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# **ROLE BARGAINING AND REGIONAL ORDERS: THE SECURITY DYNAMICS OF EU-RUSSIA AND ASEAN-CHINA RELATIONS**

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that no parts of this thesis have been accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions. This thesis contains no material previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

Margaryta Rymarenko

January 23, 2018

*To Professor Boris Yatsenko, who inspired my interest in Regional and Area Studies,  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation examines how and why regional orders transform into cooperative or conflictual security environments. It develops a role theory approach to the understanding of regional security dynamics, which emphasizes processes of role bargaining between key regional actors and their governance practices. It argues that the co-impact of these two processes determines whether cooperative or conflictual security patterns develop in a region. The framework is applied to examine the evolution of the intersubjective security environments in EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction from the end of the Cold War until 2017. It argues that the EU and Russia failed to establish a mutually accepted role relationship through bargaining, which resulted in the reproduction of a conflictual security order. In contrast, the ASEAN-China role bargaining process was successful and maintained a cooperative intersubjective security order. Deviations of regional security patterns from the nature of regional order are analyzed in the cases of EU-Russia confrontation over Ukraine in the Eastern Partnership and ASEAN-China contentions over the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. In each case, the deviation resulted from actors' preference for an inclusive or protectionist governance approach and their actual practices supporting or undermining the existing governance consensus. Focusing on the processes of regional security dynamics, rather than structural or actor-specific factors, allows the fluid nature of regional security to be captured and contributes to our understanding of regional orders as spaces driven by power, interaction and imagination.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Research Puzzles .....	2
Limitations of Existing Literature .....	4
A Role Theory Approach to Regional Security Dynamics .....	8
The Focus on Regional Organizations and Great Powers .....	11
Contributions of the Dissertation .....	14
Overview of Dissertation Chapters .....	17
<b>CHAPTER 1: REGIONS AND ORDER</b> .....	<b>20</b>
1.1. Regional Security Complex Theories: Why Focus on Regions? .....	21
1.2. Security Community Theory: Upgrading Regional Impact .....	27
1.3. Socialization as a Process of Regional Transformations.....	31
1.4. Bridging ‘Balance of Power’ and ‘Security Community’: the Role of Agency .....	36
1.5. Conclusion.....	44
<b>CHAPTER 2: A ROLE THEORY APPROACH TO REGIONAL SECURITY DYNAMICS</b> .....	<b>47</b>
2.1. Role Location Approach as a Basis for Theorizing Regional Transformations.....	49
2.2. Role Bargaining, Role Relationships and Intersubjective Security Orders.....	54
2.3. Actors’ Governance Approaches and Practices in Regional Security Dynamics .....	62
2.4. Regional Security Dynamics as a Two-Level Process.....	70
2.5. Research Design and Methods .....	73
2.6. Conclusion.....	84
<b>CHAPTER 3: THE EU-RUSSIA ROLE BARGAINING PROCESS: FROM COMPLEMENTARITY TO RIVALRY</b> .....	<b>86</b>
3.1. Complementary Roles and Successful Role Bargaining, 1994-2005.....	88
3.2. Contradictory Roles and Failed Role Bargaining, 2006-2014 .....	96
3.3. Ukrainian Crisis of 2013-2014 and Consolidation of a Conflictual Security Order .....	107
3.4. Conclusion.....	113
<b>CHAPTER 4: THE ASEAN-CHINA ROLE BARGAINING PROCESS: CONSOLIDATING ROLE AGREEMENT</b> .....	<b>115</b>
4.1. The Development of a Complementary Role Relationship, 1993-2001 .....	117

4.2. Role Agreement and Sustained Cooperative Security Order, 2002-2012.....	126
4.3. New Round of Role Bargaining and Return to Complementarity, 2013-2016.....	136
4.4. Conclusion.....	150
<b>CHAPTER 5: SECURITY DYNAMICS OF THE EU-RUSSIA RELATIONS: CONFLICT OVER UKRAINE IN THE COMMON NEIGHBORHOOD.....</b>	<b>152</b>
5.1. The EU-Russia Governance Consensus and Non-confrontation in 2009-2013.....	154
5.1.1. Initial Consensus over the Common Neighborhood.....	155
5.1.2. Role Bargaining Without Confrontation .....	157
5.2. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and Deviation from 2005 Consensus .....	165
5.2.1. The Importance of Ukraine.....	165
5.2.2. Change in the EU Governance Approach and Activation of Contentions .....	168
5.2.3. Role Conflict and Its Consequences for the EU-Russia Security Environment.....	175
5.3. The EU-Russia-Ukraine Trilateral Talks .....	180
5.3.1. The EU Shift to Inclusiveness and Russia’s Cooperation .....	181
5.3.2. Inability to Resolve the Role Conflict and Russia’s New Assertiveness .....	189
5.4. Conclusion.....	193
<b>CHAPTER 6: SECURITY DYNAMICS OF ASEAN-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA: THE CASE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT.....</b>	<b>195</b>
6.1. The First ASEAN-China Governance Consensus on the South China Sea .....	198
6.1.1. Initial Contentions over the South China Sea and the Deadlock of Negotiations .....	198
6.1.2. ASEAN-China Role Agreement and SCS Governance.....	200
6.1.3. DOC and Sustained Cooperative Security Trend .....	204
6.2. Deviation in ASEAN’s Approach and China’s Assertiveness, 2011/12.....	207
6.2.1. Rising Tensions in the South China Sea Prior to the 2011-2012 Escalation.....	208
6.2.2. Changes in ASEAN’s Governance Practice and Reactivation of Contentions .....	211
6.2.3. Cooperative Security Order Undermined .....	217
6.3. Official Consultations on the Code of Conduct and the Second ASEAN-China Consensus .....	220
6.3.1. New Role Complementarity and Implications for the Code of Conduct.....	220
6.3.2. Inclusive Governance Approach and the New Consensus .....	223
6.3.3. Consequences for the Intersubjective Security Environment.....	229
6.4. Conclusion.....	235
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>236</b>
The Main Argument .....	236
Research Puzzles Revisited .....	238
Contributions of the Dissertation .....	244
Avenues for Future Research .....	249
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>255</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. Role Bargaining and Regional Order Outcomes .....	59
Figure 2.2. Security Dynamics in Regional Governance.....	69

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1. Empirical Observations of Role Bargaining Outcomes.....	79
Table 3.1. The EU-Russia Role Bargaining Process .....	87
Table 4.1. The ASEAN-China Role Bargaining Process.....	116
Table 5.1. Security Dynamics of the EU-Russia Relations in the Case of Ukraine .....	154
Table 5.2. European and Eurasian Integration Processes in 2009-2013 .....	159
Table 6.1. Security Dynamics of the ASEAN-China relations in the case of the Code of Conduct	197
Table 7.1. Comparison of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China Role Bargaining .....	239
Table 7.2. Co-influence of Role Location Process and Governance Practice .....	243

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AA – Association Agreement

ACFTA – ASEAN-China Free Trade Area

ADMM – ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting

ADMMP – ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting Plus

AFTA – ASEAN Free Trade Area

APT – ASEAN Plus Three

ARF – ASEAN Regional Forum

ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations

CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States

COC – Code of Conduct

COEST - Council Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia

CU – Customs Union

CUES – Code of Unplanned Encounters at Sea

DCFTA – Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

DG – Directorate General

DOC – Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea

EaP – Eastern Partnership

ECT – Energy Charter Treaty

EEAS – European External Action Service

EEU- Eurasian Economic Union

EEZ – Exclusive Economic Zone

ENP – European Neighborhood Policy

ESDP – European Security and Defense Policy

EU – European Union

FM – Foreign Minister

GP – great power

HADR – Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

JWG – Joint Working Group

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NRT – new regionalism theory

NTS – non-traditional security

OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

P4M – Partnership for Modernization

PCA – Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

PLA – People's Liberation Army

PRC – People's Republic of China

RCEP – Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

RO – regional organization

ROT – regional order theory

RSC – regional security complex

RSCT – regional security complex theory

SCS – South China Sea

SCT – security community theory

SEANWFZ – Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone

SOM – Senior Officials Meeting

ST – socialization theory

TAC – Treaty of Amity and Cooperation

UNCLOS – United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

## INTRODUCTION

*In a world caught between global pressures and local pushback, regional dynamics come to the fore. As complex webs of power, interaction and identity, regions represent critical spaces of governance in a de-centred world.*

*(A Global Strategy for the European Union, 2016, 32)*

Regionalism is inherently linked to cooperation, integration and governance. There is a broad understanding that where regional networks, institutions and communities proliferate, the drive for cooperation should overtake incentives for conflict. In 1997, Lake and Morgan argued that ‘the end of the Cold War has opened new possibilities for more cooperative regional orders’ and that regions across the globe were taking ‘tentative steps towards collective security.’<sup>1</sup> During the past 20 years, however, many regions and sub-regions failed ‘to transform into peaceful communities.’<sup>2</sup> For example, Davutoglu argued that the crisis in the Middle East was ‘the direct outcome of the lack of a sustainable and legitimate regional order.’<sup>3</sup> In Africa, regional organizations failed to establish durable security communities and it remains ‘the most conflict-ridden continent in the world.’<sup>4</sup> ‘Significant progress’ towards sustainable peace was noted in Latin America that was taking the region ‘past the age of ideological conflict,’ but ‘security hurdles’ remain while the capacities of regional actors to address them are still limited.<sup>5</sup> Even in regions where the policies of the European Union (EU) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were seen as the most successful in expanding the practices of security communities, major challenges to sustaining cooperative regional orders arise.

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<sup>1</sup> David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 7.

<sup>2</sup> T.V. Paul, ed., *International Relations Theory and Regional Transformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmet Davutoglu, “The Crisis of Regional Order in the Gulf,” *Al-Jazeera*, July 27, 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/07/crisis-regional-order-gulf-170727173842629.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Liisa Laakso, “Beyond the Notion of Security Community: What Role for the African Regional Organizations in Peace and Security?,” *The Round Table* 94, no. 381 (September 1, 2005): 489.

<sup>5</sup> Emma Welch, “Sustaining the Peace in Latin America: Regional and International Efforts” (International Institutions and Global Governance Program, Washington DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2012), 4.

This dissertation focuses on the question: *when and how do regional orders transform into cooperative or conflictual security environments?* It argues that the best way to understand security dynamics in regional orders is to conceptualize them as dynamic rather than stable systems, where the processes of action and interaction between key actors continuously shape and (re)produce dominant security patterns and intersubjective security environments. I develop a role theory approach to regional security dynamics that allows me to analyze these developments through the interlinked processes of role bargaining and governance practice. This Introduction first presents the two ‘puzzles’ guiding this research and the limitations of existing theories to address them. It then introduces a role theory approach to regional security dynamics and its advantages compared to the existing theories. The following section justifies the focus of this research project on the interaction between regional organizations and great powers. I then outline the key contributions of the dissertation and provide an overview of its structure.

## **Research Puzzles**

The first research puzzle of this dissertation is inspired by divergent developments of the European and Southeast Asian regional orders. The EU used to be considered a champion in security promotion in its neighborhood, but is now struggling to sustain a cooperative security environment at its borders. The latest EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy admitted that ‘peace and stability in Europe are no longer given’ and that Russia challenged the European security order ‘at its core.’<sup>6</sup> The EU-Russia relationship deteriorated in the late 2000s following a decade of peaceful co-existence. The conflict culminated in 2014, following confrontation over Ukraine. Despite attempts to recover a cooperative security trend under the Minsk peace process, the EU-Russia-Ukraine trilateral consultations and the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) framework, a conflictual security environment between Russia and the EU endures. A different pattern has

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<sup>6</sup> “Shared Vision, Global Action: A Stronger Europe, A Global Strategy for European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy,” European Union, June 2016, 33.

developed in Southeast Asia. The increasingly pro-active and at times assertive Chinese policies against ASEAN endangered a cooperative security order developed in Southeast Asia. Major regional conflict over the South China Sea (SCS) escalated in 2011-2012 at a time when ASEAN and China celebrated the so-called ‘golden decade’ of successful cooperation. However, despite the crisis caused by this issue, ASEAN and China progressed in drafting a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea and maintained a cooperative security environment in the region.

Why, when both relationships experienced a crisis, was a cooperative trend sustained between ASEAN and China, but not between the EU and Russia? The question becomes even more interesting if we consider the fact that the EU, as a regional actor, enjoys vastly more developed internal capabilities than ASEAN and has a greater potential for influencing security dynamics outside its borders. In contrast, ASEAN is often accused of being a weak and ineffective ‘talk shop’, whose coherence and autonomy as a regional organization is questionable.<sup>7</sup> Yet, as Acharya rightly argued, ‘ASEAN ha[s] done [a] better job in dealing with rising China, than the EU has done with resurgent Russia.’<sup>8</sup>

The second puzzle addressed in this dissertation relates to the fact that only some security patterns but not others drive transformations of regional security order. Shifts in regional security dynamics towards cooperation or confrontation are happening *within* regional orders regularly and, at times, simultaneously. When multiple actors at multiple levels of governance engage in order-building, sustained cooperation or conflict looks less likely. Rather, shifts towards conflict or cooperation and the overlap of both are actual features of regional communities. The EU-Russia relationship, for example, experienced shocks long before the Ukrainian crisis caused by the war in Georgia (2008) or the so called ‘gas wars’ (2006 and 2009). Until 2013, however, the negative shifts

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<sup>7</sup> David Martin Jones and Michael LR Smith, “Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian Regional Order,” *International Security* 32, no. 1 (2007): 148–184; Evelyn Goh, “Institutions and the Great Power Bargain in East Asia: ASEAN’s Limited ‘Brokerage’ Role,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 373–401; Jens-Uwe Wunderlich, “The EU an Actor Sui Generis? A Comparison of EU and ASEAN Actorness: The EU an Actor Sui Generis?,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 50, no. 4 (July 2012): 653–69.

<sup>8</sup> Amitav Acharya, “Regional Worlds in a Post-Hegemonic Era,” Spirit Working Papers, June 2009.

in security dynamics did not undermine the overall cooperative environment between the EU and Russia. Likewise, ASEAN and China survived a number of downturns while managing the South China Sea conflict, such as the clashes over resource exploitation in 2007 and the revival of territorial disputes in 2009. Yet these developments did not undermine the prevailing cooperative relationship until 2011-2012. Moreover, from 2013 the regional security environment resumed a cooperative trend despite growing uncertainty in the South China Sea. Why these deviations occurred and when they become consequential for the nature of regional security order is the second underlying question that this dissertation pursues.

### **Limitations of Existing Literature**

According to Paul, ‘proper understanding of regional conflict and cooperation patterns assumed wider significance’ in IR scholarship and ‘is of utmost importance for crafting appropriate policy initiatives.’<sup>9</sup> As I discuss in detail in Chapter 1, a number of theories offered accounts of regional security dynamics and order. As I argue in what follows, however, the existing theories, while explaining different variations of regional security order, often fail to take into account the processes of regional transformation. If they do analyze these processes, their impact is often treated as unidirectional, that is, able to explain only one type of regional security outcomes.

The most extensive accounts of regional security dynamics are offered by the literature on regional orders, which effectively established regions as the most ‘appropriate level of analyses in security studies.’<sup>10</sup> These theories approach regions as distinct ‘sub-systems’ in the international system, whose security dynamics are often driven by the same factors as those at the international level (e.g. distribution of power or globalization), but the impact that these factors produce is shaped by regional features. Katzenstein, for instance, theorized regions as products of the American imperium and considered their security dynamics to be fully driven by the purpose and interests of

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<sup>9</sup> Paul, *International Relations Theory and Regional Transformation*, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Bary Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 45.

the US in the world.<sup>11</sup> Buzan and Wæver's analysis of regions was guided by the notion of regional security complexes (RSC), understood as security-bound groups of actors. Security patterns in RSCs are strongly shaped by regional features: the type of RSC in terms of the distribution of power, and the dominant patterns of amity/enmity between its actors. These two features determine the evolution of regional order towards peace or conflict.<sup>12</sup> Lake and Morgan also explained the nature of regional security through a 'catalog of ideal types', or 'stages', open for RSCs to choose when organizing the patterns of their security management.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, Hettne and Söderbaum viewed the development of regional orders through the prism of stages, or 'levels of regionness', that actors undergo in the process of identity transformation. The higher the region moves along the ladder from regional space to region-state, the less likely conflict is between its members.<sup>14</sup>

The main limitation of these studies is their understanding of regional order as a particular stable 'type', 'stage' or 'level.' Theorized deductively, these types are then applied to explain regional security patterns in the real world. However, as Adler and Greve (2009) rightly argued, security dynamics within regions often represent a 'mixture of practices', or an 'overlap' of various types.<sup>15</sup> These overlaps have 'empirical consequences' for the nature of regional security 'in their own right,'<sup>16</sup> which the existing typologies cannot account for.

Another limitation of scholarship on regional orders is the lack of conceptualization of the *processes* of regional security dynamics, and of the interconnection between these processes and regional order outcomes. Buzan and Wæver, for example, noted that shifts in the distribution of power and changes in the patterns of amity/enmity guide processes of regional transformation. However, they did not explicitly discuss the correlation between different types of RSCs and different types of

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<sup>11</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*.

<sup>13</sup> Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*, 32–33.

<sup>14</sup> Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum, "Theorising the Rise of Regionness," *New Political Economy* 5, no. 3 (November 2000): 457–72.

<sup>15</sup> Emanuel Adler and Patricia Greve, "When Security Community Meets Balance of Power: Overlapping Regional Mechanisms of Security Governance," *Review of International Studies* 35, no. S1 (February 2009): 59–84.

<sup>16</sup> Adler and Greve, "When Security Community Meets Balance of Power," 60.

order.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, the degree of amity/enmity is considered as determining the range of regional order outcomes on a spectrum from anarchy (relations structured by enmity) to security community (relations structured by amity),<sup>18</sup> yet the processes that push regional complexes toward one or the other end remain unclear. Lake and Morgan similarly argue that ‘the greater the magnitude, concentration and the number of [security] externalities, the larger are the potential gains from cooperation and the more likely states are to engage in higher forms of conflict management.’<sup>19</sup> However, in this case regional orders are seen as snapshots along a spectrum of different ‘degrees,’ and the authors do not theorize the processes of regional change between and within these stages. Moreover, while focusing on the degrees of amity/enmity and on security externalities, scholars do not take into consideration their quality. Would political and economic externalities, for example, produce similar or different modes of security management in a region? Patterns of hostility within a region also may not be limited only to the friend/enemy dichotomy, but represent a variety of relationships (consensus, agreement, contradiction, etc), as the cases discussed in this dissertation demonstrate. What type of regional security order would these relationships produce?

The third limitation is that the role of interaction processes is downplayed in existing security order theories. Patterns of interaction are used only to detect the boundaries of RSCs and thus do not have explanatory power of their own. Amitav Acharya rightly criticized this feature of RSCs, arguing that regions structured along the modes of power distribution and patterns of amity/enmity do change but ‘they cannot change too much.’<sup>20</sup> Hettne and Söderbaum considered the cumulative effect of interaction of state and non-state actors on the creation of regions as ‘imagined communities.’<sup>21</sup> However, they attributed variations in regionness not to the interaction processes but to the impact of globalization and regionalization. Hence, these theories considered the impact of interaction in terms

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<sup>17</sup> Amitav Acharya, “The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics,” *World Politics* 59, no. 04 (2007): 638.

<sup>18</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd Edition (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2008), 180.

<sup>19</sup> Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*, 57.

<sup>20</sup> Acharya, “The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics,” 636.

<sup>21</sup> Hettne and Söderbaum, “Theorising the Rise of Regionness,” 469.

of its longevity and scope, but not content. It is the quality and not just the degree of interaction, however, that might be important for the nature of regional orders. As Wendt rightly argued, it is interaction that ‘rewards actors for holding certain ideas about each other and discourages them from holding others.’<sup>22</sup>

The role of interaction in the processes of regional transformation is emphasized in security communities theory. Adler and Barnett conceptualized socialization, institutionalization and regional transactions are conceptualized as the mechanisms for creating shared rules and norms in a regional security community.<sup>23</sup> They limit their explanation, however, to only one type of regional order outcome (security community) and do not account for a range of other options that interaction could produce. The same limitation applies to socialization theory that focuses on the micro-processes of identity change in security community.<sup>24</sup> Because of the narrow scope conditions, applying these mechanisms to wider regional security dynamics is problematic. For example, socialization is possible only in a security community setting and only if an asymmetry of power is present between socializer and socializee. Role playing and normative suasion as micro-processes of socialization require a very tight institutional setting with thick, sustained interaction processes in order to be successful.

Finally, regional order theories rarely recognize the role of non-state actors in shifting the patterns of regional security. Most consider great powers to be the main agents behind regional security shifts. They are exercising a system-level impact on regional security dynamics and are seen as the most powerful socializers. The role of non-state regional actors, in structuring regional order, and particularly regional organizations, is rarely recognized. For example, Buzan and Wæver consider

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<sup>22</sup> Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 02 (1992): 405.

<sup>23</sup> Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, “International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework,” *International Organization* 59, no. 04 (October 2005): 801–26; Frank Schimmelfennig, “Strategic Calculation and International Socialization: Membership Incentives, Party Constellations, and Sustained Compliance in Central and Eastern Europe,” *International Organization* 59, no. 04 (October 2005): 827–860; Alexandra Gheciu, “Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the,” *International Organization* 59, no. 04 (October 2005): 973–1012.

the EU to be the only organization capable of shaping the patterns of regional security, but the authors treat it ‘as if’ it were a great power. Security community theory recognized the importance of formal and informal institutions, including organizations, in the processes of state socialization. However, it defines organizations as ‘sites of interaction’ rather than collective actors producing autonomous impact.

The possibility of a responsive impact of regions as collective actors to power penetration is considered by a few scholars, who argued that regional responses to power might be more important for shaping the nature of regional orders.<sup>25</sup> However, these studies do not go beyond describing possible regional strategies to great power penetration, without conceptualizing how their combinations actually work or what outcomes they produce for the nature of regional order.

To sum up, the three major limitations of regional security order theories are their understanding of order as a stable security outcome; their inadequate conceptualization of the processes behind regional order building; and their lack of attention to the role of interaction and agency in shaping regional security patterns. To account for the dynamics of regional security and regional order transformations, a theory is needed that incorporates structural and agential impact, that is capable of explaining both the *processes* of regional order development (security dynamics) and their *outcomes* (regional order types), that can accommodate overlapping security mechanisms and that can incorporate actors of any kind.

## **A Role Theory Approach to Regional Security Dynamics**

This dissertation develops a role theory approach to regional security dynamics. I propose to shift the scholarly focus away from analyzing regional orders as particular stages or types and, instead, focus on the processes of order-creation. Differently put, instead of taking a top-down approach, and

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<sup>25</sup> Andrew Hurrell, “Explaining the Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics,” *Review of International Studies* 21, no. 4 (1995): 331–58; Andrew Hurrell, “Hegemony and Regional Governance in the Americas,” in *Regionalism and Governance in the Americas*, ed. Louise Fawcett and Mónica Serrano (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 185–207; Acharya, “The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics”; Juergen Haacke and Paul D. Williams, “Regional Arrangements and Security Challenges: A Comparative Analysis,” Crisis States Research Centre Working Paper Series, no. 2 (July 2009), <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/24696/>.

imposing theory-driven ‘order types’ to understand patterns of regional security, I take a bottom-up approach and analyze the interactions between key actors that are seen as constitutive of the nature of intersubjective security orders. I situate my argument in the role location approach to state socialization originally developed by Cameron Thies.<sup>26</sup> Using insights from Thies’s model, as well as from sociological and IR role theory, I develop a framework for analyzing regional security dynamics that is sensitive to capturing the structural shifts in the nature of regional orders (towards cooperation or conflict) as well as variations in security dynamics within particular order types. The main advantage of this theoretical approach is its ability to account for a variety of regional transformations, and not only those that lead to the creation of particular orders. Within this framework I argue that regional security order should be understood not as a particular ‘level’, ‘type’ or ‘stage’, but as subject to the processes of security dynamics that happen at different levels of interaction between key actors in a region.

I argue that two dimensions of interaction between regional actors are consequential for regional security dynamics and regional order outcomes. The first dimension is *role bargaining*, defined as a process of interaction between actors through which they may develop, modify or even change their role conceptions in response to the expectations, demands, or cues from each other. Understanding how actors’ role conceptions (towards the region and towards each other) manifest themselves through interaction, and what role relationships are created between actors through this process, is indicative of the nature of regional order. I argue that when actors develop role consensus, complementarity or agreement through role bargaining, a cooperative security environment develops. If their role relationship evolves into dissensus, contradiction or rivalry, however, a conflictual regional order is the likely outcome. Conflictual and cooperative regional orders are thus understood

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<sup>26</sup> Cameron G. Thies, “Role Theory and Foreign Policy,” in *International Studies Association Compendium Project, Foreign Policy Analysis Section*, 2009; Cameron G. Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions: Can Role Theory Integrate IR Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis?: International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 1 (January 2012): 25–46; Cameron G. Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order: Socializing States* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

not as binary outcomes, but as intersubjective security environments, whose nature is contingent on the quality of role relationships.

Role relationships inform the pattern of regional security at the intersubjective level, which allows me to explain shifts in the nature of regional order towards cooperation or conflict. They also guide actors' thinking about appropriate behavior, or *governance practice*, which constitutes the second dimension of regional security dynamics. I define governance practice as the actual behavior of actors (foreign policy) that reveals their preference for sustaining or undermining the existing security order. I argue that actors have different vision of regional governance based on their role conceptions and they try to shape the system of regional governance in a way that allows them to enact their roles most effectively. The bargaining between them may unfold over three issues of contention: the substance of regional governance, terms of role enactment and tolerance to institutional alternatives. In this regard, a more inclusive governance approach might be supportive of overcoming the issues of contention, while a protectionist approach might consolidate confrontational outcomes.

By resolving or activating the issues of contention, governance practice produces regional security shifts in its own right. These shifts cause deviations in regional security patterns *within* particular orders. When governance practices falls in line with the accepted role relationship and governance consensus, cooperative regional order is sustained. However, if actors deviate in their actions from the accepted role structure or governance consensus, a conflictual pattern develops with the consequences for the role bargaining process. The reverse impact can also take place: a cooperative shift in the role bargaining process contributes to the positive security dynamics at the level of governance, while a negative turn may re-activate the issues of contention. A role theory approach, and a focus on regional security dynamics, allow capturing the changing nature of regional order. It helps to overcome the limitations posed by the conventional understanding of order as a stable 'subsystem', or 'type', and account for the *actual* variety of security outcomes that may be created in the region, as well as the processes that constitute them.

Interaction between key actors in the region is seen as the primary factor influencing regional order developments. However, I admit that other factors from within and outside the region might intervene in this process. The eruption of the Ukrainian crisis in 2014 in Europe, and the US ‘pivot to Asia’ in 2010 are the examples of intervening factors discussed in this dissertation. I argue that the impact of these factors on regional security dynamics and regional order should also be understood through the prism of actors’ interaction. In other words, what matters for the nature of regional order is how actors interpret them in the role bargaining process.

Important clarifications should be made about the scope of analysis. Under the theory of regional security dynamics, I focus on the external role bargaining process between the two actors and on the role relationships as its outcomes. I do not account for processes of domestic role contestation. I only take into account the outcomes of domestic role making when they have a direct impact on external role bargaining; that is, when domestic role contestations result in the change or redefinition of actors’ regional roles, or affected their choice of a role bargaining or role enactment strategy. Because of my focus on regional orders, I limit my empirical analysis to regional roles; that is, those that actors developed towards the region and towards each other, and do not trace the evolution of other international role conceptions. Since my research objective was to understand the development of role relationships between actors over time, I limited my analysis to those instances and areas of interaction that featured prominently in their communication as the dimensions of regional role bargaining process. The method of identifying these instances is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

### **The Focus on Regional Organizations and Great Powers**

States are traditionally viewed as the main actors driving security dynamics at any level of analysis. IR theories and regional order theories claim that the ability of states to shape the patterns of regional security depends on their relative power capabilities, both material and social. In this regard, supranational powers, great powers and regional powers have varying degrees of impact on regional

order.<sup>27</sup> Scholars also pointed out that apart from the distribution of power, the aspirations of powerful actors also matter for the type of order being produced. For example, Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll, as well as Destradi, theorized how roles, foreign policy orientations and strategies that powerful states chose to pursue influence the nature of regional security orders (hierarchy, hegemony, empire).<sup>28</sup>

Regional organizations are also increasingly seen, however, as actors in their own right that can ‘purposefully shape the outcomes in the external world.’<sup>29</sup> Some scholars even consider regional organizations as having a comparative advantage over states and global institutions in dealing with security issues.<sup>30</sup> The level of organizations’ effectiveness is strongly linked to their power capabilities as collective actors defined as the level of autonomy and institutionalization, level of presence in the region in terms of size, economic and military power, and the level of actorness, or ability to act purposefully in producing external outcomes.<sup>31</sup> A few scholars evaluated the actual responses that organizations provide to regional security challenges, including the penetrating impact of regional powers.<sup>32</sup> The study of EU foreign policy is an exception, as the EU is widely recognized as a regional and even a global actor.<sup>33</sup> Even research on the EU external governance usually represents a set of case studies, rather than a generalizable theoretical framework. Moreover, these

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<sup>27</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*; Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*; Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*.

<sup>28</sup> Derrick Frazier and Robert Stewart-Ingersoll, “Regional Powers and Security: A Framework for Understanding Order within Regional Security Complexes,” *European Journal of International Relations* 16, no. 4 (December 1, 2010): 731–53; Sandra Destradi, “Regional Powers and Their Strategies: Empire, Hegemony, and Leadership,” *Review of International Studies* 36, no. 04 (October 2010): 903–30.

<sup>29</sup> Björn Hettne, “Regional Actorship and Regional Agency: Comparative Perspectives,” *The 6th Garnet PhD School, Brussels*, June 9, 2008, 2.

<sup>30</sup> Andrew Fenton Cooper, Christopher W. Hughes, and Philippe de Lombaerde, *Regionalisation and Global Governance: The Taming of Globalisation?* (London: Routledge, 2008), 9; Elzbieta Stadtmüller, “Regional Dimensions of Security,” in *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mary Farrell, Björn Hettne, and Van Langenhove (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 119.

<sup>31</sup> Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor* (London: Routledge, 2006); Hettne, “Regional Actorship and Regional Agency.”

<sup>32</sup> Acharya, “The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics”; V. Shekhar, “ASEAN’s Response to the Rise of China: Deploying a Hedging Strategy,” *China Report* 48, no. 3 (December 3, 2012): 253–68.

<sup>33</sup> Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 40, no. 2 (June 2002): 235–58; Sandra Lavenex, “EU External Governance in ‘Wider Europe,’” *Journal of European Public Policy* 11, no. 4 (January 2004): 680–700; Hiski Haukkala, “The European Union as a Regional Normative Hegemon: The Case of European Neighborhood Policy,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 9 (November 2008): 1601–22; Mary Farrell, “EU Policy towards Other Regions: Policy Learning in the External Promotion of Regional Integration,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 16, no. 8 (December 2009): 1165–84.

studies often downplay the fact that ROs in other region are also capable of influencing regional security and modes of governance beyond their borders. Hence, the role of regional organizations in shaping the patterns of security dynamics beyond their borders remains understudied. In addition, actor-focused approaches to regional security limit our understanding of regional order transformations because they explain actor-specific strategies or foreign policy outcomes but fail to provide a bigger picture in terms of how the combinations of these strategies impact the nature of intersubjective security orders. In this context, Europe and Southeast Asia represent special cases, where both regional organizations (the EU and ASEAN) and great powers (Russia and China) claim a role in security promotion and are influential players in shaping patterns of regional security.

The EU and ASEAN are the organizations with the highest level of political actorness so far, and both are recognized as leaders in region-building. Focusing on these organizations allows me to evaluate how effective they are as collective actors in regional security promotion and specifically in managing the great power impact. Although scholars mostly consider the EU to be a more advanced actor than ASEAN in terms of power capabilities, and are discouraged from drawing comparative analyses by its unique nature, I argue that both organizations are comparable in terms of their level of engagement and contribution to regional affairs, and the challenges they need to manage. Both the EU and ASEAN claim leadership in shaping the normative foundations of their regional orders by externalizing internal rules and norms, seen as ‘EU values’ and the ‘ASEAN Way’ respectively. Both also seek to contribute to regional peace and security by shaping the principles and institutions of regional governance: the EU promotes so called ‘hard regionalism’, which is based on formal and intrusive institutions and legally binding-regulations, while ASEAN advocates ‘soft regionalism’, which favors informal and loose institutional structures and consensus commitments rather than legally binding rules.<sup>34</sup> Importantly, they are also recognized as collective actors by other regional stakeholders.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> On hard and soft regionalism in the EU and ASEAN see Frederick Söderbaum, “Theories of Regionalism,” in *Routledge Handbook of Asian Regionalism*, ed. Mark Beeson and Richard Stubbs (New York: Routledge, 2012), 11–22.

<sup>35</sup> Wunderlich, “The EU an Actor Sui Generis?”

In their capacity as regional leaders and security promoters, the EU and ASEAN face the challenge of having great powers at their doorstep (Russia in Europe and China in Southeast Asia). Russia and China are seen as states engineering new poles of power with their own distinct vision of regional and global order, which is alternative to the current state of economic and political affairs.<sup>36</sup> They increasingly demonstrate a willingness and capability to influence regional order-building in line with their developing leadership roles.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, for both regions, the interaction between regional organizations and great powers constitutes the dominant pattern of interaction, which is constitutive of the overall nature and dynamics of regional security order. Only by looking at both actors can security patterns in these regions be understood. Focusing on the pattern of RO-GP interaction, rather than state-to-state relationship, helps develop a more robust analytical framework for understanding regional orders that can incorporate actors of different types.

### **Contributions of the Dissertation**

This dissertation contributes to existing scholarship by offering a novel framework for the analysis of regional security dynamics and regional order transformations. Unlike existing frameworks, a role theory approach offers a process-driven - rather than an outcome-driven - understanding of order, which has several important advantages.

Firstly, a role theory approach to regional security dynamics places the main emphasis on interaction patterns in shaping the nature of regional orders. Regardless of the types of actors, their power capabilities or number of security externalities they produce, it is through interaction that they essentially form particular perceptions about each other and determine appropriate policy responses. Even with multiple factors influencing regional security, what essentially matters is how actors

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<sup>36</sup> Andrej Krickovic, “‘All Politics Is Regional’: Emerging Powers and the Regionalization of Global Governance,” *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 21, no. 4 (October 1, 2015): 557–77.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Kingah and Cintia Quiliconi, eds., *Global and Regional Leadership of BRICS Countries*, vol. 11, United Nations University Series on Regionalism (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016).

process them through interaction. Unpacking interaction processes behind regional security shifts provides us with a new understanding of regional transformation processes as a matter of the *quality* of interaction between actors, not just a matter of the *degree*. Other theories focus on the level of amity/enmity, thickness of interaction or number of security externalities that are quantitative factors. In contrast, my framework brings forward qualitative features of interaction, such as actors' approaches to role bargaining and governance practice. I argue that the way actors approach their role location, and the quality of the role relationship, is what constitutes the nature of order. This understanding differs from conventional role theory, which focuses on the nature of roles and their appropriateness as determining the quality of security order in the international system.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, different governance approaches that actors choose to pursue in interaction with others determine whether a particular role relationship is sustained or redefined, and consequently, whether cooperative or conflictual order emerges as an outcome of this process. In addition, my analysis demonstrates how one role can have multiple ways of enactment with different implications not only for the role beholder (consolidating or change of the internal role conception), but also for the role relationship between actors and the nature of regional security order. This further supports my claim that the quality of interaction, not merely the fact of role performance or non-performance, matters for regional security outcomes.

Secondly, incorporating role theory into the study of regional security dynamics proves especially valuable as it provides a necessary bridge between the intersubjective or structural dimensions of regional order (role relationships) and the actual practices of actors within these orders (governance practices). Although co-impact between agency and structure is widely accepted in IR scholarship, the regional orders literature tends to be either structure-focused or agency-focused. Very few accounts actually try to theorize the impact of both.<sup>39</sup> In this regard, the role theory approach to

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<sup>38</sup> Stephen G. Walker, *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987); Thies, "International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions," January 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics"; Jorge F. Garzón Pereira, "Hierarchical Regional Orders: An Analytical Framework," *Journal of Policy Modeling* 36 (2014): 26–46.

regional security dynamics developed here fills this theoretical gap as it theorizes specific processes linking both levels together under one framework.

Thirdly, unlike other regional security theories, the process-driven framework advanced in this dissertation can explain the emergence and the security outcomes of what Adler and Greve called an ‘overlap’ of different security mechanisms. By distinguishing between the two processes of regional security dynamics (role bargaining and governance practice) I can account for instances of the temporal intersection between them and the specific regional security outcomes that these intersections produce. In such a way, the role theory approach can explain the emergence and the empirical outcomes of regional ‘security overlap’.

Finally, focusing on the processes of security dynamics enables a fruitful avenue for cross–regional comparative analyses. Focusing on interaction processes under role theory takes the focus away from the region-specific context or actor-qualities. This enables me to analyze and compare patterns of security development across different regions and between different actors. Focusing on roles, governance practice and interaction, rather than on actors’ capabilities, provides a better evaluative framework for understanding the effectiveness of ROs as political actors in comparative perspective. It allows me to overcome the major problem of comparative regionalism studies, namely the ‘*sui generis*’ nature of the EU as a case for comparison. Under a role theory approach, the effectiveness of regional organizations might be redefined as how well they can sustain their own role conception and direct the role development of other actors, including great powers within the region, while their internal capabilities assume a secondary role.

In addition to theoretical contributions, this dissertation also offers a better understanding of the empirical cases of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction in terms of qualitative changes of security environment between the actors at specific points in time. Tracing the development of their role bargaining process allowed uncovering the links between their domestic role making and external security order evolution. The focus on role bargaining and governance practice processes also helped to explain specific developments in the case studies: EU-Russia contestation over Ukraine and the

ASEAN-China conflict over the South China Sea. It enabled me to understand why security patterns in each case unfolded in a particular way, and what triggered the turning points to cooperation or conflict. Empirical investigation also helped to uncover how the involvement of third factors (the Ukrainian revolution and the US ‘Pivot to Asia’) shaped the security patterns and the outcomes of role bargaining in each case.

## **Overview of Dissertation Chapters**

What follows is structured in to seven chapters. Chapter 1 analyzes existing explanations of regional order-building and security management. I argue that the main limitations of existing theories are their strong focus on regions as particular stable ‘order types’ and failure to account for variations or overlap of types; inadequate conceptualization of the processes behind regional security dynamics and the lack of attention to the role of interaction and agency in shaping regional security patterns. In contrast, I argue that in order to understand regional transformations towards cooperative or conflictual order, a middle-range theory is needed that incorporates both regional context and agency impact. Such a theory should also be capable of explaining dynamic processes of regional order development and change and the *actual* regional order outcomes. In addition, it should be flexible enough to incorporate non-state actors.

Chapter 2 develops a role theory approach to regional security dynamics based on Thies’s role location framework. I conceptualize regional transformation as a process of role bargaining between key actors, whereby they allocate ‘suitable roles’ for themselves in regional order. I then expand the idea of role location to conceptualize role relationships between actors as specific outcomes of the role bargaining process. I argue that shifts in the nature of role relationships determine the transformation of regional order towards conflict or cooperation. I then theorize the impact of governance practices of actors and their role enactment on the process of role location and the nature of role relationships. I argue that different governance approaches may sustain or undermine the outcomes of the role bargaining process. Security dynamics at the governance level guide the patterns

of regional security *within* particular orders and determine whether the shifts to cooperation or confrontation happen between actors. I then discuss the methodology used, and the empirical cases analyzed, in this dissertation.

The remaining chapters apply the theoretical framework to empirical cases. Chapters 3 and 4 analyze the EU-Russia and ASEAN-China role bargaining processes. I argue that the increasingly conflictual security environment in Europe resulted from the unsuccessful EU-Russia role bargaining process, whereby actors failed to establish a mutually accepted role relationship. Whereas the EU tried to consolidate its role conceptions and force its role expectations on Russia, for the latter the role bargaining process turned into constant attempts to resolve role dissonance and locate a suitable role in the European regional order. The role redefinition produced by the Ukrainian crisis of 2013-2014 consolidated the conflictual security order between the EU and Russia. Unlike the EU-Russia pattern of interaction, the ASEAN-China relationship represented a successful role location process, whereby actors established and later consolidated a relationship of role agreement. The preference for role accommodation as a role bargaining strategy and the fact that they agreed on the mechanisms for appropriate role enactment resulted in a sustained cooperative security order.

Chapters 5 and 6 analyze cases where security patterns deviated from the intersubjective role relationships: EU-Russia contention over Ukraine, and ASEAN-China interaction over the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. I trace how regional governance practices in each case produced independent shifts in security patterns, as well as how these shifts contributed to the nature of regional security order. In the case of Ukraine, I argue that the shifts in Russia's behavior followed changes in the EU's governance approach. EU compliance with or deviation from the established governance consensus determined whether Russia's reaction to EU policies was confrontational or cooperative. The nature of EU governance practice (inclusive or protectionist) determined whether a cooperative or confrontational trend was sustained in relations with Moscow. In the case of the Code of Conduct, the role bargaining process between ASEAN and China played a more important role for regional security outcomes than shifts in their governance practice. Positive turns in ASEAN-China role

location de-activated the existing contentions over the South China Sea and supported a governance consensus. Similar to the case of Ukraine, ASEAN's compliance or deviation from this consensus caused cooperative or confrontational responses from China respectively. In the final Conclusion, I summarize the main findings and contributions of this dissertation and offer trajectories for future research.

## CHAPTER 1: REGIONS AND ORDER

The literature on regional orders is polarized depending on how much autonomy the authors grant to regions in the global system dominated by great powers. Some authors see regions as subordinate to the impact of great powers, merely arenas for action.<sup>1</sup> Others recognize that internal dynamics in a region may be at least as important as external power influence.<sup>2</sup> Still others emphasize the responsive actions of a region to great power penetration.<sup>3</sup> A number of studies have focused on the specific role of regional organizations and regional (great) powers in terms of how their policies may shape regional and global governance.<sup>4</sup> This chapter reviews each of these debates in terms of their ability to explain regional security dynamics and regional order outcomes, with a specific focus on the interaction between regional organizations and great powers.

In the first section, I discuss structural approaches to regional security orders. The second and the third sections address process-driven theories of regional security. The fourth section addresses middle-range theories bridging neo-realist and constructivist accounts, as well as actor-specific approaches to the study of regional security dynamics. It will be argued that existing theories have a number of limitations rendering them inappropriate for explaining the dynamics of RO-GP interaction in terms of the development of conflictual or cooperative security patterns, as well as intersubjective security orders that emerge as an outcome. At the same time, the theories reviewed offer a number of useful concepts that I later utilize to further develop a role theory approach to regional security dynamics.

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<sup>1</sup> Katzenstein, *A World of Regions*.

<sup>2</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Power*; Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*; Hurrell, "Explaining the Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics;" Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities* Juergen Haacke and Paul D. Williams, "Regional Arrangements and Security Challenges: A Comparative Analysis."

<sup>3</sup> Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics;" Shekhar, "ASEAN's Response to the Rise of China."

<sup>4</sup> Mary Farrell, Björn Hettne, and Luk van Langenhove, *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice* (London: Pluto Press, 2005); Hettne, "Regional Actorship and Regional Agency"; Marieke Zwartjes et al., "Determinants of Regional Leadership: Is the European Union a Leading Regional Actor in Peace and Security?," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 12, no. 3 (September 2012): 393–405; Daniel Flemes, *Regional Leadership in the Global System: Ideas, Interests and Strategies of Regional Powers* (Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010); Kingah and Quiliconi, *Global and Regional Leadership of BRICS Countries*.

## 1.1. Regional Security Complex Theories: Why Focus on Regions?

Although regions and regionalism have always been a part of IR studies, these concepts nevertheless remain vaguely defined and, therefore, contested. A region can be defined in a number of ways, either from the perspective of pure geography, economics, history and culture, or from a more complex social constructivist perspective, as any area ‘recognized’ as a region by internal and external actors. Moreover, regions can have fixed borders (the borders of regional organizations or FTAs), or fuzzy and changing borders as with, for example, civilizational regions or security communities. It is also often the case in regionalism studies that authors do not clearly distinguish between the boundaries of ‘regions’ and ‘regional organizations’ when, in reality, political regions and regional organization do not necessary coincide.<sup>5</sup> Being aware of these controversies, I use the concepts of ‘region’ and ‘regional organization’ in this chapter as they are understood in the studies surveyed here. Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) and Security Community Theory (SCT) are reviewed as foundational to understanding security dynamics in regional orders. It should be noted that both theories focus on states as the main actors, and grant little autonomy or actor qualities to regional organizations. Nevertheless, they are potentially flexible in accommodating regional organizations as actors.

The concept of regional security complex (RSC) was developed by Barry Buzan to offer an appropriate level of analysis in security studies.<sup>6</sup> He defined a RSC as ‘a set of units whose major processes of securitization, desecuritization or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another.’<sup>7</sup> The world is divided into 11 RSCs with settled borders, so that each complex represents an independent security system. Security here is understood in a wide sense, as any issue posing existential threat to the state or other unit

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<sup>5</sup> Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*, 1998; Acharya and Johnston, *Crafting Cooperation*; Alex Warleigh-Lack, Nick Robinson, and Ben Rosamond, eds., *New Regionalism and the European Union: Dialogues, Comparisons and New Research Directions*, Routledge, Routledge/ECPR Studies in European Political Science, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 187-209.

<sup>7</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 201.

(society, territory, organization) and that calls on the region to adopt necessary measures to block a threatening development. It is through this notion of security that I evaluate the policies of the EU and ASEAN towards Russia and China in their respective regions. Both organizations see great powers as actors posing a threat to peaceful regional order, and that require necessary measures on the side of the organizations to prevent negative developments.

Buzan and Wæver consider regions to be the most fruitful level of analysis for understanding security dynamics. In *Regions and Powers*, they persuasively argued that the national level is not very informative as ‘no nation’s security is self-contained.’<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the global level is too abstract and diverse, meaning very little can be said at this level that will ‘reflect the real concerns in most countries.’<sup>9</sup> In contrast, ‘regional is the level where the extremes of national and global security interplay and where most actions occur.’<sup>10</sup> Hence, regions are seen as analytically useful ‘sub-systems’ in the wider world structure. Regions are still subordinate to global level dynamics or superpower penetration, but at the same time may have independent effects and shape security dynamics of their own.<sup>11</sup> Despite granting high explanatory value to regions, Buzan and Wæver denied them actor qualities, or agency. They make an exception only for the EU as a special case of a regional organization that may be defined as RSC and, at the same time, enjoys independent actorness. Buzan and Wæver categorized the EU as a great power, however, and not as a regional actor.

In my analytical framework, I make a distinction between *regions/regional security complexes* as an independent and most insightful level of analyses, and *regional organizations* as actors operating at this level and exercising independent impact on regional security dynamics together with other actors: great powers, superpowers, states, other regional organizations, non-state actors, etc. In this regard, Buzan and Wæver made an important distinction between superpowers, great powers and

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<sup>8</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 43.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 52.

regional powers in the international system in terms of their impact on regional security. Superpowers ‘exercise global political and military reach’<sup>12</sup> and are seen as superior to RSCs. Currently, only the US enjoys this status. Great powers do not possess the same level of capabilities, but are seen by others as having the potential to become superpowers. Great powers are not superior to a RSC. In fact, they may constitute an integral part of a RSC or they may also penetrate from the outside, in which case they are seen as producing global effects. Within this framework, Russia and China are considered great powers. This hierarchy of powers is somewhat similar to Katzenstein’s model of the US imperium supported by Germany and Japan as core states. However, in his analysis, regional development is fully determined by one superpower, the US, while Buzan and Wæver argue that regional politics may be determined by powers of any level (global, great or regional).

If understood solely through the interplay of powers at different levels, regions appear to be just smaller versions of the global system, and the nature of their security order to be driven by power politics. The independent effect of regions on security dynamics exists under what Buzan and Wæver called *the patterns of amity/enmity*. These patterns ‘are not generally imported from the system level but generated internally within the region by the mixture of history, politics and material conditions.’<sup>13</sup> They are durable, self-contained, path-dependent and ‘exist even if other actors did not impinge on it.’<sup>14</sup> As such, they ‘are allocated a historically derived reality of their own as the socially constructed dimensions of the structure.’<sup>15</sup> These regional patterns of friendships and hatreds, in addition to the distribution of power within the region, allowed authors to predict the patterns of regional conflict and cooperation across regional security complexes.

There are several problematic aspects in this approach to security dynamics. Firstly, as durable constructs, patterns of amity/enmity can account only for major shifts in regional security (e.g. war and peace), but they cannot capture smaller variations in cooperation and confrontation within

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 50.

regions. Yet, it is precisely these variations, and not the ‘major shifts’, that constitute the immediate reality of regions. Secondly, patterns of amity/enmity help to understand whether conflict or cooperation is the dominant feature of a regional complex. That is, ‘one particular role (enemy, rival, friend) dominates sufficiently to assign an overall social structure’<sup>16</sup> to the region. However, what about instances when cooperative and conflictual patterns develop simultaneously between the same actors? EU-Russia and ASEAN-China relations represent examples where conflicting and cooperative security patterns co-exist, and overlap at times, within the same issue area. Thirdly, and most importantly, Buzan and Wæver do not explain how these patterns emerge in the first place, and how and why they change. The authors do not go beyond noting that security patterns are generated by ‘a mixture of history, politics and material factors,’<sup>17</sup> which tells us literary nothing about *the actual processes* behind their creation and transformation. Applying this theory to explain the evolution of intersubjective security orders, particularly those between regional organizations and great powers, is thus highly problematic.

The revised concept of RSC was developed by Lake and Morgan in their regional orders theory (ROT), which also focused on patterns of regional security dynamics. In *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, Lake and Morgan used Buzan’s early version of RSCT to develop a theory of regional security orders. Similarly to Buzan, they argued that ‘the role [...] of global relations [has] shrunk in analytical and practical importance, [while] regional relations have grown,’<sup>18</sup> so that regions became ‘more important objects of study than ever before.’<sup>19</sup> Yet, contrary to Buzan’s understanding of a RSC as a closed system, Lake and Morgan conceptualized a RSC as an open system. Security interdependence as a central feature of a regional complex might not be locked within geographical borders. In fact, even powers outside the geographical borders of the region may be considered

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>18</sup> Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*, 6.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 7.

members of a particular security complex, due to security interconnections.<sup>20</sup> Their suggested example is that both Russia and the US are, and have always been, integral parts of Europe's security complex.<sup>21</sup>

My understanding of region-great power interaction is in line with this conceptualization of regional security order. I treat Russia and China as great powers that operate within their regional security complexes, together with the EU and ASEAN respectively. The patterns of security interdependence make them 'legitimate' to be considered as members of the respective RSCs. As potential superpowers, they inevitably raise security concerns from the EU and ASEAN because they produce what Lake and Morgan called 'security externalities', or a range of impacts that spill-over to neighboring states and may be seen as potential security challenges (political, military, economic, environmental).<sup>22</sup> It is through these externalities, as Lake and Morgan argued, that one can attribute the participation in a RSC. Hence, through this approach, Russia and China may be seen as members of Europe's and Southeast Asia's security complexes.

Lake and Morgan also introduced the regional aspect of security dynamics. Unlike Buzan and Wæver, who emphasised patterns of amity/enmity, Lake and Morgan focused on patterns of security management to explain developments in regional security complexes. The authors viewed patterns of regional security as a range of stages starting from the balance of power, moving to collective security, then pluralistic security community and, finally, political integration. Such a model explains variations in regional orders across space and time, and possibly predicts their development as regions move along the ladder.<sup>23</sup> Still, it cannot be seen as explanatory for my particular cases of the development of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction. First of all, the model explains only one dimension of security, namely conflict management. Secondly, an evolutionary approach can usefully explain the evolution of EU and ASEAN internal security dynamics, but not their relations with

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 48–49.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 32–33.

Russia and China. These relations, rather, represent a mixture and not a ladder of power-balancing, collective security and integration. Though Lake and Morgan admit that at times signs of balancing or concert of powers may be observed even within the EU and ASEAN,<sup>24</sup> it is an interchange and not the combination of approaches they are talking about. Thirdly, according to Lake and Morgan, the behavior of great powers is not regulated by regional order. Differently from Buzan and Wæver, for whom power penetration is inevitable, Lake and Morgan suggest that outside great powers will be ‘unlikely to penetrate in the region,’ unless there are some serious domestic or extra-regional interests to it.<sup>25</sup> If great powers are embedded in an RSC they will experience the same effect of externalities as non-great powers, but their response will depend upon global level, rather than region level, conditions. That is, in a bipolar international system, they will be more constrained to act, but in unipolar or multipolar systems, penetration is more likely.<sup>26</sup> Hence, though regional orders can be successful in managing security within their borders, they do not seem to affect great powers, whose behavior, just as Buzan and Wæver claimed, is driven by global level conditions.

Both RSCT and ROT offer a neorealist understanding of the interaction between regions/regional organizations and great powers. Contrary to what the authors have claimed, RSCs and regional orders still remain mini-versions of global order, where region-level features are admitted, but have little independent effect of their own. At best, regional patterns may impact the direction of great power penetration in a regional security complex, but great powers themselves remain immune to regional impacts. Regional organizations are not analyzed as actors producing independent external effects. The only exception Buzan and Wæver make is for the EU, whose external impact is similar to great power influence. Lake and Morgan consider ROs are interstate entities at superior stages of regional order development (EU has reached the integration stage, and ASEAN moving closer to it but with limited autonomous actorhood). Both theories fail to conceptualize processes of regional transformation or change, and focus only on structures/patterns

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 37–39.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 62.

guiding regional security dynamics. Greater credit to *regional processes* in shaping security dynamics is granted by security community theory, which is discussed in the next section.

## **1.2. Security Community Theory: Upgrading Regional Impact**

If RSCT and ROT draw their explanation of regional security dynamics from power politics, security community theory (SCT) provides an alternative sociological explanation of relations between states. Grouped in integrated communities, states create shared understandings, values and collective identity, which eventually leads to stable order and, even, stable peace.<sup>27</sup> The SCT focus on interaction, and its emphasis on the role of institutions make it potentially capable of explaining the changing intersubjective environment of RO-GP interaction.

In *Security Communities* (1998), Adler and Barnett offered a three-tiered framework to explain the emergence of security communities across the globe, based on: 1) structural factors (power and knowledge); 2) process factors (transactions, organizations and social learning) and 3) necessary conditions of peaceful change (trust, collective identity).<sup>28</sup> Those are, however, poorly specified, and it is unclear how these ‘tiers’ could be operationalized for empirical investigation. For example, Adler and Barnett distinguish transactions (or interaction), institutions and social learning as distinct processes of security community development. At the same time, they argue that social learning is facilitated by transactions and institutions, so it is unclear how the three mechanisms can really be separated. As an outcome, the security community concept, as Ditrych has rightly noted, turned into a ‘fetish’ or ‘unstable signifier’ that absorbs ‘whatever meaning both the author and the reader will impose on it.’<sup>29</sup> This is also evident from the case studies discussed in the book. In *Security Communities*, the concept is applied inconsistently and at times superficially, that is the authors claim

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<sup>27</sup> Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*, 3.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>29</sup> Ondrej Ditrych, “Security Community: A Future for a Troubled Concept?,” *International Relations* 28, no. 3 (2014): 355, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117814545952>.

the existence of security community or its features based on different pieces drawn from the framework.

This being said, there are still some aspects of SCT that may be relevant to my focus on RO-GP interaction. Firstly, unlike the previously discussed theories, SCT highlights the transformative impact of transactions or interaction that happen in a region that facilitates the process of social learning, and eventually lead to the creation of mutual trust and collective identity. A focus on the *interaction dynamics* and shared values/identity is what distinguishes the security community from the previously discussed RSCs and regional orders. Those are constructed through security practices that exist regardless of whether participants identify themselves as a group or a region. Security communities, in contrast, exist because ‘security is becoming the condition and the quality’ that ‘determines who is in and who is out.’<sup>30</sup> Intersubjective understandings of actors, and their identification with the group, are the defining feature of these communities. If in RSCs interaction patterns are used only to detect measures of regional complexes, in SCT they receive the main explanatory power. Interaction processes lead to the peaceful transformation of states’ identity and policies towards collective identity and establishment of mutual trust. This is not to say that states abandon interest-based behavior; competition and rivalry are still present in security communities. However, states refrain from the use of violence to settle their disputes.<sup>31</sup> If in RSCs or regional orders the constraints to violence were power balances, here the explanation lies in ideational and normative constraints.

The relationship between ROs and GPs could also be theorized similarly to the security community development process: as an evolution or failure to establish particular intersubjective understandings about the nature of regional security. The problem, however, lies in the fact that security community building is a unidirectional model of regional transformations. It can only account for evolutionary transformations of birth, growth and maturity of security communities.

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<sup>30</sup> Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*, 4.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

Moreover, these changes are seen as path-dependent, and even irreversible, ‘once a particular path is chosen it precludes others’ even more efficient ones.<sup>32</sup> It makes SCT somewhat deterministic and inflexible in being able explain alternative developments or reversed transformation in regional orders (e.g. from security community back to the balance of power). Although Adler and Barnett admit the possibility of disintegration of security communities,<sup>33</sup> they do not investigate this assumption any further. For example, when the Gulf Cooperation Council is analyzed as a case of ‘failed’ security community-building, the authors themselves subscribed to the realist reading of the case and applied SCT only to explain the factors that prevented regional transformation towards peace.<sup>34</sup> This limitation of SCT was also rightly criticized by Acharya, who argued that the theory of regional security transformation should be able to explain both cooperative and conflictual patters in security communities.<sup>35</sup> As a contribution to the framework Acharya theorized the conditions under which security communities can be deconstructed,<sup>36</sup> yet he himself, as Ditych correctly observed, did not empirically investigate the process of regional disintegration.<sup>37</sup>

Another important aspect of SCT is that international institutions and organizations are considered as part of the process of regional transformations, unlike in RSC theories. Social institutions (defined as social practices with easily recognized roles and rules governing the interaction), as well as formal organizations (material entities possessing physical locations, equipment’s and budgets),<sup>38</sup> impact security community formation through the development of trust and shared identity by establishing norms of behavior, monitoring mechanisms and sanctions, by creating places for socialization, and by ‘engineering’ the very conditions that assist community

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Barnett and F. Gregory Gause III, “Caravans in Opposite Directions: Society, State, and the Development of Community in the Gulf Cooperation Council,” in *Security Communities*, ed. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 161–97.

<sup>35</sup> Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2001), 36.

<sup>36</sup> Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia*, 36–37.

<sup>37</sup> Ditych, “Security Community,” 360.

<sup>38</sup> Barnett and Gause, “Caravans in Opposite Directions,” 41.

development. By doing so, they facilitate the process of social learning – ‘the process of redefinition and reinterpretation of reality’ - that shapes what political actors consider ‘real, possible and desirable.’<sup>39</sup> It is importantly observed that formal organizations are not only ‘sites of interaction but actors in their own right,’ whose officials become ‘new missionaries’ that wish to expand the values of their own community.<sup>40</sup>

However, by making the useful distinction between social and formal institutions, Adler and Barnett, as well as other contributors to the volume, focused only on the later, so the impact of social structures on the processes of community-building is omitted. Furthermore, even though they recognize the ‘actorness’ of regional organizations, they conceive of it as the expansion of the formal institutional environment that supports norm diffusion through elite socialization. For example, Adler theorized NATO’s expansion to Central and Eastern Europe through the socialization of local elites into the practices of security community under the institutionalized framework of Partnerships for Peace.<sup>41</sup> Thus, although the pro-activeness of organizations in promoting certain values is recognized, they are still analyzed as ‘sites of interaction’ rather than political actors in their own right. It is this particular feature of organizations, however, that is in focus of my research. As security communities, the EU and ASEAN aim at expanding their values beyond their borders. They socialize neighboring states, including great powers, into their vision of social reality a great deal more through social institutions than through the expansion of formal organizational structure. Organizations as collective actors are the drivers of this process, not merely their elites.

The power aspect is of particular importance in Adler and Barnett’s model as a condition for security community expansion. They argued that power always sits in the back of the socialization processes. It is vital, therefore, that states with superior material power and legitimacy became members of the security community, because their material and moral authority will ensure the

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<sup>39</sup> Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*, 43.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 420.

<sup>41</sup> Emanuel Adler, “The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO’s Post—Cold War Transformation,” *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 2 (June 1, 2008): 195–230, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066108089241>.

internalization of norms and practices by other actors. Hence, communication exchange must happen ‘in the context of power asymmetries’ in order to be successful.<sup>42</sup> The power claim of SCT is yet another dimension where the EU-Russia and ASEAN-China cases offer counterevidence. In the EU-Russia case, the EU collectively has material leverage over Russia. It is composed of the most advanced economies and developed democracies in the world that, according to SCT, should ensure structural material leverage of the EU over Russia and thus should ensure the attractiveness of EU norms. Instead, we observe the EU’s continuous failure to adequately exercise its political influence over Russia and socialize it into the desired vision of social reality. In the ASEAN-China case, the material leverage belongs to China, while ASEAN is composed of relatively weak, mostly post-colonial states, which should not, according to SCT, enforce the attractiveness of its behavioral norms. However, ASEAN demonstrated visible success in getting China and other great powers to subscribe to its normative paradigm and restraining from assertive behavior during 2002-2010. Hence, without abandoning the importance of power, greater credit should be granted to sociological explanation in understanding of region-external power relations, and more attention should be paid to the quality of their interaction and the mechanisms of socialization, than to power distribution. A discussion of specific socialization mechanisms is offered in the following section.

### **1.3. Socialization as a Process of Regional Transformations**

The socialization theory reviewed here focuses on specific mechanisms through which actors could encourage their counterparts to internalize external rules and norms. Socialization theory draws predominantly on the case of the EU and its ability to enforce ‘states and state agents [...] to internalize new roles or group-community norms.’<sup>43</sup> The outcome of socialization is theorized as ‘sustained compliance based on the internalizations of these new rules and norms.’<sup>44</sup> This implies that socializers switch from the logic of consequences to the logic of appropriateness in their behavior.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 43–45.

<sup>43</sup> Checkel, “International Institutions and Socialization in Europe,” 802.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 804.

Following the logic of appropriateness can happen in two ways: agents either consciously adopt a particular role that is appropriate and accepted in a given social context (Type I internalization), or go beyond role playing and internalize the interests and identity of the community they wish to belong to (Type II internalization).<sup>45</sup> Socialization theory introduces three distinct mechanisms through which internalization of norms may occur: strategic calculation, role playing, and normative suasion.

*Strategic calculation* is based on the logic of rationality, whereby actors' behavior is subject to material and social incentives and rewards. Actors' calculative behavior is not a part of the socialization process per se, but can translate into sustained compliance and preference change at a later stage, due to various 'cognitive and institutional lock-in effects.'<sup>46</sup> Key to the success of this process is political conditionality. However, as Checkel himself admits, this perspective is ontologically limited as it is individualistic and theorizes the basic properties of actors as given. Hence, it is ill-equipped to account for preference change.<sup>47</sup> *Role playing* is another process of socialization that already marks the shift from the logic of consequences to the logic of appropriateness, as it involves non-calculative behavior of actors.<sup>48</sup> Role playing happens with the support of organizations as sites of interaction, where individuals' behavior acquires certain degree of 'automaticity', which implies that actors adopt roles that are appropriate for particular setting.<sup>49</sup> Hence, agents comply with the community norms in a non-reflective manner, yet there is no identity or preference change in this case. The incentive for such behavior is the fact that role playing is socially easier as opposed to strategic calculation at any point of time.<sup>50</sup> *Normative suasion* is the process whereby 'agents present arguments and try to persuade and convince each other; [so] their interests and preferences are subject to redefinition.'<sup>51</sup> The behavior of actors is strongly based on the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 809.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 810.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 811.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 812.

logic of appropriateness, and they actively and reflectively internalize community norms, which represents Type II internalization.

The three mechanisms of socialization offered by Checkel provide very useful insights into the micro-processes of socialization at the level of individuals, and specify the conditions for each type of behavior. They thus offer a much more detailed account of identity transformation process than security community theory. Yet, its micro-level focus makes the applicability of the framework beyond very narrow scope-conditions problematic. All three mechanisms are happening in the formal institutionalized context of regional organizations. Moreover, for each mechanism, Checkel identified several necessary conditions for socialization to succeed. Hence, their applicability beyond this very narrow context is highly problematic. An attempt to adopt the framework at the international level was made by Alexandra Gheciu in *'Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the New Europe.'* She successfully used socialization theory to explain how NATO encouraged the Czech Republic and Romania to internalize 'Western ways of thinking and acting.'<sup>52</sup> Yet, she also specified a number of conditions that ensured positive socialization outcomes: the partners recognized their roles as 'teachers' and 'students'; the Czech Republic and Romania identified themselves with the Western community, which enhanced their trust in NATO as the main security institution of their community; systematic interaction between teachers and students supported the internalization of new norms. These conditions yet again restrain the applicability of socialization theory to RO-GP interaction. Gheciu's focus on the case of NATO-Eastern Europe relations fulfills the requirements of 'the most likely case', where initial conditions supported successful socialization. Contrary to that, EU-Russia and ASEAN-China relations represent the 'most difficult cases' for socialization theory. The EU and ASEAN as socializers may guide the establishment of shared context of interaction with Russia and China as socializers. However, unlike in the case of NATO in Central Europe, they would need to cope with the reluctance, rather than willingness, of norm internalization on the side of great powers.

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<sup>52</sup> Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization?," 976.

A useful insight of Gheciu's framework is her operationalization of socialization as identity change. She conceptualizes the change in national identity as 'the emergence new conception of the relationship between the national self and the outside world (such as rearticulating of the self's particular position – identification with, similarly to, or difference from, even opposition to – various international other and purpose of self in the context of interaction with those different others).'<sup>53</sup> This definition can be utilized to evaluate the socializing effect of RO-GP interaction. The extent to which organizations are able to construct a favorable context of interaction and impact the identity and position of great power in relation to regional order may be used as an indicator of their success as 'agents of socialization.'

A more relevant socialization framework to my cases was offered by Cameron G. Thies, who theorized mechanisms of socialization at the international level that lead to the construction of identity at the international level.<sup>54</sup> This framework has several advantages compared to Checkel's approach to socialization. It addresses the socializations of states in the international system, and not individuals. It theorizes mechanisms that are general enough to be found 'in all sorts of environmental settings'<sup>55</sup> and not only under very specific scope conditions. Although Thies's model is state-centered, any type of actor could potentially be accommodated into it. This makes the framework applicable to the interaction between ROs and GPs in regional order.

Thies distinguished between 'social proof heuristic' and dissonance reduction as two mechanisms through which states in the international system may socialize novices (new states) to adopt appropriate roles in the international system.<sup>56</sup> Unlike Checkel's socialization mechanisms, which may lead to the cognitive changes at the level of identity, Thies's mechanisms 'primarily affect the external behavior of states with some requisite adjustments in internal organization.'<sup>57</sup> A social

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 977.

<sup>54</sup> Cameron G. Thies, "A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries," *Political Psychology* 22, no. 4 (December 2001): 693–725; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*.

<sup>55</sup> Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 18.

<sup>56</sup> Thies, "A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries;" Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*.

<sup>57</sup> Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 18.

proof heuristic is that of imitation or modeling, when the question is not about the appropriateness of the role to be adopted but ‘how to properly enact this role in conformity with other’s expectations.’<sup>58</sup> A predominance of this mechanism should result in a ‘fairly stable system, where units engage in its reproduction,’ while deviations are permissible only in short-run.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast, a dissonance reduction mechanism is observed when actors adopt roles that are considered inappropriate by other actors in the system. Dissonance, or discomfort created in this case, may lead to a rejection of the chosen role by the audience of stares, whereby the claiming state might be forced to revise the role, or even abandon it altogether. A dissonance reduction mechanism is operational in a system where there is a potential disagreement over the appropriate choice of a role, so that states engage in a role bargaining process to locate suitable roles (discussed in a greater detail in Chapter 2). Importantly, dissonance reduction allows conceiving purely realist strategies (such as balancing) as attempts at socialization. For example, states may apply a balancing strategy to prevent the enactment of a non-sanctioned role by a claiming state.<sup>60</sup>

Thies’s framework provides the most useful avenue to analyze the RO-GP interaction process. In particular, socialization through dissonance reduction could be a mechanism to explain the security dynamics of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction in regional order. Yet Thies’s framework is underdeveloped in terms of explaining the implications that this process may have on intersubjective regional order. Thies’s main interest is in explaining how and why states adopt particular roles in the system, and how they get successfully socialized in the ‘club of nations.’ If applied to explain transformation in regional order, the framework would only be indicative of the processes that lead states to adopt or abandon particular roles. My interest goes further than that, as I aim to understand how particular security patterns (conflictual or cooperative) are produced in this process as well as whether a particular regional security order could be established and sustained as an outcome. In

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 20.

Chapter 2, I advance Thies's socialization model to develop the theoretical framework that addresses these issues.

Overall, socialization theory offers useful insights into the mechanisms through which regional actors could be socialized into particular vision of regional order. The framework offered by Checkel, however, is too contextualized to be applied to the case of RO-GP interaction, while Thies's model is strongly focused on the roles that actors adopt, rather than on the security patterns and intersubjective structures that emerge as a result of this process. In the rest of this chapter, I address attempts at middle-range theorizing of regional security orders that draw on the role of agency and combine power-driven explanations and sociological constructivist accounts for explaining regional security developments.

#### **1.4. Bridging 'Balance of Power' and 'Security Community': the Role of Agency**

The pragmatic approach to understanding region-great power interaction should definitely consider both neorealist power-driven explanations and constructivist social and ideational impacts, rather than favoring one against the other. In this regard, an interesting account of horizontal relations between regions and great powers was offered by Acharya in *'The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics'*, which argues that 'power matters, but local responses to power matter even more in the construction of regional orders.'<sup>61</sup> The analytical framework offered by Acharya explains interaction between neorealist great power politics and regional responsive contribution to the construction of order in a way that is similar to Thies's socialization mechanisms. Acharya draws on his earlier findings on regional cooperation to argue that the distribution of power or great power presence is not a key factor for regional peace and security, or for the construction of particular regional order type.<sup>62</sup> Rather, 'regionalisms by weaker states [may] challenge the dominance of great powers and /or socialize them through norm setting'.<sup>63</sup> His typology of regional responses to power detects exclusion,

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<sup>61</sup> Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics," 630.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 640.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 642.

resistance or binding (socializing) strategies that regions may adopt to both internal and external powers. Interestingly, these strategies are often used simultaneously. For example, he argued that ASEAN countries resist Chinese influence in a number of issues, at the same time ASEAN is binding China through various institutional frameworks.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, the EU clearly resists Russia's participation in the Eastern Partnership framework negotiations; at the same time, the organization still attempt to socialize Russia through various conditional strategic partnerships.

Unlike previously discussed theories, Acharya's framework gives greater autonomy and significance to regional organizations as producing external influences of their own. It also encourages a more complex understanding of regional security dynamics as a combination of balancing and socialization. Acharya does not, however, go beyond describing possible regional responses to external powers, without explaining how these strategies or their combinations actually work, what outcomes they produce and how they contribute to the development of a particular regional order.

A more advanced framework for understanding regional security mechanisms was developed by Adler and Greve, who theorized the role of overlapping security practices for generating particular security outcomes.<sup>65</sup> They rightly pointed to the fact that types of security orders are often treated by academics as mutually exclusive 'ideal types' or, at best, viewed as a number of evolutionary stages. Contrary to that mainstream perspective, they claim that the systems of security governance in fact 'often coexist and overlap' and that it is 'theoretically and empirically promising to make this overlap a key research subject *in its own right*'<sup>66</sup> and study its impact and consequences.

The authors distinguished between four different types of overlap: temporal, functional, spatial and relational. Examples of each could be found in the EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction. For instance, ASEAN responses to China can be considered a functional overlap, when balancing and

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 646–47.

<sup>65</sup> Adler and Greve, "When Security Community Meets Balance of Power."

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 60.

socializing strategies are applied simultaneously.<sup>67</sup> In addition to the types offered by Adler and Greve, the overlap of security governance between the ROs and GPs could be observed between the levels of political interaction. Namely, Russia and China simultaneously deal with the regional organization as collective actors and also have parallel relations with member states, often around the very same patterns of cooperation. For instance, the EU tries to frame energy dialogue with Russia as a collective actor, while at the same time most of its Member States maintain individual energy relations with Russia. The same applies to the ASEAN-China South China Sea dialogue. ASEAN operates as an organization at a regional level, while individual members hold separate dialogue with China on the issue. This might be seen as undermining the integrity and coherence of ROs as political actors, but such an overlap might not necessarily be the sign of organizational weakness. If individual states do not act contrary to an organization's politics, it might be seen as another layer of cooperation and actually reinforce the position of the organization as a whole.

The wide existence of overlaps, and their impact on regional security outcomes, further proves the point that actual security mechanisms, rather than deductively-created concepts, should be in focus when studying regional security dynamics. However, the reviewed studies rather set a framework for further research, than provide actual explanations of the impact of overlap on regional security outcomes. While documenting the instances of overlap, neither Acharya nor Adler and Greve theorized why and how these overlaps emerge, and what implications they have for the security dynamics in the region.

Both studies demonstrate that there are attempts of middle-range theorizing to bring together neo-realist power explanations and constructivist sociological accounts of regional security dynamics. Another stream of middle-range theories highlights the role of particular actors, rather than structure or interaction processes on regional security dynamics. In the rest of this section, I review those studies that specifically discuss the role of regional organizations and/or regional great powers in structuring security orders.

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<sup>67</sup> Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics."

The role of regional organizations in regional order-building is addressed in the literature on regional actorness. Differently from SCT or socialization theory, where organizations are considered as ‘sites of interaction’ or processes facilitating social learning, a regional actorness approach grants organizations independent agency, that is, the ability to ‘to act purposefully and to shape outcomes in the external world.’<sup>68</sup> Importantly, the EU and ASEAN are seen under this approach as organizations with the highest level of actorness that pro-actively engage in region-building beyond their borders as autonomous political actors.<sup>69</sup> However, as I demonstrate below, the nature of regional organizations and their capacity for agency are highly debated between IR scholars, which has resulted in conceptual disagreements and difficulties to derive a coherent research program. The main research focus of this approach was placed on explaining the evolution of organizations as actors and the effectiveness of their strategies to exercise external impact. These studies are heavily case-driven and, therefore, can offer very few generalizable theoretical claims. In order to overcome these limitations, the main focus should be placed on the behavioral notion of actorness, rather than on the qualities of the actor. This would take us away from case-specific theorizing, and open up a possibility to study the impact of diverse organizations across regions.

Disagreements over the nature of regional organizations as actors are rooted in wider IR debate on actorness: ‘How do we recognize an actor in the system?’<sup>70</sup> The terms ‘actor’ and ‘unit of the political system’ are often seen as synonyms,<sup>71</sup> and for a long time nation-states have been considered the only relevant units of analysis. State-centered IR theories give little credit to organizations as autonomous political actors, and usually see them as subordinate to state interests and agendas.

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<sup>68</sup> Hettne, “Regional Actorship and Regional Agency,” 2.

<sup>69</sup> Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*; Telò, *European Union and New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Global Governance in a Post-Hegemonic Era*; Björn Hettne, “The European Union as an Emerging Global Actor,” in *The European Union and Global Governance: A Handbook*, ed. Jens-Uwe Wunderlich and David J. Bailey (London: Routledge, 2011); Attila Ágh, “Global Governance and Integrative Balancing: EU Efforts to Respond to the Global Challenge: Global Governance and Integrative Balancing,” *Global Policy* 3, no. 2 (May 2012): 145–53; Stubbs, “The ASEAN Alternative?”; Simon Tay, “Growing an ASEAN Voice?: A Common Platform in Global and Regional Governance,” *ERIA Discussion Paper Series*, no. 16 (September 2013), <http://www.eria.org/ERIA-DP-2013-16.pdf>; Catherine Jones, “Great Powers, ASEAN, and Security: Reason for Optimism?,” *The Pacific Review* 28, no. 2 (March 15, 2015): 259–80.

<sup>70</sup> Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, 15.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

Greater autonomy is granted to organizations under the social constructivist frameworks, where organizations and institutions more broadly have the power to shape preferences and policies of member states creating particular identity or self-perception of an actor.<sup>72</sup> Yet, organizations themselves still lack independent actorhood. Security community and socialization theories, reviewed earlier in this chapter, demonstrate this approach to organizations very well.

The lack of agreement about the nature of regional organizations as actors in the international system is also supported by their significant diversity. Unlike states, which can be considered 'like units', regional organizations are hardly ever designed in a similar way and each and any of them can be considered a '*sui generis*' actor. Organizations vary significantly in terms of their institutional design, ranging from heavily institutionalized supranational entities (e.g. the EU) to loosely interconnected forums of purely intergovernmental nature (e.g. East Asia Summit). The possession of legal personality also does not provide an accurate reflection of the power or impact of the organization. Only a few regional organizations explicitly state the possession of legal personality in their founding documents. At the same time, a number of groupings like the G20 are very active in global politics, without having any legal founding document. Furthermore, even within one organization, actorhood may vary across issues and time. The EU, for instance, can be considered the most powerful actor in those issues where it has full competence from the Member States and lack actorhood, where the competence is not granted. Bretherton and Vogler described this feature of organizations as 'multi-faceted actor[hood]'.<sup>73</sup> In addition, approaching actorhood from a purely legal perspective reduces the impact of regional organizations to a particular legal body (e.g. the European Commission or ASEAN Secretariat) and prevents assessment of the all-embracing impact of the organization in external affairs.<sup>74</sup>

The most significant limitation of the literature on regional actorhood is that scholars largely remain focused on the nature of ROs as actors, while research on their actual behavior and external

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<sup>72</sup> Wunderlich, "The EU an Actor *Sui Generis*?" 656.

<sup>73</sup> Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, 31.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

impacts rarely goes beyond single case studies. The responsibility for favoring this specific focus can be granted to EU studies. Scholars, who worked on developing the concept and criteria of regional actorness, aimed to explain the nature of the EU as political actor and draw conclusions about its external power and influence, relying essentially on its internal features.<sup>75</sup> Drawing on the case of the EU, Bretherton and Vogler defined regional actorness as the ability to determine priorities and formulate policies (in terms of unity and coherence) and the ability to utilize policy instruments (political, economic, military means of impact).<sup>76</sup> Wunderlich considered self-perception of actorness/identity, recognition and presence as well as institutional development as explanatory factors for successful actorness.<sup>77</sup> Jupille and Caporaso offered four criteria of regional actorness: recognition, autonomy, coherence and authority.<sup>78</sup> Viewed from this perspective, both the EU and ASEAN are full-pledged regional actors according to the four criteria: 1) they are recognized as collective actors by third parties; 2) both organizations have legal personality and authority from their member states to conduct foreign policy; 3) the EU and ASEAN are relatively autonomous actors with a distinctive institutional apparatus to be considered ‘corporate actors’;<sup>79</sup> 4) both organizations are capable to ensure at least a minimum degree of cohesion when shaping external outcomes.

The obsession with capabilities for actorness, however, contributed to broad agreement among academics that regional organizations can be effective only if they developed actor qualities to a significant degree. For instance, the EU is considered to be a powerful regional, and even global, actor based on the capabilities it has developed as a regional organization.<sup>80</sup> The failures of the EU

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<sup>75</sup> Joseph Jupille and James A. Caporaso, “States, Agency, and Rules: The European Union in Global Environmental Politics,” in *The European Union in the World Community*, ed. Carolyn Rhodes (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 213–30; Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*; Hettne, “The European Union as an Emerging Global Actor”; Wunderlich, “The EU an Actor Sui Generis?.”

<sup>76</sup> Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, 38.

<sup>77</sup> Wunderlich, “The EU an Actor Sui Generis?.”

<sup>78</sup> Jupille and Caporaso, “States, Agency, and Rules: The European Union in Global Environmental Politics,” 214–20.

<sup>79</sup> According to Jupille and Caporaso, ‘corporate’ rather than ‘collective’ entity has or at least can have causal importance that is more than the sum of its constituent parts (Jupille and Caporaso, “States, Agency, and Rules,” 217).

<sup>80</sup> Fredrik Söderbaum, Patrik StÅlgren, and Luk Van Langenhove, “The EU as a Global Actor and the Dynamics of Interregionalism: A Comparative Analysis,” *Journal of European Integration* 27, no. 3 (September 1, 2005): 365–80; Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*; Mario Telò, *The European Union and Global*

actorness were likewise attributed to the internal restraining factors (e.g. lack of coherence, or lack of competences).<sup>81</sup> In contrast, ASEAN is often perceived as weak and ineffective, given that its bureaucracy is less advanced than that of the EU.<sup>82</sup> However, while qualitative features of regional organizations may help to evaluate their *capacity* to shape external outcomes, they tell us almost nothing as to how actorness is *actually exercised* regionally and globally and, more importantly, what security outcomes ROs produce as actors. It is indeed true that at certain points, the lack of unity between member states, or the absence of particular legal enforcement mechanisms, may prevent the organization from formulating an effective foreign policy. It does not, however, explain why foreign policies that have met with approval from all member states (coherence), substantial material, institutional and normative resources at their disposal (autonomy, authority) fail to deliver the desired outcome in the EU–Russia case, and why the lack of the same capabilities does not prevent ASEAN from maintaining a positive trend in engaging China. It means that actorness cannot be equated with influence, and that a more sophisticated approach is needed to evaluate ROs’ effectiveness as autonomous political actors.

Considering the variety of perspectives on the nature of regions and regional organizations, and their diversity, it is a challenging task indeed to construct an ‘all inclusive’ theory of regional actorness. In order to incorporate the existing divergences, one needs to conceive of regional actorness as a process rather than a quality. One such conceptualization could be found in Hettne and Söderbaum, who coined the term ‘regionness’, understood as ‘a process whereby a geographical area is transformed from a passive object to an active subject, capable of articulating the transnational interests of the emerging region.’<sup>83</sup> The capability of being an ‘active subject’ identifies the point when the region or regional organizations becomes an autonomous actor. This definition is consistent

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*Governance*; Hettne, “The European Union as an Emerging Global Actor”; Simon Duke, *Europe as a Stronger Global Actor: Challenges and Strategic Responses* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

<sup>81</sup> Articles in the special issue of *International Relations* 27 no. 3 (September 2013) entitled ‘EU External Policy at the Crossroads: The challenge of Actorness and Effectiveness’ offered a number of relevant case studies.

<sup>82</sup> Jones and Smith, “Making Process, Not Progress”; Narine, “ASEAN in the Twenty-First Century”; Wunderlich, “The EU an Actor Sui Generis?”

<sup>83</sup> Hettne and Söderbaum, “Theorizing the Rise of Regionness,” 461.

with the behavioral notion of actorness that conceptualizes an actor as ‘an entity that is capable of formulating purpose and making decisions, and thus engaging in some form of purposive action.’<sup>84</sup> Behavioral conceptualization of actorness resolves the ‘sui generis’ problem and takes the research focus away from capabilities, placing it on the external outcomes of actorness. Under this approach, regional organizations are conceptualized as ‘actors by doing’ rather than ‘actors by being.’ This, in turn, enables to evaluate the implications their policies have on regional security order. It is through this notion of actorness that the EU’s and ASEAN’s role in shaping regional transformations is understood in the scope of this dissertation.

A number of studies have specifically focused on the impact of regional powers on the nature of security order. Unlike structural theories of regional security dynamics (RSCT, ROT), which focus on the distribution of power and balancing as well as great power politics to explain regional security outcomes, several studies examined the strategies that regional (great) powers employ to shape the nature of security order. Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll offered their contribution to RSCT, arguing that in addition to structural distribution of power, regional power roles and orientations should be considered to understand the patterns of regional security dynamics. They identified three possible roles that regional powers may adopt: regional leader, protector or custodian. These roles represent ‘a set of behaviors crucial for the development and maintenance of regional security order’.<sup>85</sup> Accordingly, the failure to perform these roles results in the instability or transformation of regional security order. Regional power orientations determine how roles are likely to be expressed in attempts to achieve particular order type.<sup>86</sup> These orientations reflect the preferences of regional powers as to maintaining or changing the status quo, pursuing unilateral or multilateral policies and a preference for pro-active or reactive role playing. As to orientations, the authors offer examples and hypothesis about how they may shape regional security dynamics, but essentially leave those issues to future research.

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<sup>84</sup> Bretherton and Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, 20.

<sup>85</sup> Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll, “Regional Powers and Security,” 743.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 744.

Similarly, Destradi theorized ‘ideal-type’ strategies that regional powers may pursue: empire, hegemony, leadership.<sup>87</sup> The choice of a strategy determines a range of regional security outcomes: cooperative or assertive self-representation of regional power, preference for military or socializing strategies, level of legitimation from secondary states and their responsive policies (resistance or followership). Destradi argued that a leadership strategy leads to a cooperative regional order, while an empire strategy results in a conflictual one.<sup>88</sup> Responsive regional strategies were analyzed by Flemmes and Wojczewski, who focused on the motivations for secondary states to accept or reject the leadership claims of regional powers. These motivations, according to the authors, are shaped by the distribution of power in the region, the ability of regional powers to project ideational resources, the respective national interests of regional leaders and secondary states and the impact of external actors.<sup>89</sup> A somewhat similar framework was offered by Garzón Pereira, who emphasized interactive dynamics between regional hegemon and secondary states over policy convergence, transfer of material resources and institutional structure of regional order that determine the type of hierarchical security order being (re)produced.<sup>90</sup>

Each of these studies offered a well-operationalized theoretical framework to guide empirical analyses, yet none actually tested their assumptions empirically. The major limitation of these approaches is that they tell us a great deal about the strategies that various actors may adopt in the region, but very little about the processes of regional security dynamics, or the direction of regional transformations, thereby limiting their explanatory power.

## **1.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that existing theories of regional order, and theories focusing on security mechanisms, have a number of limitations that make them ill-equipped to explain the

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<sup>87</sup> Destradi, “Regional Powers and Their Strategies.”

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 926–27.

<sup>89</sup> Daniel Flesmes and Thorsten Wojczewski, “Contested Leadership in Comparative Perspective: Power Strategies in South Asia and South America,” *Asian Journal of Latin American Studies* 24, no. 1 (2011): 1–27.

<sup>90</sup> Garzón Pereira, “Hierarchical Regional Orders.”

processes of regional security transformations and, specifically, the dynamics of RO-GP interaction. I argued that regional security complex theories and security community theory are heavily focused on structural factors. They can explain major shifts in regional order (e.g. the shift from balance of power to security community), but are unable to account for more immediate security dynamics within particular order types, or the deviation of security mechanisms from the existing structure. In addition, they cannot explain multiple outcomes or alternative pathways in the process of regional order transformation. These theories consider the evolutionary development of regional orders from anarchy to stable peace, or theorize the failure of regions to follow this pattern. In the real world, however, regional order building rarely follows a linear path of development. Rather regional security orders represent dynamic systems that are constantly in motion and where conflictual and cooperative security patterns overlap.

The literature on regional actorness and regional powers provides only a limited understanding of regional security dynamics that is linked to the policies or strategies of particular actors. Yet, actor-focused theories do not explain how these policies may shape the nature of regional security transformations over time, or how they produce sustained order outcomes. Process-driven theories of security order transformation, such as the socialization approach, are strongly context-specific, which makes their applicability beyond the narrow scope conditions problematic. More general mechanisms of socialization offered by Thies may be used to account for regional security interaction. Yet Thies's socialization framework focuses primarily on the outcomes of the role location for actors, and he does not develop it further to explain the intersubjective security environment between actors generated by these outcomes.

All the existing theories conceptualize regional order as a particular arrangement, a goal or a stage, towards which regions should develop. In other words, order is understood in a static manner as a structural or socially-constructed reality. Yet, in the actual world, order seems to be a temporary formation, whereas security dynamics constitute the permanent feature of regional social reality. In

this regard, even the durability of particular social order could be understood in terms of regional security processes reproducing the same outcome.

In order to explain the patterns of regional order transformation and the dynamics of RO-GP interaction, a middle-range theory that incorporates the regional context, but also allows for agency impact, needs to be developed. This theory should be capable of explaining both the *processes* behind the development of and changes in regional order, as well as a variety of *outcomes* (regional order types). This theory should also be able to accommodate overlapping security mechanisms (both conflict and cooperation), and should be flexible enough to incorporate state and non-state actors. The framework that brings together all the above requirements can be developed on the basis of role theory. As I argue in the next chapter, role theory allows the impact of agency and structure on the patterns of regional security dynamics to be incorporated. It enables me to theorize both the processes of regional change, as well as their outcomes, in a non-deterministic way that is without necessarily subscribing to the evolutionary pattern. Role theory is also sufficiently flexible to incorporate actors of various kinds, and to explain their socializing impact on each other. I take Thies's role location approach as a starting point to develop a theory of regional security dynamics that enables me to account for the developments of particular intersubjective security orders between ROs and GPs over time, as well as to explain specific shifts and deviations in their security patterns from the nature of security order.

## CHAPTER 2: A ROLE THEORY APPROACH TO REGIONAL SECURITY DYNAMICS

The previous chapter discussed the limitations of existing theories to explain regional transformations into conflictual or cooperative security environments. I argued that in order to understand regional security dynamics, a new theory needs to be developed that: 1) incorporates both the structural context *and* actors' impact on the direction of regional transformations; 2) is capable to capture the multidirectional development of security patterns (conflictual and cooperative trends) and the actual regional order outcomes; 3) is applicable to any social actors, including ROs and GPs, and can explain their socializing impact on other actors, and on each other, in the process of order-building.

This chapter develops such a framework on the basis of role theory, as it meets all the criteria summarized above. I use the role location approach developed by Cameron Thies as a starting point in constructing a theory of regional security dynamics to explain RO-GP interaction. Thies's model has several advantages that enable it to overcome the above-mentioned theoretical limitations. Firstly, it puts the explanatory power on the *interaction process* between actors in the social system, rather than on agency or structure, in explaining security outcomes. This reduces the dilemma of favoring one over the other. In other words, it offers a way to bridge agency and structure.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, as this chapter demonstrates, a role theory approach can be advanced to theorize the development of intersubjective security patterns that emerge between actors (both conflictual and cooperative) and multiple regional order types based on the intersubjective outcomes of the role location process. Thirdly, role theory can be applied to any social actor and social system. Although this approach is often viewed as appropriate to study individuals, it is also applicable to corporate entities.<sup>2</sup> Regional organizations as collective actors can hence be incorporated into it. Finally, a role location approach

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<sup>1</sup> Sebastian Harnisch, Cornelia Frank, and Hanns W. Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); Cameron G. Thies and Marijke Breuning, "Integrating Foreign Policy Analysis and International Relations through Role Theory," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 1–4.

<sup>2</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*.

admits the possibility of a socializing impact over great powers,<sup>3</sup> which removes the limitation posed by conventional socialization theories that regards power asymmetry as a necessary condition for socialization to take place. The possibility of great power socialization allows me to test how effective regional organizations are as political actors in inducing their vision of regional security order on the powerful states beyond their borders.

I use Thies's model as a starting point to conceptualize *regional transformation* as a role bargaining process between key actors, whereby they allocate suitable roles for themselves in regional order. The specific outcomes of the role bargaining process between actors are defined as *role relationships*. I argue that the direction of role bargaining process and the nature of role relationships determine the transformation of regional orders towards conflictual or cooperative security environments. I then consider security dynamics produced within particular order types, which is conceptualized through the *governance approaches and practices* of actors. I theorize when and how it becomes consequential for the role location process and the cooperative or conflictual nature of regional orders. I argue that role bargaining and governance practices constitute two dimensions that are equally important for understanding the nature of regional transformations. Co-impact between these two processes determines whether conflictual or cooperative security patterns develop between actors, and what type of regional order is being (re)produced as an outcome. Distinguishing between the two dimensions also enables me to explain the overlaps and deviations of regional security patterns in RO-GP interaction (cooperative trends under conflictual security order and vice versa), as well as to account for the possible impact of third factors.

This chapter is structured as follows. The first section discusses Thies's original role location model and outline modifications necessary to adapt it for the analysis of regional security dynamics. In the second, I develop a conceptualization of role relationships as the outcomes of role bargaining process using insights from sociological role theory. I propose two theoretical assumptions linking

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<sup>3</sup> Thies, "A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries," 709; Thies, "International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions," 33; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 45.

the nature of role relationships to the type of regional security order produced in the region. The third section theorizes the impact of governance approaches and practices on regional security dynamics and offer assumption as to how they play out within particular security orders. In the fourth section, I theorize how the co-impact between role location and governance approaches/practices shapes the actual regional security outcomes. The final section outlines the research design and methodology of this dissertation.

## **2.1. Role Location Approach as a Basis for Theorizing Regional Transformations**

Thies developed the role location framework to study the process of state socialization in the international system. Once a new state (or novice) enters the international system, the asymmetry in views on social reality between this state and the members (states with the established roles in the system) allows them ‘to structure the reality within which the novice must operate.’<sup>4</sup> Through this socialization process the novice ‘becomes similar to the members.’<sup>5</sup> Yet, novices also exert influence on members, rendering the accommodation from the side of the member also necessary.<sup>6</sup> Socialization is, thus, equated with role location, and is understood as a two-way process, whereby new states learn their appropriate roles in response to the cues and demands from the audience of member states, but at the same time cause accommodation on the side of the members.<sup>7</sup> Role location occurs when ‘role expectations of the self and other, role demands of the situation, and cues from the audience all come together to produce a [suitable] role for the actor and set the conditions for its appropriate enactment.’<sup>8</sup> The ‘suitable roles’ are determined through interaction in the role bargaining process, which is operationalized as a socialization game. The game model shows how a novice state interacts with its socializer in a sequence of moves in order to adopt an appropriate role.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 29; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 35.

<sup>9</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 30; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 36–40.

The original game model includes three players: an emerging state, a socializing state and Nature. The emerging state, or ego, ‘needs to be socialized into the appropriate norms, roles and behavior for social interaction’ as it claims roles for itself.<sup>10</sup> The socializing state, or alter, must respond to the emerging state’s role claim. The socializing actor may also be understood as a ‘significant other’, or an actor in relation to whom the socializee defines its role.<sup>11</sup> Nature can be conceptualized as international structure that acts as a ‘selector’ rewarding or punishing states for their role choices, or Nature may be understood from a role theory perspective as an audience of states with specific demands regarding the role of the emerging state.<sup>12</sup> The game model is rather general, and can be applied to the constituent units of any type of social system.<sup>13</sup>

In line with this model, I treat RO-GP interaction as a role bargaining process, whereby both actors engage in *role location* and aim to acquire and sustain suitable roles for themselves in regional order. At the same time, both also engage in altercasting, that is, they suggest roles for each other based on their perception of regional order and the history of previous interactions. In this process ROs, as groups of states, perform a dual role of ‘significant others’ and Audience/Nature. As ‘significant others’, or according to Harnisch ‘organized others’,<sup>14</sup> they provide specific cues or role demands for GPs, as Audience/Nature they may accept or reject their role claims in regional order. In line with Thies, I assume that the difference in ROs and GPs views of social reality guided their role bargaining process. It is this process that essentially determines the direction of regional order transformations. Depending on how role bargaining unfolds, and whether actors succeed in locating the desired roles, a regional security environment moves towards conflict or cooperation.

There are multiple roles that actors may claim in the international system. Since I am primarily interested in regional security environments, I examine those roles that regional organizations and

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<sup>10</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 30.

<sup>11</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 11–12.

<sup>12</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 29.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>14</sup> Sebastian Harnisch, “Conceptualizing in the Minefield: Role Theory and Foreign Policy Learning,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 49.

great powers develop in relation to their respective regions and towards each other. These roles form role relationships, whose nature is then indicative of the type of intersubjective security order being developed. In role theory, role relationships are viewed as complementary ego-alter pairs, where roles are meaningless without each other. Whereby one actor claims the role, another must respond until the appropriate role-counter role relationship is found through role bargaining processes.<sup>15</sup> This notion of role relationships as pre-existing complementary role-pairs between states in the system allowed Thies to theorize the sequence of moves in the socialization game. The game unfolds as long as actors find themselves in a situation of role dissonance (that is, when the role of the claiming actor is rejected by the socializer and the Audience). In order to resolve the dissonance, the claiming actor must update its beliefs in order to match the structural constraints and adopt an appropriate role. Although Thies recognized that states may adopt ‘a myriad of roles through social interaction’, the adoption of role by a claiming state is still limited by structural constraints.<sup>16</sup> Pre-existing structure define whether the role is appropriate or inappropriate for a state, while the socializer acting on behalf of the structure simply confirms or disconfirms the role. This implies that roles themselves are pre-determined by the structure. Such an understanding of roles, however, is too simplistic and unsocial. Roles, like identities, are developing and changing categories that can be contested internally or externally and may be ‘creatively interpreted’, ‘learnt’ or ‘re-made’ in the process of interaction.<sup>17</sup> In order to properly understand the dynamics of role bargaining, a more flexible understanding of role is therefore required.

In the scope of my research, I treat roles as ‘social positions that are constituted by ego and alter expectations regarding the purpose of an actor in an organized group.’<sup>18</sup> Ego expectations

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<sup>15</sup> Cameron G. Thies, “State Socialization and Structural Realism,” *Security Studies* 19, no. 4 (2010): 697; Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 29; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 37.

<sup>16</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 29.

<sup>17</sup> Cristian Cantir and Juliet Kaarbo, “Contested Roles and Domestic Politics: Reflections on Role Theory in Foreign Policy Analysis and IR Theory,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 5–24; Harnisch, “Conceptualizing in the Minefield”; Cristian Cantir and Juliet Kaarbo, *Domestic Role Contestation, Foreign Policy, and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>18</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 8.

represent domestic perceptions about what the suitable role is. Some scholars equate them with actor's identity, which is not influenced by the interaction process.<sup>19</sup> Alter expectations represent the explicit and/or implicit demands of others regarding an actor's social position, such as counter roles, complementary roles and/or audience cues.<sup>20</sup> Both ego and alter expectations define role conceptions, or 'actor's perception of his or her position vis-à-vis the others, and perceptions of the role expectations of others as signaled through actions and interaction.'<sup>21</sup> While roles are sustained social constructs, role conceptions are more fluid and more closely linked to the process of interaction. Therefore, in my research I mainly focus on *role conceptions*, rather than roles or identity, in order to explain how and why particular role relationships emerge in the bargaining process and what implications they have for regional security orders.

Differently from Thies and other role theorists, I treat *role relationships* not as complementary ego-alter pairs, but as particular social structures representing relatively stable sets of role conceptions that emerge between actors in the role bargaining process. These role relationships are constitutive of the nature of regional security order. As social structures, they are fundamentally cognitive and intersubjective, and can be both conflictual and cooperative.<sup>22</sup> Depending on which role relationship is consolidated through the role bargaining process, cooperative or conflictual regional security order is (re)produced.

Since both role conceptions and role relationships are contingent on the *process of interaction* between actors, it receives greater significance in my theoretical framework. The role of interaction is not limited to acceptance or rejection of particular role claims, as in Thies's socialization game. It is seen as determining the direction of role development and change in response to the expectations/demands/cues from other actors. Interaction facilitates what Harnisch (2012) described

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<sup>19</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Tedd Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities & Foreign Policies, Moscow 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It," 399.

as ‘role making’, when ‘embedded in social interaction [...] agent sets out to reconstruct a role, potentially setting in motion a reconstruction of counter-role.’<sup>23</sup> This notion of interaction is also consistent with Wendt’s constructivist understanding of it as a process that ‘rewards actors for holding certain ideas about each other and discourages them from holding the others.’<sup>24</sup> Hence, it is through interaction that particular role relationships are (re)constructed between actors. Interaction also determines the extent to which these relationships are intersubjective and, therefore, whether or not they are sustained as the basis of regional security orders (role relationships are discussed in greater detail in the next section).

It is important to clarify here that I do not consider *all* changes in actors’ role conceptions to be contingent on their external interaction processes. Fundamental role shifts may occur as a result of the changes in structural conditions, through domestic role contestation, change of leadership or the crisis of some kind.<sup>25</sup> In the scope of my dissertation, I do not engage directly with the internal processes of role making. I consider how the internal shifts in actors’ role conceptions impacted the direction and the outcomes of their role bargaining process and subsequently what consequences it produced for regional order outcomes. Secondly, I do not claim that every change or re-definition of the internal role conceptions automatically leads to the changing nature of regional security orders. I argue that what is essential for the nature of regional transformations is how these shifts are accommodated by actors in the role bargaining process.

Although the role location approach was initially developed to explain the socialization of novice states in the international system, Thies admitted that this process also affects existing members of the international system and thus ‘occurs throughout the cycle of any social actor.’<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, he argued that his model is general enough ‘to be applied to constituent units of any

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<sup>23</sup> Harnisch, “Conceptualizing in the Minefield,” 49.

<sup>24</sup> Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It,” 405.

<sup>25</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 252–56.

<sup>26</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 29.

type of social system.’<sup>27</sup> This aspect of the role location framework allows me to theorize the socializing impact over great powers. Similar to other theorists of socialization, Thies admits that power capabilities do matter when states adopt roles in the international system. Depending on the level of capabilities, he distinguished between emerging states, small member states, major member states and great powers. These ‘master roles’, as he called them, determine the range of ‘auxiliary roles’ that states can claim in the role location process.<sup>28</sup> In this context, great powers can develop the largest number of roles in comparison to other types of states, as they are better equipped to force roles for themselves. They are, though, ‘still subject to socializing influence as members of the system.’<sup>29</sup> This implies that they might also re-define their role conceptions, abandon or adopt certain roles in response to the demands of the audience. For example, Thies’s own research showed how the United States was socialized out of its neutral role by Britain and Germany before each of both World Wars.<sup>30</sup>

Overall, the role location model offers a useful conceptual basis from which the analytical framework for understanding regional security dynamics can be developed. In the next section, I propose such a framework that allows using the concepts of role bargaining, role relationships and insights from sociological role theory.

## **2.2. Role Bargaining, Role Relationships and Intersubjective Security Orders**

In the previous section I defined RO-GP interaction as a role bargaining process, whereby actors try to locate desired roles for themselves in the regional order. I also defined outcomes of this process as role relationships that emerge as cognitive social structures based on actors’ role conceptions vis-à-vis each other. In this section, I discuss how and why particular role relationships emerge, and what kind of regional orders they (re)produce. I argue that the nature of role relationship being (re)produced

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>28</sup> Thies, “A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries,” 708–9; Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 33–34.

<sup>29</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 33.

<sup>30</sup> Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*.

through interaction is indicative of the type of intersubjective security order, that is, whether a conflictual or cooperative environment emerges between actors.

There are not many accounts in IR and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) scholarship on how the roles of different actors relate to each other, and what security outcomes these relationships produce for the international system. For example, Thies distinguished between four ‘master statuses’ available for states in the international system: great powers, small powers, emerging states and major powers.<sup>31</sup> This distinction refers to the power relations between actors and determines the number and the types of auxiliary roles they can claim, but it does not capture the modes of conflict/cooperation that these roles may produce between states. Thies used this power-centered framework to theorize who is competing with or socializing whom, but his main focus was on explaining only one type of role relationship - enduring rivalries.<sup>32</sup> However, a myriad of other possible outcomes of the role bargaining process may emerge. The distribution of national role conceptions as an indicator of a conflictual or cooperative international system could be found in Holsti, who distinguished between conflict type roles (e.g. liberator supporter, defender of faith, regional protector) and collaborative roles (e.g. regional-subsystem collaborator, mediator-integrator, developer).<sup>33</sup> The growth or decline in the number of particular roles may then lead to the ‘change in the major properties of the system’.<sup>34</sup> Yet, a simple focus on the distribution of roles does not tell us much about the actual relationship between role beholders, precisely because it omits the question of how roles between actors relate to each other. For example, collaboration might be possible between a ‘regional protector’ and a ‘defender of faith’: although both are conflict type-roles, their role expectations are similar, which may trigger cooperation.

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<sup>31</sup> Thies, “A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries”; Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012; Thies, *The United States, Israel and the Search for International Order*, 44–45.

<sup>32</sup> Thies, “A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries.”

<sup>33</sup> Holsti, K. J. “National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy.” In *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, edited by Stephen G. Walker (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 35–36.

<sup>34</sup> Holsti, “National Role Conceptions,” 36.

Unlike IR/FPA scholarship, sociological role theory has produced a number of concepts that describe how roles in a social system may relate to each other. For example, role integration describes a social structure where the roles of actors fit well together. Accordingly, there might be instances of malintegration or unfitting roles, when the roles of actors overlap or when actors compete for scarce resources to perform the roles.<sup>35</sup> One of the variations of role integration is complementarity. Complementary roles ‘are those that fit together in that specific functions are accomplished through their occurrence.’<sup>36</sup> In each case the function of the activity, where the complementary roles are imbedded, is performed easily if all roles are present. Another form of role integration is interdependence, or the degree to which roles are mutually facilitative or hindering one another. The specific form of interdependence is reciprocity, that is, ‘when a characteristic behavior of one act as a sanction for the other and vice versa.’<sup>37</sup>

However, the application of these concepts to theorize the outcomes of regional role bargaining is problematic. Firstly, they describe the relationships between roles as already set social constructs, while I consider roles as fluid and constantly developing categories. Secondly, these concepts (apart maybe from role integration and malintegration) do not tell us much about the nature of the role relationships as constitutive of conflict or cooperation. For instance, interdependence or reciprocity might be the characteristics of both cooperative and confrontational role relationship.

Concepts that might better capture the nature of role relationships are role consensus and role dissensus. These were originally used in sociology to describe how expectations, roles and behavior of individual actors and the social system relate to each other and imply conflictual or cooperative relationships. Role consensus is used by role theorists ‘to denote agreement among the expectations that are held by various persons.’<sup>38</sup> Arguably, a higher degree of consensus leads to a better integrated

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<sup>35</sup> Bruce J. Biddle, *Role Theory: Expectations, Identities, and Behaviors* (London: Academic Press, 2013), 77.

<sup>36</sup> Biddle, *Role Theory*, 78.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> B. J. Biddle, “Recent Development in Role Theory,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 12 (1986): 76; Biddle, *Role Theory*, 191–95.

social system.<sup>39</sup> Role dissensus is defined as the opposite of role consensus. It represents a situation ‘when nonconsensual role expectations are found or are presumed to exist’ between actors.<sup>40</sup> Building on these and related concepts, I theorize conditions under which actors may develop cooperative or confrontational role relationships. I assume that bargaining may generate cooperative role relationship under the conditions of role consensus, role complementarity and role agreement, while conflictual role relationships are the likely outcome of role dissensus, role contradiction or role conflict.

*Role consensus* emerges in a situation when actors share expectations about their roles in relation to the region and to each other. It describes a type of relationship when actors do not have specified role conceptions, but share understanding about each other’s purpose in the region. Hence, if role consensus is consolidated through interaction, a cooperative security environment is likely to emerge. Another type of role relationship that leads to cooperative security is *role complementarity*, which I define as a situation when role conceptions of actors fit well together, but they have different expectation and objectives when pursuing the roles. Complementarity encourages cooperative security patterns, but if shared expectations are not established in the process of role bargaining, it is unlikely to be sustained. *Role agreement* reflects a situation when actors accept each other’s role conceptions and share expectation/objectives about perusing their roles. If sustained through interaction, it is likely to result in the formal institutionalization of roles and the creation of mechanisms for role enactment. Role agreement is considered to be the successful outcome of role bargaining process, which leads to durable cooperative security orders.

A conflictual role relationship may emerge on the basis of *role dissensus*, that is, when actors do not have their roles specified, but their role expectations about each other diverge. It is unlikely to result in cooperation, and triggers further role bargaining. If role consensus does not emerge as the next bargaining outcome, *contradictory roles* might be consolidated. Contradictory roles are those

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<sup>39</sup> Biddle, “Recent Development in Role Theory,” 76–77; Biddle, *Role Theory*, 195–96.

<sup>40</sup> Biddle, *Role Theory*, 196.

that do not fit well together but are not necessarily rival. Under a contradictory role relationship actors experience the situation of *role dissonance* (just as Thies socialization game model prescribed). Role dissonance could then be resolved by the change in their beliefs/attitudes so that they can achieve or give up the desired role. However, it could also result in the modification/change of the role conception and the new round of role bargaining in order to overcome role contradiction. If role dissonance is not resolved through further bargaining, it may lead to a situation when actors adopt rivalry role conceptions or *role rivalry*. I also make a distinction between role rivalry and role conflict. In this dissertation, role rivalry is understood as a particular role relationship, where actors see each other as rivals. Role conflict refers to specific situations in a role bargaining process, when role enactment by one actor deprives the other from enacting or locating its role.<sup>41</sup> It may occur under any type of role relationship. Role contradiction and role rivalry signal the failure of the role bargaining process. If these role relationships become consolidated through interaction, conflictual security order is likely to endure.

How do these role relationships emerge in the role bargaining process? The initial condition for role bargaining is role uncertainty, meaning when actors do not have consolidated role conceptions for themselves and are uncertain about the roles of others. Yet, they do have expectations about the purpose of self and others in the region. Uncertainty creates the need for ‘mutual understanding of the other’ in order to avoid conflict in terms of role behavior or the situation of ‘ideational security dilemma’, when the role taken by one actor deprives the other from adopting acceptable complementary one.<sup>42</sup> Alternatively, bargaining might be triggered by structural changes, internally-generated shifts in actors’ role conceptions, penetration of the third actor or crisis of some kind. As

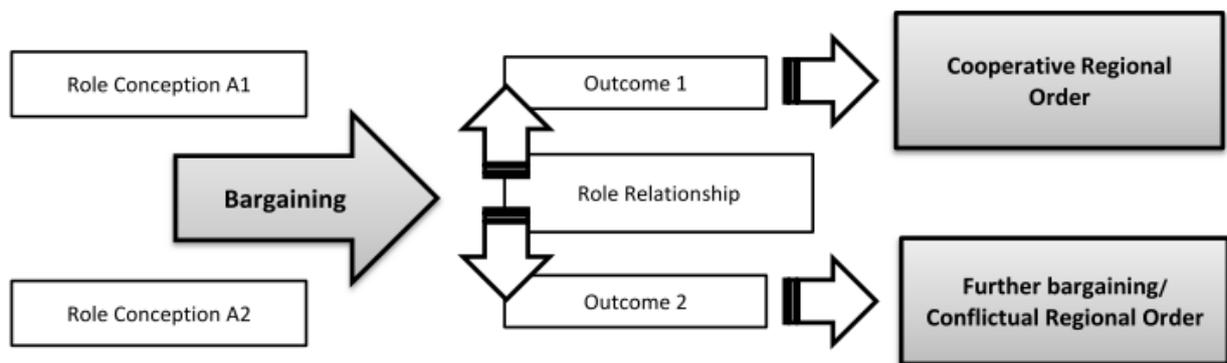
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<sup>41</sup> In sociology, as well as in IR role theory, role conflict is often defined as a cognitive process (similar to role dissonance). It occurs when an actor experiences polarized expectations as to its social position or behavior, faces the need to perform complex or inconsistent roles, or when the context of performing a role changes. Role conflict has also been conceptualized in a more general terms as a situation when national role conceptions in the international system are incompatible or conflicting, which leads to its reorganization (See Biddle, *Role theory*, 196-197; Aggestam, “Role Theory and European Foreign Policy,” 22-24; Akan Malici and Stephen G. Walker, *Role Theory and Role Conflict in U.S.-Iran Relations: Enemies of Our Own Making* (New York: Routledge, 2016):41-43; Harnisch et al, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 256.

<sup>42</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 257–58.

shown in Figure 2.1, starting at the situation of uncertainty, two actors (A1 and A2) engage in role bargaining, which may result in cooperative (outcome 1) or conflictual (outcome 2) role relationship. Depending on which bargaining outcome gets consolidated in the process of interaction, a conflictual or cooperative intersubjective security environment emerges between actors. Conflictual or cooperative orders should not be understood as binaries, because their nature might be shaped by different role relationships. In this dissertation, I theorized three cooperative outcomes (consensus, complementarity, agreement) and three conflictual ones (dissensus, contradiction, rivalry).

*Figure 2.1. Role Bargaining and Regional Order Outcomes*



*Source: Own account*

*Regional transformation* under this framework could then be understood as a role bargaining process between key actors, whereby they allocate suitable roles for themselves in the regional order. *Regional order*, in turn, is defined as an intersubjective outcome of the role bargaining process, whose nature (cooperative or conflictual) is contingent on the type of role relationship being consolidated through bargaining process.

Outcomes of the role bargaining process may also depend on the strategies that actors use to ‘to reduce the tension between the individual’s and other’s expectation concerning the choice of a role’<sup>43</sup> or role dissonance. The mechanisms for dissonance reduction were well theorized in role theory.<sup>44</sup> I argue that the same mechanisms can also be used by actors as strategies in the role

<sup>43</sup> Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions,” January 2012, 32.

<sup>44</sup> William J. Goode, “A Theory of Role Strain,” *American Sociological Review* 25, no. 4 (1960): 483–96, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2092933>; Douglas T. Hall, “A Model of Coping with Role Conflict: The Role Behavior of College

bargaining process to gain recognition for their role claims, or to altercast their role demands on other actors. Following Thies, I assume that actors can choose a Force, Fizzle, Resolve, or Reject strategy.<sup>45</sup> Actors can Force their roles by using capabilities to modify the world in order to achieve or impose particular roles. Another strategy is to Fizzle, or accept that the role cannot be achieved and stop desiring it altogether. Actors could also choose a Resolve strategy, or update their beliefs in a way that the roles become suitable for ego and the alter. Finally, they could Reject or stop desiring the role for themselves or the alter contrary to initial preferences or beliefs. In addition, I theorize Accommodation as a distinct role bargaining strategy, whereby actors fit each other's roles in a relationship without changing or updating their own beliefs. Depending on which strategies actors use in the role bargaining process, arriving at a mutually acceptable role relationship is more or less likely. For example, if both actors prefer to Force their role claims, a positive role bargaining outcome is unlikely, while conflicting or rivalry roles might be consolidated instead. If both actors choose to Resolve and recognize that roles are appropriate role location is successful.

The following theoretical assumption might be formulated on the basis of the above:

*A1a: If role bargaining under the initial conditions of uncertainty leads to role consensus, complementarity or agreement, then cooperative security order is more likely.*

*A1b: If role bargaining under initial conditions of role uncertainty leads to role dissensus, contradiction or role conflict, then conflictual security order is more likely.*

The focus on role bargaining and role relationships as directing regional order and security dynamics enables me to capture the actual security environments being (re)produced between actors. To some extent, role relationships could be compared to what Buzan and Wæver defined as patterns

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Educated Women,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (1972): 471–86, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393827>; Jon Elster, “A Plea for Mechanism,” in *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*, ed. Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg, Studies in Rationality and Social Change (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 45–73.

<sup>45</sup> Here and later in the text the names of the strategies are capitalized as in their original use.

of amity/enmity in RSCT.<sup>46</sup> However, in RSCT these patterns are seen as durable constructs produced by historical, cultural, or material factors, while less attention is paid to how they are created or why they change. In contrast, a role bargaining model, with its focus on interaction, helps to account for this process and explain how and why conflictual or cooperative security environment develops between actors using role relationship as an explanatory variable.

Role relationships are the products of actors' role bargaining process and thus reflect the *actual* intersubjective security environments being created in the region. Unlike security complexes, security orders or security communities, which represent theoretically-driven 'types' 'stages' or 'levels' of order, role relationships represent open categories constituted by actual role conceptions and interaction processes that occur between actors in a given time. As such, they capture the dynamic nature of regional orders as conceived by the actors themselves. Although I theorize two types of order (cooperative and conflictual), the variety of role relationships on which they could be based gives some idea as to the degree of conflict or cooperation. For example, a cooperative order based on role agreement is more sustainable than the one based on complementarity or consensus. Likewise, the degree of conflict might be less under role dissensus than under role rivalry.

Role relationships not only reflect intersubjective understandings of actors about self and other in regional orders, but also guide their thinking about appropriate actions (foreign policy). Neither roles, nor role relationships pre-determine the behavior of actors. However, just like the patterns of amity/enmity in RSCT, role relationships make conflicting or cooperative behavior of actors more or less likely. As social institutions they affect 'the understanding that leaders of states have of the roles they should play and their assumptions about other's motivations' as well as help to define 'how actions are interpreted.'<sup>47</sup> They are 'not a root cause [for behavior] in itself, but a structure that modifies and mediates the actions and interactions of units.'<sup>48</sup> In other words, they guide actor's

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<sup>46</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 49–50.

<sup>47</sup> Robert Owen Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), 6.

<sup>48</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 51.

thinking about the appropriate behavior of self and others. Yet, the deviations in actor's behavior from the established role relationship might also take place.

In the next section, I argue that in order to understand security dynamics *within* particular orders, one must look at the governance approaches and practices of actors. Regional governance represents a system of rules and regulations that guide role enactment and in itself constitutes the subject of bargaining. Governance practices of actors may activate or resolve contentions over governance issues and thus evoke conflictual or cooperative behavioral patterns within particular security orders.

### **2.3. Actors' Governance Approaches and Practices in Regional Security Dynamics**

Regional governance can be defined as '*a system of rules* aiming at coordinating, managing and regulating collective existence of actors in the region.'<sup>49</sup> Here I understand governance as being different from social order. If regional order refers to the outcomes of strategic interaction between actors in the role bargaining process, regional governance represents specific mechanisms for managing these interactions and specific conditions of role enactment. At the same time, governance also refers to *a process* of setting rules and enforcing institutions within a particular geographical space reflected in the practices of actors.<sup>50</sup> Both approaches are relevant in the context of my theoretical framework to theorize security shifts beyond the role bargaining process.

Here *governance* is defined as a system of rules that reflects actors' role conceptions as well as mutually-agreed conditions for role enactment (governance consensus). It sustains the outcomes of the role bargaining process. *Governance practices* represent the actual behavior of actors that reveals their preference for sustaining or undermining the existing governance consensus. In role theory, an actor's behavior or role enactment is often treated as a dependent variable that is structured

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<sup>49</sup> Adler and Greve, "When Security Community Meets Balance of Power," 64.

<sup>50</sup> L. Fawcett and M. Serrano, *Regionalism and Governance in the Americas: Continental Drift* (London: Macmillan, 2005), 19; Detlef Nolte, "Regional Powers and Regional Governance," in *Regional Powers and Regional Orders*, ed. Nadine Godehardt and Dirk Nabers, *Europe in the World* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 53.

by the role conception.<sup>51</sup> Here, following Aggestam, I assume that ‘role conceptions do not define the outcomes directly, but merely define the potential range of options and strategies.’<sup>52</sup> It means that actors have some ‘flexibility of interpretation’, and might prefer different governance approaches and practices when pursuing their roles.

Both ROs and GPs are considered powerful actors in shaping regional governance. Processes of regional integration, specifically the presence of regional organizations, are primarily seen as having a ‘transformative effect’ on the domestic governance of their member states.<sup>53</sup> However, a lot of research attention has been also devoted to ROs as external governance providers in their macro-regions and in the world.<sup>54</sup> EU studies champion this approach, focusing on the particularities of EU policies shaping external governance and on the specific mechanisms of its external impact.<sup>55</sup> Recently, ASEAN has received increasing attention in terms of its strategies for shaping regional governance in Southeast Asia and Asia-Pacific.<sup>56</sup> The main impact of regional organizations as external governance providers is seen in the externalization of their internal rules and norms, which, if successful, supports the proliferation of security community practices beyond the borders of the organization. From this perspective ROs are seen as the important contributors to regional peace.<sup>57</sup>

The role of regional (great) powers in shaping regional governance is seen from a different perspective. Scholars consider regional power roles, strategies and orientation to be the main cause

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<sup>51</sup> Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations*, 9.

<sup>52</sup> Lisbeth Aggestam, “Role Theory and European Foreign Policy,” 20–21.

<sup>53</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, “Governance by Conditionality: EU Rule Transfer to the Candidate Countries of Central and Eastern Europe,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 11, no. 4 (January 2004): 661–79; Tanja A. Börzel and Vera van Hüllen, eds., *Governance Transfer by Regional Organizations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>54</sup> Acharya, Amitav, and Alastair Iain Johnston. *Crafting Cooperation: Regional International Institutions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Emil J. Kirchner and Roberto Dominguez, *The Security Governance of Regional Organizations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>55</sup> Lavenex, “EU External Governance in ‘Wider Europe’”; Sandra Lavenex, “Concentric Circles of ‘European’ Integration: A Typology of EU External Governance Relations,” *Comparative European Politics* 9, no. 4 (2011); Frank Schimmelfennig, “Europeanization beyond Europe” 4, no. 3 (2009).

<sup>56</sup> Anja Jetschke, “Is ASEAN a Provider of Regional Security Governance?,” *Occasional Paper*, no. 4 (2011): 3; Stubbs, “The ASEAN Alternative?”; Tay, “Growing an ASEAN Voice?”

<sup>57</sup> Michael Barnett, “Partners in Peace? The UN, Regional Organizations, and Peace-Keeping,” *Review of International Studies* 21, no. 4 (October 1995): 411–33; Ramesh Thakur and Luk van Langenhove, “Enhancing Global Governance Through Regional Integration,” *Global Governance* 12 (2006): 233–40; Asnake Kefale, “Regional Organizations and Security Governance: A Comparative Assessment of IGAD and ASEAN,” Monograph, 2015.

of regional security dynamics. In ROT and RSCT, great powers are considered ‘penetrators’ in regional affairs that produce the major security externalities for other states and regional order.<sup>58</sup> Destradi argued that regional powers ‘strongly influence interactions taking place at regional level’ and contribute significantly to ‘the degree of cooperation and conflict and the level of institutionalization’ in the region.<sup>59</sup> Likewise, Frazier and Ingersoll, as well as Garzon Pereira, noted that the foreign policy approaches used by regional powers help explaining variations in security outcomes.<sup>60</sup> Hence, the impact of ROs is mostly seen as leading towards sustained peace, while the policies of GPs are responsible for regional security dynamics of both peace and conflict. My theoretical framework does not follow such a dichotomy but considers the practices of ROs and GPs to be contributing equally to patterns of regional security.

Similar to regional security order, I treat regional governance as the product of RO-GP interaction. I argue that the ability of actors to shape governance in a way that best reflects their role conception, and their ability to use it for enacting regional roles most effectively, represents how powerful they are in promoting their vision of order. I adopt Garzon Pereira’s concept of the ‘*issues of contention*’ to identify the dimensions of governance over which the bargaining between ROs and GPs takes place and along which governance practices manifest themselves. Garzon Pereira argued that regional order is a subject to strategic interaction between great powers and weaker states. In represents:

‘a transactional bargain or give-and-take dynamic in which both types of states pursue distinct foreign policy objectives in accordance with their respective power positions within the regional and international system and of which realization is contingent on the other party’s behavior.’<sup>61</sup>

As it is evident from the quote, the author linked bargaining process with states’ distinct foreign policy objectives that are subject to their relative power positions in the regional and international system. Based on this power-centered distinction, he assumed that bargaining between strong and

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<sup>58</sup> Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*, 64–65; Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 46.

<sup>59</sup> Destradi, “Regional Powers and Their Strategies,” 904.

<sup>60</sup> Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll, “Regional Powers and Security”; Garzón Pereira, “Hierarchical Regional Orders.”

<sup>61</sup> Garzón Pereira, “Hierarchical Regional Orders,” 33.

weak states takes place over policy convergence, transfer of material resources and the nature of international institutions for the distribution of power. The nature of regional orders could then be understood through ‘empirical observation of state preferences and bargaining outcomes over these issues.’<sup>62</sup>

Similarly to Garzon Pereira, I define the process of RO-GP interaction over regional governance as a transactional bargain, whose realization is contingent on other party’s behavior. However, as shown above, I derive actors’ preferences for particular governance mechanisms not from their ‘relative power positions’ but from their subjective role conceptions. I assume that ROs and GPs have distinct vision of regional governance based on their role conceptions and try to shape governance in a way that allows them to enact their roles most effectively. Bargaining between them may unfold around the following issues of contention: substance of governance, conditions of role enactment and tolerance to alternatives. Actors’ governance practices in each dimension are indicative of whether they want to sustain or undermine the existing governance consensus.

**Substance of regional governance** (*How well are actors’ role conceptions reflected in regional rules and regulations?*). This dimension is indicative of how well actors’ role conceptions are reflected in the system of regional rules and regulations as well as the degree to which actor contribute to the substance of these rules. Adler and Barnett saw governance structure as practices ‘backed by shared goals and intersubjective meanings’, whose substance represents ‘a direct reflection of the actor’s identity and self-understanding.’<sup>63</sup> This definition is also consistent with what Nolte defined as normative-institutional dimension of regional governance. He viewed the regional institutionalized context as a reflection of actor’s normative agenda with regard to who should be included in regional governance structures, which issues should be covered, how porous the region should be for external actors to participate, and what the basic rules of interstate behavior are within the region.<sup>64</sup> In the context of my research, regional governance specifies the degree to which RO’s

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>63</sup> Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*, 36.

<sup>64</sup> Nolte, “Regional Powers and Regional Governance,” 59–60.

and GP's vision of regional order and their regional roles are reflected in the rules of conduct, patterns of interaction, distribution of material benefits etc. As we shall see from the cases of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction (see chapter 5 and 6), preferences for regional governance are actor-specific and depend on the role conceptions in place. However, the bargaining logic remained similar regardless of the issue-area, region or role structure. In each case, actors' behavior was contingent upon the degree to which their vision of order and their role conceptions were reflected in the governance principles and rules. Whereas this vision was adequately reflected actors complied with the established status quo, otherwise bargaining takes place over this issue of contention.

**Terms of role enactment** (*How specific are the conditions of role enactment?*). This issue refers to the principles of ordering relations between actors and specifies conditions for *appropriate* role enactment. Role enactment refers to the actual foreign policy behavior in terms of 'characteristic patterns of decisions and actions undertaken in specific situational context.'<sup>65</sup> Role enactment is primarily a product of domestic role conception but it is also a subject of influence by external perceptions of how particular role 'should be, has been and is enacted.'<sup>66</sup> Depending on how specific these perceptions are, actors may have more or less space for maneuver.

Possible contention between regional organizations and great powers may arise over the conditions of role enactment as well as over the interpretation of what constitutes appropriate behavior. In the first case, regional organizations may impose higher demands on GPs in terms of compliance with particular rules of conduct or require higher responsibility for role performance. They may also try to put more specified conditions to constrain the undesirable behavior of great powers. Likewise, great powers may be interested in structuring the level of engagement of ROs in handling particular regional security issues or prefer unilateral mechanisms depending on their role conception. Different interpretations of 'appropriateness' might also create contention between actors. These differences may arise if conditions of role enactment are poorly specified, they may

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<sup>65</sup> Aggestam, "Role Theory and European Foreign Policy," 20.

<sup>66</sup> Ole Elgström and Michael Smith, "Introduction," in *The European Union's Roles in International Politics*, ed. Ole Elgström and Michael Smith (London: Routledge, 2006), 6.

also result from specific situational context or be the product of changing role conceptions domestically. If actors are satisfied with the existing conditions for role enactment, and if their interpretations of what constitutes appropriate behavior within these conditions coincide, cooperative behavior should prevail. Likewise, dissatisfaction with role enactment mechanisms or differences in interpretation of appropriateness may spark bargaining over these issue and confrontational behavior.

**Tolerance to alternatives** (*How do actors manage different institutional alternatives or governance overlap?*). This dimension refers to the terms of co-existence between different governance mechanisms created by ROs and GPs in the region. Regional governance mechanisms may exist in synergy, complementarity, co-existence, or competition. One could think of them as distinct spheres of influence as conceptualized by Keal. Spheres of influence, according to him, represent the authority of influential states over particular territories, where the intrusion of other actors is unwelcomed.<sup>67</sup> Keal argued that spheres of influence ‘contribute to order’, if they are removed from the disputes between influential states and the static relationship (balance of power) is kept between them.<sup>68</sup> From this perspective it is possible to assume that if regional organizations and great powers develop and pursue regional governance with mutual acquiescence and ‘non-interference’ in each other’s ‘spheres of influence’ then contention might be avoided in this dimension. However, such situation is unlikely given that the presence of ROs and GPs in one region makes the creation of exclusive spheres of influence highly unlikely.

What seems more relevant is to examine how actors deal with the arising overlaps of alternative governance mechanisms. Governance overlap may create contention either about geographical coverage (territory) or functional coverage (issue-areas, objectives). In this case regional organizations and great powers would have to negotiate the terms of co-existence of their governance practices in the region.<sup>69</sup> Whereas they are able to agree and sustain mutually acceptable conditions

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<sup>67</sup> “International Order and Spheres of Influence,” in Paul Keal, *Unspoken Rules and Superpower Dominance* (London Palgrave Macmillan, 1983), 209–11.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>69</sup> In Chapter 1, I discussed the idea of overlapping governance mechanisms offered by Adler and Greve (2009) to refer to a situation when an actor applies a mixture of security practices that belong to normatively different systems of

for overlapping governance, cooperation or at least non-confrontation would prevail. If, however, actors fail to manage overlap, competition or confrontation would become more likely.

Similar to different strategies for role bargaining, actors may prefer different approaches to settle governance contentions. I theorize inclusive governance approach as supportive of overcoming the issues of contention and protectionist approach that might prevent effective resolution of contentions. The notion of inclusive and protectionist approaches is based on the idea of multilateral vs unilateral orientation of actors in regional security complexes conceptualized by Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll. According to the authors, these two orientations represent ‘different styles of role playing’ and ‘have a substantial bearing’ upon the nature of regional governance outcomes.<sup>70</sup>

The multilateral orientation implies that regional powers view security of RSC members as interconnected and therefore try to develop governance rules and regulations ‘oriented towards long-term cooperation, rather than immediate reciprocation.’<sup>71</sup> A multilateral orientation guides an inclusive approach, whereby the idea of indivisible security encourages certain acceptance of each other’s preferences and vision of regional governance, which leads to greater legitimacy and longevity of bargaining outcomes over governance principles. In contrast, a unilateral orientation presupposes an individualistic notion of security, concerns with relative gains and immediate short-term national interests.<sup>72</sup> It guides a protectionist approach in governance practice, whereby actors favor their immediate governance priorities rather than the idea of mutually acceptable long-term outcome.

Governance approaches and practices structure the patterns of regional security dynamics *within* particular orders. How successful actors are in resolving the issues of governance contention

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governance. Such overlap would constitute a mixture of realist balance of power practices and constructivist security community practices. Here, I conceptualize governance overlap as a co-existence between ROs and GPs systems and practices of regional governance over particular territory/issue area.

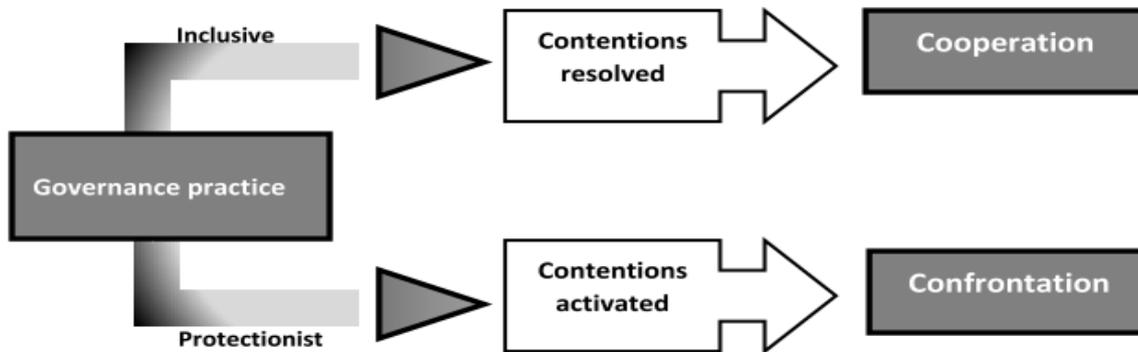
<sup>70</sup> Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll, “Regional Powers and Security,” 745.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

determines whether cooperative or confrontational security patterns will be sustained in the region, as Figure 2.2 demonstrates.

*Figure 2.2. Security Dynamics in Regional Governance*



*Source: Own account*

The following assumptions might be formulated on the basis of the above:

*A2a: Under an inclusive governance approach actors are more likely to resolve existing contentions and sustain cooperative security pattern.*

*A2b: Under protectionist governance, contentions are likely to remain unresolved with the danger of consolidating conflictual security pattern.*

Role bargaining and governance practices are two interrelated processes of regional security dynamics. It is through role conceptions that actors define their preference for regional governance, while governance approaches and practices determine whether these conceptions are sustained or changed in the role bargaining process. Because of this interconnection, it is only by looking at the two dimensions simultaneously, and tracing empirically the interaction between actors' in each particular case, that one might understand why relations between actors unfold in a particular way and why certain foreign policy responses (cooperative or confrontational) are triggered. The next section outlines how role bargaining and governance practices relate to each other, and under what conditions cooperative or confrontational shifts in regional security become more or less likely.

## 2.4. Regional Security Dynamics as a Two-Level Process

In sections 2 and 3 of this chapter, I discussed the dimensions of security dynamics between regional organizations and great powers. I argued that role bargaining process shapes actors' attitudes towards each other and towards the region. It constitutes a particular social environment for their actions and interaction (role relationships). These environments are sustained through regional governance structures and practices. Regional governance constitutes a separate subject of bargaining between actors. Security patterns in regional governance depend on the state of consensus between actors over the possible issues of contention: substance of governance, terms of role enactment and institutional alternatives. Governance practices, or the actual behavior of actors, reveal their preference for sustaining or undermining these structures. Role bargaining and governance practices represent two interrelated processes whose co-impact eventually determines which security pattern will be dominant in the region. Role bargaining is constitutive of the intersubjective security environments between actors (cooperative or conflictual). Governance practices determine behavioral security patterns within these environments. Taken together they provide the fullest account of the regional security dynamics and help to understand regional order transformations. This section offers theoretical assumptions about the interconnection of the two processes and the outcomes it produces for regional security.

The straightforward relationship between role bargaining and governance practices suggests that governance structures should reflect the outcomes of the role location process. As I argued earlier in this chapter, actors' preference for a particular governance structure is based on their role conceptions, so they would try to shape regional governance in a way that allows them to enact their roles most effectively. Accordingly, the state of consensus over regional governance should be contingent on the success of the role location process. The following proposition might be formulated in this regard:

*A3a: The more cooperative are regional role relationships (consensus, complementarity, agreement), the less likely is the conflict over the issues of contention in regional governance.*

*A3b: The more confrontational are regional role relationships (dissensus, contradiction, rivalry), the more likely is that actors would re-activate or fail to resolve the issues of contention in regional governance.*

Under a cooperative role relationship one might expect governance practices that aim at sustaining positive role bargaining outcomes. In this case, actors would prefer inclusive governance approach to consolidate their role location. Consensus over the issues of governance contention would be more likely, and cooperative security environment between actors would be positively reinforced. Under a conflictual role relationship, one might expect a protectionist governance approach, whereby actors would be unable to reach governance consensus. In this case, the role location process is likely to be undermined, while governance practices of actors would consolidate a conflictual security environment.

Security dynamics in regional governance might not necessary follow the role bargaining process. Deviations in governance practice and reactivation of the issues of contention might result from changing interpretations of appropriate behavior domestically within specific role conceptions. Alternatively, actors may consider deviation in governance practices, if they believe it will allow them to enact their role more effectively. In an unlikely scenario, deviation might also result from a systemic failure, when the interaction capacity in the system is so low that its members cannot effectively constrain behavior.<sup>73</sup> Deviation of governance practice from the established governance structure or role relationship results in a confrontational foreign policy response from another actor. These responses could be seen as a form of socializing activity to bring the deviating actor in line with expectations.<sup>74</sup> If the deviating actor is not forced back on track, or if the new governance consensus is not established, the deviation may lead to the redefinition of the role conceptions domestically and changes the intersubjective security environment.

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<sup>73</sup> Thies, "State Socialization and Structural Realism," 697; Thies, "International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions," 29.

<sup>74</sup> Thies, "State Socialization and Structural Realism," 697.

An alternative scenario would occur under solid governance practice, which may sustain the patterns of regional security dynamics and the existing security order. If a cooperative role relationship is sustained through governance practice over time, it is likely to develop into a sustained cooperative security order or even security community. However, if a conflictual role relationship becomes consolidated through governance practices, a conflictual security order or even an enduring rivalry might be the outcome. At the same time, neither of the two outcomes is pre-determined or irreversible. Domestic factors or structural change may lead to the redefinition of roles or changes in the governance approach or practices, which may also shift the dominant security pattern towards a different track. Two assumptions might be offered based on the above:

*A4a: The more governance practice deviates from the intersubjective governance structure or role relationship (because of domestic politics, leader's personality, etc), the more likely is the reactivation of contention and the redefinition of roles by one or both parties.*

*A4b: The more solid the governance practice is, the less likely is the conflict over the issues of contentions and the more consolidated is the role relationship and intersubjective security order.*

Finally, regional security dynamics could be the product of intervening factors (involvement of third states, crisis of some kind). Yet, the impact of these factors would also be contingent on how they are managed by actors in the role bargaining process. This leads to the final theoretical proposition:

*A5: All other things being equal, external shocks or events are less likely to affect governance practices and role conceptions that are well consolidated (e.g. not challenged domestically).*

So far I outlined the theoretical framework for analyzing regional security dynamics and formulated five theoretical assumptions as to how role bargaining and governance practice shape the

patterns of security dynamics between and within regional orders. It is important to note that the theoretical assumptions formulated above are not meant as hypotheses to be tested, but rather as theoretically informed expectations to inform and guide the case analysis. In the next section, I present the research design and the methods used in the dissertation and elaborate on how they guide the usage of these theoretical assumptions in the empirical research.

## **2.5. Research Design and Methods**

This dissertation examines regional security developments at two levels of analysis. Firstly, I investigated the patterns of the EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction over time to establish what kind of role relationships emerged between actors in the process of role bargaining and what intersubjective security orders they produced in a given period of time. The specific focus was placed on the interconnection between role conceptions, role bargaining strategies and role bargaining outcomes. This enabled me to analyze how and why particular role relationships were established in the process of interaction as well as when they were or were not sustained. Understanding the pattern of the role bargaining process in each case allowed me to account for the transformation of intersubjective security environment between actors and explain periods of cooperative and conflictual security order. A combination of qualitative content analysis (QSA) and narrative analysis was used to conduct this examination.

Secondly, I took a closer look at two specific cases of RO-GP interaction that deviated from the general pattern of the role bargaining process. EU-Russia interaction over Ukraine's Association Agreement in the Eastern Partnership and ASEAN-China interaction over the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea were investigated as such deviating cases. The aim of these case studies was to examine how role bargaining and governance practice co-impact each other, and what specific security outcomes this co-impact produces for the region. Specific empirical focus was also placed on explaining the confrontational responses of Russia and China to the policies of EU and ASEAN in each case. Interpretive process-tracing was used to understand the temporal sequence of action and

reaction between ROs and GPs through the relational impact of shifts in role location process and governance practice of actors. Detailed analysis of actors' governance practices in each case study helped to understand how different approaches either supported or prevent the resolution of contentions in regional governance and what implications it had for the overall intersubjective security environment. In addition, interpretive process tracing helped me to incorporate the impact of third factors on the development of role bargaining and governance practices.

**Analysis of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China role bargaining process.** In order to understand the emergence of conflictual or cooperative regional security environments between EU and Russia as well as ASEAN and China I traced the history of their interaction. The time period selected for the analysis was 1991-2016.<sup>75</sup> The starting point marked the end of the Cold War when both ROs and GPs faced uncertainty (initial condition for role bargaining) and needed to reformulate their regional roles following global structural changes. In each case, I examined how their role conceptions towards the regions and towards each other developed, modified or changed in the process of role bargaining, what kind of role relationships emerged as intermediary outcomes of this process and what type of regional security environment they consolidated. This analysis was conducted using RO-GP summit communication as an empirical dataset. The data included the official documents of regular EU-Russia and ASEAN-China summits (agreements, declarations, summit press-releases, memos, working sessions transcripts) as well as summit-related materials (press statements of summit participants, post-summit press-briefings and interviews of the participants). For the ASEAN-China case, the dataset also included the joint statements of ASEAN Summits and ASEAN+3 Summits. Bilateral ASEAN-China communication often occurred at these forums and sometimes the outcomes of the ASEAN-China meetings appeared in the concluding documents of these summits rather than in separate statements.

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<sup>75</sup> The latest EU-Russia summit happened in January 2014. For the later period, leaders' declarations and statements on the state of relations between actors were used for narrative analysis.

The choice of the summit documents as the empirical database for analysis relates to the fact that summits represent the regular track of communication between ROs and GPs. They happen annually and are not usually tied to the particular issue area or event. They cover the overall state of relations between actors and represent the main channel of communication through which they can outline their role claims and expectations for each other. Thus, summits represent a suitable series of ‘observations’ to evaluate how interaction between ROs and GPs unfolded over time. Official summit statements and related documents are also freely available at the organizations’ web-sites and web-sites of China’s and Russia’s Ministries of Foreign Affairs as well as from media sources.

A combination of narrative analysis and qualitative content analysis has been chosen as the most appropriate research method to study the role bargaining process between ROs and GPs. Content analysis is widely used in social sciences for the analysis of ‘the artifacts of social communication’ (mainly texts).<sup>76</sup> Holsti defined it as ‘a technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages.’<sup>77</sup> Conventional content analysis focuses on the frequencies of certain category appearance in texts, which then allows researchers to make certain conclusions about the content. At the same time, content analysis is also a method for identifying, organizing, indexing and retrieving data from the texts along certain content elements depending on the research objectives in place.<sup>78</sup> In this regard, it goes beyond mere counting and helps to uncover patterns in the content that give the opportunity for the researcher to understand how subjects or the authors of textual materials view their social world.<sup>79</sup> The main focus of research in this case is placed not on the frequency of words, categories or themes, but on their *qualitative content* (literal words and the manner in which they are used) which allows tracing changes in the qualitative content over long periods of time.<sup>80</sup> The two advantages of the Qualitative Content

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<sup>76</sup> Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 7 edition (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2008).

<sup>77</sup> O.R. Holsti, “Content Analysis,” in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, 2nd ed. (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1968), 608.

<sup>78</sup> Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 242.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 258.

Analysis (QCA) make it particularly suitable for my research objectives: 1) it is a useful method to organize empirical data along specific content elements or categories; 2) it enables the researcher to trace how the meaning of particular categories changed over time. Applied to the study of RO-GP role bargaining process, QCA allowed me to trace how actors' role conceptions and expectations about self and as well as their perception about regional security order in which they exist developed over time.

The categories for the QCA were structured along the following themes/patterns: 1) What are actors' perceptions about the desired regional order and their role in it? 2) What role expectations/demands do actors have for each other? 3) How do actors evaluate each other in terms of following these expectations? 4) How do actors evaluate the environment of their interaction? The first two questions were used to retrieve text passages from the summit communication materials that reflected the perceptions of ROs and GPs about their roles in the region and role demands for each other as well as particular preferences for regional order. The third and fourth questions were used to track ROs and GPs evaluations of each other and their relationship to see how their understanding of intersubjective security environments changed over time towards conflictual or cooperative. Analysis of the summit communication through QCA also allowed me to identify specific issue areas, in which role bargaining between ROs and GPs took place. These instances of interaction were selected for further empirical analysis.

Retrieving relevant data from the texts using QCA method is not enough to make causal links between the direction of the role bargaining process, specific nature of the role relationships or their constitutive impact on regional security environment. For this purpose, a deeper examination of content patterns is required, and the context in which these patterns were produced is also taken into consideration. In other words, it is not only important to study what actors *say*, but also what they *mean* by it, whether their understanding of each other's' role conceptions is shared or different and whether their narratives also become political acts in the role bargaining process indicative of actors' reaction to its specific turning points. This was achieved using the narrative method.

Narratives represent ‘stories told by actors to comprehend and frame the world in which they interact’ and thus could be understood as ‘strategies constructed by political agents that speak on behalf of the state, in internal and external relations to frame and cast roles and achieve specific goals and interests.’<sup>81</sup> It narratives, therefore, that are indicative of actors role claims, preferred role bargaining strategies and reactions to the expectations of others. Narrative analysis implies ‘using secondary sources, official documents and spontaneous press declarations to find yardsticks for specific narrations containing the roles enacted by [actors] in different settings as well as divergence/convergence in the making of a role.’<sup>82</sup> The usage of different sources (primary and secondary) produced via different institutional settings (official government communications, media) for the same event in the narrative analysis ensures the validity of the method as it allows for triangulation and helps to identify whether ‘a unified voice pushing for a role exists on a specific method.’<sup>83</sup>

In order to account for the role making of actors and the nature of their role relationships I placed the role bargaining narratives in a specific issue areas identified by QCA in the wider context of the foreign policy communication between actors. I analyzed secondary foreign policy documents available in English, such as foreign policy strategies, communiqués, leaders’ addresses, foreign policy evaluation reports, spontaneous media declarations as narratives in order to understand what meaning and expectations actors attached to the role conceptions of self and other, why they preferred particular role bargaining strategy and how they interpreted the outcomes of role bargaining process in each particular case. I was specifically interested in how the external manifestations of domestically-defined roles shape interaction between ROs and GPs and what intersubjective environments are created as an outcome. Therefore, my analysis focused on role conceptions as they appeared in the foreign policy discourse of actors, because these understandings of roles constitute

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<sup>81</sup> Leslie E. Wehner and Cameron G. Thies, “Role Theory, Narratives, and Interpretation: The Domestic Contestation of Roles,” *International Studies Review* 16, no. 3 (September 1, 2014): 421.

<sup>82</sup> Wehner and Thies, “Role Theory, Narratives, and Interpretation,” 421.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 422.

the subject of bargaining. I used interpretations provided by officials and/or institutions directly responsible for interpreting foreign policy (e.g. heads of states/governments, MFAs) or those that officially handled specific issues internationally. Hence, I did not investigate discourses shaping domestic role contestations, because my interest was on the external role bargaining outcomes.

In order to empirically assess the convergence or divergence of role conceptions, and the nature of the role relationships, I adopted Keohane's indicators for measuring institutionalization: commonality, specificity and autonomy.<sup>84</sup> Originally developed for measuring the levels of institutionalization, these indicators with some reconceptualization were applied to evaluate the nature of role relationships. In this context, *commonality* was defined as the degree to which role expectations of self and other were shared between ROs and GPs; *specificity* indicated how closely actors followed their role conceptions and expectations of each other in the role bargaining process; *autonomy* referred to the existence of institutional mechanisms for role enactment. These measures provided a useful guide as to how different role bargaining outcomes, theorized in Chapter 2, could be empirically detected. The empirical observations for different types of role relationships are provided in Table 2.1.

The narrative method helped to arrive at a 'thicker' interpretation of QCA results and enabled me to understand the constitutive links between role bargaining, role relationships and the nature of regional security order (theoretical assumption A1). The quality of intersubjective security environment was empirically assessed using actors' own evaluation of the context of the interaction and of each other (questions 3, 4 in QCA). Positive evaluations of interaction and of each other were indicative of cooperative security order, while negative evaluations reflected conflictual security environment.

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<sup>84</sup> Keohane, *International Institutions And State Power*, 4–5.

*Table 2.1. Empirical Observations of Role Bargaining Outcomes*

<b>Role relationship</b>	<b>Empirical Observation</b>
<i>Role consensus</i>	commonality in actors' role expectations about self and other
<i>Role dissensus</i>	divergence in actors' role expectations about self and other
<i>Role complementarity</i>	specific role conception that fit well together are accepted, but different objectives for pursuing these roles
<i>Role contradiction</i>	specific role conceptions that do not fit together, different expectations, roles are rejected
<i>Role agreement</i>	commonality in expectations, fitting role conceptions, institutional mechanisms for mutual role enactment
<i>Role conflict</i>	diverging expectations, rivalry role conceptions, competing mechanisms for role enactment

*Source: Own account*

The results of the narrative analysis and QCA informed the next step in the research of regional security dynamics. They helped to identify specific cases, where the dominating security patterns deviated from the nature of the intersubjective security order. That is, when cooperative patterns were observed under rivalry role relationship, or confrontational behavior developed under role agreement. These cases were selected to investigate the interconnection between role bargaining process and governance practice of actors.

**The analysis of regional security dynamics: case studies.** The two cases selected for the analysis of the relational impact of bargaining and governance practice of actors are the EU-Russia interaction over Ukraine's Association Agreement in the Eastern Partnership and ASEAN-China interaction over the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. Both cases represent long-term patterns of interaction between ROs and GPs, which allowed me to trace how their security dynamics manifested itself under different intersubjective orders. In both cases there were instances when the behavior of actors deviated from the intersubjective role relationship triggering shifts to conflict or

cooperation. In each of these instances, process tracing was used to detect the links between the role bargaining and governance practice and vice versa and to explain specific security outcomes.

Process tracing was selected as a method for case analysis precisely because of its ability to ‘explore the various stimuli to which the different social actors react in relation to the internal and external conditions influencing the issue, situation, or pivotal event.’<sup>85</sup> Process tracing is widely accepted as method to detect causal mechanisms in rational or positivist research.<sup>86</sup> However, and interpretive variant of process tracing can be adopted for the study of social processes in a constructivist research design.<sup>87</sup> Here I adopt the approach of interpretive process tracing. Differently from conventional process tracing that looks at a timeline of critical junctures linking variables with outcomes in a single causal mechanism, interpretive process-tracing focuses on the interaction of parallel processes. It considers the explanatory power of ‘process-factors’ rather than ‘variables’ in explaining particular outcomes, whose link is then seen as relational rather than causal.

Being interpretive in nature, this method takes into account the meanings that actors attach to particular situation or event and it is these meanings that are retrieved to provide reasons for particular behavior in a social process. It is a historical method, so that time/sequencing of events is important to understand how particular processes unfold. Interpretive process tracing is also multilayered, so it allows researcher to investigate how different autonomous processes evolve and interact with each other in the analyzed time period.<sup>88</sup>

These features of interpretive process tracing make it a suitable method to account for the social processes of regional security dynamics. It enables me to understand the autonomous impact

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<sup>85</sup> Rosemary C. Reilly, “Process Tracing,” in *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, ed. Albert J. Mills, Gabrielle Durepos, and Elden Wiebe (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2012), 735.

<sup>86</sup> David Collier, “Understanding Process Tracing,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44, no. 04 (October 2011): 823–30; Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>87</sup> Stefano Guzzini, “Securitization as a Causal Mechanism,” *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4–5 (August 1, 2011): 329–41; Vincent Pouliot, “Practice Tracing,” in *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, ed. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>88</sup> Stefano Guzzini, *The Return of Geopolitics in Europe?: Social Mechanisms and Foreign Policy Identity Crises* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 252–56.

of governance approaches and practices on regional security outcomes (theoretical assumption A2) as well as combinatorial impact of role bargaining and governance practices on the nature of regional security (theoretical assumptions A3 and A4). Being interpretive, historic and multilayered this method allows me to examine how temporal changes in role bargaining (positive or negative) evoked changes in regional governance structures and whether they encourage actors to activate or resolve the issues of contention. It helps to account for the reasons that shaped actors preferences for inclusive or protectionist governance approaches as well as for particular governance practices. In addition, interpretive process tracing enables me to incorporate into the analysis the impact of intervening factors and to see how these factors influenced the patterns of regional security (theoretical assumption A5). Under the conventional process tracing method those would constitute alternative explanation or causal mechanisms, yet under interpretive process tracing their constitutive impact could be incorporated to understand the development of the social processes.

Applying interpretive process tracing enabled me to ‘slice’ each of the cases along horizontal and vertical dimensions. Shifts in the role bargaining process and governance practices were conceptualized as horizontal layers each moving with its own logic and speed. These layers cut through certain vertical time periods where the two processes intersected. The analysis of these periods helped to investigate the changes that intersection caused to the processes as well as regional security outcomes resulted from these changes.<sup>89</sup> Temporal intersections between the two processes are the triggers for the evolution of the new regional security patterns. However, the direction of these patterns (towards conflict or cooperation) would be dependent on the autonomous developments in each of the processes. Hence, being consistent with the hypothesis-driven research design, interpretive process tracing is used not to test the theoretical assumption but rather to see how certain process outcomes became possible. It thus provides a comparative framework, but allows for the case-oriented outcomes.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> This approach to process tracing is discussed in Tulia G. Falletti and Julia F. Lynch, “Context and Causal Mechanisms in Political Analysis,” *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 9 (September 1, 2009): 1143–66.

<sup>90</sup> Guzzini, *The Return of Geopolitics in Europe?*, 71.

I used several different sources of data to conduct interpretive process tracing: official communication of ROs and GPs, media reports during the time periods under study and personal interviews with the officials and experts. Media reports and official statements were used as the main source of data to understand the interconnection between role bargaining and governance practices. The purpose of the interviews was mostly to fill the gaps in information, as well triangulate between sources of data. Similarly to the narrative method, the usage of different sources (official communication, media reports and interviews) supported the validity of interpretive process tracing as a method.

Official communication on Eastern Partnership and Code of Conduct was retrieved from the web-sites of the EU and ASEAN, Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Russia and China as well as web-sites of the relevant official units involved in the handling of this cases at international forums. Media reports from various outlets were retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database. For the EU-Russia case I used all search results under ‘Ukraine Association Agreement’ between 1 May 2009 and 1 January 2016 which included 251 articles. For ASEAN-China case, whose research interval was from 2000 to 2016 I had to reduce the sources to comparable number as the initial research returned over 3000 results. Hence, I selected only those articles that the database sorted as *Relevant*. After ‘relevance’ filter was applied, the number of reports on ASEAN-China Code of Conduct talks reduced to 326.

The analysis of official communication and media reports was used to identify critical junctures, where the inter-relation between role bargaining and governance practice was detected. After the critical junctures were identified, I expanded the original database of publications using more targeted search within LexisNexus Academic to cover these specific periods (e.g. the failing ASEAN-China summit in July 2012, reports about concrete EU-Russia-Ukraine trilateral meetings). This was done to better understand the context in which actors’ interpretation of particular events and thus roles of self and other was formed and how this interpretation triggered particular reactions. For this purpose, official reports, documents and press-statements of ROs and GPs were also informative

in terms of understanding the reasoning behind specific foreign policy actions. These documents helped to understand how role conceptions and understandings of appropriate role enactment were formed and transformed in relation to concrete events. Accounting for these domestic discourses was particularly important to understand the nature of the external output (governance approaches and practices).

Interviews were conducted at a later stage of the research to obtain additional data and to fill in gaps in understanding how particular perceptions were formed or why they guided certain reaction. The main focus of the interviews was to understand the reasoning/perceptions that pushed the choice of particular behavior at critical junctures. For the EU-Russia case concerning Ukraine, I interviewed 10 officials in Brussels (8 from the EU and 2 from Russia) during the research visit in October-November 2016. Interviewees represented different EU institutions involved in handling relations with Ukraine and Russia: European External Action Service, European Commission, and European Parliament. For the ASEAN-China case of the Code of Conduct, I conducted interviews with 2 former ASEAN officials and 5 experts on the topic during the research visits to Thailand and Singapore in March 2017, as well a Skype interview with the representative of Australia on ASEAN-China meetings. The limitations in ASEAN-China case was that the Chinese officials were not available for personal interview. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured in-depth interview method. The set of guiding questions was prepared and sent out to the interviewees in advance. Yet specific topics and clarifying questions were added as they emerged in the conversation.

A potential limitation of interpretive process tracing is the issue of generalizability of the findings to explain a variety of cases. Following Guzzini, I understand generalizability in my project as referring not the empirical universe of cases, but to the fact that theorized mechanisms of regional security dynamics ‘can travel across cases via a form of abstraction similarly to ideal types.’<sup>91</sup> It should also be recognized that processes of regional security dynamics do not follow one trajectory

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<sup>91</sup> Stefano Guzzini, “Militarizing Politics, Essentializing Identities: Interpretivist Process Tracing and the Power of Geopolitics,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 52, no. 3 (2017): 434.

with linear causal outcome, but represent ‘distinct trajectories of different but connected long-term processes’ with multiple outcomes.<sup>92</sup> Hence, interpretive process tracing could be applied to analyze the cases of Ukraine in the EaP and Code of Conduct but the empirical findings would be unique for each case, e.g. non-generalizable.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

In this chapter I advanced a role theory approach to study regional security dynamics, particularly the one between regional organizations and great powers. The framework has several important advantages compared to other theories discussed in the previous chapter. Role theory allows me to conceptualize regional security order as a dynamic environment, whose nature (cooperative or conflictual) is defined by the bargaining process between actors at two levels of interaction. The first level is represented by the role bargaining process. The dynamics of role bargaining is triggered by the actors’ role conceptions and role expectations for each other. Bargaining process consolidated particular role relationships between actors that are indicative of cooperative or conflictual security orders. Depending on which type of role relationship is being consolidated through interaction, a cooperative or conflictual security environment is reproduced between actors.

The governance practice of actors constitutes the second layer of regional security dynamics. The bargaining in this dimension unfolds over the three possible issues of contention in regional governance: the substance of regional governance, terms of role enactment, and tolerance to institutional alternatives. The state of consensus over these issues as well as actors compliance or deviation from governance consensus determine whether the exiting role relationship is sustained or undermined and, subsequently, whether cooperative or conflictual behavioral patterns pick up in the regional order. The impact of other factors on regional security such as the involvement of the third actor or internal crisis of some kind should also be understood through the prism of actors’ role bargaining process.

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<sup>92</sup> Guzzini, “Militarizing Politics, Essentializing Identities,” 436.

In the rest of the dissertation, I apply this theoretical framework to analyze the processes of security dynamics in the case of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction. In the next two chapters I trace the EU-Russia and ASEAN-China role bargaining process to show how particular role relationships between ROs and GPs emerged and what type of regional security order they produced. I argue that the deterioration in the EU-Russia case resulted from the failure of actors to gain recognition for their role claims and sustain a mutually acceptable role relationship. In contrast, the ASEAN-China role bargaining process resulted in a successful role agreement that got institutionalized through interaction.

## CHAPTER 3: THE EU-RUSSIA ROLE BARGAINING PROCESS: FROM COMPLEMENTARITY TO RIVALRY

After initial enthusiasm during the 1990s and early 2000s, EU-Russia interaction deteriorated gradually into ‘stalemate’, ‘unfortunate continuity’, ‘systemic crisis’, ‘mutual disappointment’ and ‘disillusionment’ as contentions over various issues piled up.<sup>1</sup> This negative trend culminated in 2014, when the EU-Russia relationship effectively turned into rivalry following Russia’s intervention in Ukraine.<sup>2</sup> Scholars largely attributed the failure of EU-Russia cooperation to the divergence and competition between their value systems or worldviews. For example, Trenin pointed to the value-driven EU vs. interest-driven Russia; Light and Haukkala noted the incompatibility between the EU’s post-sovereignty logic and Russia’s sovereign democracy doctrine, while Averre and Makarychev emphasized competing logics of region-building between the ‘soft power’ EU and geopolitical Russia.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, these divergences are seen as an underlying reason behind the deterioration of EU-Russia relations and the main cause of the current crisis. Yet, as Haukkala argued, these divergences are often taken ‘at a face value’ and in ‘a static manner’, while the process of their development might actually be more important if one wants to understand why, despite initial enthusiasm, EU-Russia interaction became so problematic.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sergei Medvedev, “The Stalemate in EU-Russia Relations,” in *Russia’s European Choice* edited by Ted Hopf (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 215–32, [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230612587\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230612587_9); Arkady Moshes, “EU-Russia Relations: Unfortunate Continuity,” *European Issues* 129 (2009): 24; Margot Light, “Keynote Article: Russia and the EU: Strategic Partners or Strategic Rivals?,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 46 (September 1, 2008): 7–27, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2008.00808.x>; Hiski Haukkala, “From Cooperative to Contested Europe? The Conflict in Ukraine as a Culmination of a Long-Term Crisis in EU–Russia Relations,” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 25–40, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2014.1001822>.

<sup>2</sup> Cristian Nitoiu, “Towards Conflict or Cooperation? The Ukraine Crisis and EU-Russia Relations,” *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 16, no. 3 (July 2, 2016): 375–90, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2016.1193305>.

<sup>3</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Russia Redefines Itself and Its Relations with the West,” *Washington Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (2007): 95–105; Light, “Keynote Article”; Hiski Haukkala, *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership: The Limits of Post-Sovereignty in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2010), 1–4; Haukkala, “From Cooperative to Contested Europe?”; Averre, “Competing Rationalities”; Andrey Makarychev, “Russia-EU: Competing Logics of Region Building,” *DGAPanalyse* 1 (March 2012), 1–18.

<sup>4</sup> Haukkala, *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership*, 1–4.

Similarly to Haukkala, I argue that a focus on the process of EU-Russia interaction is more important for understanding when and why diverging worldviews started to become consequential for their relationship. However, differently from him and other scholars, I claim that EU-Russia interaction in regional order was strongly guided by divergence of their role conceptions and expectations for each other, rather than their material or ideational values. What also mattered for the development of their security environment were the strategies they employed in the role bargaining process. Both increasingly preferred to Force their roles, which reduced the prospect for successful role bargaining. The pattern of the EU-Russia role bargaining process is summarized in Table 3.1.

*Table 3.1. The EU-Russia Role Bargaining Process*

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Role Bargaining Outcomes</b>	<b>Regional Order Type</b>
<b>1994-2005</b>	Role complementarity institutionalized through interaction	Cooperative security order
<b>2006-2014</b>	Failure to sustain complementarity, role bargaining consolidated the role contradiction	Cooperative security order undermined
<b>2014-2017</b>	Interaction became fully guided by Ukrainian conflict; consolidation of the role rivalry	Conflictual security order

*Source: Own Account*

This chapter argues that the initial relationship of complementarity that supported a cooperative security order between 1994-2005 was not sustained. Following a shift in the role bargaining process in 2006, role contradiction, and later role rivalry, emerged as the bargaining outcomes. Failure to establish a mutually accepted role relationship after 2006 resulted from the fact that actors used interaction to Force their roles. The EU failed to socialize Russia into its vision of a European security order, while Russia failed to locate its own desired role. The intervening factor of the Ukrainian revolution in 2013-2014 set role expectations of the partners further apart, as their interpretation of the events in Ukraine diverged significantly. Following Russian's annexation of Crimea, and its support for the insurgency in the Eastern Ukraine, the interaction of actors became fully contingent

on developments in Ukraine. As a result, the conflictual security environment between them was consolidated.

### **3.1. Complementary Roles and Successful Role Bargaining, 1994-2005**

In the previous chapter, I defined complementarity as a role relationship where actors accept fitting role conceptions but pursue these roles out of different expectations and objectives. In this section, I argue that the EU-Russia role bargaining process between 1994-2005 consolidated complementary roles as its outcome. Fitting role conceptions enabled the EU and Russia to obtain each other's recognition for the desired role claims, even though their expectations for pursuing these roles diverged. As a result, a cooperative intersubjective security environment was sustained.

The complementary role relationship between Russia and the EU was established on the basis of the role expectations they acquired in the context of the uncertain post-Cold War environment. The key roles that the EU identified for itself at the time were that of a regional 'normative guide' and a 'peace and security promoter'. These roles shaped the EU vision of regional security order. It believed that by developing interaction and closer cooperation with its neighbors, including Russia, it would support their reintegration in the world economy and facilitate the creation of a regional security order in Europe.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, the EU expected Russia to become a 'follower' of its policy advice and recommendations in order to become a market economy and a democracy in European regional order. For Russia, which struggled to define its national identity after the collapse of the Soviet Union, accepting the role of a follower was a way to escape international isolation and become recognized as a member of the European order.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, Moscow accepted the role of a 'follower' because it realized that democratic transition and economic modernization were required

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<sup>5</sup> Karren E. Smith, *The Making of EU Foreign Policy: The Case of Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 49; "A Secure Europe in a Better World - European Security Strategy, Brussels, 12 December 2003," (European Council, December 13, 2003), <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/.../78367.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Maurizio Massari, "Russia and the EU Ten Years On: A Relationship in Search of Definition," *The International Spectator* 42, no. 1 (March 1, 2007): 2-3, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932720601160294>.

for it to ‘become an equal member of the great powers’ club of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries’<sup>7</sup> and were hardly possible without EU assistance.<sup>8</sup> Russia was therefore willing to become ‘everything that the Western capitalist democracies could wish for’<sup>9</sup> - a democracy with a market economy and a partner of the EU in regional and global affairs - with the expectation of a return to the status of a great power. As such, the roles of the EU and Russia fitted well together, but actors had different expectations for pursuing these roles. This initial complementarity was consolidated in the 1994 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). The document defined shared objectives for the EU-Russia partnership as ‘gradual integration between Russia and the wider area of cooperation in Europe’ and the ‘[EU] support for Russian efforts to consolidate democracy and economic development.’<sup>10</sup> Although the PCA was worded in a balanced way, the end goal of its implementation resembled closely the European vision of Russia in regional order, which further supports the fact that Russia accepted the role of a ‘follower’.

The relationship of complementarity was consolidated by further recognition that actors granted to each other in the interaction process. The EU continued its support for Russia in line with perception of the country as a ‘follower’. Moscow, though, interpreted it in line with its own role conception of being accepted as an ‘equal partner’ of the EU and the West, and implicitly as a ‘great power’. For example, the EU granted ‘full support’ for the ‘policy of reforms’ launched by Vladimir Putin in 2000, which the EU perceived as ‘a new stage in [Russia’s] development’ towards ‘meeting the democratic requirements of modern economy and society.’<sup>11</sup> As a normative guide, the EU expressed its willingness to support Putin’s National Development Plan of 2001 by providing

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<sup>7</sup> “Russian Foreign Policy Concept,” 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Vladimir Baranovsky, “The Economic Community as Seen from Moscow: Rival, Partner, Model?,” in *Russia and Europe: An End to Confrontation?*, ed. Neil Malcolm (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994), 59–78; Jackie Gower, “Russia and the European Union,” in *Russia and Europe: Conflict or Cooperation?*, ed. Mark Webber (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 66–98.

<sup>9</sup> Haukkala, *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership*, 70.

<sup>10</sup> “Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation” (Official Journal L 327, November 28, 1997), accessed January 20, 2018, [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2003/november/tradoc\\_114138.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2003/november/tradoc_114138.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> “Joint Declaration on Strengthening Dialogue and Cooperation on Political and Security Matters in Europe,” (EU-Russia Summit, October 30, 2000), accessed January 20, 2018, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-00-1239\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-00-1239_en.htm).

technical assistance and financial aid in the areas that were identified by Russia such as business environment, taxation, de-monopolization, and investment climate.<sup>12</sup> In 2002, the EU admitted Russia's role achievement by granting the country an official status of a fully-fledged market economy 'in recognition of the major reforms it has successfully undertaken in recent years.'<sup>13</sup> As such, EU recognition was consistent with its expectation that Russia would accomplish the process of domestic transformations under EU normative guidance. However, Russia interpreted the EU gesture in line with its own role conception. According to Vladimir Putin, this decision, although related to economic issues, had important 'moral and political' significance for Russia.<sup>14</sup> It guaranteed that Russia '[would] no longer be discriminated against' and signaled that it was recognized as an equal member of the Western club.<sup>15</sup>

EU recognition of Russia as a 'partner' in the European security order also supported the consolidation of Moscow's own role claim. In 2000, the EU officially granted Russia a role in European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). This move by the EU provided a 'material expression' of its role expectation for Russia as expressed in the 1999 EU Common Strategy on Russia: to have Moscow firmly encored in 'a united Europe free of new dividing lines.' The EU Country Strategy Paper on Russia (2002-2006) recognized it as 'a key actor for the stability and security of the entire European continent.'<sup>16</sup> In 2002, the EU and Russia agreed to elaborate a common approach to crisis management based on their respective proposals. In 2003, Russia contributed to the first EU-led conflict management mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which the

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<sup>12</sup> "Country Strategy Paper: Russia 2002-2006," (European Union, December 27, 2001), 5, accessed January 20, 2018, [eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/russia/docs/02-06\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/russia/docs/02-06_en.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> "EU Announces Formal Recognition of Russia as 'Market Economy' in Major Milestone on Road to WTO Membership," European Commission, May 29, 2002, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-02-775\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-02-775_en.htm).

<sup>14</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Statement for the Press and Answers to Questions at a Press Conference after the Russia-European Union Summit," President of Russia, May 29, 2002, accessed August 24, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21615>.

<sup>15</sup> "Russia will soon receive a status of a country with market economy, but so far only from the EU," [in Russian], Pravda.RU, July 8, 2002, accessed August 24, 2017, <https://www.pravda.ru/world/08-07-2002/808036-0/>; "The US recognized Russia as a country with market economy," [in Russian], InoSmi.Ru, June 7, 2002, accessed August 24, 2017, <http://inosmi.ru/untitled/20020607/147186.html>.

<sup>16</sup> "Country Strategy Paper: Russia 2002-2006," 2.

EU evaluated as a ‘positive contribution’ and as a reason for expanding its role acceptance by inviting Russia to join EU-NATO crisis management exercises.<sup>17</sup>

The EU proposition and the follow-up cooperation under the ESDP complemented Russia’s own expectation of becoming a ‘partner’ of the EU in developing the European security architecture by ‘join[ing] conflict prevention and local conflict resolution in Europe.’<sup>18</sup> Being named in the EU Common Security Strategy as ‘a major factor in [European] security and prosperity’, particularly in the regions adjacent to Russia, was also interpreted as recognition of Russia’s role claim. According to Frolova (2008), it signaled that the EU was ‘recognizing Russia as an influential player in world politics’, which ensured that Moscow would not be isolated from the region that it traditionally viewed as a sphere of its special interests.<sup>19</sup> In this way, complementarity contributed to a successful role location process in Russia and subsequently supported a cooperative trend between the partners.

Two other cases of EU-Russia interaction during 1994-2005 institutionalized reciprocal role recognition: EU enlargement, and the adoption of the EU-Russia Roadmaps for the Four Common Spaces. EU enlargement of 2004 has been widely interpreted as having a negative influence on the course of EU-Russia relations.<sup>20</sup> However, the way the actors managed this sensitive issue contributed positively to their role location. Originally the EU took a harder stance on Moscow, demanding that Russia extend the application of the PCA to the states joining the EU in 2004 ‘without any precondition or distinction,’ in order to ‘avoid a serious impact on the EU-Russia relations in general.’<sup>21</sup> According to some EU officials, this position implied ‘a threat of sanctions’ in case

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<sup>17</sup> “Joint Declaration between the European Union and the Russian Federation on Strengthening Dialogue and Co-Operation on Political and Security Matters,” (EU-Russia Summit, November 6, 2003), accessed January 20, 2018, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/77846.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/77846.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> “Russian Mid-Term Strategy on the Cooperation with the European Union (2000-2010),” 1999, accessed February 15, 2013. [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/russia/russian\\_medium\\_term\\_strategy/](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/russian_medium_term_strategy/).

<sup>19</sup> Yelena Frolova, “Russia in the System of European Security,” [in Russian], *Geopolitika*, no. 01 (2008): 55, accessed August 24, 2017, <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/v/rossiya-v-sisteme-evropeyskoy-bezopasnosti>.

<sup>20</sup> N. Arbatova, “Will CIS countries become a 'bone of contention' between Russia and the EU?,” [in Russian], *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya*, no. 6 (2006): 15–20, accessed November 25, 2017, <https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=9199488>; Margot Light, “Russia and Europe: The Process of EU Enlargement,” in *The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2008), 87; Ronald D. Asmus, “Europe’s Eastern Promise: Rethinking NATO and EU Enlargement,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (2008): 95–106.

<sup>21</sup> “Council Meeting on External Relations Press Release 6294/04” (European Commission, February 23, 2004), accessed August 24, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_PRES-04-49\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_PRES-04-49_en.htm).

Moscow would not comply with the EU expectations.<sup>22</sup> Russia, however, refused ‘to act on orders from Brussels’<sup>23</sup> and prepared its own extensive list of concerns to be addressed by the EU.

For Russia, negotiating the issue of EU enlargement represented part of the role bargaining process. President Putin considered it to be ‘an absolute criteria of sincerity’<sup>24</sup> in relations with the EU. The fact that Brussels was willing to address, and eventually to accommodate, most of Russia’s concerns was interpreted in Moscow as recognition of Russia’s role as a strategic partner of the EU. During the 2003 summit, President Putin noted that ‘it was important for [Russia] that our partners understand our concerns and are willing to settle these problems before the enlargement date.’<sup>25</sup> He also identified the EU’s readiness to work with Russia ‘on the principles of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation’ as ‘the main outcome of the meeting.’<sup>26</sup> Reciprocally, Russia recognized EU enlargement as an expression of the Union’s role as a ‘normative guide’ and ‘security promoter’. In a 2004 joint statement, the Russian Federation acknowledged the EU role as a security promoter by subscribing to its vision of enlargement as contributing to ‘Europe without the dividing lines by creating a common space of freedom, security and justice.’<sup>27</sup> It also recognized the EU ‘normative guide’ role by acknowledging that enlargement was ‘a firm guarantee for the protection of human rights and the protection of persons belonging to minorities.’<sup>28</sup>

Another case of reciprocal role recognition was the negotiation of the Roadmaps of the Four Common Spaces launched between the EU and Russia in 2005. Specifically, two aspects made the Roadmaps important for the EU-Russia role location process. Firstly, the PCA, which as argued

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<sup>22</sup> Alex Fak, “EU Stands Firm in Spat With Russia,” *Moscow Times*, February 25, 2004, sec. #2868, LexisNexis Academic.

<sup>23</sup> Vernon Tidwell, “‘Cornerstone’ of EU-Russia Threatened,” *Moscow News*, March 3, 2004, sec. Economy, LexisNexis Academic.

<sup>24</sup> Anna Zafesova, “European Union - the source of joys and sorrows for Putin,” [in Russian], *InoPressa*, May 30, 2002, accessed August 24, 2017, <https://www.inopressa.ru/article/30May2002/lastampa/arc:lastampa:russia.html>.

<sup>25</sup> “Statement for the Press and Answers to Journalists’ Questions at a News Conference Following the Russia-European Union Summit, Rome,” President of Russia, November 6, 2003, accessed January 18, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22190>.

<sup>26</sup> “Statement for the Press, Rome.”

<sup>27</sup> “Joint Statement on EU Enlargement and EU-Russia Relations, Luxemburg,” (EU-Russia Summit, April 27, 2004), accessed January 20, 2018, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_PRES-04-122\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_PRES-04-122_en.htm).

<sup>28</sup> “Joint Statement on EU Enlargement.”

earlier institutionalized the initial relationship of complementarity between Russia and the EU, was about to expire in 2006, while the prospect of negotiating a new legal agreement was uncertain. In this context, both actors expected the Roadmaps to become a guiding document for EU-Russia cooperation, at least in the medium term. In 2005 Russia's Vice-Foreign Minister Vladimir Chizhov referred to the Roadmaps of the Four Common Spaces as 'the basis of the EU-Russia partnership for the foreseeable future.'<sup>29</sup> The EU also perceived the Roadmaps as a document that 'will determine the agenda for co-operation between the EU and Russia for the medium-term.'<sup>30</sup> It was thus important for both actors to make sure their role conceptions are institutionalized through these documents. Secondly, the Roadmaps of the Four Common Spaces represented an alternative to the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), which Russia categorically rejected. The asymmetric relationship between the EU and ENP countries was not consistent with Russia's role conception, as it marginalized its role as a 'partner' in European security<sup>31</sup> and represented an 'affront to Russia's status as a great power.'<sup>32</sup> Russia chose to 'Reject' the role of 'follower' that ENP membership implied. It 'felt insulted',<sup>33</sup> being grouped together with other EU neighbors 'that are entirely different in their level of development and [...] have different [from Russia] objectives with respect to the EU.'<sup>34</sup> In contrast, the framework of the Four Common Spaces 'reflect[ed] the strategic nature of the partnership between the EU and Russia'<sup>35</sup> and thus better suited Russia's role expectation to be recognized as an equal, strategic partner of the EU.

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<sup>29</sup> "Speech of the Vice-Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation V.A. Chizhov at the Bergerdorf Forum, Potsdam," (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, June 25, 2005), [in Russian], accessed January 20, 2018, [http://www.mid.ru/press\\_service/deputy\\_ministers\\_speeches/-/asset\\_publisher/O3publba0Cjv/content/id/43435027-06-2005](http://www.mid.ru/press_service/deputy_ministers_speeches/-/asset_publisher/O3publba0Cjv/content/id/43435027-06-2005).

<sup>30</sup> "EU/Russia: The Four 'common Spaces', MEMO/04/268" (European Commission, November 23, 2004), accessed January 20, 2018, [europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-04-268\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-04-268_en.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Derek Averre, "Russia and the European Union: Convergence or Divergence?," *European Security* 14, no. 2 (June 1, 2005): 182, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662830500336060>.

<sup>32</sup> Anna-Sophie Maass, *EU-Russia Relations, 1999-2015: From Courtship to Confrontation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 58.

<sup>33</sup> Haukkala, *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership*, 134.

<sup>34</sup> Vladimir Chizhov, "European Union: A Partnership Strategy," *International Affairs (Moscow)* 50, no. 6 (2004): 85.

<sup>35</sup> "Joint Press Release, EU-Russia Summit, Hague, 25 November 2004," accessed December 16, 2017, <http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/russia/docs/summits/82799.pdf>.

In pursuit of its role claim, Russia engaged in protracted and ‘bitterly contested’<sup>36</sup> negotiations on the framework of the Four Common Spaces to locate its desired role for itself. The four Roadmaps that came out of the negotiations reflected a successful role bargaining outcome for both the EU and Russia, which managed to secure at least partial acceptance for their role claims. Brussels succeeded to inscribe the emphasis on common values and especially ‘the centrality’ of human rights in the document in line with its objective for the negotiations,<sup>37</sup> which signaled its success as a ‘normative guide.’ Although the explicit reference to the EU as a source of norms and values had been removed from the document,<sup>38</sup> the Roadmap on Culture still mentioned ‘strengthening the European identity’ in Russia as one of its objectives.<sup>39</sup> As a security promoter, the EU succeeded in inserting a commitment to managing ‘existing and potential regional and local conflicts, [...] including in the regions adjacent to the EU and Russian borders’ into the Roadmap on External Security,<sup>40</sup> despite the fact that Russia was not welcoming the EU’s involvement in this area.

The key achievement for Russia was official recognition of its role in regional security alongside the EU. According to Vladimir Chizhov, the Roadmap on External Security ‘incorporated key elements of the Russian foreign policy aspirations’ alongside those of the EU.<sup>41</sup> Particularly important for Russia, in this context, was the paragraph accepting Russia’s role of a key EU partner in maintaining regional security. Specifically, the Roadmap stated that the EU and Russia ‘share responsibility for international order’ and ‘will give particular attention to strengthening international stability, including the regions adjacent to the EU and Russian borders’ and cooperate in addressing ‘existing and potential regional and local conflicts’ in Europe.<sup>42</sup> This paragraph closely resembled Russia’s role conception expressed in the Mid-term Strategy of Cooperation with the EU to ‘increase

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<sup>36</sup> Averre, “Russia and the European Union,” 183.

<sup>37</sup> “EU/Russia: The Four ‘Common Spaces’ MEMO/04/268.”

<sup>38</sup> Haukkala, *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership*, 151.

<sup>39</sup> “Roadmaps for the Four Common Spaces” (EU-Russia Summit, May 10, 2005), 47, [https://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/policy/russia\\_eu\\_four\\_common\\_spaces-%20roadmap\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/policy/russia_eu_four_common_spaces-%20roadmap_en.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> “Roadmaps for the Four Common Spaces,” 32.

<sup>41</sup> “Speech of the Vice-Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation V.A. Chizhov at the Bergerdorf Forum, Potsdam.”

<sup>42</sup> “Roadmaps for the Four Common Spaces,” 32.

Russia's role and authority in Europe by creating the system of collective security' inter alia 'by strengthening the partnership with the EU in conflict prevention and joint conflict resolution' in the region.<sup>43</sup> The case of the Eastern Partnership, discussed in Chapter 5, demonstrates that despite the fact that the EU and Russia mutually recognized each other's roles, and formalized this recognition in the Roadmaps, the expectations of actors for pursuing them diverged. Hence, at this stage, formal institutionalization consolidated the relationship of role complementarity and not role agreement.

Positive development of the role bargaining process contributed to a cooperative intersubjective security environment between the EU and Russia from 1994 to 2005. The actors viewed each other as 'friends' and 'partners', despite a number of issues overshadowing their relationship during this time period (the wars in Chechnya (1994, 1999), the revolution in Ukraine (2004), EU enlargement (2004) and the energy crisis (2005)). The summits in May 2001 and May 2003 probably produced the most cooperative joint statements ever made by Russia and the EU, where each paragraph started with 'we,' rather than regular 'the EU and Russia.' Both actors saw 'no alternative' to the development of stronger partnership and both firmly intended to further institutionalize their relations by concluding a new legally-binding agreement on strategic cooperation instead of the outdated PCA. The language of the Roadmaps demonstrated these positive expectations very well. In all areas of cooperation covered by this document, Russia and the EU agreed to 'start a dialogue', 'intensify dialogue', 'start consultations', 'start negotiations', 'intensify cooperation', 'explore the possibilities', 'establish reliable channels', 'build capacity' and 'develop an appropriate legislative framework.'<sup>44</sup>

However, as I argue in the next section, the cooperative security pattern was not sustained. In 2006 actors changed their role bargaining strategies following an internal role redefinition, which negatively impacted the role bargaining process. As a result, contradictory roles fostered a more conflictual intersubjective security order.

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<sup>43</sup> "Russian Mid-Term Strategy on the Cooperation with the European Union (2000-2010)."

<sup>44</sup> "Roadmaps for the Four Common Spaces."

### 3.2. Contradictory Roles and Failed Role Bargaining, 2006-2014

From 2006, the EU and Russia re-defined their role conceptions, while their expectations for each other further diverged. I argue that the role redefinition influenced their role bargaining process in a way that both actors resorted to Force strategy to locate their role claims. Role enforcement failed to produce mutually acceptable role relationship. As a result, between 2006-2014 contradictory roles were consolidated with negative implications for the regional security environment.

In a contradictory role relationship, actors have diverging role expectations about each other and adopt roles that do not fit well together. Changes in the EU's role conception with regard to Russia occurred after the 2004 enlargement. Countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states, which joined the EU in 2004, brought into the debate a 'negative perception of Russia and a higher perception of threat coming from the Russian Federation', which contributed to a more assertive position of the EU towards Russia as a whole.<sup>45</sup> Gradually, old member states also hardened their positions.<sup>46</sup> The EU still considered Russia a strategic partner, but from 2006 became more assertive in the role bargaining process, forced its roles as a 'normative guide' and 'security promoter' and imposed its role expectation on Moscow.<sup>47</sup> In other words, it was using its capabilities for changing regional environment in a way that they could achieve the desired roles. As a normative guide, the EU resorted to negative rather than positive conditionality when fostering democratic reforms in Russia and promoting internalization of European norms and values.<sup>48</sup> As a security

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<sup>45</sup> J. Kaminska, *Poland and EU Enlargement: Foreign Policy in Transformation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1917.

<sup>46</sup> Steven Blockmans, "How the EU's 'Big Bang' Enlargement Changed Foreign Policy," *EU Observer*, May 1, 2014, accessed August 26, 2017, <https://euobserver.com/opinion/123983>.

<sup>47</sup> The triggering event in this regard was the Polish veto in 2006 to block the start of EU-Russia negotiations of the new comprehensive partnership agreement, instead of the expiring PCA. Poland demanded that the EU make Russia's accession to the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) and the elevation of the trade embargo on Polish food products the preconditions for starting PCA negotiations. Lithuania joined Polish demands in May 2007. In addition, it requested the EU to include Russia's commitment to solving the 'frozen conflicts' in Georgia and Moldova into the PCA talks. Eventually, the EU agreed to emphasize the ECT and to include the specific clause on frozen conflicts in the text of the PCA. Hence, due to internal pressures from new members, the organization ended up having a more demanding mandate for the PCA talks with Russia than originally agreed. The Russian side saw this move as 'blackmail' and argued that PCA talks should start without preconditions.

<sup>48</sup> Positive conditionality is based on providing encouraging incentives for an actor to change the course of behavior. Negative conditionality implies structuring the behavior of an actor through the use of threat, sanctioning, etc. For the

promoter, the EU pushed Russia to accept more commitments in regional security order, while reducing the opportunities for Russia's own contribution. The shift in Russia's foreign policy towards more assertive behavior at that time ('gas wars' between Russia and Ukraine in 2006 and 2009, Russian-Georgian war in 2008), and the roll-back of democracy in Russia during 2006-2013, only consolidated this trajectory in the EU approach to Russia.

The shift in the EU's role bargaining approach came in contradiction with the developments of Russia's own role conception at that time. In 2005, Konstantin Kosachev, Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs, of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, observed that in foreign policy President Putin faced a choice between *realpolitik* and the structures of international security cooperation. According to Kosachev, Russia constantly made this choice in favor of cooperative security under international frameworks, and would continue to do so, yet 'the results of this policy were few and not obvious.'<sup>49</sup> There was also a change in the existing perception that by following the EU or Western guidelines for democratic reforms Russia would reach the desired place in the international system. In 2005, President Putin remarked that while using the achievements of European civilization, Russia 'had to find [its] own path in order to build a democratic, free and just society and state.'<sup>50</sup>

These developments in Russia's role conception projected into the EU-Russia role bargaining process. From 2006, Moscow was no longer satisfied with the role of a 'partner' in EU security initiatives and a 'follower' of its normative agenda, but claimed the role of a 'contributor' aiming to 'develop together [with the EU] a set of common principles that can be applied to all actors in [regional and ] international community.'<sup>51</sup> As a contributor, Russia started to question the validity of

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discussion of the two types of conditionality see V. Veebel, "European Union's Positive Conditionality Model in a Pre-Accession Process," *Trames. Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 13, no. 3 (2009): 207-231.

<sup>49</sup> Konstantin Kosachev and Anders Aslund, "Russian Foreign Policy: A New Stage of Development (Meeting Summary)," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 2, 2005, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2005/11/02/russian-foreign-policy-new-stage-of-development-event-828>.

<sup>50</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," President of Russia, April 25, 2005, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22931>.

<sup>51</sup> "Press Conference Following Russia-EU Summit, Sochi," President of Russia, May 25, 2006, accessed January 21, 2018. <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23595>.

the EU's normative agenda, rejected the 'imposition' of European values on Russia and involvement in its domestic reform process, but started to position itself as contributor to the normative debate. Likewise, in sharp contrast with EU expectations, Moscow was no longer willing to accept the security commitments under the EU institutional framework, but preferred to contribute to European security order with its own initiatives.

The domestic developments of EU and Russian roles turned their role bargaining into mutual role enforcement. While the EU wished to discipline Russia as a 'follower', Moscow was claiming an upgraded role of a 'contributor'. The result was a consolidation of a contradictory role relationship. The dimensions that featured in the EU-Russia role bargaining process of 2006-2014 were normative the dialogue, the energy dialogue and the integration processes in the common neighborhood.

**Normative dialogue.** The issues of human rights and democratic freedoms have always been high on the agenda of the EU-Russia dialogue. However, before 2006 the EU preferred to acknowledge positive developments in Russia's democratic transformation without raising major criticism. For example, before 2006 Russian actions in Chechnya received quite a neutral mentioning in the EU-Russia communication, whereby the EU 'acknowledged improvements', 'welcomed political process', 'noted the work done' and 'steps in right direction.'<sup>52</sup> In 2006, the EU for the first time raised a 'concern' about human rights issues in Russia with regard to the lack of process in investigating the murder of a journalist, Anna Politkovskaya, and the political case of Mikhail Khodorkovskiy.<sup>53</sup> Attention to single cases eventually turned into more structural concerns about Russia's democracy, such as 'the [lack of] independence and the impartiality of the judicial institutions of the Russian Federation', 'unclear' anti-extremist legislation 'used to harass NGOs, religious minorities and media organizations', 'constraints on political competition in Russia' and

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<sup>52</sup> These evaluations could be found for example in the statements of the EU-Russia Moscow Summit of 29 May 2000; EU-Russia Paris Summit of 30 October 2000; EU-Russia Moscow Summit of 17 May 2001 and in the EU-Russia Summit in Petersburg of 31 May 2003.

<sup>53</sup> "Joint Press Conference Following the Russia-EU Summit Meeting, Helsinki," President of Russia, November 24, 2006, accessed January 5, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23921>.

shrinking space for civil society, expressed in European Parliament (EP) resolutions on Russia and in EU-Russia summit communications during 2007-2014.<sup>54</sup>

These concerns impacted the EU role bargaining strategy as it started to Force its role of a ‘normative guide’, using political conditionality to return Russia back on track of the ‘follower’. For example, the EP resolution of 2008 stated that ‘respect for the rule of law, democracy and human rights must be an important part of any future agreement with Russia’ making it a ‘necessary condition for the start of the EU-Russia negotiations of a new PCA. When concluding the Partnership for Modernisation (P4M) agreement with Russia in 2010, the EU also made implementation of the agreement in areas desirable for Russia (e.g. technology cooperation) contingent on its compliance with the EU’s normative agenda. At the related summit, the President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, emphasized that the rule of law, protection of citizen’s rights and business regulations ‘are indispensable’ to modernization and noted that Russia’s performance in these dimensions was an important precondition for the development of the closer economic ties between Russia and the EU.<sup>55</sup> In 2011, the European Parliament also called on the EU leaders to apply a full range of measures at their disposal to address systemic violations of human rights abuses in Russia. The most famous resolution in this regard came in 2011, calling on the EU to impose entry bans and freezing bank accounts of the 60 Russian officials related to ‘Magnitsky case.’<sup>56</sup>

Russia rejected the role of a ‘follower’ in a normative dialogue as it became incompatible with Russia’s own role conception to become a ‘contributor’ to the European value system. To locate the desired role, the country started imitating the EU’s own role location strategy. An imitation strategy presupposes that an actor is certain about the role, its aims and means, identifies with a successful

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<sup>54</sup> See for example European Parliament Resolutions on Russia on 26 April 2007, 13 March 2008, 21 October 2010, 11 February 2011, 13 December 2011.

<sup>55</sup> “Press Statements Following EU-Russia Summit, Brussels,” President of Russia, December 7, 2010, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/9730>.

<sup>56</sup> The decision was related to the death of Serhiy Magnitsky, the Russia lawyer, imprisoned in 2008 after revealing large-scale corruption among Russian authorities. He died during pre-trial detention in 2009, after being physically assaulted and receiving poor medical treatment.

role holder and imitates its behavior.<sup>57</sup> In 2006, Vladimir Putin famously stated that ‘it would be short-sighted and deeply erroneous’ to impose any artificial values on Russia.<sup>58</sup> However, in the opening statement of the very same speech, he identified Russia as ‘a natural member of the European family,’ whose partnership with the EU should be based on ‘common aspirations and values.’<sup>59</sup> According to President Putin, these ‘common values’ should not be unilaterally imposed by the EU but should be as subject of debate, where Russia could contribute, for instance, its ‘unique experience’ of handling ethnic and cultural diversity.<sup>60</sup>

Russia started imitating the EU in locating the role of a ‘contributor’ to the normative dialogue. Russia claimed the right to provide evaluation of the democratic developments in the EU. At summits the Russian President regularly expressed his opinion about the situation of the Russian speaking population in the Baltics, political crimes, use of force by law enforcement agencies and the transparency of elections in different EU Member States. Russia openly criticized the EU responses to these cases; in 2007 President Putin called them ‘unacceptable and unworthy of Europe.’<sup>61</sup> Similar to the EU, Russia proposed monitoring mechanisms for the human rights situation in the EU. In 2007, President Putin offered establishing the EU-Russia Human Rights Institute for studying and monitoring democratic rights, freedom of press and elections in both Russia and the EU. According to Putin’s aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, this initiative was meant as a ‘Russian institution’ aimed at supporting democracy in Europe in the same way the EU institutions worked in Russia by offering financial grants and working with local NGOs in the EU.<sup>62</sup> In response to a number of European

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<sup>57</sup> Sebastian Harnisch, “Role Theory and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy,” in *China’s International Roles*, ed. Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 16.

<sup>58</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Europe Has Nothing to Fear from Russia,” *Financial Times*, November 21, 2006, accessed August 28, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/ddc234d6-7994-11db-90a6-0000779e2340>.

<sup>59</sup> Putin, “Europe Has Nothing to Fear from Russia.”

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> “Press Statement and Answers to Questions During the Joint Press Conference Following the Russia-European Union Summit Meeting, Samara,” President of Russia, May 18, 2007, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24264>.

<sup>62</sup> “EU-Russia Summit Ended in Portugal: Putin Offered Europeans an Alternative Mechanism for Monitoring Human Rights,” [in Russian], *NEWSru.com*, October 26, 2007, accessed January 18, 2018, <http://www.newsru.com/world/26oct2007/sammiteu.html#18>.

Parliament resolutions regarding the state of democracy in Russia, in May 2012 the Russian Parliament held its own debate on the state of democracy in the EU. According to the organizer and the chair of the debate, Aleksey Pushkov, ‘Western partners should lose the perception that they have the monopoly on the issue of defending human rights internationally and on interpreting human rights problem’ because Russia also ‘has the right’ to draw attention to these problems within the EU.<sup>63</sup> Somewhat copying the EU’s paternalistic tone, the Russian Parliament embraced the idea to point to the EU at the existing human rights problems within the organization and to offer recommendations to Member States for improving their situation.<sup>64</sup> Incompatible role expectations and mutual role enforcement through bargaining consolidated the contradictory role relationship between the EU and Russia in the normative dialogue.

**Energy dialogue.** Another dimension of EU-Russia interaction that revealed the failure of the role bargaining process was the energy dialogue and, specifically, the failure of the EU to force Russia’s ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). The dispute over the ECT is often perceived in terms of competing security and economic interests of actors: the EU pushed for ECT to ensure secure transit and supply of energy as well as to gain access to Russia’s energy market; Russia rejected the Charter as restraining its control over energy as a strategic source of income and an important mean of political influence.<sup>65</sup> However, beyond security and economic interests, the ECT was important for actors’ role location process. As I argue below, the EU perceived the ECT as one of the instruments of its ‘security promoter’ role in Europe. For the EU, Russia’s acceptance of ECT commitments marked a successful achievement of this role. In contrast, Russia refused to follow EU

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<sup>63</sup> “On Parliamentary hearing ‘On Human Rights Problems in the Member States of the European Union’ in the State Duma of the Federal Council of the Russian Federation,” [in Russian], Embassy of the Russian Federation in Portugal, May 14, 2012, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://www.embrussia.ru/ru/node/160>.

<sup>64</sup> “On Parliamentary hearing.”

<sup>65</sup> Filippou Proedrou, “The EU–Russia Energy Approach under the Prism of Interdependence,” *European Security* 16, no. 3–4 (September 1, 2007): 329–55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662830701751190>; Amelia Hadfield, “EU–Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation,” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 16, no. 2 (August 1, 2008): 231–48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782800802309953>; Andrei V. Belyi, “A Russian Perspective on the Energy Charter Treaty,” Real Instituto Elcano, 2009, [http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/carc/research/eeag/papers/ARI98-2009\\_Belyi\\_Russian\\_Perspective\\_Energy\\_Charter\\_Treaty.pdf](http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/carc/research/eeag/papers/ARI98-2009_Belyi_Russian_Perspective_Energy_Charter_Treaty.pdf); Tom Casier, “The Rise of Energy to the Top of the EU–Russia Agenda: From Interdependence to Dependence?,” *Geopolitics* 16, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 536–52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2011.520862>.

expectations and approached the ECT with the aim of locating itself as a ‘contributor’ to regional and global security. Their role bargaining process failed to result in a mutually acceptable role relationship, and role contradiction was consolidated instead.

The EU role as a ‘security promoter’ in energy was consolidated following the 2006 gas crisis between Russia and Ukraine. The interruption of gas supplies to Ukraine in the winter of 2006 damaged Russia’s prestige as a reliable energy supplier, and caused an active debate in the EU about decreasing dependency on Russia and about its role in enhancing energy security in Wider Europe as a whole.<sup>66</sup> The EU perceived an energy partnership with Russia to be ‘crucial in ensuring energy security on the European continent’ benefitting not only the EU but also the countries of Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia<sup>67</sup> in line with the EU role of a security promoter. In this context, the ECT was seen as an important element of the effective external EU Energy Policy,<sup>68</sup> so its ratification by Russia would mark a successful EU role performance.

Russia’s approach to the ECT was also related to the location of a new role claim. In 2005, Vladimir Putin defined Russia’s role as a country that ‘makes an important contribution towards maintaining global and regional energy security’ and that must shape ‘global energy system.’<sup>69</sup> This approach was consolidated by his successor Dmitriy Medvedev, who believed that the Russian Federation had ‘moral, legal and physical capacities’ to be a participant in the diverse energy processes in the world and that ‘none of the energy partnerships or dialogues should be developed

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<sup>66</sup> Petr Iskanderov, “European Union to Increase Pressure on Russia in the Near Future, An Interview with German Minister of State Gernot Erler,” *Vremya Novostey*, November 30, 2006, 226 edition, sec. Press Extracts.

<sup>67</sup> “Communication Form the Commission to European Council: External Energy Relations – from Principles to Action COM(2006) 590” (European Commission, December 10, 2006), accessed January 21, 2018, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004\\_2009/documents/com/com\\_com\(2006\)0590\\_/com\\_com\(2006\)0590\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/com/com_com(2006)0590_/com_com(2006)0590_en.pdf).

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.; “Communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament: An Energy Policy for Europe,” (European Commission, January 10, 2007), accessed August 30, 2017, <http://www.ebb-eu.org/legis/energy%20policy%20for%20europe%20100107%20provisional%20version.pdf>.

<sup>69</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Opening Address at the Security Council Session on Russia’s Role in Guaranteeing International Energy Security,” President of Russia, December 22, 2005, accessed August 30, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23356>.

without Russia's participation.<sup>70</sup> Russia's 'contribution,' which Russia managed to include into the G8 Summit Communiqué on Global Energy Security in 2006, was a new concept of energy security for Europe that ensured an equal share of responsibility between energy suppliers, consumers and transit countries.<sup>71</sup> Russia advocated for the same approach with regard to the ECT. As a participant in the ECT process from 1994, Russia was always eager to insert into the treaty provisions that would reflect its national interests. However, it did not question the underlying principles of the Energy Charter before 2006.

In April 2009 Russia published an official document entitled *Conceptual Approach to the New Legal Framework for Energy Cooperation (Goals and Principles)*, where it spelled out the principles it wished to see underlying regional and global cooperation in energy and that diverged from those inscribed in the ECT. The 'Conceptual Approach' advocated mutual responsibility of energy consuming, supplying and transit countries in energy security, mandatory consultations on the issues of energy supply diversifications and on the adoption of regulatory documents on these issues as well as mandatory consultations on planning and implementation of infrastructure projects having regional and global impact as the *nee principals* for energy cooperation in Europe.<sup>72</sup> Although the EU evaluated Russia's propositions as 'interesting and useful', it nevertheless firmly rejected the possibility of revising the ECT, since it would contradict its role achievement as a security promoter. Responding to Russia, the EU Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs firmly stated that 'replacing [the ECT] is impossible.'<sup>73</sup> The same message came from Jose Manuel Barroso in May 2009 at the EU-Russia

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<sup>70</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, "Speech at the government meeting on increasing the effectiveness of Russia's participation in international energy cooperation," [in Russian], President of Russia, February 18, 2009, accessed August 30, 2018, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/3231>.

<sup>71</sup> Ivan Grushin, "Summit G8: Day Two," [in Russian], Lenta.ru, July 17, 2006, accessed August 30, 2017, <https://lenta.ru/articles/2006/07/17/day2/>.

<sup>72</sup> Russian Federation, "Conceptual Approach to the New Legal Framework for Energy Cooperation (Goals and Principles)," President of Russia, April 21, 2009, accessed August 30, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/258>.

<sup>73</sup> Mikhail Zygar and Natalia Grib, "MR. Petroleum; Igor Sechin Rejects Europe's Energy Plans and Warns That Problems Could Extend beyond the Natural Gas Trade," *Kommersant*, May 4, 2009, # 78.

summit, where he stated that Russia's propositions for the ECT could be considered but 'without destroying or putting in question the system [of principles] that already exists.'<sup>74</sup>

The EU's reaction signaled that Russia's attempt to contribute to the energy dimension of the European security order failed and that it could not locate its role. Consequently, Russia stopped the provisional application of the ECT on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) explained that the decision was linked to Russia's objectives for improving global energy security and, specifically, the failure of the ECT to promote the principles that take into account the interests of all players, and address new challenges and threats to the stability of energy markets, which Russia's proposals for 'fundamental revision' specifically tackled.<sup>75</sup> Subsequently, the EU also failed to act as a 'security promoter' as Russia did not accept the ECT.

**Regional integration.** Regional integration was another case of an unsuccessful role bargaining process, whereby actors were unable to locate their role roles. While the EU managed to secure at least partial recognition from Russia for its Eastern Partnership project, it did not accept Russia's role claim of a contributor to regional security order through the Eurasian integration process.<sup>76</sup> Following the Russian-Georgian war in 2008, the EU sought to re-enforce its regional roles of a normative guide and a security promoter by launching the Eastern Partnership (EaP) policy in 2009. The program targeted countries in the Eastern Neighborhood and Southern Caucasus, and was expected to run in 'parallel' to the EU relations with Russia.

Although Russia was not an immediate objective of the EaP policy, the EU still engaged in role bargaining with Moscow, to secure the acceptance for smooth implementation of the policy. For instance, the EU emphasized that its objectives as a 'normative guide' and a 'security promoter' to bring 'more stability, consolidation of democracy, and more prosperity in our common

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<sup>74</sup> "News Conference Following Russia-EU Summit, Khabarovsk," President of Russia, May 22, 2009, accessed August 30, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/4172>.

<sup>75</sup> "Ministry Explains Russia's Rejection of Energy Charter," *BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union*, August 7, 2009, sec. Transcript.

<sup>76</sup> Here the Eastern Partnership case is analyzed only in the context of the EU-Russia role bargaining process. For the detailed analysis of security dynamics within this case see Chapter 5.

neighborhoods<sup>77</sup> through the EaP would benefit Russia. The EU role location was partially successful. Although the initiative caused a negative response from Moscow,<sup>78</sup> the Russian leadership acquiesced. Dmitriy Medvedev even noted that if the Partnership ‘really does promote normal economic cooperation [...] we would have no objection and would wish such a partnership every success.’<sup>79</sup> Although Russia did not thus openly accept the EU role claims as a ‘normative guide’ and a ‘security promoter; through the EaP, it granted acceptance to the project, which enabled the EU’s role enactment. At the same time, Russia voiced an expectation for EU policy not to ‘turn into a Partnership against Russia.’<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, Moscow expected the reciprocal recognition for its own regional integration project – the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which became the main issue of the EU-Russia role bargaining process during 2001-2013.

Russia’s integration process and the creation of the EEU are often perceived as part of Moscow’s hegemonic ambition to restore its sphere of influence in the post-Soviet space and prevent neighboring countries from joining the EU.<sup>81</sup> Although this might be Moscow’s agenda in relation to its neighbors, in its interaction with the EU Russia used the Eurasian Union to locate a role of a contributor to regional order. In an article in the Russian newspaper *Izvestia* in 2011, Vladimir Putin described the EEU as a project that would constitute ‘a bridge between the European and Asia-Pacific regions’ contributing to the idea of creating a ‘common space’ from Lisbon to Vladivostok and from Atlantic to Pacific.<sup>82</sup> According to Putin ‘creating a balanced system of partnership’ between the EU

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<sup>77</sup> “News Conference Following Russia-EU Summit, Khabarovsk.”

<sup>78</sup> Susan Stewart, “Russia and the Eastern Partnership - Loud Criticism, Quiet Interest in Cooperation,” *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs*, SWP Comments, no. 7 (May 2009).

<sup>79</sup> “News Conference Following Russia-EU Summit, Khabarovsk.”

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Rilka Dragneva and Kataryna Wolczuk, “Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?,” *Chatham House Briefing Paper* no.1 (August 2012); Olga Shumylo-Tapioda, “The Eurasian Customs Union: Friend or Foe of the EU?,” *Carnegie Papers* (October 3, 2012): 1–30; Nicu Pepescu, “Eurasian Union: The Real, the Imaginary and the Likely,” no. 32 (September 9, 2014), <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/eurasian-union-the-real-the-imaginary-and-the-likely/>.

<sup>82</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Eurasian Union: A Future in the Making Article Published in the Newspaper *Izvestia*” (European Parliament, October 4, 2011), accessed January 31, 2018, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/d-ru/dv/dru\\_2013\\_0320\\_06\\_/dru\\_2013\\_0320\\_06\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/d-ru/dv/dru_2013_0320_06_/dru_2013_0320_06_en.pdf).

and the EEU contributed to ‘the new geopolitical and geo-economic situation on the continent with the positive global impact.’<sup>83</sup> During the EU-Russia summits in June and December of 2012, Vladimir Putin identified discussion of the integration processes in the Eurasian region ‘a priority direction’ and ‘an increasingly important factor’ in relations with the EU.<sup>84</sup> He ‘updated’ the European leaders on the achievements of the way to EEU, as well as on its ‘prospective impact on shaping relations between Russia and the EU.’ Moreover, Russia proposed to upgrade bilateral relations with the EU to the multilateral format of the EU-EEU dialogue by offering to discuss the new PCA under this format, and not bilaterally between Russia and the EU.<sup>85</sup>

However, the EU rejected Russia’s role claim. Although formally it admitted in interaction with Russia that the idea of Eurasian Union based on the WTO rules could positively influence regional trade, prosperity and cooperation in Wider Europe, Brussels refused to accept the EEU as a partner in relations with Russia or in relations with the third countries. It firmly stressed the bilateral nature of EU-Russia relations and made clear that the development of integration between the EU and the neighbors should not involve any third actors. Thus, Russia failed to receive recognition of its role claim in the dimension of regional integration. As I argue in Chapter 5, the failure of role location contributed to the development of the EU-Russia role conflict and resulted in Russia’s assertiveness against the EaP countries and in contentions with the EU.

This subsection demonstrated that the EU-Russia role location process during 2006-2013 prevented them from arriving at a mutually acceptable role relationship. The failure of role bargaining significantly undermined the cooperative security environment between them, yet the intersubjective security order was still not perceived as conflictual. The EU emphasized that it did not see the relationship with Russia as ‘block against block’ and that it wished to preserve cooperative

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<sup>83</sup> Putin, “Eurasian Union: A Future in the Making.”

<sup>84</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Speech at the EU-Russia Summit, Brussels,” President of Russia, December 21, 2012, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/17177>.

<sup>85</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Addresses at the Working Session of the Russia-EU Summit, Yekaterinburg,” President of Russia, June 4, 2013, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/18251>.

development with mutual gains.<sup>86</sup> Even though it recognized many issues in interaction with Russia as ‘problematic’, it believed that ‘the process [of interaction] in general was going positively.’<sup>87</sup> Likewise, Russia stressed the need to establish more ambitious goals for cooperation and evaluated the relationship with the EU as ‘large-scale and multi-faceted.’<sup>88</sup> The cooperative security environment was also evident from the fact that both actors scheduled the talks on the new legally binding agreement for June 2014. Hence, although the failure of the role bargaining process in 2006-2014 contributed to the deterioration of their relationship, it did not yet result in a change of the regional security order from cooperative to conflictual. The shift towards a conflictual security order occurred only after the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis. As the next section argues, even before Russia’s intervention in Ukraine, different interpretations of the Euromaidan revolution caused the redefinition of the EU and Russia role conceptions and expectations of each other. Russia’s annexation of Crimea and support for insurgency in Eastern Ukraine only consolidated a relationship of rivalry.

### **3.3. Ukrainian Crisis of 2013-2014 and Consolidation of a Conflictual Security Order**

The 2013-2014 revolution in Ukraine (or Euromaidan) served as an intervening factor in the EU-Russia role bargaining process. Here I argue that different evaluations of the events in Ukraine significantly influenced actors’ perceptions of each other and led to the development of a rivalry role relationship. Role rivalry represents a situation when actors have incompatible or clashing role conceptions for each other and resort to conflicting mechanisms of role enactment. Russia’s intervention in Crime and the Eastern Ukraine in 2014 only consolidated the shift to rivalry and the reproduction of a conflictual security order.

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<sup>86</sup> *EU-Russia Summit Press Conference* (Brussels, 2014), Video, *EU Reporter*, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_LBN9sYPL8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_LBN9sYPL8).

<sup>87</sup> Author’s interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 12, 2016.

<sup>88</sup> *EU-Russia Summit Press Conference*.

The revolutionary developments in Ukraine in November 2013 - March 2014 significantly affected the EU's and Russia's role location process and their role expectation of each other. Russia considered that EU support for the revolution in Ukraine and for the post-revolutionary government were inconsistent with its roles of a normative guide and regional security promoter. If previously Russia was not rejecting these EU roles, but rather expected to add its own contribution to the regional security and value system, developments in Ukraine led Moscow to question the validity of EU role claims.

The Russian leadership rejected the EU role of a 'normative guide' after it supported the post-Maidan Ukrainian government, which included the members of the nationalistic 'Svoboda' party, and after it approved Kiev's antiterrorist operation in the Eastern Ukraine in 2014. Russia considered these to be an 'absolute hypocrisy' and to demonstrate the inability of the EU to adhere to its own normative values.<sup>89</sup> Likewise, Russia was no longer accepting the EU as a 'promoter of regional security' through neighborhood policies. Moscow believed that the EU contributed to the Ukrainian crisis by forcing Ukraine to sign an Association Agreement with the EU, while rejecting its participation in the EEU as a complementary regional initiative. In the eyes of Moscow, this EU-imposed dilemma contributed to the internal conflict in Ukraine and eventually had 'seriously undermined European stability.'<sup>90</sup> In addition, the EU's reluctance to recognize the Eurasian integration process confirmed Russia's long-term concern about European neighborhood projects being a part of the 'zero-sum geopolitical game' aimed at destroying the historical ties between the participant-countries and Russia.<sup>91</sup> As a result, Russian leaders labeled the EU-Russia partnership as

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<sup>89</sup> Sergey Lavrov, "Statement and Answers to Questions at a Meeting with Students and Faculty of Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) Moscow, September 1, 2015," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, September 1, 2015, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/meropriyatiya\\_s\\_uchastiem\\_ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/1722643](http://www.mid.ru/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/-/asset_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/1722643).

<sup>90</sup> Sergey Lavrov, "Russia's Priorities in Europe and the World," *Horizons*, January 28, 2015, accessed January 31, 2018, [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/916716](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/916716).

<sup>91</sup> Lavrov, "Russia's Priorities in Europe and the World."

‘insincere’ and failing to consolidate ‘Russia’s role and the dynamics of its intertwining with Europe.’<sup>92</sup>

Differently from Russia, the EU perceived Ukraine’s case as strongly supporting its regional role claims and saw Russia as challenging its successful role performance. Brussels framed the Ukrainian crisis as predominantly about European values, which signaled its success as a normative guide and therefore justified its support for the protestors in Kiev. President Barroso noted that the EU would have been ‘morally bankrupt’<sup>93</sup> had it refused to support Ukraine’s European aspirations that initially inspired the anti-government protests. In this context, Russia’s actions were perceived as undermining the EU role achievement, whereby Russia ‘resorted first to political and economic bullying, and then to outright aggression’ to prevent the independent choice of the neighbors in favor of European integration.<sup>94</sup> Eventually, the EU perception of Russia’s role in Europe changed from being a partner to a challenger of European security order after its intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. According to the EU Commissioner Štefan Füle, Russia’s behavior in Ukraine ‘challenged’ democratic rights and freedoms in Europe ‘in an extremely serious and dangerous way.’<sup>95</sup> The EU declared that the relations could not ‘continue under the label of ‘strategic partnership.’<sup>96</sup> The

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<sup>92</sup> Vlast', *Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S.V. Lavrov at the meeting with the representatives of the Russian Council on External Affairs, Moscow, 4 June 2014* (Moscow, 2014), Video, accessed September 19, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwF4yi8HigY>; “Speech by Russia’s Permanent Representative to NATO Alexander Grushko at the Opening of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) in Vienna,” The Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, June 27, 2017, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/diverse/-/asset\\_publisher/zwI2FuDbhJx9/content/vystuplenie-postoannogo-predstavitela-rossijskoj-federacii-pri-nato-a-v-grusko-na-otkrytii-ezegodnoj-konferencii-obse-po-obzoru-problem-v-oblasti-be-1](http://www.mid.ru/diverse/-/asset_publisher/zwI2FuDbhJx9/content/vystuplenie-postoannogo-predstavitela-rossijskoj-federacii-pri-nato-a-v-grusko-na-otkrytii-ezegodnoj-konferencii-obse-po-obzoru-problem-v-oblasti-be-1); “Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE Alexander Lukashovich at the OSCE Security Days Panel in Prague: The State of European Security Today and Prospects for the Future,” The Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, March 23, 2017, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/rso/osce/-/asset\\_publisher/bzhxR3zkq2H5/content/id/2763974](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/rso/osce/-/asset_publisher/bzhxR3zkq2H5/content/id/2763974).

<sup>93</sup> Jose Manuel Barroso, “Speech ‘The European Union in the New World Order’,” European Commission, September 21, 2014, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-612\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-612_en.htm).

<sup>94</sup> “‘The European Union in the New World Order’.”

<sup>95</sup> Štefan Füle, “‘Russian Pressure on Eastern Partnership Countries, Destabilization of Eastern Ukraine’,” Plenary Session, European Parliament,” April 16, 2014, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-331\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-331_en.htm).

<sup>96</sup> Štefan Füle, “‘EU-Ukraine: There Is No Time to Rest’,” Contribution at the European Parliament Plenary Debate of EU-Ukraine Association Agreement Ratification on Behalf of the HR/VP,” September 16, 2014, accessed September 9, 2018, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-601\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-601_en.htm).

perception of Russia as ‘challenger’ eventually found institutional reflection in the EU Global Strategy and the policy of the ‘five guiding principles’ on Russia.<sup>97</sup>

Both actors used the Ukrainian crisis as a tool in the role bargaining process. While questioning the EU roles of normative guide and security promoter, Russia continued to demand recognition as a contributor using internal crisis in Ukraine to Force its role claim. For example, Russia argued that it was impossible to stabilize Ukraine ‘without deriving a balanced compatibility formula of the [EU and Russia] integration processes in Europe.’<sup>98</sup> According to Vladimir Chizhov, the gradual approximation between the EU and EEU integrations ‘allow[ed] Russia and the European Union in their role as two linchpins of our common European [...] Eurasian or Euro-Atlantic civilization.’<sup>99</sup>

Despite Russia’s attempts to use Ukraine for enforcing its role, the EU granted no recognition to the EEU and, therefore, to Russia’s role claim. Even though the EU Global Security Strategy recognized regional cooperation entities as ‘global players’, and referenced their ‘promotion and support’ as part of the EU’s security agenda,<sup>100</sup> Eurasian integration did not feature in the document. Rejection of the Eurasian integration process was also evident in the fact that the Strategy considered strengthening the ‘resilience’ of the EU neighborhood through closer economic and security cooperation with the EU. This cooperation was expected to go beyond the deep and comprehensive economic partnerships and grow into a common economic area, common energy community and even the involvement of the neighbors into a Common Security and Defense Policy of the EU.<sup>101</sup> These developments supported the EU-centered, rather than the EU-EEU balanced, evolution of

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<sup>97</sup> “A Global Strategy for European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy”; Martin Russel, “The EU’s Russia Policy: Five Guiding Principles” (European Parliamentary Research Service, October 2016).

<sup>98</sup> “Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE Alexander Lukashevich at the OSCE Security Days Panel in Prague.”

<sup>99</sup> “Permanent Representative to the EU Vladimir Chizhov’s Interview with TASS News Agency,” 16 October 2016, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2504315](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2504315).

<sup>100</sup> “A Global Strategy for European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy,” 32.

<sup>101</sup> “A Global Strategy for European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy,” 25.

integration processes in the region. They also contributed to EU success as a ‘security promoter’, but reduced the prospects for Russia to locate itself as ‘contributor’ to regional integration.

Moscow also turned the crisis in Ukraine into an instrument to Force its role as a ‘contributor’ in European security order. Russia hoped that Ukraine would serve as a ‘refreshing thunderstorm’ that would help to re-reorganize its relations with the Western partners (both the EU and the US) on ‘a healthier and fairer background’,<sup>102</sup> and convince them that only Russia’s ‘active involvement in the continent's affairs’ could bring ‘long periods of peace and stable development.’<sup>103</sup> To this end, Russia revived the idea of contributing to the system of ‘indivisible security’ in Europe under the framework of the OSCE. Russian leaders started to recall the idea of legally-binding European Security Treaty proposed by Dmitriy Medvedev back in 2008 and sidelined by the EU at that time. Without reviving the treaty idea or proposing a new initiative, Moscow signaled that a legally-coded security framework in Europe would be desirable.<sup>104</sup> Here, again, the Ukrainian crisis was utilized to argue that, had such a framework existed, many of the current regional conflicts including the one in Ukraine could have been avoided.<sup>105</sup>

The EU’s response came in a proposition of German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier to negotiate a new arms control agreement with Russia under the OSCE framework. According to him, these negotiations could contribute to an ‘inclusive’ debate with Russia about the new security architecture in Europe and refute the ‘unstable security situation’ in the direction of

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<sup>102</sup> Vlast', *Speech by t S.V. Lavrov at the meeting with the representatives of the Russian Council on External Affairs, Moscow, 4 June 2014.*

<sup>103</sup> Lavrov, “Russia’s Priorities in Europe and the World.”

<sup>104</sup> “Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE Alexander Lukashevich at the OSCE Security Days Panel in Prague”; “Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s Remarks and Answers to Questions at a Meeting with the Students and Faculty of MGIMO University and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, September 1, 2017, accessed September 9, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/meropriyatiya\\_s\\_uchastiem\\_ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/2851134](http://www.mid.ru/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/-/asset_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/2851134).

<sup>105</sup> “Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE Alexander Lukashevich at the OSCE Security Days Panel in Prague”

‘cooperative security order.’<sup>106</sup> At that time, the initiative was backed by 13 European states,<sup>107</sup> who signaled that they would prefer to see Russia as a member and not as an outsider in Europe’s security order, contrary to what the EU policy on Russia presupposed. Should this initiative take over, Russia’s role of a ‘contributor’ to European security could be accommodated.

The way the Ukrainian crisis featured in the EU-Russia role bargaining consolidated the conflictual security environment between the actors. Both defined European security order as conflictual. The EU officially labeled its relationship with Russia in Europe as ‘rivalry’,<sup>108</sup> while Russia saw it as ‘reproduce[ing] confrontation.’<sup>109</sup> Under these circumstances, the conflictual trend might only be refuted if actors redefine their role conceptions internally. A debate about a more pragmatic approach to Russia has been taking shape in the EU since 2016. Even though the organization remains united in seeing Russia as a ‘challenger’ to the European security order, some leaders started to call for a more flexible approach to Russia. The EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, German chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and a number of the EU governments voiced this perspective.<sup>110</sup> Juncker even went as far as to admit the need for recognizing Russia’s role claim in the European security order by saying that the EU needs an agreement with Russia to go ‘beyond the ordinary framework, bearing in mind that without Russia, there is no security architecture in Europe’ and that ‘Russia must be treated as one big entity, as a proud nation’ and not as ‘a regional power.’<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> “OSCE Countries Back Germany’s Push for New Arms Control Deal with Russia,” Deutsche Welle Web Site, November 25, 2016, accessed August 9, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/osce-countries-back-germanys-push-for-new-arms-control-deal-with-russia/a-36528699>.

<sup>107</sup> “OSCE Countries Back Germany’s Push for New Arms Control Deal with Russia.”

<sup>108</sup> Russel, “Briefing, ‘The EU’s Russia Policy: Five Guiding Principles’.”

<sup>109</sup> “Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE Alexander Lukashevich at the OSCE Security Days Panel in Prague.”

<sup>110</sup> “EU’s Juncker Calls For Better Ties With Russia, But Not At Any Cost,” RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, accessed September 7, 2017, <https://www.rferl.org/a/eu-russia-juncker-urges-better-ties-not-any-cost/28703138.html>.

<sup>111</sup> Isabelle Kummur, “Marine Le Pen Won’t Be France’s next President, Says Juncker,” Euronews Web Site, November 26, 2016, accessed September 7, 2017, <http://www.euronews.com/2016/11/26/global-conversation-exclusive-interview-with-european-commission-president-jean>.

Although not all EU member states share this perspective on Russia, some, like Austria, Germany, Italy, Slovakia and Hungary favored the idea of normalizing relations with Moscow for the sake of their national interests.<sup>112</sup> According to Russia's Permanent Representative to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, Moscow is aware that the EU policy on Russia represents '28 shades of grey.'<sup>113</sup> In this context, it is hoping for pragmatic considerations to pick up so that 'Europeans will manage to stop using the lowest common denominator in their Russia policy, when the obvious benefits of cooperation are sacrificed to the interests of a small but aggressive anti-Russia group.'<sup>114</sup> If the EU internal discourse indeed turns more pragmatic, it might produce a shift in the EU role bargaining strategy towards accommodating Russia's role claims in the European security order.

### **3.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that the nature of the regional security environment in Europe was determined by the EU-Russia role bargaining process and, specifically, by the failure of the EU and Russia to develop and consolidate a mutually accepted role relationship. Although they initially developed role complementarity that ensured the cooperative regional order during the 1990s and early 2000s, this positive role relationship was not maintained. Their successful role bargaining process was interrupted because of the redefinition of the EU's and Russia's role conceptions after the 2004 EU enlargement and Putin's re-election in Russia the same year.

Internal changes in Russia and in the EU negatively impacted their role bargaining process for two reasons. Firstly, the redefinition of actors' role conceptions led to diverging role expectations for each other. Secondly, the role redefinition led the EU and Russia to change their role bargaining strategies, which led to unsuccessful role location. As a result, during 2006-2014 contradictory roles

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<sup>112</sup> Peter Korzun, "Europe Turns Towards Russia in Major Foreign Policy Change," Online Journal, Strategic Culture Foundation, December 1, 2016, accessed January 21, 2018, <https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2016/12/01/europe-turns-towards-russia-major-foreign-policy-change.html>.

<sup>113</sup> "Permanent Representative to the EU Vladimir Chizhov's Interview with TASS News Agency."

<sup>114</sup> "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Remarks and Answers to Media Questions at the Korber Foundation, Berlin, July 13, 2017," The Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, July 13, 2017, accessed September 8, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/meropriyatiya\\_s\\_uchastiem\\_ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/2814020](http://www.mid.ru/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/-/asset_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/2814020).

guided their interaction undermining the cooperative environment between the actors. The different interpretation of the domestic Ukrainian crisis set the role expectations of the EU and Russia further apart, while their interaction, being strongly subordinate to the Ukraine conflict, reproduced the relationship of rivalry. As a result, a conflictual security order was sustained between actors.

The next chapter turns towards the ASEAN-China role bargaining process. Differently from the pattern of the EU-Russia interaction, ASEAN and China succeeded in establishing mutually accepted role relationships. Moreover, they managed to consolidate a cooperative security order through institutionalization and the development of mechanisms for appropriate role enactment. As a result, the cooperative security order was sustained between actors, even despite negative security developments in the region.

## CHAPTER 4: THE ASEAN-CHINA ROLE BARGAINING PROCESS: CONSOLIDATING ROLE AGREEMENT

The development of cooperative security patterns in Southeast Asia is puzzling. In 1993 Aaron Friedberg famously argued that Asia, rather than Europe, was ‘ripe for rivalry’ and would likely see the escalation of crisis and wars.<sup>1</sup> Particularly, the rise of China has been always seen as a potential threat in the region. Nonetheless, a cooperative security environment was preserved between ASEAN and China, ‘actors [that had]enjoyed a long history of stable relations.’<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter I argue that ASEAN-China interaction represented a successful role location process, different from the EU-Russia case. After the end of the Cold War, both sides shared expectations about what security order in Southeast Asia should be like, which ensured an initial role consensus. The Asian financial crisis of 1997-1999 was used by both sides to upgrade this relationship to role complementarity. Successful role location encouraged actors to institutionalize their role relationship in 2002, creating a role agreement that helped sustain a cooperative security order between actors for the next ten years. Leadership change in both ASEAN and China in 2012 led to the re-definition of their role conceptions and a new round of role bargaining. Divergent expectations under the re-defined roles complicated the role bargaining process. Yet mutual role accommodation helped actors to negotiate a new relationship of complementarity. Therefore, despite some negative security externalities produced by the domestic role redefinition (e.g. militarization of the South China Sea by the claimant states, growing nationalism in China and its assertive foreign policy), a cooperative security environment still prevailed in the region. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the ASEAN-China role bargaining process.

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<sup>1</sup> Aaron L. Friedberg, “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia,” *International Security* 18, no. 3 (1993): 5–33, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539204>.

<sup>2</sup> David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 6.

*Table 4.1. The ASEAN-China Role Bargaining Process*

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Role Bargaining Outcomes</b>	<b>Regional Order Type</b>
<b>1991-2002</b>	Role consensus upgraded to role complementarity	Cooperative security order with some negative externalities
<b>2002-2013</b>	Role agreement formally consolidated through the appropriate role enactment mechanisms	Sustained cooperative security order
<b>2013-2017</b>	New role complementarity based on the re-defined role conceptions	Cooperative security order with some negative externalities

*Source: Own Account*

Understanding ASEAN-China interaction through role bargaining adds several important arguments to existing explanations of ASEAN-China security dynamics. Firstly, the analysis in this chapter shows that China was neither socialized by ASEAN, nor had a socializing impact on the organization, in contrast to what scholars who focused on the study of norms, ideas and practices in shaping Asian security order suggested.<sup>3</sup> Both ASEAN and China pursued internally developed role conceptions, rather than internalizing the expectations or norms imposed by the other, and it is these conceptions that were located through bargaining. Their compliance with external expectations represented a strategy aimed at the location of the domestically defined roles. Secondly, study of the role bargaining process demonstrates that ASEAN's strategies towards China were driven not only by the rationale of balancing the latter's hegemonic rise or to pragmatically benefit from China's economic development.<sup>4</sup> ASEAN's policy towards China was indeed influenced by the perception of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a rising power, which led ASEAN to recognize China's role claims in the regional security order. However, the organization itself successfully used China's role location to boost its own position in the region. Furthermore, ASEAN continued to consolidate its

<sup>3</sup> Alice D. Ba, "Who Is Socializing Whom? Complex Engagement in Sino-ASEAN Relations," *The Pacific Review* 19, no. 2 (2006): 157–79; Acharya and Johnston, *Crafting Cooperation*; Stubbs, "The ASEAN Alternative?"; Amitav Acharya, "Asian Regional Institutions and the Possibilities for Socializing the Behavior of States," *ADB Working Paper Series on Regional Economic Integration*, no. 82 (June 2011); Joseph YS Cheng, "China's Regional Strategy and Challenges in East Asia," *China Perspectives*, no. 2 (2013): 53.

<sup>4</sup> David C. Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks," *International Security* 27, no. 4 (2003): 57–85; Denny Roy, "Southeast Asia and China: Balancing or Bandwagoning?," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27, no. 2 (2005): 305–22; Shekhar, "ASEAN's Response to the Rise of China"; Ryu Yongwook, "ASEAN's Middle Power Diplomacy Towards China," EAI Issue Briefing MPDI, 2013.

leadership and centrality in the Asia-Pacific, even when pressured by China to share this role. Finally, institutionalization was important for consolidating the sustained cooperative trend, as many analysts have noted before.<sup>5</sup> Yet, institutions sustained a cooperative relationship not only because they imposed formal rules of conduct, or provided sites for socialization, but also because they granted both actors appropriate mechanisms for role enactment, thereby consolidating a successful role location process.

#### **4.1. The Development of a Complementary Role Relationship, 1993-2001**

The end of the Cold War created a situation of uncertainty for both ASEAN and China as to the roles they should adopt in the Southeast Asian security order, so the role conceptions of actors were not fully specified at this point. Nevertheless, ASEAN and China shared some expectations as to the nature of security order they would like to see in the region. As I argue below, these expectations formed the basis for an initial role consensus as the ASEAN-China relationship developed in the early 1990s. The 1997-1999 Asian financial crisis served as an intervening event in the actors' role bargaining process. I argue that both ASEAN and China successfully used it as an instrument of role location, which led to a relationship of role complementarity. Both role consensus and role complementarity are positive role bargaining outcomes, and supported the development of a cooperative intersubjective security environment between the actors.

**Establishing role consensus.** The primary concern for ASEAN at the end of the Cold War was preserving security in the 'immediate wider environment of Asia-Pacific region' and remaining 'relevant' as an actor in Southeast Asian geopolitics.<sup>6</sup> Similarly to the EU, ASEAN started to position itself as a 'normative guide' in the region promoting its internal values, known as the 'ASEAN way,'<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Stubbs, "The ASEAN Alternative?"; Acharya, "Asian Regional Institutions and the Possibilities for Socializing the Behavior of States"; Goh, "Institutions and the Great Power Bargain in East Asia"; M. Weissmann, "The South China Sea: Still No War on the Horizon," *Asian Survey* 55, no. 3 (June 1, 2015): 596–617.

<sup>6</sup> ASEAN, "Joint Communique of the 24th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia," July 19, 1991, accessed September 15, 2014. [http://www.asean.org/?static\\_post=joint-communique-of-the-twenty-fourth-asean-ministerial-meeting-kuala-lumpur-19-20-july-1991](http://www.asean.org/?static_post=joint-communique-of-the-twenty-fourth-asean-ministerial-meeting-kuala-lumpur-19-20-july-1991).

<sup>7</sup> 'ASEAN Way' is the term used by ASEAN leaders to describe the process of intra-ASEAN interaction and policy-making. There is no official definition of the term. The principles that constitute the 'ASEAN Way' are inscribed in

as a basis for regional security order. Expanding the practices of the ‘ASEAN Way’ also supported another ‘pivotal role’ for the organization – being a ‘peace and security promoter’ in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>8</sup> Another constitutive dimension of this role was increased economic integration within and beyond the borders of the organization, a policy that ASEAN believed to be ‘the most effective way’ to achieving regional security.<sup>9</sup> The promotion of the ‘ASEAN Way’ and economic regionalism became the main tools of ASEAN’s role enactment. However, unlike the EU, ASEAN did not possess sufficient internal capabilities to support its regional roles: it was neither a strong normative power, nor a properly institutionalized economic community.<sup>10</sup> ASEAN was thus not able to force its role claims or impose its expectations on other actors in the same way as the EU had tried to do with Russia.

Instead, the organization favored a strategy that I call role accommodation. Accommodation means that in the process of role bargaining, an actor selectively accommodates fitting role conceptions of other actors without changing or giving up his or her own role claims. Accommodation is different from acceptance (full recognition of the role claim of another actor), or a Resolve strategy (actors update their beliefs to recognize each other’s roles as appropriate). Role accommodation also differs from interest accommodation. The former implies accommodation of the social status of the claiming actor, while the latter relates to the accommodation of specific interests (economic, political, etc) without necessary recognizing the social position of the claimant.

Role accommodation was inherent in ASEAN’s role expectations for all regional great powers. Stressing its role as ‘a driving force’ in regional security, the organization admitted that regional

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ASEAN’s Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. The ‘ASEAN Way’ stresses informality, minimal institutionalism, incisiveness, consensus decision-making, non-intervention in the internal affairs of states and peaceful resolution of disputes.

<sup>8</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum, “The ASEAN Regional Forum : A Concept Paper,” August 1, 1995, accessed September 15, 2014, <http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/files/library/Terms%20of%20References%20and%20Concept%20Papers/Concept%20Paper%20of%20ARF.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> ASEAN, “Joint Communique 25th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Manila, Philippines,” July 21, 1992, accessed September 15, 2014, [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=joint-communique-25th-asean-ministerial-meeting-manila-philippines-21-22-july-1992](http://asean.org/?static_post=joint-communique-25th-asean-ministerial-meeting-manila-philippines-21-22-july-1992).

<sup>10</sup> Shaun Narine, *Explaining ASEAN: Regionalism in Southeast Asia* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002); Jones and Smith, “Making Process, Not Progress”; Wunderlich, “The EU an Actor Sui Generis?”

peace would not be achieved without the ‘active participation and cooperation of all participants.’<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it was important to ‘always be sensitive to and take into account the interests and concerns’<sup>12</sup> of other partners in regional security order with the expectation that regional great powers maintain ‘stable relationships’ among themselves and adopt ‘positive policies towards the region’<sup>13</sup> and towards ASEAN. Great powers were expected to contribute to ASEAN’s economic development and internal integration and thus boost its capabilities as relevant regional actor.<sup>14</sup> In this context, ASEAN’s expectations for China were specified as: ‘a stable, peaceful and prosperous China would constitute an important factor for the long-term peace, stability and development of the Asia-Pacific region in particular and of the world in general.’<sup>15</sup>

ASEAN’s expectations matched China’s own perspective about itself in the region, forming the basis for role consensus. Similarly to Russia, Beijing struggled to overcome international isolation at the end of the Cold War and to establish more favorable relations with its neighbors and with the West. International isolation of China was related to the 1989 violent military crackdown of protests on Tiananmen Square in Beijing and in other cities of China, which destroyed the favorable opinion that had built up about the country over the previous decade.<sup>16</sup> The country’s foreign policy discourse after these events was shaped by internationalist and reformist lines.<sup>17</sup> Re-establishing international connections was an important priority for the Communist Party of China (CPC) not only politically but also economically. Preserving domestic economic growth was ‘at the core of the

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<sup>11</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum, “The ASEAN Regional Forum : A Concept Paper.”

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> ASEAN, “Joint Communique of the 26th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Singapore, 23-24 July 1993,” July 23, 1993, accessed September 15, 2014, [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=joint-communique-of-the-twenty-sixth-asean-ministerial-meeting-singapore-23-24-july-1993](http://asean.org/?static_post=joint-communique-of-the-twenty-sixth-asean-ministerial-meeting-singapore-23-24-july-1993).

<sup>14</sup> ASEAN, “Joint Communique of the 24th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia.”

<sup>15</sup> “Joint Statement of the Meeting of Heads of State/Government of the Member States of ASEAN and the President of the People’s Republic of China, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,” December 16, 1997, accessed September 15, 2014, [http://www.asean.org/?static\\_post=joint-statement-of-the-meeting-of-heads-of-stategovernment-of-the-member-states-of-asean-and-the-president-of-the-people-s-republic-of-china-kuala-lumpur-malaysia-16-december-1997](http://www.asean.org/?static_post=joint-statement-of-the-meeting-of-heads-of-stategovernment-of-the-member-states-of-asean-and-the-president-of-the-people-s-republic-of-china-kuala-lumpur-malaysia-16-december-1997).

<sup>16</sup> Judith F. Kornberg and John R. Faust, *China in World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects* (London: UBC Press, 2005), 44.

<sup>17</sup> Harry Harding, Allen Suess Whiting, and Robert S. Ross, “China’s Foreign Relations After Tiananmen: Challenges for the U.S.,” *NBR Analysis* 1, no. 3 (1990), <http://www.nbr.org/publications/nbranalysis/pdf/vol1no3.pdf>.

Chinese agenda' at that time, and this would only be possible if good relationship were maintained with major world powers and neighbors.<sup>18</sup>

China's regional roles were not specified at that time, but the country had expectations regarding the position it should adopt in regional affairs. These expectations were reflected in Deng Xiaoping's notion of 'observing smoothly worldwide events, standing strong, approaching difficulties with confidence, keeping a low profile, never taking the leading role, acting consciously.'<sup>19</sup> With regard to regional security order, China expected to develop amiable relations with its neighbors, preserve trilateral balance between China, the US and Japan in the region, and create a regional environment favorable for China's economic modernization and development.<sup>20</sup>

China's priorities for economic development, balance between great powers and developing cooperation with neighbors were very much in line with ASEAN's expectations for great powers in post-Cold War Asia. Shared expectations supported constructive engagement from both sides. Within two years after Tiananmen, China had normalized relations with Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. China also contributed to regional security order by facilitating peace process in Cambodia and engaging in negotiations to solve border issues with Vietnam.<sup>21</sup> Despite the fact that Beijing was reluctant to enter into multilateral institutions due to its strong emphasis on sovereignty, in practice it participated in a multilateral arrangement for regional security with ASEAN as early as 1990. In January 1990, an informal workshop mechanism on the South China Sea was established that brought together ASEAN, China and Taiwan.<sup>22</sup>

Shared expectations as to their respective positions in regional order supported by coherent foreign policy actions supported the consolidation of role consensus in official interaction. In 1993

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<sup>18</sup> Arnaldo M.A. Gonçalves, "Foreign Policy of People's Republic of China under Deng, Jiang and Hu: A Conservative Trend," *Working Paper Programa Asia-Pacífico*, no.60 (2009): 3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Yoshifumi Nakai, "Foreign Policy of the Post-Jiang Zemin Era," in *China's New Leadership*, ed. Yasuo Onishi (IDE Spot Survey no.26, 2003), 28–30.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph Y. S. Cheng, "China's ASEAN Policy in the 1990s: Pushing for Regional Multipolarity," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 21, no. 2 (1999): 179.

<sup>22</sup> Leszek Buszynski, "Southeast Asia in the Post-Cold War Era: Regionalism and Security," *Asian Survey* 32, no. 9 (1992): 838, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645074>.

ASEAN and China recognized that their interaction had ‘exerted a positive influence on peace, stability and prosperity of the region’, which encouraged the establishment of a ‘consultative relationship based on equality, mutual benefit and common development.’<sup>23</sup> However, recognition of shared expectations and cooperative actions did not immediately translate into the cooperative security environment ‘without prejudice’<sup>24</sup> that the partners intended. China’s strong emphasis on sovereignty still inspired a somewhat assertive foreign policy against Southeast Asian states in the South China Sea, and during the Taiwan Straits crisis in 1996 involving the US.<sup>25</sup> These actions cast doubts within ASEAN as to Chinese regional aspirations, and contributed to the perception of China as a threat.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, sovereignty concerns made Beijing suspicious of ASEAN-led multilateral initiatives, and China remained mostly an observer rather than a participant in regional cooperation.<sup>27</sup> Even at ASEAN meetings, Chinese representatives attended as guests and only in 1996 did China progress from being a ‘consultative’ to a ‘Dialogue Partner’ of ASEAN.

What accelerated the progress of ASEAN-China role bargaining and the establishment of an intersubjective order of cooperative security was the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1999. Some scholars have rightly pointed to the fact that China used the 1997 crisis to push a ‘responsible great power’ role that contributed to regional economic development and stability without taking advantage of its smaller neighbors.<sup>28</sup> For example, China’s decision not to devalue its currency during the crisis, and its offer to create a giant ASEAN-China FTA to boost Asia’s economic development, were

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<sup>23</sup> “Joint Press Statement for the Meeting to Explore the Establishment of the Consultative Relationship with the People’s Republic of China, Beijing,” September 13, 1993, accessed September 15, 2014, [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=joint-press-statement-for-the-meeting-to-explore-the-establishment-of-the-consultative-relationship-with-the-people-s-republic-of-china-beijing-china-13-14-september-1993](http://asean.org/?static_post=joint-press-statement-for-the-meeting-to-explore-the-establishment-of-the-consultative-relationship-with-the-people-s-republic-of-china-beijing-china-13-14-september-1993).

<sup>24</sup> “ASEAN-China Joint Press Statement, 1993.”

<sup>25</sup> David Shambaugh and Michael Yahuda, *International Relations of Asia* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 130.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Kuik Cheng-Chwee, “Multilateralism in China’s ASEAN Policy: Its Evolution, Characteristics, and Aspiration,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27, no. 1 (2005): 102–22, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25798722>.

<sup>28</sup> Brantly Womack, “China and Southeast Asia: Asymmetry, Leadership and Normalcy,” *Pacific Affairs* 76, no. 4 (2004 2003): 529–48; Cheng-Chwee, “Multilateralism in China’s ASEAN Policy”; David Shambaugh, “China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order,” *International Security* 29, no. 3 (January 1, 2005): 64–99, <https://doi.org/10.1162/0162288043467496>; Chen Zhimin, “International Responsibility and China’s Foreign Policy,” in *China’s Shift Global Strategy of the Rising Power*, edited by Masafumi Iida (Tokyo: National Institute for Defence Studies), 7-28.

seen as elements of a successful ‘charm offensive’ policy that eliminated ‘China threat’ perception in the region.<sup>29</sup> This is a valid, yet one-sided interpretation of the impact of the crisis on ASEAN-China relations. I argue that not only China but also ASEAN used the financial crisis as an instrument of role location. The organization preferred to upgrade cooperation with China, and not with any other regional power, precisely because it allowed ASEAN, apart from receiving economic benefits, to locate its own regional roles.

**Developing role complementarity.** The Asian financial crisis not only had drastic economic consequences for ASEAN but also undermined the credibility of the organization. The fact that ASEAN members resorted to unilateral actions during the crisis led its dialogue partners to question the ‘relevance’ of ASEAN as a block, and therefore endangered its regional role as a driver of economic integration and security promotion. In the words of the Singaporean Prime Minister, some dialogue partners ‘were taking us [ASEAN] less seriously than before.’<sup>30</sup> In these circumstances, ASEAN needed to prove itself as a solid actor not only to succeed in economic recovery, but also to restore its international credibility. Failure to do so might have caused ‘major powers to turn away from Southeast Asia towards other more interesting regions,’<sup>31</sup> if they were not confident of a consensus among ASEAN to take tough economic steps. Subsequently, the loss of credibility in the eyes of regional actors would have prevented ASEAN from maintaining pursuing its regional roles.

In line with their role conception, ASEAN leaders believed that the best way to regain ‘relevance’ was accelerating ASEAN’s economic integration. Speedy economic integration above all addressed ASEAN’s economic interests to achieve post-crisis recovery, secure attractive environment for FDIs and survive the competition posed by China’s rise and by other regional groupings such as NAFTA and the EU that already accomplished market integration. However, it was also an important part of ASEAN’s role location process. Establishing at least an intra-ASEAN

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<sup>29</sup> Shambaugh, “China Engages Asia”; Josua Kurlantzick, “China’s Charm Offensive in Southeast Asia,” *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs* no. 692 (2006): 270–76; Amitav Acharya, *Asia Rising: Who Is Leading?* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2008).

<sup>30</sup> Edward Tang, “Top Priority in Asean: Boost Confidence,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, December 16, 1998.

<sup>31</sup> Tang, “Top Priority in Asean: Boost Confidence.”

FTA was seen as a way to secure confidence in the eyes of regional partners as a collective actor and thus served as an important precondition for succeeding in other regional roles. For example, deepening economic cooperation within and beyond ASEAN enabled the organization to ‘remain in the driver’s seat’ and lobby for great powers to bear greater responsibility for their macro-economic policies in the region.<sup>32</sup>

ASEAN’s vision of preserving ‘relevance’ also crystallized into the idea of generating ‘internal dynamism’ within the region itself, making it economically more resilient and less dependent on external markets. According to ASEAN Chair Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei, doing so allowed the organization to stay ‘in control of regional affairs and [...] look to the future with confidence.’<sup>33</sup> In this regard, three alternative ways to regain role acceptance were debated within ASEAN: 1) accelerating intra-ASEAN FTA (AFTA) and upgrading it to Customs Union; 2) creating ASEAN+3 FTA with China, Japan and South Korea; 3) supporting China’s offer for ASEAN-China FTA (ACFTA). All three options were consistent with ASEAN’s economic interests, yet as I argue below only ASEAN-China FTA allowed the organization to successfully locate its regional role and thus was chosen by ASEAN.

The idea of an intra-ASEAN FTA was debated from 1992, the deadline for implementation being 2008.<sup>34</sup> Yet domestic reservations by ASEAN member states prevented smooth integration. Even the shock of the 1997 financial crisis did not result in any acceleration of the process. The only accomplishment of ASEAN towards the FTA goal was the agreement to cut tariffs to 0 - 5 per cent in 2001.<sup>35</sup> By 2001 the organization also realized that even if fully accomplished, AFTA would be inevitably marginalized by the rising economies of China, NAFTA and other powerful regional

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<sup>32</sup> Anis Kamil, “Asean Ideas to Ride out Economic Woes,” *New Straits Times (Malaysia)*, December 18, 1997.

<sup>33</sup> Yang Razali Kassim, “Asean, East Asia in Major Move to Reduce Dependence on US,” *The Business Times Singapore*, November 6, 2001.

<sup>34</sup> Ching Cheong, “China Gains Big in FTA Deal with Asean,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, November 30, 2001.

<sup>35</sup> Mary Kwang, “Why China Speeded up Plans for FTA with Asean,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, November 13, 2001.

FTAs.<sup>36</sup> Finally, the poor record of AFTA encouraged some ASEAN members to go for bilateral trade agreements. For example, Singapore concluded FTAs with Japan (2002), New Zealand (2002), Thailand with Bahrain (2002).<sup>37</sup> These developments harmed the much desired unity and credibility of ASEAN as a block and thus undermined its efforts to restore relevance and subsequently regain international recognition as collective actor driving regional integration.

ASEAN+3 FTA offered better opportunities for ASEAN's role location. If supported by three major economies of the region China, Japan and South Korea, it could have enabled ASEAN not only to succeed in pursuing economic integration but to raise its international leverage, enabling it 'to argue its course more effectively' in front of the EU, NAFTA and other Western groupings.<sup>38</sup> Two obstacles prevented ASEAN from strengthening its role under this scenario. Firstly, among the three countries only South Korea favored an East Asian FTA and advocated for one with ASEAN and Japan.<sup>39</sup> China and Japan were uneasy about entering in the joint regional initiative. On top of that, Japan was protectionist of its own markets and cautious not to upset the US, which spoke against East Asian Economic cooperation.<sup>40</sup> ASEAN leaders themselves were 'under no illusion' that ASEAN+3 FTA would be 'an easy idea' and realized that it was not making fast enough progress to generate 'internal dynamism.'<sup>41</sup> Secondly, ASEAN was mindful that it could be 'eclipsed' by the bigger powers should the ASEAN+3 initiative become strengthened by the FTA and thus would actually lose rather than boost its 'relevance.'<sup>42</sup> The East Asia FTA scenario was thus postponed for the time when 'ASEAN is strong enough.'<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Yang Razali Kassim, "Many Potholes on Road to East Asia FTA," *The Business Times Singapore*, November 6, 2001, sec. Regional News; Ching Cheong, "China Gains Big in FTA Deal with Asean."

<sup>37</sup> Cheng, "China's Regional Strategy and Challenges in East Asia," 61.

<sup>38</sup> Ashraf Abdullah, "EAEC Idea Revived," *New Straits Times (Malaysia)*, November 26, 2000.

<sup>39</sup> Tress Martelino, "ASEAN, China Hashing out Trade Pact," *The Nikkei Weekly (Japan)*, November 12, 2001.

<sup>40</sup> Abdullah Ashraf, "Leaders Concur Formation of East Asian Community Inevitable," *New Straits Times (Malaysia)*, November 8, 2001, sec. National.

<sup>41</sup> Yang Razali Kassim, "Many Potholes on Road to East Asia FTA."

<sup>42</sup> "Japan, China and Korea Pledge to Co-Operate in Integration Efforts," *New Straits Times (Malaysia)*, November 20, 2000, sec. National.

<sup>43</sup> "Japan, China and Korea Pledge to Co-Operate in Integration Efforts."

In contrast, ASEAN-China FTA suited best ASEAN's role location process. Firstly, unlike intra-ASEAN FTA or East Asia FTA the prospects of a fast conclusion to an ASEAN-China agreement were seen as 'very good,'<sup>44</sup> allowing the organization to achieve regional 'internal dynamism' faster. Secondly, while strengthening internal cohesiveness through ACFTA, ASEAN was protected from being swallowed by China. In this regard, China was mindful to offer unilateral concessions to the organization by opening up its market five years before ASEAN was expected to take reciprocal action.<sup>45</sup> Thirdly, and most importantly, ACFTA demonstrated the 'confidence on ASEAN's part' to geopolitically lock China in through economic ties<sup>46</sup> and thus not only boost economic integration but also increase regional peace and stability in line with its role of security promoter. The unintended consequence of the ACFTA deal was that it raised ASEAN's importance in the eyes of other great powers. The US, Japan, India and even the EU rushed to secure similar deals with ASEAN<sup>47</sup> so as not to lose out to China. Thus, ASEAN's relevance and central position in the region increased even further.

Importantly, the ASEAN-China FTA deal pushed actors towards the relationship of role complementarity. AFTA helped China to gain recognition from ASEAN as a positive actor in the region. Convinced by Beijing's support during the crisis, ASEAN 'took a leap of faith' with China and recognized it as 'an important partner of ASEAN over the past decade,' close relations with whom 'have much to offer for regional peace and prosperity.'<sup>48</sup> According to Ba, praise for China's responsible attitude during the crisis 'became standard fare at the meetings between China and ASEAN states.'<sup>49</sup> For example, Malaysian Prime-Minister, Said Mahathir, remarked in 1999 that

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<sup>44</sup> Yang Razali Kassim, "Asean, East Asia in Major Move to Reduce Dependence on US."

<sup>45</sup> Ching Cheong, "China Gains Big in FTA Deal with Asean."

<sup>46</sup> Lee Kim Chew, "Asean, China Plan FTA," *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, November 7, 2001.

<sup>47</sup> Yang Razali Kassim, "Asean Leaders Put Region into Expansion Mode; Prime Minister Goh Pushes for an Asean Economic Community," *The Business Times Singapore*, November 5, 2002, sec. News Front.

<sup>48</sup> "Press Statement of the 5th ASEAN+1 Meetings during ASEAN Summit, Brunei, 6 November 2001" (ASEAN, 2001), 1.

<sup>49</sup> Alice D. Ba, "China and ASEAN: Renavigating Relations for a 21st-Century Asia," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 4 (2003): 637.

‘China’s high sense of responsibility that have spared the region from worse consequences.’<sup>50</sup> The Chair of ASEAN-China dialogue at that time, Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar also admitted that China’s actions during the crisis ‘have contributed significantly to regional stability’ and China ‘has, indeed, proved to be a real friend of ASEAN in times of need.’<sup>51</sup> Reciprocally China recognized that ASEAN ‘has grown into an important force in regional and even international arena.’<sup>52</sup> Beijing also accepted the organization’s role as a normative and security promoter by joining ASEAN’s Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and by supporting the ASEAN-led Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in Southeast Asia.

Mutual role recognition allowed actors to upgrade their relationship to role agreement during 2002-2012. As I argue in the next section, institutionalization of this role bargaining outcome and establishment of appropriate mechanisms for role enactment contributed to the durable cooperative security order in Southeast Asia, otherwise known as the ‘golden decade’ of ASEAN-China cooperation.

#### **4.2. Role Agreement and Sustained Cooperative Security Order, 2002-2012**

Commonality of expectations and fitting role conceptions established after the Asian financial crisis allowed actors to upgrade their relationship to role agreement. Following the crisis, ASEAN’s and China’s roles were domestically refined. New role conceptions became institutionalized in the official documents regulating ASEAN-China cooperation. Importantly, institutional mechanisms for appropriate role enactment of these roles were established. As a result, role agreement was established that sustained a decade of cooperative security order in the region.

In 2003, ASEAN’s regional role conception became further specified under the Bali Concord II. ASEAN expected to progress to ‘a dynamic, cohesive, resilient and integrated ASEAN

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<sup>50</sup> Ba, “China and ASEAN,” 637.

<sup>51</sup> Yang Razali Kassim, “China Scores Points for Role in Region’s Recovery,” *Business Times (Singapore)*, July 28, 1999, sec. Singapore At Home & Abroad.

<sup>52</sup> “Speech by China Representative at the 3rd ASEAN Informal Summit (ASEAN+1) 28 November 1999.”

Community’ that that played ‘a primary security role’ in Asia-Pacific by being ‘open and outward looking in respect of actively engaging ASEAN’s friends and Dialogue Partners.’<sup>53</sup> Engagement of outside actors was needed in order to ‘be taken seriously by the partners’ and to secure ‘privileged position’ in regional security architecture.<sup>54</sup> The refined ASEAN role conception complemented China’s expectations for the organization, which became more concrete. China ‘wished to see a united, stable and prosperous ASEAN’ that maintained ‘open and inclusive’ approach in regional initiatives and played a central role in the regional security architecture.<sup>55</sup> Beijing believed that a strong ASEAN would ‘make greater contribution to world peace and development.’<sup>56</sup>

China’s own role conceptions about its position in the region were upgraded. Beijing not only wished to appear as a ‘responsible power’ but also as a ‘contributor’ to the regional security order in Asia. To that end, China expressed a firm commitment to ‘energetically engage in regional cooperation in order to jointly [with the neighbors] create a peaceful, stable regional environment’ in Southeast Asia.<sup>57</sup> According to a high-ranking Chinese official, quoted by the *China Daily*, Beijing expected that participation in regional multilateral cooperation would signal to the international community that ‘China intends to become open and responsible’ and that its active participation would ‘create common prosperity and development in Asia.’<sup>58</sup> China’s role also complemented well ASEAN’s expectations. The organization wished all countries of the region to engage in ASEAN-led multilateral frameworks and ‘to cooperate and compete peacefully, and manage disagreements and disputes.’<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> “Declaration of ASEAN Bali Concord II” (ASEAN, October 8, 2003), accessed December 12, 2017, [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=declaration-of-asean-concord-ii-bali-concord-ii](http://asean.org/?static_post=declaration-of-asean-concord-ii-bali-concord-ii).

<sup>54</sup> “Asean: Still Attractive at 40, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong Delivered the Asean Day Lecture at the 40th Anniversary Celebrations of the 10-Nation Grouping Yesterday,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, August 8, 2007, sec. Review.

<sup>55</sup> Wen Jiabao, “Speech at the Commemorative ASEAN-China Summit, October 2006,” (ASEAN, 2006).

<sup>56</sup> “Speech at the Commemorative ASEAN-China Summit, October 2006.”

<sup>57</sup> Hu Jintao, “Report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China,” *Xinhua News Agency*, October 15, 2007, accessed April 8, 2016, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content\\_6938749\\_10.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749_10.htm).

<sup>58</sup> “Regional Economic Integration Benefits All,” *China Daily*, March 30, 2005, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://french1.china.org.cn/english/BAT/124264.htm>.

<sup>59</sup> “Asean: Still Attractive at 40; Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong Delivered the Asean Day Lecture at the 40th Anniversary Celebrations of the 10-Nation Grouping Yesterday.”

The rising regional profile of China sparked debate about whether Beijing was pursuing hidden ambitions aimed at challenging the regional power balance in Asia by assuming a greater regional role.<sup>60</sup> The findings of my research suggest that as a ‘contributor’ to regional security, China did not expect to change the existing normative or security environment in Asia, but merely wished to locate a new role. According to Chinese diplomats, ‘China was reaching out to ASEAN for its own reasons’ as it did not wish to be ‘surrounded by none of friendly forces’ and ‘wanted to signal to them [ASEAN] [that] China also wanted to be friends, that it too wanted trade and economic cooperation and would not threaten them.’<sup>61</sup> Another diplomat confirmed that China’s upgraded role conception targeted ASEAN, and was not intended to change regional power balance, by saying that Beijing neither wanted to engage in economic competition with Japan over Asia, nor wished the US out of the region altogether. In fact, China advocated engaging Japan and South Korea together with ASEAN in regional economic cooperation under the APT and accepted US defense cooperation with some ASEAN member states.<sup>62</sup> The fact that China preferred to engage in ASEAN-led institutions, rather than propose its own alternatives, provided further evidence that it was not *at that time* seeking to change the existing regional order.

Fitting role conceptions and expectations for each other supported the successful development of ASEAN-China role location process. Actors not only recognized each other’s role claims but also institutionalized them through official documents and developed joined mechanisms for their appropriate enactment, which marked the establishment of role agreement. In 2003, ASEAN and China signed the Declaration on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity, which was

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<sup>60</sup> Aaron L. Friedberg, “The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?,” *International Security* 30, no. 2 (October 1, 2005): 7–45, <https://doi.org/10.1162/016228805775124589>; Rosemary Foot, “Chinese Strategies in a US-Hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging,” *International Affairs* 82, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 77–94, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2006.00516.x>; John J. Mearsheimer, “China’s Unpeaceful Rise,” *Current History* 105 (April 2006): 160–62; Jeffrey W. Legro, “What China Will Want: The Future Intentions of a Rising Power,” *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 3 (September 2007): 515–34, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592707071526>; G. John Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (2008): 23–37.

<sup>61</sup> Leslie Fong, “China’s Not in Competition with Japan,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, December 19, 2003, sec. Commentary.

<sup>62</sup> Fong, “China’s Not in Competition.”

accompanied by a five-year Plan of Action, where their roles were officially spelled out. China explicitly accepted ASEAN 'as a driving force' in regional security under the ARF, accepted ASEAN's TAC practices as the basis for regional cooperation, committed to support ASEAN in promoting TAC and Southeast Asia Nuclear- Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) among ASEAN Dialogue Partners as confidence-building mechanisms. In addition, China committed to support ASEAN efforts to establish itself as a collective actor by contributing to its internal integration schemas: Initiative for ASEAN Integration, Vientiane Action Plan and cross-border economic growth areas.<sup>63</sup> In return, ASEAN recognized China as a contributor to regional order by accepting China's Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence as a normative basis for cooperation along with the ASEAN Way, agreeing to jointly realize regional security through cooperation and 'to create an environment of tolerance and openness for cooperation and development in the region.'<sup>64</sup>

Institutionalization of ASEAN-China cooperation deepened from 2003. By 2011, in addition to the annual ASEAN-China and ASEAN+3 Summits, 10 ministerial meeting mechanisms and more than 20 senior officials' level working mechanisms were created to support implementation of the Declaration on Strategic Partnership.<sup>65</sup> Some scholars have argued that this institutional 'enmeshment' of China in a variety of ASEAN institutions sustained cooperative relationship as it created the web of complex interdependence.<sup>66</sup> Others emphasized that thick institutionalization supported argumentative persuasion or social learning, which led to greater norm convergence

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<sup>63</sup> "Joint Declaration of the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity" (ASEAN, October 2003), accessed May 3, 2015, <http://www.asean.org/asean/external-relations/china/item/external-relations-china-joint-declaration-of-the-heads-of-stategovernment-of-the-association-of-southeast-asian-nations-and-the-people-s-republic-of-china-on-strategic-partnership-for-peace-and-prosperity-bali-indonesia-8-october-2003>.

<sup>64</sup> "Declaration on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity."

<sup>65</sup> "China-ASEAN Cooperation: 1991-2011," The Chinese Central Government's Official Web Portal, November 15, 2011, accessed January 15, 2015, [http://www.gov.cn/english/2011-11/15/content\\_1994087.htm](http://www.gov.cn/english/2011-11/15/content_1994087.htm).

<sup>66</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (Routledge, 2005); Vinod K. Aggarwal and Min Gyo Koo, *Asia's New Institutional Architecture: Evolving Structures for Managing Trade, Financial, and Security Relations* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2008); Evelyn Goh, "Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (January 1, 2008): 113–57, <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2008.32.3.113>; Yongwook, "ASEAN's Middle Power Diplomacy Towards China."

between ASEAN and China and as an outcome to cooperative security order.<sup>67</sup> Still others attributed Chinese commitment to cooperation to the fact that regional institutions helped China to promote its own strategic interests.<sup>68</sup> Here I advance a claim that institutionalization also contributed to the successful role location process. Institutionalization was used by both actors to consolidate the recognition of their role claims and provided them with appropriate mechanisms for role enactment. Through these mechanisms, the relationship of role agreement was consolidated between actors. To demonstrate this impact of institutionalization on role location, I discuss the case of ASEAN-China cooperation in non-traditional security (NTS).

Non-traditional security featured as an important component in ASEAN's and China's role conceptions, which made it an essential dimension of their role bargaining process. China considered NTS cooperation to be part of its 'responsible power' concept. According to its 2002 White Paper on Non-traditional Security, addressing NTS threats together with ASEAN and ARF partners enabled China 'to make a positive contribution to the maintenance of regional peace and stability' as a 'responsible member of international community.'<sup>69</sup> Therefore, by raising its profile in NTS China could locate its role of a contributor to regional security and even exercise some leadership without necessarily evoking the 'China threat' perception. Although non-military in nature, NTS cooperation was not entirely military-free. At the 2007 ASEAN-China summit, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao voiced a proposition for ASEAN to 'increase military exchanges and cooperation, pursue institutionalized defense cooperation, strengthen dialogue on defense policy, and promote more cooperation between our militaries in NTS areas.'<sup>70</sup> Another form of contribution that he offered was to enhance ASEAN's own capabilities in fighting NTS by information sharing and providing courses

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<sup>67</sup> Ba, "Who Is Socializing Whom? Complex Engagement in Sino-ASEAN Relations"; Acharya, "Asian Regional Institutions and the Possibilities for Socializing the Behavior of States."

<sup>68</sup> Cheng-Chwee, "Multilateralism in China's ASEAN Policy."

<sup>69</sup> The Department of International Organizations and Conferences, "Position Paper on Enhanced Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, May 2002), accessed September 27, 2017, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjb\\_663304/zzjg\\_663340/gjs\\_665170/gjzyhy\\_665174/2612\\_665212/2614\\_665216/t15318.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zzjg_663340/gjs_665170/gjzyhy_665174/2612_665212/2614_665216/t15318.shtml).

<sup>70</sup> Wen Jiabao quoted in David Arase, "Non-Traditional Security in China-ASEAN Cooperation: The Institutionalization of Regional Security Cooperation and the Evolution of East Asian Regionalism," *Asian Survey* 50, no. 4 (2010): 823.

and trainings for ASEAN professionals in various NTS fields. China expected that the institutionalization of NTS dialogue, military cooperation for NTS purposes and contribution to ASEAN NTS capabilities would help its role location. It presented China with an opportunity to demonstrate that its superior military capabilities were for ASEAN-shared NTS goals and not for hard power projection.<sup>71</sup>

ASEAN also viewed NTS as an important part of its role as ‘security promoter’ within and beyond the borders of the organization. Internally, ASEAN considered addressing non-traditional security threats to be an essential element of creating Political and Security Community among member states and consolidating its capabilities as a security promoter. The ASEAN Blueprint for Political and Security Community identified ‘a key purpose of ASEAN’ as a security promoter to ‘respond effectively and in a timely manner’ to NTS challenges.<sup>72</sup> For example, ASEAN’s joint response to the Asian avian influenza flu in 2003-2005 was promoted as the organization ability ‘to exert leadership, coordination, and be on top of the situation.’<sup>73</sup> Externally, addressing NTS challenges was used by ASEAN as an instrument of role location. However, the organization was aware that it can be effective as extra-regional security promoter only in cooperation with other regional partners because of the transnational character of security threats and because in itself ASEAN lacked sufficient capabilities to address these challenges.<sup>74</sup> Similarly to China, ASEAN expected to achieve its security role through the development of institutionalized security frameworks for NTS. Developing extra-regional institutional mechanisms allowed ASEAN to enhance regional peace and security by drawing on the resources of non-ASEAN-countries and at the same time ‘enabled ASEAN to position itself to influence the development of the constructive relations between major powers.’<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Arase, “Non-Traditional Security in China-ASEAN Cooperation,” 828.

<sup>72</sup> ASEAN Secretariat, “ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint (2009-2015)” (ASEAN, June 2009), accessed September 27, 2017, <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/ASEAN-APSC-Blueprint-2025.pdf>.

<sup>73</sup> ASEAN Secretariat, “ASEAN Response to Combat Avian Influenza” (ASEAN, April 1, 2006), accessed September 27, 2017, [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=asean-response-to-combat-avian-influenza-by-asean-secretariat-3](http://asean.org/?static_post=asean-response-to-combat-avian-influenza-by-asean-secretariat-3).

<sup>74</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting, “Concept Paper of ADMM Plus” (2nd ADMM, November 14, 2007).

<sup>75</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting, “Concept Paper of ADMM Plus.”

The institution that allowed actors to locate successfully their role claims was ASEAN's Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus). Launched in 2007, it was implemented in 2010 as 'the highest ministerial defense and security consultative and cooperative mechanism amongst the ASEAN Member States and the eight Plus countries'<sup>76</sup> Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, Russian Federation, and the United States. As an actor drafting the ADMM Plus mechanism, ASEAN made sure that its role conception was institutionally protected by it. The ADMM Concept Papers secured ASEAN's 'central role' in the interaction with the 'Plus' countries by making it a permanent chair of ADMM Plus meetings, subordinating ADMM Plus to ASEAN's own Defense Ministers' Meeting, putting ASEAN's principles at the heart of ADMM Plus cooperation and explicitly linking the ADMM Plus process with the development of ASEAN Political and Security Community.<sup>77</sup> ASEAN's expectations for the 'Plus' countries were also institutionalized through membership criteria, such as the status of ASEAN's Dialogue Partner, the presence of trust, mutual understanding and comfort level with ASEAN defense establishments and the ability to bring expertise, perspectives and resources to bear on shared security challenges. The admission to ADMM Plus was possible under consent from all ASEAN member states.<sup>78</sup> In such a way, the system ensured that ASEAN remained in control of the agenda and direction of ADMM Plus cooperation. The fact that the Plus countries, including China, agreed to this institutional design of the forum in the First Joint Declaration of ADMM Plus confirmed that ASEAN's role was accepted.

Importantly, ASEAN was able to enact its leadership as cooperation progressed, which further supported its role location. It succeeded in launching a platform in defense cooperation between the countries whose collective defense capabilities were comparable to NATO, but who had 'no past war

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<sup>76</sup> "Joint Declaration on the First ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, Ha Noi" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Indonesia, October 2010), accessed January 20, 2018, <http://www.kemlu.go.id/id/lembar-informasi/Pages/Joint-Declaration-on-the-First-ADMM-Plus.aspx>.

<sup>77</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, "Concept Paper of ADMM Plus"; ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, "Concept Paper on ADMM-Plus: Configuration and Composition" (4th ADMM, May 11, 2010).

<sup>78</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, "ADMM-Plus Principles for Membership" (3rd ADMM, February 26, 2009).

or crisis or common threat to drive them together.’<sup>79</sup> In May 2012, ASEAN leaders made use of their centrality and accelerated the ADMM Plus process by increasing the frequency of forum meetings. This decision aimed at supporting ASEAN’s role as a security promoter by ‘reinforc[ing] the positive commitment of ADMM-Plus countries to enhance regional peace and stability’, which also ensured ASEAN’s own resilience to security challenges.<sup>80</sup> Finally, ASEAN made use of ADMM Plus to demonstrate its practical achievements as a security promoter. In July 2011 the inaugural ASEAN Militaries’ Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Table-Top Exercise took place in Singapore and Indonesia, where over 100 personnel from ASEAN militaries participated in three day exercise.<sup>81</sup> In June 2013, ADMM Plus HADR/MM took place bringing over 3000 personnel and much military hardware, including seven ships and 15 helicopters from 18 ADMM Plus countries.<sup>82</sup> At the 7<sup>th</sup> ADMM ASEAN, Defense Ministers ‘underscored the progress that ADMM and ADMM Plus have made in enhancing practical cooperation among the militaries in addressing non-traditional security challenges.’<sup>83</sup> It allowed ASEAN to demonstrate its capabilities in region-wide security promotion, thus proving its role achievement. At the same time, it showed that ASEAN as a security promoter was able to make countries that are sometimes viewed as regional rivals conduct practical military cooperation. The fact that *all* Dialogue Partners subscribed to the ADMM Plus framework, according to Prime-Minister Tan Chee Hean of Singapore, proved that ‘ASEAN was able to play a role as the fulcrum of the regional security architecture.’<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ron Huisken, “ADMM Plus Cooperates on Security and Defense Issues,” East Asia Forum, October 19, 2010, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2010/10/19/admm-plus-cooperates-on-security-and-defence-issues/>.

<sup>80</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting, “Concept Paper on Frequency of ADMM-Plus Meeting” (6th ADMM, May 29, 2012).

<sup>81</sup> “ASEAN (and ADMM Plus) Military Exercises,” *Defense Talk Forum*, June 13, 2013, accessed September 27, 2017, <http://www.defencetalk.com/forums/military-photos-videos/asean-admm-plus-military-exercises-12640/>.

<sup>82</sup> Rabiatul Kamit, “Military Officials Discuss Significance of Coordination, Cooperation,” *The Brunei Times*, January 22, 2014, sec. National, accessed September 27, 2017, <https://btarchive.org/news/national/2014/01/22/military-officials-discuss-significance-coordination-cooperation>.

<sup>83</sup> “Minister for Defense in Brunei for 7th ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting,” Ministry of Defense Singapore, May 7, 2013, accessed January 20, 2018, [https://www.mindef.gov.sg/oms/imindef/press\\_room/official\\_releases/nr/2013/may/07may13\\_nr.html](https://www.mindef.gov.sg/oms/imindef/press_room/official_releases/nr/2013/may/07may13_nr.html).

<sup>84</sup> “Opening Remarks by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defense Teo Chee Hean at the Putrajaya Forum Opening Dinner,” Ministry of Defense Singapore, October 14, 2010, accessed September 27, 2017, [https://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/press\\_room/official\\_releases/sp/2010/14oct10\\_transcript.print.noimg.html](https://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/press_room/official_releases/sp/2010/14oct10_transcript.print.noimg.html).

China was also able to locate its role as a contributor to regional security through ADMM Plus cooperation. In line with its role conception as a responsible power and regional security contributor, Beijing used the forum to showcase its support for a cooperative and peaceful regional security order. At the first meeting, the Chinese representative Liang Guanglie highlighted that Chinese regional policy was ‘defensive in nature’ and aimed at ensuring its own as well as regional peace.<sup>85</sup> He identified NTS challenges as the major source of regional instability and therefore the primary focus of ADMM Plus security cooperation. Demonstrating its commitment China also proposed to further institutionalize the mechanisms of ADMM Plus and called on the participants to ‘press ahead with practical cooperation in a steady manner.’<sup>86</sup> The institutional framework of ADMM Plus allowed China to locate successfully its role of a contributor by providing it with appropriate channel for role enactment. Although NTS challenges were non-military in nature, they served as a justification for institutionalized interaction between ASEAN Plus defense establishments through enhanced coordination and practical cooperation in the areas of mutual interest. Hence, through ADMM Plus, China could conduct its military confidence-building by using power capabilities for NTS goals. Moreover, its role was also institutionally accepted. In 2011 China became a co-chair of the ADMM Plus Expert Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). According to an expert from the PLA Academy, China (together with the US) had the largest HADR capabilities in the region,<sup>87</sup> which is probably why it chose to play a leading role in this dimension. As a co-chair, China hosted ADMM Plus meetings on HADR with the aim to produce recommendations for region-wide cooperation in ADMM Plus. Beijing could also credit itself as an organizer of ADMM Plus HADR/MM Exercise labeled as ‘the first action-oriented achievement

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<sup>85</sup> “China Makes Use of ASEAN Meeting to Boost Regional Peace, Stability,” *Xinhua News Agency*, October 12, 2010, accessed September 27, 2017, [http://www.china.org.cn/world/2010-10/12/content\\_21108872.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/world/2010-10/12/content_21108872.htm).

<sup>86</sup> “China Makes Use of ASEAN Meeting to Boost Regional Peace, Stability.”

<sup>87</sup> Bo Zhou, “China-U.S. HA/DR Exercise and Its Implication for the Asia-Pacific,” *China-US Focus*, February 16, 2015, accessed September 27, 2017, <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/china-u-s-hadr-exercise-and-its-implication-for-the-asia-pacific>.

since the advent of ADMM-Plus.<sup>88</sup> The Chinese PLA representative noted in an interview that participation in the exercise under ADMM Plus framework allowed China to improve its ‘capabilities in non-war operations’ and to ‘demonstrate PRC active participation in regional security promotion.’<sup>89</sup> Another PLA representative also confirmed that the exercise showed that ASEAN and Plus countries ‘can work together in a good environment.’<sup>90</sup> Hence, ADMM Plus provided both ASEAN and China with the mechanisms to enact their roles with mutual consent, which supported their role location and as a result cooperative security environment in the region.

This section has demonstrated that ASEAN-China role bargaining process during the 2000s took a divergent trend compared to the EU-Russia case. Where the EU and Russia failed to consolidate and upgrade role complementarity, ASEAN and China successfully consolidated the relationship of role agreement. Mutual acceptance of each other’s roles and institutional mechanisms for their appropriate enactment contributed to sustained cooperative security order.

A quote from Chinese premier Wen Jiabao’s speech at the commemorative ASEAN-China summit in 2011 captures best this progress:

As strategic partners for peace and prosperity, China and ASEAN have engaged in exchanges and cooperation in wide-ranging areas and at a level unseen in the past, and we have formed a community of common destiny sharing a common stake.<sup>91</sup>

As is evident from the quote, China not only recognized regional security environment with ASEAN as cooperative, but even implied the existence of security community (community of common destiny). ASEAN seemed to subscribe to this assessment. In 2006, ASEAN’s Secretary General admitted that ASEAN and China were playing ‘the supporting and complementary role in each other's socio-economic development and in maintaining peace and stability in the region.’<sup>92</sup> In 2011, the

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<sup>88</sup> “Joint Work Report of EWG on HADR” (ASEAN Regional Forum Archives, 2013), accessed September 27, 2017, <http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/files/Archive/20th/12th%20ARF%20ISM%20on%20DR,%20Padang,%2012-13March2013/Annex%205%20-%20Joint%20Work%20Report%20of%20ADMM-Plus%20EWG%20on%20HADR.pdf>.

<sup>89</sup> “ASEAN (and ADMM Plus) Military Exercises.”

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Wen Jiabao, “Statement at 14th China-ASEAN Summit,” *Xinhua News Agency*, November 18, 2011, accessed April 4, 2016, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-11/18/c\\_131255936.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-11/18/c_131255936.htm).

<sup>92</sup> “‘ASEAN-China Relations: Harmony and Development,’ Speech by ASEAN Secretary General Ong Keng Yong on ASEAN-China 15th Anniversary” (ASEAN, December 8, 2006), accessed September 27, 2017,

Chairman's statement of ASEAN-China summit 'noted with satisfaction the continued strengthening relationship and the significant progress of cooperation made within the framework of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations.'<sup>93</sup> As I discuss in the next subsection, the new round of role bargaining process between ASEAN and China started in 2013, when China decided to upgrade its role and claim co-leadership in regional order.

### **4.3. New Round of Role Bargaining and Return to Complementarity, 2013-2016**

From 2013 ASEAN and China engaged in a new round of role bargaining. The Chinese leadership transition from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping in 2012 caused a redefinition of China's role from a contributor to co-leader in regional security order. For ASEAN, these developments created a challenge as to how it could accommodate China's claim for co-leadership without undermining its own 'centrality' in regional affairs. In this section I argue that the ASEAN-China role bargaining process during 2013-2016 developed towards a new role complementarity that encouraged a cooperative security environment. However, differently from the previously discussed period, institutionalization benefited only ASEAN's role, and restrained China's role location process.

Following China's leadership transition in 2012, Beijing upgraded its role conception and claimed co-leadership with ASEAN in regional security order. This meant, according to China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Liu Zhenmin, 'to provide a 'Chinese solution' (*zhongguo fangan*)' to regional challenges and 'to play a leadership role in international affairs by contributing the 'Chinese wisdom' (*zhongguo zhihui*).'<sup>94</sup> Under the new role claim Chinese foreign policy became more assertive, so that some observers even claimed a shift in China's international paradigm.<sup>95</sup> However,

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<http://www.asean.org/resources/2012-02-10-08-47-56/speeches-statements-of-the-former-secretaries-general-of-asean/item/asean-china-relations-harmony-and-development>.

<sup>93</sup> ASEAN, "Chairman's Statement of the 14th ASEAN-China Summit, Bali, Indonesia, 2011" (ASEAN, November 18, 2011), accessed September 27, 2017, <http://www.asean.org/storage/archive/documents/19th%20summit/CH-CS.pdf>.

<sup>94</sup> Jian Zhang, "China's New Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping: Towards 'Peaceful Rise 2.0'?", *Global Change, Peace & Security* 27, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 5–19, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14781158.2015.993958>.

<sup>95</sup> David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Justyna Szczudlik-Tatar, "Towards China's Great Power Diplomacy under Xi Jinping," *PISM Policy Paper* 9, no. 3 (2015): 1–7; Nien-chung Chang-Liao, "China's New Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping," *Asian Security* 12, no. 2 (May 3, 2016): 82–91, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2016.1183195>.

following Zhang, I argue that China's foreign agenda remained within the earlier declared doctrine of 'peaceful rise',<sup>96</sup> therefore, role redefinition represented an upgrade and not a change of the role conception.

China's bid for co-leadership was announced by President Xi Jinping during his first visit to Southeast Asia in 2013. Xi proclaimed China's intentions to 'champion [together with ASEAN] the new thinking of comprehensive security, common security and cooperative security and jointly uphold regional peace and stability' in the region with the end goal of establishing 'a community of common destiny.'<sup>97</sup> Accordingly, China expected ASEAN to demonstrate 'trust, pragmatism and inclusiveness' and to respond positively to China's regional initiatives for the sake of 'fruitful cooperation.'<sup>98</sup> The ASEAN-China co-leadership also presupposed that not only China, but 'any big county' (meaning the US) had to restrain from seeking hegemony in the East Asian regional order.<sup>99</sup> As a way to contain any undesirable engagement of extra-regional powers, China strongly backed the idea of ASEAN 'centrality' that it understood in terms of balanced accommodation of interests of regional great powers without granting preferential treatment to any actor. China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi explicitly put it by saying that

China firmly supports ASEAN's centrality in East Asian cooperation. China does not and cannot ask ASEAN to choose sides between major countries. China has not and will not do anything detrimental to ASEAN unity. At the same time, we also hope that ASEAN will be objective and impartial in its position, accommodate the interests and legitimate concerns of various parties [great powers] in a balanced way.<sup>100</sup>

The quote clearly demonstrates that China's recognition for ASEAN 'centrality' role was linked to very specific role expectations for the organization. This posed a new challenge for the ASEAN role location process. If previously China exercised its influence but ASEAN had a room for maneuver,

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<sup>96</sup> Zhang, "China's New Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping: Towards 'Peaceful Rise 2.0'?"

<sup>97</sup> Xi Jinping, "Speech to Indonesian Parliament, Jakarta, Indonesia," ASEAN-China Center, October 2, 2013, accessed September 4, 2016, [http://www.asean-china-center.org/english/2013-10/03/c\\_133062675.htm](http://www.asean-china-center.org/english/2013-10/03/c_133062675.htm).

<sup>98</sup> Li Keqiang, "Remarks at the 16th ASEAN-China Summit, Brunei, 9 October 2013" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, October 10, 2013), accessed December 17, 2017, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/topics\\_665678/lkqzlcxdyldrxlhy\\_665684/t1089853.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/topics_665678/lkqzlcxdyldrxlhy_665684/t1089853.shtml).

<sup>99</sup> Wang Yi, "Remarks at Meeting with Senior Officials and Ambassadors of ASEAN Countries, Chinese Foreign Ministry, 2 April 2013," Embassy of the Republic of China in the Kingdom of Denmark, April 15, 2013, accessed December 2, 2012, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cedk/eng/TourChina/t1031257.htm>.

<sup>100</sup> Wang Yi, "Remarks at the Meeting."

with the role upgrade China started to meddle into ASEAN's 'internal kitchen' and to 'Force' its role expectations on the organization.<sup>101</sup> However, as I argue below, ASEAN accommodated China's role claims and fulfilled its role expectations only to an extent that the organization's own position in the region remained secure.

Overall, China's expectations fitted well ASEAN's role location process. In 2013, similarly to 1997, ASEAN was guided by the need to consolidate its position as a 'relevant actor' in regional security order. ASEAN's stance in the region in 2013 was undermined due to disagreements over the South China Sea issue, which prevented its leaders from adopting a unified stance during the 2012 summit (this case and its implications for ASEAN's regional role are analyzed in Chapter 6). To regain international recognition after the failure of 2012, ASEAN placed a new emphasis on 'strengthening its leadership role' and on maintaining 'centrality' in regional affairs.<sup>102</sup> This meant, according to ASEAN's Secretary General Le Luong Minh, 'proposing ideas and initiatives and take the lead in providing innovative and creative responses to current and future challenges.'<sup>103</sup> It also required 'manag[ing] the competing interests of our [ASEAN's] Dialogue Partners to ensure they contribute constructively to address the challenges facing the region and support ASEAN's community building efforts.'<sup>104</sup>

As such, the roles of ASEAN and China fitted well together, but their expectations for pursuing these roles were not entirely the same. ASEAN welcomed China's 'constructive contribution' to the region and support for ASEAN's integration efforts. ASEAN also accepted China's claim for co-leadership by supporting a number of China-led initiatives in the region such as the Asian

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<sup>101</sup> Author's interview with Bhubhindar Singh, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore, March 30, 2017.

<sup>102</sup> ASEAN, "Chairman's Statement of the 24th ASEAN Summit, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, 2014" (ASEAN, May 11, 2014), accessed January 31, 2018, [http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/pdf/2014\\_upload/Chairman%20Statement%20of%20the%2025th%20ASEAN%20Summit.pdf](http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/pdf/2014_upload/Chairman%20Statement%20of%20the%2025th%20ASEAN%20Summit.pdf).

<sup>103</sup> Le Luong Minh, "'Moving ASEAN Forward, Strengthening Community Building' Speech at the 10th ASEAN Leadership Forum, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia" (ASEAN, July 18, 2013), accessed January 31, 2018, <http://www.asean.org/storage/images/2013/resources/speech/SG%20ASEAN%20Leadership%20Speech%20revised%2018%20jul%202013%20final.pdf>.

<sup>104</sup> Le Luong Minh, "Moving ASEAN Forward."

Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR) and Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC). However, the organization granted its recognition for China's role only as long as its own regional position was untouched. As I argue in what follows, ASEAN was reluctant to support China's role upgrade and even restrained Beijing's aspirations for co-leadership in the initiative where ASEAN claimed central role. Two examples discussed below - negotiations of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the developments of the ADMM Plus framework - demonstrate this development.

**Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).** RCEP was launched in November 2012 as an ASEAN-led initiative to upgrade the existing 'noodle bowl' network of ASEAN+ FTAs with six Dialogue Partners to a single economic area. RCEP was widely seen by scholars as a response to another region-wide economic cooperation agreement – the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Accordingly, China's support for this initiative was strongly linked with strategic considerations to consolidate a China-centered regional order, which excluded the US.<sup>105</sup> US-China competition was not merely limited to inclusion or exclusion. TPP and RCEP as macro-regional initiatives offered real alternatives to the unsuccessful WTO Doha Round talks on trade liberalization.<sup>106</sup> If concluded, they would have set up a benchmark for regional economic governance in the Asia-Pacific region and, possibly, elsewhere in the world. The opportunity to write the rules of regional economic governance intensified competition between the US and China for the fast conclusion of negotiations.<sup>107</sup> However, beyond strategic considerations, both ASEAN and China saw regional economic integration as the dimension for successful role location.

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<sup>105</sup> Sebastian Heilman et al., "China's Shadow Foreign Policy: Parallel Structures Challenge the Established International Order," *China Monitor* 18 (October 28, 2014): 1–9; Jeffrey D. Wilson, "Mega-Regional Trade Deals in the Asia-Pacific: Choosing Between the TPP and RCEP?," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 45, no. 2 (April 3, 2015): 345–53, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2014.956138>; Vinod K. Aggarwal, "Mega-FTAs and the Trade-Security Nexus: The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)," *Asia-Pacific Issues* 123 (2016): 1–8.

<sup>106</sup> Wilson, "Mega-Regional Trade Deals in the Asia-Pacific."

<sup>107</sup> Aggarwal, "Mega-FTAs and the Trade-Security Nexus: The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)."

ASEAN came up with the proposal for RCEP in 2011, when regional economic architecture had already been changing. Three alternative frameworks for economic integration were considered by regional stakeholders: the US-backed TPP, China's East Asia Free Trade Area and Japan's Comprehensive Economic Partnership of East Asia. However, each of these initiatives posed a challenge to ASEAN 'centrality' in the region. The TPP, already under negotiation, included only four ASEAN members (Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam and Malaysia). The Philippines and Thailand considered joining the initiative, while other countries were reluctant to undertake advanced obligation that TPP presupposed. ASEAN as a block was not a member to TPP, and the involvement of only some countries inevitably undermined organization's 'centrality'. Two other proposals included all ten ASEAN member states, but were not ASEAN-led, which again created a fear that the block would be marginalized by more powerful participants.

Faced with the need to preserve its leading position and centrality in regional architecture, ASEAN 'resolve[d] to establish an ASEAN-led process [RCEP] by setting out principles under which ASEAN will engage interested ASEAN FTA partners in establishing a regional comprehensive economic partnership agreement.'<sup>108</sup> The proposed framework reflected closely ASEAN's conception of 'leadership' in terms of setting the principles for addressing regional challenges. The proposal specified that the future agreement should: a) be guided by ASEAN principles; b) be open to any ASEAN FTA partner as well as other economic partners; c) contribute to ASEAN's economic integration and community-building efforts; d) provide for special treatment for the least developed ASEAN members in terms of capacity-building and closing the development gap.<sup>109</sup> In such a way, ASEAN institutionally ensured that its leading position in the framework would be preserved. Getting regional powers interested in RCEP was also important for the organization because the initiative

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<sup>108</sup> "ASEAN Framework for Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Bali, Indonesia, 17 November 2011" (ASEAN, November 17, 2011), accessed December 15, 2017, <https://cil.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/formidable/18/2011-ASEAN-Framework-for-Regional-Comprehensive-Economic-Partnership.pdf>.

<sup>109</sup> "ASEAN Framework for Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership."

offered ‘another pathway’ to economic integration of Asia-Pacific<sup>110</sup> that, unlike TPP, was centered on ASEAN.

RCEP was also consistent with another dimension of ASEAN’s leadership concept -managing the competing interests of Dialogue Partners. If successful, RCEP would create a single economic area between ASEAN Plus members that previously were not connected by FTA network: China, Japan, South Korea and India. Competition for leadership and conflicting interests prevented their economic integration, even despite potential gains. This is where RCEP provided a solution. An ASEAN-centered framework removed the leadership problem. ASEAN’s Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan noted that ‘The Japanese would like to come through us [ASEAN] to go into India. India would like to go through us [ASEAN] to go to China and Australia.’<sup>111</sup> RCEP also eased the problem of competing interests by encouraging the principle of flexibility embedded in ASEAN’s idea of ‘soft’ regionalism. It allowed actors ‘to sign up for some but not all RCEP provisions’,<sup>112</sup> which eased the consensus during the negotiations. The Trade and Industry Minister Lim Hng Kiang of Singapore, commenting on RCEP talks, confirmed that despite the conflicting interests of key actors ‘[RCEP] talks have been good, and all 16 countries have indicated that they are on board.’<sup>113</sup>

China’s position on RCEP closely resembled ASEAN’s expectations for great powers to engage in the initiative as ‘constructive contributors’. Echoing ASEAN, Beijing expected RCEP to form ‘a solid foundation for the grand blueprint of jointly building the Asia-Pacific FTA.’<sup>114</sup> China signalled it would ‘take a more proactive position to advance RCEP negotiations’<sup>115</sup> and would ‘open

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<sup>110</sup> Pichai Chuensuksawadi, “A Bright Spot at the Asean Summit,” *The Bangkok Post (Thailand)*, November 19, 2012, sec. Asia Focus, accessed December 29, 2017, <https://www.bangkokpost.com/print/321997>.

<sup>111</sup> Chuensuksawadi, “A Bright Spot.”

<sup>112</sup> Anna Ashton, “Recent Developments in China’s International Trade Engagement,” *China Business Review*, May 30, 2017, accessed December 29, 2017, <https://www.chinabusinessreview.com/recent-developments-in-chinas-international-trade-engagement/>.

<sup>113</sup> “New Pact’s Long-Term Goal Is FTA for Asia-Pacific,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, January 28, 2014, sec. News; World.

<sup>114</sup> Giovanni Lieto, “RCEP the Grand Blueprint of Xi Jinping’s World Trade Game,” *Asia Times*, September 28, 2017.

<sup>115</sup> Li Keqiang, “Speech at the 20th ASEAN Plus China, Japan and ROK Summit,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, November 14, 2017, accessed December 29, 2017, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1510659.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1510659.shtml).

more [...] to make sure the fruits of development are shared'.<sup>116</sup> RCEP was also hailed by *China Daily*, a Chinese government mouthpiece. According to an editorial, China 'unconditionally supported' the RCEP as contributing to ASEAN's integration efforts and enhancing the status of the organization in the region and in the world.<sup>117</sup> To that end, a researcher from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, which is responsible for RCEP talks, argued that China was prompt to work closely with ASEAN on RCEP precisely because the initiative 'suit[ed] the Southeast Asian bloc's realities like uneven development and accord[ed] it the leading role in promoting regional cooperation.'<sup>118</sup> The importance of RCEP in addressing regional economic gaps and accelerating regional development was also employed under China's claim for co-leadership. In this context, China linked the so called 'Chinese Dream' to the 'ASEAN Dream'. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi defined the 'ASEAN Dream' as the establishment of the ASEAN political, economic and security communities, which he connected with the Chinese goals of peaceful rise and economic development.<sup>119</sup> In this context, China believed that RCEP should establish a 'rule systems that accord with the development of Asia'<sup>120</sup> benefitting both China's and ASEAN's interests.

Importantly, even though China linked its leadership in RCEP negotiations with its growing capabilities, Beijing still preferred to recognize the primary position of ASEAN and to frame its contribution to RCEP in line with ASEAN's expectations. China believed that its position as 'the largest economy among 16 RCEP members', whose rapid development, global competitiveness and economic administration level 'have enhanced significantly' made it 'capable and responsible for

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<sup>116</sup> "China Pledges Further Opening as Xi Jinping Pushes China-Backed Trade Deals at Apec," *The Straits Times*, November 20, 2016, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/xi-jinping-pushes-for-asia-pacific-trade-deals-with-china-to-fill-us-void>.

<sup>117</sup> Dequan Ling, "Reaching a New Milestone for the ASEAN Path," *China Daily*, November 24, 2015, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/201511attendsASEAN/2015-11/24/content\\_22512561.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/201511attendsASEAN/2015-11/24/content_22512561.htm); Hoo Tiang Boon, "The Rise of Southeast Asia and the Challenges Ahead," *China Daily*, November 24, 2015, sec. Opinion, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-11/24/content\\_22513240.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-11/24/content_22513240.htm).

<sup>118</sup> Xu Man, "TPP Not an Insurmountable Challenge," *China Daily*, November 17, 2015, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2015-11/18/content\\_22479983.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2015-11/18/content_22479983.htm).

<sup>119</sup> Wang, "Remarks at Meeting with Senior Officials and Ambassadors of ASEAN Countries, Chinese Foreign Ministry, 2 April 2013."

<sup>120</sup> Ministry of Commerce, PRC, "Give Play of China's Important Role and Accelerate RCEP Negotiations," China FTA Network, January 9, 2014, accessed December 29, 2017, [http://fta.mofcom.gov.cn/enarticle/rcepen/enrcepnews/201411/18815\\_1.html](http://fta.mofcom.gov.cn/enarticle/rcepen/enrcepnews/201411/18815_1.html).

playing an important role in negotiations.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, China's claim for leadership in the economic dimension was the strongest. Yet, the Chinese then-commerce minister Gao Hucheng clarified that 'the Chinese side supports ASEAN to lead the negotiations.'<sup>122</sup> By closely following ASEAN's expectations, Beijing succeeded in gaining recognition from the organization. In 2017 ASEAN Secretary General Le Luong Minh confirmed ASEAN's and China's 'shared commitment' to regionalism and multilateralism in Asia-Pacific and recognized that 'China play[ed] an important role in the negotiations of the RCEP.'<sup>123</sup>

However, by supporting RCEP, Beijing aimed to locate its own role as a regional and, even, a global leader. The opportunity to shape the foundations of international economic governance through the RCEP was in line with China's claim for global leadership, as presented by Hu Jintao in 2012 Report to the Party Congress as 'taking an active part in global economic governance, promot[ing] and facilitate[ing] free trade and investment, and oppos[ing] protectionism in all its forms'.<sup>124</sup> The 'smooth establishment of the RCEP' was seen by China as 'fighting for the initiative of the new round of reconstruction of international economic and trade rules, ... creating a more relaxed external environment for foreign trade and economic cooperation and cultivating harmonious and stable surroundings for China's peaceful development.'<sup>125</sup> The new agreement aimed at the 'the formation of rule systems that accord with the development interests of East Asia' and thus was believed to increase the voice of the region in 'the international rules game.'<sup>126</sup>

Contrary to the dominant perception that China supported RCEP only as a balancing strategy against the US, the Chinese side promoted it as the initiative contributing to regional peace and security. RCEP was framed as 'strengthening the cohesion of Asian-Pacific region' and as

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<sup>121</sup> Ministry of Commerce, "Give Play of China's Important Role."

<sup>122</sup> Lieto, "RCEP the Grand Blueprint of Xi Jinping's World Trade Game."

<sup>123</sup> "China, ASEAN See Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation in All 3 Pillars: ASEAN Secretary General," *Xinhua News Agency*, November 13, 2017, sec. World, accessed December 30, 2017, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2017liattendasean/2017-11/13/content\\_34480943.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2017liattendasean/2017-11/13/content_34480943.htm).

<sup>124</sup> Hu Jintao, "Report to the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China," *Xinhua News Agency*, November 19, 2012, accessed December 30, 2017, <http://en.people.cn/90785/8024777.html>.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> Ministry of Commerce, PRC, "Give Play of China's Important Role."

contributing to the ‘peace and stability’ of the ‘hot area in power game’ by supporting closer relations and integration between the ‘core countries in the region’ including the US.<sup>127</sup> Although the US was not a member of RCEP, while China was reluctant to join the TPP, the Chinese side perceived that taken together these initiatives would complement each other as ‘the two wheels of regional and global trade [governance].’<sup>128</sup>

Although ASEAN recognized China’s leadership in negotiations, in practice it did not allow China to take a lead. Using its institutional position, ASEAN managed to set itself as a ‘facilitator of the process’ and the ‘driver of the substance’ in RCEP negotiations.<sup>129</sup> It managed to set up RCEP dialogue in a way that prevented great powers, including China, from overtaking the forum for their benefit. During the first round of talks the organization successfully established itself as a chair of all the meetings including dismissing the demands for co-chairmanship made by partner countries.<sup>130</sup> ASEAN partners assumed the roles of the rotating facilitators in the negotiations, including in the working groups and sub-working groups.<sup>131</sup> All participants, including China, subscribed to the original ASEAN-specific guidelines for RCEP. This signaled that future regional economic governance assumed ASEAN’s vision rather than ‘Chinese characteristics.’ For example, ASEAN dialogue partners followed the idea of ‘differential treatment’ and ‘additional flexibility’ for the least developed ASEAN countries and agreed to provide technical assistance and support capacity-building of those states to enable their full participation in negotiations and ability to implement obligations under RCEP.<sup>132</sup> RCEP negotiations proceeded through consensus decision-making and encouraged flexibility in implementing the achieved commitments.<sup>133</sup> These features were inherently

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Li Keqiang, “Time for Harvest and Sowing for Future,” *China Daily*, September 5, 2013.

<sup>129</sup> Yoshifumi Fukunaga, “ASEAN’s Leadership in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership: ASEAN’s Leadership in RCEP,” *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 2, no. 1 (January 2015): 103–15, <https://doi.org/10.1002/app5.59>.

<sup>130</sup> Fukunaga, “ASEAN’s Leadership in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership,” 105.

<sup>131</sup> ASEAN Secretariat, “ASEAN Integration Report 2015” (ASEAN, November 2015), 104, accessed December 30, 2017, [http://www.miti.gov.my/miti/resources/ASEAN\\_Integration\\_Report\\_20151.pdf?mid=431](http://www.miti.gov.my/miti/resources/ASEAN_Integration_Report_20151.pdf?mid=431).

<sup>132</sup> “ASEAN Integration Report 2015,” 132.

<sup>133</sup> Sherman Katz, “The Real Trade Pay-off in Asia,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, January 28, 2014, sec. Opinion.

specific to ‘ASEAN Way’, thus the observance of these principles during RCEP talks confirmed that ASEAN succeeded in its role location. In terms of substance, RCEP negotiations build on ASEAN templates, including its ‘Plus One’ agreements with the partner countries.<sup>134</sup>

Institutionalized ASEAN leadership made it difficult for China to enact a ‘co-leadership’ role in RCEP. For example, a major dispute existed between China on the one hand, who advocated a ‘low-quality’ agreement, and Japan and Australia on the other hand, which preferred ‘high quality’ trading rules.<sup>135</sup> Competition over leadership in setting the direction for negotiations escalated between China and Japan especially after the US announced its withdrawal from TPP talks. This left RCEP, in the words of Japanese negotiator, ‘the largest FTA negotiation that’s alive and kicking’<sup>136</sup> and raised the stakes for its participants as there was no alternative any longer. Both countries lobbied heavily for ASEAN to support their agenda.<sup>137</sup> For China, getting ASEAN’s consent also represented a real opportunity to consolidate its co-leadership role in shaping the system of economic governance in the Asia-Pacific. Yet, the organization put forward its own perspective. The ASEAN Economic Ministers in September 2017 proclaimed that the RCEP agreement ‘will have to be better than the current individual ASEAN country FTAs, or Asean+1 FTA.’<sup>138</sup> This meant, according to ASEAN Trade Secretary, Ramon M. Lopez, that China and other non-ASEAN countries ‘will have to recalibrate and be more realistic in setting their expectations on RCEP’ and ‘base their offers on this [ASEAN level].’<sup>139</sup> The document adopted by ASEAN also included parameters and guidelines for the substantive conclusion of the RCEP. Ramon Lopez clarified that it enabled ASEAN to ‘ensure

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<sup>134</sup> Deborah Elms, “RCEP: Designing an Agreement for the Future,” Asian Trade Centre, March 2, 2017, accessed December 30, 2017, <http://www.asiantradecentre.org/talkingtrade/rcep-designing-an-agreement-for-the-future>.

<sup>135</sup> Robin Harding, Tom Mitchell, and Michael Peel, “China and Japan Vie for Control of Asia Trade Deal,” *Financial Times*, March 14, 2017, accessed December 30, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/d34d324c-03d8-11e7-ace0-1ce02ef0def9>; Shefali Rekhi, “Will RCEP Be a Reality by the End of 2017?,” *The Straits Times*, April 23, 2017, accessed December 30, 2017, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/will-rcep-be-a-reality-by-the-end-of-2017>.

<sup>136</sup> Harding, Mitchell, and Peel, “China and Japan Vie for Control of Asia Trade Deal.”

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> “Asean to Dictate Terms of RCEP Commitments,” *Business Mirror (Philippines)*, September 11, 2017.

<sup>139</sup> “Asean to Dictate Terms of RCEP Commitments.”

that commitment from each party would have a more concrete impact in the negotiation process,' since RCEP process evolved 'beyond ASEAN and its FTAs'.<sup>140</sup>

The RCEP case demonstrated that despite ASEAN's recognition for Beijing role in the RCEP talks, institutionally the organization restrained the opportunities for China or other partners to overtake or share ASEAN's leadership. Similar developments occurred under the ASEAN Plus security framework.

**ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus.** In the previous section I argued that ASEAN-China role bargaining under ADMM Plus in 2010-2012 resulted in a successful role location for China as a contributor and for ASEAN as a leader in regional security order. Following China's role re-definition, the bargaining between the actors under ADMM Plus resumed during 2013-2017. Although China remained an active participant in ADMM Plus forum, in 2013 it placed greater emphasis on building a bilateral defense and security cooperation with ASEAN. At the 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN China Summit, Premier Li Keqiang offered ASEAN the opportunity to convert the informal meeting of ASEAN-China Defense Ministers into a formal dialogue on 'regional security issues' and invited ASEAN to have the next ASEAN-China DMM in Beijing.<sup>141</sup>

During the Consultative Meeting at the side-lines of the 7<sup>th</sup> ADMM the same year, China's Minister of Defense, Chang Wanquan, further elaborated on the proposal stating that 'China is ready to take concerted efforts with all parties of ASEAN' to build 'a new regional security cooperation architecture with Asian characteristics.'<sup>142</sup> This proposal addressed two aspects of China's redefined role conception. Establishing a formal ASEAN-China Defense Minister's Dialogue would have made China the only Dialogue Partner having exclusive security cooperation with ASEAN. It would have singled China out among other Dialogue Partners, whom ASEAN met collectively under ADMM Plus framework. Hence, this exclusive position in regional security would have institutionally ensured

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<sup>140</sup> "RCEP Ministers Agree On 'key Elements' to Speed up Talks On 'mega Trade Pact,'" *Xinhua News Agency*, September 11, 2017, accessed January 3, 2018, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-09/11/c\\_136601066.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-09/11/c_136601066.htm).

<sup>141</sup> Keqiang Li, "Remarks at the 16th ASEAN-China Summit, Brunei, 9 October 2013."

<sup>142</sup> Dan Zhang, "Chinese Defense Minister Calls for Practical Cooperation in Boosting Ties with ASEAN," *Xinhua News Agency*, May 7, 2013, accessed January 2, 2018, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1510666.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1510666.shtml).

Beijing's regional co-leadership. Creating a bilateral formal security mechanism also addressed another important aspect of China's concept of co-leadership: the exclusion of other great powers, mainly the US, from managing regional security affairs.

ASEAN only partially accepted Beijing's role upgrade. On the one hand, it welcomed China's intention to make greater contribution to regional security because it was in line with ASEAN's expectations for all regional great powers. However, the organization was reluctant to institutionalize China's co-leadership role, as it wished to preserve its own 'centrality' in regional security architecture. In 2015 ASEAN accepted China's proposal for the Informal Defense Ministers Meeting to be held for the first time in Beijing and chaired by China. According to Ng Eng Hen, the Minister of Defense for Singapore (the Country Coordinator for ASEAN-China relations in 2015-2018), 'all ASEAN members' supported China's idea of 'a community of common destiny' as an approach to regional security order and recognized that 'China can and must play a role in strengthening strategic trust in the region'.<sup>143</sup>

To that end, ASEAN welcomed enhancing and deepening practical security and defense cooperation with China. For example, in 2016 China proposed to hold 'a joint exercise with militaries from ASEAN nations on maritime search and rescue, disaster relief and application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea'.<sup>144</sup> During the ADMM Plus meeting in Philippines in 2017, the Chinese Defense Minister, Chang Wanquan stated that 'China [was] ready to provide a safe environment [...] and make contributions to further strengthen ties with ASEAN countries to build a community with shared future' including through joint drills and stronger cooperation in counter terrorism.<sup>145</sup> The fact that ASEAN accepted the Chinese proposal signaled that the organization accepted China's enhanced

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<sup>143</sup> Eng Hen Ng, "Address at the ASEAN-China Defense Ministers' Informal Meeting in Beijing, China" (Ministry of Defense, Singapore, October 16, 2015), accessed January 2, 2018, [http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20151023002/final\\_-\\_address\\_by\\_minister\\_at\\_asean-china\\_defence\\_ministers%27\\_informal\\_meeting.pdf](http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20151023002/final_-_address_by_minister_at_asean-china_defence_ministers%27_informal_meeting.pdf).

<sup>144</sup> Tao Zhang, "Beijing Proposes Joint ASEAN Drill," *China Daily*, May 26, 2016, accessed January 2, 2018, [http://english.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2016-05/26/content\\_7074381.htm](http://english.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2016-05/26/content_7074381.htm).

<sup>145</sup> Xin Zhou, "China Vows to Work Closely with ASEAN to Build Community with Shared Future," *Xinhua News Agency*, October 24, 2017, accessed January 2, 2018, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c\\_136700699.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c_136700699.htm).

contribution under the new role claim. According to Singapore's Defense Minister, who was chairing the ADMM, the initiative 'strengthen[ed] defense ties and help[ed] reduce tensions and the risk of miscalculations in this region.'<sup>146</sup>

On the other hand, however, ASEAN wished to preserve its own centrality and leadership as security promoter in the region. This was especially pressing given that not only China, but also other ADMM Plus countries (the US, Japan, Australia, Russia and India) wanted to establish 'more exclusive interactions' with ASEAN in defense and security through informal ADMM+1 mechanism.<sup>147</sup> ASEAN feared it would lead to the 'proliferation of meetings with separate agendas, which may possibly overlap with the ADMM-Plus' and, as a result, undermine ASEAN's central regional role.<sup>148</sup> In this context, ASEAN not only restrained from endorsing China's proposal to upgrade the ADMM+1 meeting into a regular and official forum, but adopted new guidelines that made the existing informal meetings less regular and even more subordinate to ASEAN's own DMM.

In 2015 ASEAN issued a Concept Paper entitled '*Guidelines to Respond to Request for Informal Engagements or Meetings by the ADMM Plus Countries.*' The paper established that all informal ADMM Plus One meetings should happen only at the sidelines of ADMM or ADMM Retreat and only during the years, when there was no ADMM Plus summit. The decision to accept an invitation of the partners for the informal meeting should have been made on a case-by-case basis following consultations between ASEAN members and after their consensus was obtained. Finally, no more than two meetings could have been held annually.<sup>149</sup> This made the informal ADMM+1 mechanism less regular and more dependent on ASEAN. Moreover, in 2017 ASEAN further toughened these conditions 'to ensure that [ASEAN-led] ADMM Plus remains to be the central

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<sup>146</sup> Raul Dancel, "Singapore Takes over Chairmanship of Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting," *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, October 24, 2017, accessed January 2, 2018, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/singapore-takes-over-chairmanship-of-asean-defence-ministers-meeting>.

<sup>147</sup> ASEAN, "Guidelines to Respond to Request for Informal Engagements or Meetings by the ADMM Plus Countries" (9th ADMM, March 16, 2015).

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

mechanism'<sup>150</sup> of in Asian security cooperation. The updated Guidelines provided that informal meetings 'shall only be called by ADMM' and not by the partner countries, that 'there will be no supportive mechanism' (e.g. working groups or follow-up activities) and that these meetings could be called only 'on urgent and/or important matter to be discussed with the Plus country.'<sup>151</sup> Therefore, institutionally the opportunities for China (together with other regional powers) to influence regional security affairs outside ADMM Plus forum were restrained, contrary to its proposal.

The development of the ADMM Plus arrangement during 2013-2017 reflected a different role bargaining outcome compared to the one discussed in the previous section. Before 2013, both ASEAN and China successfully located and institutionalized their roles through ADMM Plus framework, which consolidated the relationship of role agreement. In contrast, during 2013-2017 ADMM Plus supported the institutionalization of ASEAN's role, while China only gained recognition as more pro-active contributor to regional security, but its role of a co-leader was not institutionalized.

Overall, a cooperative security environment between ASEAN and China was maintained during 2013-2016. Actors' internal role conceptions were redefined and their expectations about each other's position in the region were not entirely the same. This generated a new wave of role bargaining. However, the fact that the novel roles still fitted well together supported the development of role bargaining process towards new complementarity. Fitting roles sustained a cooperative trend despite the existing divergence in expectations. The ASEAN Chairman's statement at the latest ASEAN China Summit noted that 'the [ASEAN-China] strategic partnership has grown rapidly to become one of ASEAN's most substantive [among] Dialogue Partners.'<sup>152</sup> This assessment was echoed by the Chinese Premier, who confirmed that 'among ASEAN's many dialogue partnerships,

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<sup>150</sup> ASEAN, "Guidelines Regarding the Conduct of ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting's (ADMM's) Informal Engagements or Meetings with Plus Countries" (11th ADMM, September 17, 2017).

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> ASEAN, "Chairman's Statement of the 20th ASEAN-China Summit, Manila, Philippines" (ASEAN-China Summit, November 13, 2017), accessed January 2, 2018, <http://asean.org/chairmans-statement-of-the-20th-asean-china-summit/>.

ASEAN plus China stands out as the most vibrant pair with the most substantial cooperation.<sup>153</sup> Furthermore, as I demonstrate in Chapter 6, a cooperative environment was sustained despite the development of negative security trends in the South China Sea.

#### **4.4. Conclusion**

This chapter argued that the ASEAN-China role bargaining process resulted in a successful role location for both actors. Mutual role accommodation enabled actors to secure recognition for the desired roles. Positive role bargaining outcomes ensured cooperative security environment between actors. Analysis of ASEAN-China interaction through a role location approach revealed that neither ASEAN nor China adopted the expectations imposed by other actors, but pursued their internally defined roles. Hence, their mutual socialization in regional security order happened not through the internalization of each other's norms or role expectations, but through mutual role accommodation. The analysis also demonstrated how institutionalization was embedded in the role bargaining mechanism. Institutions served as instruments of role location, as a tool to consolidate the desired role bargaining outcomes and provided mechanism for the appropriate role enactment. The latest round of ASEAN-China role bargaining between 2013-2017 also showed how ASEAN was able to manipulate its institutional position to restrain the undesired development of China's role in RCEP and ADMM Plus.

The focus on role relationships and role bargaining provided an explanation of how and why security environments were transformed towards cooperative or conflictual patterns over time, yet they still cannot account for deviations in the security patterns of the EU-Russia and ASEAN-China relations. Namely, the EU and Russia demonstrated a cooperative trend under conflictual security order, while ASEAN and China developed confrontation under sustained cooperative environment. The next two chapters analyze in detail the two case studies that represent such a deviation: EU-Russia interaction over Ukraine's Association Agreement under Eastern Partnership policy, and

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<sup>153</sup> Li Keqiang, "Speech at the 20th ASEAN-China Summit, Manila, Philippines," Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, November 14, 2017, accessed January 2, 2018. [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1510666.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1510666.shtml).

ASEAN-China interaction over Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. Through these cases, the link between role bargaining and regional governance (a second dimension of regional security dynamics) will be explored.

## **CHAPTER 5: SECURITY DYNAMICS OF THE EU-RUSSIA RELATIONS: CONFLICT OVER UKRAINE IN THE COMMON NEIGHBORHOOD**

This chapter applies the theory of regional security dynamics to explain the deviation of the EU-Russia interaction from the pattern of their role bargaining process in the case of Ukraine. Between May 2009 and July 2013, Moscow took a non-confrontational stance towards the policy and even considered joining some of its projects. This was surprising, given that regional integration was part of the unsuccessful EU-Russia role bargaining process (discussed in Chapter 3). Russia granted only limited acceptance to the EaP and did not recognize the normative and security roles of the EU behind it. The EU, in turn, rejected Russia's Eurasian Union and its role claim of a contributor to the regional order through Eurasian integration attached to it. Despite the failure of role bargaining, Russia was not considering assertive actions against the EaP participants or the EU until July 2013, when it applied trade sanctions against Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia, and engaged in contestation with the EU over the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (AA). Interestingly, the cooperative trend between Russia and the EU over Ukraine developed under a highly conflictual security environment caused by the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. Trilateral consultations took place between Russia, the EU, and Ukraine in 2014/15 and achieved some notable (albeit unsustainable) cooperative outcomes.

Conflict between the EU and Russia in the common neighborhood is widely perceived as geopolitical contestation. EU-Russia rivalry over Ukraine is understood in terms of 'security dilemma', 'zero-sum thinking', 'geopolitical struggle', or 'normative battleground,' whereby both the EU and Russia compete for spheres of influence, and try to balance each other using hard and soft power tools.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the realist logic dominated when explaining Russia's assertive actions against

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Charap and Mikhail Troitskiy, "Russia, the West and the Integration Dilemma," *Survival* 55, no. 6 (December 1, 2013): 49–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2013.862935>; Vanda Amaro Dias, "The EU and Russia: Competing Discourses, Practices and Interests in the Shared Neighborhood," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 14, no. 2 (June 1, 2013): 256–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15705854.2013.785261>; David Cadier, "Eastern Partnership vs Eurasian Union? The EU-Russia Competition in the Shared Neighborhood and the Ukraine Crisis," *Global Policy* 5 (October 2014): 76–85, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12152>; Rilka Dragneva and Kataryna Wolczuk, "Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?."

Ukraine in 2014.<sup>2</sup> However, the realist perspective cannot fully account for the dynamics of the EaP case. If Russia was guided exclusively by geopolitical thinking, one would have expected to see assertive actions against the EU policy in the common neighborhood already in 2009. It would also be unlikely for Russia to engage in trilateral talks and remove objections to the EU-Ukraine integration deal, as it did in 2014–2015. Similarly, constructivist accounts also cannot account for the deviations in Russia’s responses to EaP. These studies focused on the process of ‘othering’ and the changing national identities of Russia and the EU that structured the conflictual interaction dynamics in the post-2013 regional security order.<sup>3</sup> However, conflictual intersubjectivity in EU-Russia relations after the Ukrainian crisis did not prevent Russia’s cooperation during the trilateral talks.

Here, I argue that in order to understand Russia’s changing behavior towards the EaP one needs to look at interconnections between the role bargaining process and the governance practices of actors. Regional governance is viewed in this project as a part of successful role location and, in itself, constitutes a subject of contestation. I theorized in Chapter 2 that bargaining over regional governance may evolve around three possible issues of contention: substance, terms of role enactment, and the co-existence of institutional alternatives. The governance practice of actors may either sustain or undermine the outcomes of the role bargaining process depending on whether they comply with or deviate from it, and whether actors’ governance approach helps to resolve the issues of contention. I argue that the security dynamics in the case of Ukraine could be best understood through this framework, as summarized in Table 5.1.

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<sup>2</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault,” *Foreign Affairs*, August 18, 2014, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault>; Richard Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2014); Keir Giles, “Russia and Its Neighbors: Old Attitudes, New Capabilities,” in *Cyber War in Perspective: Russian Aggression against Ukraine*, ed. Kenneth Geers (Tallinn: NATO CCD COE Publications, 2015), 19–28.

<sup>3</sup> Dimitar Bechev, “Understanding the Contest Between the EU and Russia in Their Shared Neighborhood,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 62, no. 6 (November 2, 2015): 340–49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2015.1067751>; Aliaksei Kazharski and Andrey Makarychev, “Suturing the Neighborhood? Russia and the EU in Conflictual Intersubjectivity,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 62, no. 6 (November 2, 2015): 328–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2015.1057077>.

*Table 5.1. Security Dynamics of the EU-Russia Relations in the Case of Ukraine*

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Regional Security Dynamics</b>	<b>Outcome (Russia's response)</b>
<b>May 2009 - July 2013</b>	Unsuccessful role bargaining; governance practices followed previously achieved consensus	Non-confrontation
<b>July 2013 - January 2014</b>	The EU deviated from the governance consensus and shifted towards protectionist approach	Russia's assertiveness against EaP countries; issues of contention with the EU re-activated; development of the EU-Russia role conflict
<b>February 2014 - January 2016</b>	Conflictual security environment (after Ukrainian crisis); the EU shifts to inclusive governance approach	Russia's return to cooperation (trilateral talks); issues of contention partially resolved; BUT cooperative trend not sustained due to the proliferation of the role conflict.

*Source: Own Account*

This chapter is structured as follows. In the first section, I argue that the EU-Russia non-confrontation in May 2009-July 2013 resulted from the fact that the governance practices of the actors stayed in compliance with the previously achieved governance consensus. I then demonstrate how the EU's shift towards a protectionist approach in 2013 resulted in Russia's assertive response to the EaP. EU protectionism not only (re)activated contentions between the partners but also pushed their interaction towards role conflict. In the third section, I explain how the return of EU governance practice towards inclusiveness encouraged Russia's cooperative behavior during the 2014-2015 trilateral talks, despite the overall conflictual security environment between actors. Positive shifts in regional governance practice still did not resolve the role conflict, so this cooperative trend was not sustained.

### **5.1. The EU-Russia Governance Consensus and Non-confrontation in 2009-2013**

In this section, I argue that the EU-Russia non-confrontation between May 2009 (the launch of the EaP) and July 2013 (the beginning of Russia's trade war with Ukraine) resulted from the fact that the governance practices of actors during that period still supported the relationship of role complementarity established back in 2005. Therefore, despite the failing role bargaining process and the geographic overlap of the EU and Russia integration initiatives, contentions were avoided and actors refrained from confrontation.

### 5.1.1. Initial Consensus over the Common Neighborhood

The governance consensus, which guided EU and Russian approaches towards the common neighborhood during 2009-2013, was established under the framework of the Roadmap for the Common Space in External Security negotiated between the EU and Russia back in 2003, and institutionalized in 2005. As argued in Chapter 3, the framework of the Roadmaps consolidated the complementary role relationship between the EU and Russia. Furthermore, it established a consensus between actors over governing the common neighborhood. The Roadmap on External Security specified that:

The EU and Russia **recognize** that *processes of regional cooperation and integration* in which they participate and which are based on the sovereign decisions of States, play an important role in strengthening security and stability. They **agree** to *actively promote them in a mutually beneficial manner, through close result-oriented EU-Russia collaboration and dialogue*, thereby **contributing effectively to creating a greater Europe without dividing lines and based on common values**.<sup>4</sup>

This paragraph established an initial consensus over three issues of possible contention. Firstly, it recognized both the EU's and Russia's integration processes, which implied that both actors could shape the **substance of regional governance** in line with their role conceptions. Secondly, an appropriate **format of role enactment** was set as 'collaboration and dialogue.' Finally, the references to 'mutually-beneficial promotion' and 'greater Europe without dividing lines' tackled the issue of **co-existence between the institutional alternatives**. Although this principle did not provide specific terms of co-existence between the EU and Russia integrations, it clearly presupposed mutual presence in the same geographic region.

Some scholars have criticized the framework of the Four Common Spaces for being politically flawed and bringing little added value to the EU-Russia partnership.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, both Russia and the EU considered these documents as determining the logic of their strategic interaction in the absence of a new, legally-binding agreement. For Russia, the Roadmaps gave an 'understanding' and

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<sup>4</sup> "Roadmaps for the Four Common Spaces," 32.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Emerson, "EU-Russia—Four Common Spaces and the Proliferation of the Fuzzy," *CEPS Policy Briefs*, no. 1–12 (2005): 1–4; Vadim Kononenko, "Roadmaps to Nowhere," *Moscow Times*, May 14, 2005; A. Tyazhov, "Four Common Spaces between Russia and the EU: Erasing Old or Building New Divides?," *EU-Russia: The Four Common Spaces Research Bulletin* no.1 (2006): 11–19.

a ‘vision’ of how its relations with the EU should develop in the future, particularly in the common neighborhood.<sup>6</sup> The understanding of 2005 consensus in Moscow was that both the EU and Russia could develop integration initiatives with the common neighbors, while between themselves they maintained the framework of a bilateral strategic partnership. Moreover, Russia’s leadership believed that this perspective was shared by the EU.<sup>7</sup> When the EU launched the EaP in 2009, Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov took it ‘with satisfaction’, emphasizing that Russia was ‘count[ing] on just this kind of implementation of this [EaP] initiative’ as ‘a programme develop[ed] fully in line with the accords reached in the past between Russia and the European Union not to allow for collision between the integrative processes developing under the aegis of the EU and those in the post-Soviet space.’<sup>8</sup>

The EU seemed indeed to share this perspective. The founding document of the EaP specified that the policy was designed to run ‘in parallel with the EU’s strategic partnership with Russia,’ thus highlighting the different format of the EU engagement with Moscow.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the EU expected to maintain a discussion with Russia on the shared neighborhood with the prospect of establishing a win-win cooperation between itself, the neighbors, and Russia. It constantly emphasized that the EaP policy was never intended for countries to make a choice between the EU and Russia, and that the EU wanted the neighbors, itself, and Russia to benefit from it in the long-run.

As such, an initial consensus existed between Russia and the EU over governing the common neighborhood. Moreover, as I shall argue, during 2009-2013, the governance practices of actors

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<sup>6</sup> Author's interview with official from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> “Transcript of Remarks and Response to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Joint Press Conference Following Talks with Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski and the Fifth Meeting of the Committee for Russian-Polish Cooperation Strategy, Moscow, May 6, 2009,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, accessed November 10, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/maps/pl/-/asset\\_publisher/D2CPYayAgyuG/content/id/295142](http://www.mid.ru/maps/pl/-/asset_publisher/D2CPYayAgyuG/content/id/295142).

<sup>9</sup> “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - Eastern Partnership (SEC(2008) 2974)” (European Commission, December 3, 2008), [http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu/euronest/webdav/shared/general\\_documents/COM\(2008\)823.pdf](http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu/euronest/webdav/shared/general_documents/COM(2008)823.pdf).

stayed in compliance with this consensus. Thus, even though the EaP's launch contributed to the new wave of role bargaining between Russia and the EU, non-confrontation was still maintained.

### **5.1.2. Role Bargaining Without Confrontation**

In Chapter 3, I argued that regional integration represented a dimension of failed EU-Russia role bargaining process that consolidated a contradictory role relationship. Nevertheless, between 2009-2013, Russia refrained from confrontational behavior. Here I argue that non-confrontation resulted from the fact that governance practices of both Russia and the EU stayed in compliance with the three issues of the 2005 governance consensus. Both actors were able to implement their regional initiatives in the common neighborhood and claim successful role achievement. There were attempts at establishing dialogue and collaboration between the two initiatives by both sides. Both the EU and Russia highlighted mutual co-existence, rather than mutual exclusiveness, between their integration projects.

**Parallel implementation of integration initiatives.** During 2009-2013, both the EU and Russia were able to implement their regional integration initiatives in the common neighborhood, as Table 5.2 demonstrates. Moreover, during that period Russia's integration project advanced faster than the EU's project. Progress of the EaP was attributed to the lack of incentives from the EU and to domestic constraints for reforms on the side of the partners. Importantly, Eurasian integration at that time was *not* considered as preventing the success of the EU role achievement.

The Eastern Partnership policy was implemented through bilateral and multilateral formats. Bilaterally, the EaP presupposed establishment of 'a more ambitious partnership' in the form of Association Agreements (AAs) and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) with the six EU neighbors (Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan). The bilateral dimension reflected the EU's normative role, as the purpose of AAs was to bring partners closer to European normative and legal standards. Multilaterally, the EaP was implemented under four thematic platforms: democracy and good governance, economic integration and convergence with the EU policies, energy security, and people-to-people contacts. The establishment of these

platforms reflected the EU's role as a security promoter. They were supposed to encourage trust building between the participating states, and between them and the EU, in order to 'create an atmosphere for conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace process in these countries.'<sup>10</sup>

In practice, the bilateral track of AAs/DCFTAs and the multilateral track of thematic platforms allowed the EU to enact its roles only with limited success. The AAs were not established until 2013 and the EaP was implemented through the already existing framework of bilateral Action Plans that were simply renamed Association Agendas. Normative convergence and deeper integration between the EU and its partners had not materialized. According to Korostelyova, this was due to the 'lack of coherence and management as well as low visibility and public appreciation' of the policy among its members, which prevented their normative convergence with the EU.<sup>11</sup> The EaP countries remained 'critical of and disappointed by the intangible promises of partnership, and perceive their relations with the EU as asymmetrical and one-sided.'<sup>12</sup> The multilateral track of thematic platforms also did not succeed in fostering closer integration of the region. According to Delcour, thematic platforms were unable to account for divergences in countries' situations and EU membership aspirations, which is why the EaP participants preferred bilateral relations with the EU over the development of multilateral tracks.<sup>13</sup> In 2012, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy, Štefan Füle, admitted that 'in the Eastern neighborhood the democratic transition remains uneven.'<sup>14</sup> Other considered weaknesses of the policy were the lack of sufficient funding, absence of the EU membership perspective and poor engagement with third partners (Russia, Turkey).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Author's interview with official from the European Commission, DG Near, Brussels, November 8, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Elena Korosteleva, "The Eastern Partnership Initiative: A New Opportunity for Neighbors?," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 27, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523279.2011.544381>.

<sup>12</sup> Korosteleva, "The Eastern Partnership Initiative," 15.

<sup>13</sup> Laure Delcour, "The Institutional Functioning of the Eastern Partnership: An Early Assessment," *Eastern Partnership Review*, 1 (2011), [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2276452](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2276452).

<sup>14</sup> Štefan Füle, "Address to Heads of Delegations of the Neighborhood Region, Brussels" (European Commission, January 14, 2013), accessed November 11, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-16\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-16_en.htm).

<sup>15</sup> Jos Boonstra and Natalia Shapovalova, "The EU's Eastern Partnership: One Year Backwards," *Friede - A European Think Tank for Global Action*, Working Paper, 17, no. 99 (2010): 1–22; Delcour, "The Institutional Functioning of the Eastern Partnership"; Oleksandr Stegnyy, "Ukraine and the Eastern Partnership: 'Lost in Translation'?", *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 27, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 50–72, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523279.2011.544383>.

Table 5.2. European and Eurasian Integration Processes in 2009-2013

Eastern Partnership	Eurasian Integration
<p>May 2009 Joint Declaration on Eastern Partnership signed between the EU, Azerbaijan, <b>Armenia</b>, Georgia, <b>Moldova</b>, <b>Belarus</b> and <b>Ukraine</b>.</p> <p>30 March 2012 Association Agreement and DCFTA with <b>Ukraine</b> initialed.</p> <p>14 June 2013 <b>Moldova</b> completed DCFTA talks with the EU</p> <p>22 July 2013 <b>Georgia</b> completed talks on DCFTA with the EU</p> <p>24 July 2013 <b>Armenia</b> completed talks on DCFTA with the EU.</p> <p>28-29 November 2013 <b>Ukraine</b> postponed signing AA and DCFTA with the EU. <b>Georgia</b> and <b>Moldova</b> initialed AAs and DCFTAs with the EU (to be signed in 2014).</p>	<p>10 October 2000 Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEc) formed between Russia, <b>Belarus</b>, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic.</p> <p>May 2002 <b>Ukraine</b> and <b>Moldova</b> joined EurAsEc as observers.</p> <p>April 2003 <b>Armenia</b> joined EurAsEc as an observer.</p> <p>6 October 2007 Treaty setting up the Customs Union signed between the members of the EurAsEc Russia, <b>Belarus</b> and Kazakhstan.</p> <p>1 July 2010 (6 July for <b>Belarus</b>) Common Customs territory becomes effective.</p> <p>18 October 2011 CIS FTA signed by Russia, <b>Ukraine</b>, <b>Belarus</b>, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, <b>Moldova</b> and <b>Armenia</b>.</p> <p>1 January 2012 Single Economic Space inaugurated (Russia, <b>Belarus</b> and Kazakhstan).</p> <p>26 May 2013 <b>Ukraine</b> signed a memorandum of deepening cooperation with Eurasian (Customs) Union receiving <i>de facto</i> 'observer' status.</p> <p>September 2013 <b>Georgia</b> and <b>Armenia</b> signaled the possibility of becoming <b>members</b> of Eurasian Economic Union.</p>

Source: Own Account

Russia's own Eurasian integration project developed progressively between 2009 and 2013. While the EU was only negotiating the Association Agreements with Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, and Belarus, Russia concluded FTAs with these counties under the CIS framework by 2011. It took only a year and a half (from July 2010 to January 2012) for the common customs area of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to be upgraded into a single economic space with a supranational regulatory body, the Eurasian Economic Commission (Table 5.2).

Even though scholars pointed to the challenges faced by Eurasian integration, they nevertheless admitted its dynamic nature and fast progress.<sup>16</sup> Whereas the EaP failed to deliver transformative change in the region, the Customs/Eurasian Union brought ‘a pivotal change to regional integration pattern’ by offering ‘a future-oriented integration model’ with the ‘growing effect on state and economic actors in its member states and beyond.’<sup>17</sup> Dreyer and Popescu observed that ‘in a region where border management practices and bureaucracies are notoriously inefficient, the union [...] work[ed] reasonably well.’<sup>18</sup> The progress of the Russian-led integration supported its role location process. Speaking at the Customs Union Summit in 2012, President Medvedev noted that ‘our integration union, our association, is emerging and is being recognized by most economic players as an independent, self-sufficient and very important partner in trade and investment. Indeed, that is exactly what we have been striving for.’<sup>19</sup>

An element of competition was obviously present between the EU and Russia initiatives.<sup>20</sup> However, while competing for attractiveness, the EU and Russia still did not slide into confrontation. In fact, their policy of offering positive incentives for integration was in line with the 2005 consensus that encouraged ‘active promotion of integration processes.’ To move the Eurasian project forward, Russia actively relied on material incentives in the form of financial loans, discount gas prices, and

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<sup>16</sup> Fracisco Carneiro, “What Promises Does the Eurasian Customs Union Hold for the Future?,” *World Bank - Economic Premise*, no. 108 (2013): 1–5; A Yesdauletova and A Yesdauletov, “The Eurasian Union: Dynamics and Difficulties of the Post-Soviet Integration,” *Trames. Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 18, no. 1 (2014): 3, <https://doi.org/10.3176/tr.2014.1.01>; David G. Tarr, “The Eurasian Customs Union among Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan: Can It Succeed Where Its Predecessor Failed?,” *World Scientific Book Chapters, Free Policy Briefs*, November 5, 2012, [https://ideas.repec.org/h/wsi/wschap/9789814551434\\_0020.html](https://ideas.repec.org/h/wsi/wschap/9789814551434_0020.html).

<sup>17</sup> Rilka Dragneva and Kataryna Wolczuk, “Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?,” 5.

<sup>18</sup> Iana Dreyer and Nicu Popescu, “The Eurasian Customs Union: The Economics and the Politics,” *European Union Institute for Security Studies* 11 (2014): 1.

<sup>19</sup> “News Conference Following Meetings of Customs Union Supreme Governing Body and Eurasian Economic Community Interstate Council,” President of Russia, December 9, 2010, accessed January 22, 2018, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/9764>.

<sup>20</sup> George Christou, “European Union Security Logics to the East: The European Neighborhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership,” *European Security* 19, no. 3 (September 1, 2010): 413–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2010.526110>; Rilka Dragneva and Kataryna Wolczuk, “Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?”; Paweł Dariusz Wiśniewski, “The Eastern Partnership - It Is High Time to Start a Real ‘Partnership,’” *Carnegie Moscow Center*, November 2013; Dreyer and Popescu, “The Eurasian Customs Union.”

joint economic ventures to attract the Eastern European countries.<sup>21</sup> In contrast, the EU relied mostly on non-material incentives such as access to the European market, visa-free traveling, and the perspective of political association with the EU. However, despite being more advanced than the EaP and being backed by material incentives, Eurasian integration was still less attractive to the neighbors. Only Belarus was supporting the establishment of closer economic and political ties with Russia. Therefore, the poor progress of the policy at that time, as Dreyer and Popescu rightly argued, resulted from its ineffective implementation from the great power competition or rivalry.<sup>22</sup>

To sum up, during 2009-2013 both actors were able to implement their integration initiatives and to project their vision of governance in the common neighborhood in line with the 2005 consensus and, thus, to enact their claimed roles.

**Attempts at collaboration and dialogue.** During 2009-2013, the EU and Russia promoted a degree of openness and inclusiveness of their integration projects towards each other and made attempts at establishing dialogue regarding the development of integration processes in the common neighborhood. These attempts did not lead to inter-regional collaboration. Yet, even the limited degree of openness and communication was consistent with the 2005 governance consensus and, thus, prevented actors from sliding into confrontation.

The EU, already at the stage of policy development, maintained the idea of keeping the EaP open to Russia through the multilateral track ‘as a reassurance measure to show openness and transparency.’<sup>23</sup> Third parties were ‘eligible for participation’ but only on case-by-case basis and only when their participation contributed to particular activities or general objectives of the EaP.<sup>24</sup> Several interviewees confirmed that the EU tried to discuss Russia’s involvement in the policy during EU-Russia summits, but was essentially reluctant, rather than pro-active, in engaging Moscow. As one of

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<sup>21</sup> Russia’s incentives for EaP countries are discussed in Andrey Makarychev and Andre Mommen, *Russia’s Changing Economic and Political Regimes: The Putin Years and Afterwards* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 179–80.

<sup>22</sup> Dreyer and Popescu, “The Eurasian Customs Union,” 36.

<sup>23</sup> Author’s interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 4, 2016.

<sup>24</sup> “Commission Communication to the Parliament and the Council-Eastern Partnership (SEC(2008) 2974)” (European Commission, December 3, 2008); “Join Declaration of Prague Eastern Partnership Summit, Prague, 7 May 2009.”

the interviewees put it: ‘if Russia would express an interest to participate, then of course under appropriate conditions the EU would support its involvement.’<sup>25</sup>

The emphasis on the EU terms and conditions was the major constraint to collaboration. As one of the EU officials pointed out, after Moscow rejected participation in the EaP because the policy was ‘EU-centered’ and inconsistent with the strategic nature of the EU-Russia partnership, the EU was reluctant to offer alternative formats that would be acceptable for Russia, which was ‘a mistake of the EU.’<sup>26</sup> Moscow was indeed open to participating in the EaP initiative, if it presupposed joint institutional cooperation of Russia, the partner countries, and the EU. This format was seen as a ‘window of opportunity’ for developing cooperation in the common neighborhood.<sup>27</sup> However, the EaP remained ‘a European initiative,’ so it was not for Russia to initiate anything.<sup>28</sup> On its side, Russia considered the inclusion of the EU as a third partner in the Eurasian integration process through joint projects in the common neighborhood. For this purpose, a special working group was created in the Russian MFA headed by Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Aleksandr Grushko. These attempts at collaboration were in line with the 2005 governance consensus and signaled that actors did not perceive their integration processes as mutually exclusive.

The EU and Russia also had an opportunity for regular communication about the common neighborhood at the working level under the COEST working group in the European Council.<sup>29</sup> Russia made active use of COEST as a platform for discussing co-existence and approximation of European and Eurasian integration initiatives, while the EU actively used the forum as a platform to

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<sup>25</sup> Author’s interview with official from the European Commission, DG Near, Brussels, November 8, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Author’s interview with the member of the European Parliament Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, Brussels, October 14, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> “Transcript of the meeting of the Expert Council of the CIS Committee of Russian Federation ‘Eastern Partnership: problems of implementation and possible consequences’” [in Russian], (CIS Committee, Council of Federation, November 19, 2009).

<sup>28</sup> Author’s interview with official from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016.

<sup>29</sup> COEST, or the Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia, handles all aspects of EU relations and cooperation with countries in Eastern Europe (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine) and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). Its work also includes frameworks for multilateral cooperation, including the Eastern Partnership. The group coordinated the EaP project before the European External Action Service was fully launched.

discuss ‘frozen conflicts’ in the common neighborhood.<sup>30</sup> Although the EU and Russia focused on different priorities, regular communication took place in line with the 2005 consensus.

**Geographic co-existence of institutional alternatives.** The relationship of the Eastern Partnership with other regional initiatives was unspecified. Neither the EU policy document on the EaP, nor the 2009 inaugural EaP Declaration, had any provisions on this matter. Through summit communication with Russia, the EU provided no clarification as to how the policy would co-exist with other regional initiatives either existing or developed in the future. The only message that the EU voiced in relation to the issue of co-existence was that the EaP was not aimed against anybody and particularly not against Russia.<sup>31</sup>

However, for the Russian side, this particular aspect of the policy created the biggest concern as evident in the transcript of the special meeting of the Expert Committee on CIS that took place in the Russian Council of Federation in 2009. Discussing responses to EaP policy, Russian officials pointed out that it was unclear how the future political Association Agreements and economic DCFTAs between the EU and EaP partners would affect the participation of these countries in the already existing CIS FTA and their prospects of joining the Eurasian integration project.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, Russia was worried as to how far the EU would go in strengthening the partnership with the six EaP countries and whether it would consider expanding the geographical boundaries of the partnership.<sup>33</sup> The position of the Expert Committee converged with the messages from the Russian MFA. In 2011, Sergey Lavrov reminded Brussels to comply with the 2005 consensus calling on the EU to ‘honor the

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<sup>30</sup> Author’s interview with official from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016

<sup>31</sup> These remarks were made by the Secretary-General of the European Council Javier Solana and President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the Czech Republic Vaclav Klaus during the news conference following the EU-Russia Summit in June 2009.

<sup>32</sup> “Transcript of the meeting of the Expert Council of the CIS Committee of Russian Federation ‘Eastern Partnership: problems of implementation and possible consequences’.”

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

prior accords, which essentially stipulate that [...] integration processes in different parts of Europe [...] should be not contradictory but complementary to each other.’<sup>34</sup>

Russia itself viewed the format of co-existence between the Eurasian and European integration initiatives in line with the 2005 consensus as ‘two intersecting projects.’<sup>35</sup> In 2011, Vladimir Putin addressed this point, stating that: ‘We do not intend to cut ourselves off, nor do we plan to stand in opposition to anyone. [...] the Customs Union, and later the Eurasian Union, will join the dialogue with the EU.’<sup>36</sup> Complementarity was emphasized by Russia specifically in relation to the EaP. In April 2013, Sergey Lavrov stated that ‘particularly in the Eastern Partnership we do not see natural causes that might become a barrier to harmonize with participation in CIS.’<sup>37</sup>

The attempts to establish complementarity signaled that Russia hoped to avoid rivalry with the EU over integration initiatives at least during that time. Despite the fact that Russia’s concerns about the EaP were often framed in geopolitical terms, it still favored a cooperative rather than a confrontational stance towards the program. Neither EaP- nor Customs/Eurasian Union-related issues featured as problematic in the EU-Russia summit communication. In addition, the slow pace of EaP implementation during 2009-2013 decreased the level of Russia’s concern over the policy as it showed its declarative rather than actual impact, so ‘there [was] no reason to fear it.’<sup>38</sup>

The fact that EU’s and Russia’ governance practice stayed in compliance with the governance consensus during 2009-2013 supported non-confrontational behavior. As I argue in the next section,

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<sup>34</sup> “Transcript of Foreign Minister Lavrov’s Response to the Question of Russian Media After Attending a Meeting of the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers, Dushanbe, September 2, 2011,” The Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, accessed September 15, 2016, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/integracionnye-strukturnye-prostranstva-sng/-/asset\\_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/196542](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/integracionnye-strukturnye-prostranstva-sng/-/asset_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/196542).

<sup>35</sup> Author’s interview with official of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016

<sup>36</sup> Putin, “Eurasian Union: A Future in the Making Article Published in the Newspaper Izvestia.”

<sup>37</sup> “Answers to Questions of Russian Mass Media by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Summarizing the Results of the Session of the Foreign Ministers Council of CIS Member-States, Tashkent, 5 April 2013,” accessed September 15, 2016, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/integracionnye-strukturnye-prostranstva-sng/-/asset\\_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/115762](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/integracionnye-strukturnye-prostranstva-sng/-/asset_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/115762).

<sup>38</sup> “Poland: Russian Expert Says Moscow No Longer Views Eastern Partnership as Threat,” *BBC Monitoring Europe - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, October 7, 2011.

Russia turned assertive only in mid-2013, when EU governance practice deviated from the 2005 consensus.

## **5.2. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and Deviation from 2005 Consensus**

Russia's foreign policy in relation to the Eastern Partnership changed sharply in mid-2013. In July 2013, Moscow engaged in 'customs wars' with Ukraine over cheese, sugar, meat, and confectionary products, eventually threatening to exclude Ukraine from the CIS Free Trade Area should it sign the AA deal with the EU.<sup>39</sup> In August 2013, Russia also engaged in contestation with the EU over the development of Eastern Partnership policy. In this section, I argue that Russia's assertiveness represented a response to what Moscow believed to be a violation of the 2005 governance consensus. The shift in EU governance practice towards protectionism activated the issues of contention with Russia over regional governance. It also contributed to the role conflict between actors in the common neighborhood with negative implications for their intersubjective security environment.

### **5.2.1. The Importance of Ukraine**

Of all EaP participants, Ukraine was clearly a special case for both Russia and the EU. Including it into their integration processes was seen by both actors as successful role performance. For Russia, locating itself as a 'second pole' on the Eurasian continent through Eurasian integration was impossible without Ukraine. It was the only country identified in the Russian Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 as 'a priority partner within the CIS,' with which Russia expected to build up relations, contributing to Ukraine's participation in extended regional integration processes.<sup>40</sup> According to Moshes, the acceptance of Ukraine to the Customs Union and later to the Eurasian Union would have brought 'greater economic logic to organization' and cemented the post-Soviet economic model that

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<sup>39</sup> "Ukrainian Opposition Leader Slams Reported Imports Ban by Russia," *Ukrayinska Pravda Kiev*, August 15, 2013, BBC Monitoring International Reports Daria Tsoy and Yanina Sokolovskaya, "Moscow May Exclude Ukraine from the CIS Free Trade Area," [in Russian] *Izvestia*, September 19, 2013, accessed January 22, 2018, <https://iz.ru/news/557387>.

<sup>40</sup> "Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation," The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, December 2, 2013, [http://www.mid.ru/brp\\_4.nsf/0/76389FEC168189ED44257B2E0039B16D](http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/76389FEC168189ED44257B2E0039B16D).

Russia was trying to promote in the region.<sup>41</sup> EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso admitted that during his meetings with the Russian President ‘he [Putin] told us how important for him was the customs union, the Eurasian Union, and the specific role he saw for Ukraine.’<sup>42</sup> Popescu even claimed that the ‘Eurasian Economic Union was to a large degree conceived and designed to attract Ukraine.’<sup>43</sup> Among EaP countries Ukraine also faced the strongest pressure from Moscow in relation to its AA deal with the EU. Russian officials tried to convince the Ukrainian leadership at various occasions that ‘the EU was offering an ‘arranged marriage’ to Ukrainians, whereas Russia offered the country ‘real love’ with no conditions.’<sup>44</sup>

Similarly to Russia, the EU has always perceived Ukraine as a ‘pivotal country’ in the Eastern Partnership framework and a ‘frontrunner’ of European integration. This perspective strengthened in 2011, when Poland assumed the Presidency in the European Council. In the eyes of Poland, Ukraine represented the leading country of the EaP, and relations with it strongly determined the EU’s approach towards other partners.<sup>45</sup> To that end, according to its Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, Poland planned to ‘encourage the European Commission and the Ukrainian side to keep up the current pace of [AA] negotiations so that the agreement could be reached during the Eastern Partnership summit in September 2011.’<sup>46</sup> However, the politically-motivated arrest of Ukraine’s most prominent opposition leader, Yulia Timoshenko, in October 2011 led the EU to delay the ratification of the agreement. Nevertheless, technical negotiations between the EU and Ukraine continued and the document was initialed on March 30, 2012. The EU expected to sign the agreement with Ukraine in

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<sup>41</sup> Arkady Moshes, “Will Ukraine Join (and Save) the Eurasian Customs Union?,” *PonarsEurasia - Policy Memos*, April 17, 2013, <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/will-ukraine-join-and-save-eurasian-customs-union>; Shumylo-Tapioda, “The Eurasian Customs Union: Friend or Foe of the EU?,” 21.

<sup>42</sup> Peter Spiegel, “José Manuel Barroso: ‘Not Everything I Did Was Right,’” *Financial Times*, November 4, 2014, accessed November 11, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/4624563a-640b-11e4-8ade-00144feabdc0>.

<sup>43</sup> Nicu Popescu, “Eurasian Union: The Real, the Imaginary and the Likely,” Chaillot Paper no. 132 (September 9, 2014): 27, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/eurasian-union-the-real-the-imaginary-and-the-likely/>.

<sup>44</sup> Andrei Kudrin, Russian representative at the Yalta political forum (Ukraine) quoted in Shaun Walker, “Ukraine Pressed by Russia to Form Alliance after It Is Spurned by EU,” *The Independent (London)*, September 17, 2012, sec. World.

<sup>45</sup> Elzbieta Kaca, “‘Eastern Partnership - It Will Not Be Easy’ Text Report by Polish Newspaper Gazeta Wyborzcka,” May 26, 2011, *BBC Monitoring Europe edition*.

<sup>46</sup> “Polish Minister Optimistic about Ukraine’s EU Association - Text Report by Polish News Agency PAP,” July 19, 2011, *BBC Monitoring Europe edition*.

November 2013 at the EaP summit in Vilnius on condition that Kiev would comply with a number of political requirements (the release of Yulia Timoshenko being the key).<sup>47</sup> In mid-2013, however, the EU moderated its approach after Germany, which used to maintain a neutral stance about EU-Ukraine's AA, turned into a supporter of signing the agreement in Vilnius. The shift in Germany's position strengthened the so-called 'maximalist' group of EU Member States who advocated signing the agreement with Ukraine without solving the Timoshenko case. Although not all EU members were in favor of compromising on conditionality, having the agreement signed was more important for the EU role location process. According to one EU official, after years of failure in EU foreign policy, the Ukraine project was seen by the EU as a good success story to demonstrate the normative power of the Union.<sup>48</sup> Another interviewer confirmed that 'it was important to keep all countries in the EaP program and especially Ukraine as the biggest partner, to ensure regional stability and resilience,' which was in line with the EU role of regional security promoter.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, the EU was luring Ukraine to sign the AA deal for the sake of successful role performance.

The turning point in the 'competition of attractiveness' between Russia and the EU occurred in July 2013 when Russia, which previously did not consider using coercive measures against Ukraine in view of AA agreement, resorted to assertiveness. Russia's policy followed the shift in the EU's approach to Ukraine, initiated by Germany. In June-July 2013, Germany 'intensified its mediation efforts with Ukraine' to get the AA signed in November 2013.<sup>50</sup> Speaking in June 2013, German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle identified the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement among Germany's 'strategic interests' and expressed hope to conclude the same agreements with other EaP countries in the short-term. Ukraine's Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhara and First Vice Prime Minister

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<sup>47</sup> "EU/Ukraine: FTA with Kyiv Might Still Go Forward," *Europolitcs Monthly*, January 23, 2012, sec. 0287; "Poland to Abolish National Visa Fees for Ukrainians - Foreign Minister, Text Report By Polish Newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza," *BBC Monitoring Europe*, February 10, 2012; "German Chancellor Says Ukraine Not yet Ready for Association Agreement with EU - Text Report by German Newspaper Die Welt," *BBC Monitoring Europe*, November 15, 2012.

<sup>48</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 6, 2016.

<sup>49</sup> Author's interview with official from the European Commission, DG Near, Brussels, November 8, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> Gunta Pastore, "The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement Prior to the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit," *Baltic Journal of European Studies* 4, no. 2 (January 1, 2014): 13, <https://doi.org/10.2478/bjes-2014-0012>.

Serhiy Arbuzov, who were welcomed in Berlin in July 2013, reassured that Ukraine was on the way towards the Vilnius agenda. According to *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya* (an influential Ukrainian weekly), the turn in Germany's position signaled to Russia that AA deal with Ukraine would indeed be signed by November 2013, which encouraged Moscow to take countermeasures. In June 2013, Vladimir Putin called an extraordinary meeting in the Kremlin in order to develop a strategy for preventing Ukraine from signing the deal with the EU and joining the Customs Union instead.<sup>51</sup> Following this meeting, export bans were imposed on 49 Ukrainian companies in July 2013, targeting specifically those whose owners lobbied in favor of the AA deal. Within a month, the Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation put all Ukrainian exporters without exclusion into its risk folder. However, as I argue in what follows, Russia's assertiveness towards Ukraine was not merely a strategy to coerce the country into the Russian-led integration project. It was also a response to the shifting EU governance practice in the EaP policy towards protectionism which Russia interpreted as a deviation from the 2005 consensus. Therefore, Moscow not only launched trade wars with Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia, but engaged in contestation with the EU over governing the common neighborhood.

### **5.2.2. Change in the EU Governance Approach and Activation of Contentions**

The contestation between Russia and the EU in mid-2013 developed over the two issues of consensus discussed in the previous section: terms of role enactment, and the issues of co-existence between institutional alternatives. The fact that the EU resorted to protectionist governance approach resulted in the inability to solve these issues of contention and led to the development of the role conflict between the EU and Russia in the common neighborhood.

The first line of contestation developed over the terms of role enactment, which were defined in the 2005 consensus as 'active promotion of regional initiatives' through 'collaboration and dialogue.' As argued in the previous section, the EU and Russia failed to establish meaningful dialogue about their integration agendas beyond the working and expert level under COEST. In

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<sup>51</sup> "Russia Implementing Strategy to Torpedo Ukraine's EU Bid - Transcript of the Article Entitled 'A Russian Plan Deliberate and Merciless' in *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya* from 16 August 2013," *BBC Monitoring Kiev*, August 19, 2013.

interviews, several EU officials noted that Russia raised concerns about AAs and under the EaP policy even before 2013. These objections were of similar nature to those that Russia had about the 2004 EU enlargement and mainly concerned the technical issues of DCFTA such as trading quotas, tariffs, and rules of origin.<sup>52</sup> However, while in 2004 the EU addressed Russia's objections (as discussed in Chapter 3), in 2013 Brussels resorted to a protectionist logic and considered them 'unjustified', or preferred to 'willfully misread' them and continued with the EaP policy as planned.<sup>53</sup> For the EU, Association Agreements represented bilateral arrangements between the Union and its neighbors, and the reluctance to engage Russia in this case aimed at defending the sovereign right of the EaP states to decide which integration project to join. The texts of the Association Agreement that the EU negotiated with Ukraine and other EaP states were not made public until the final stage of initialing. The EU-Ukraine agreement was first published on August 9, 2013 and this is when Russia started to contest the EU approach in managing relations with the common neighborhood.

Moscow accused the Union of being secretive about its association talks and in 'decision-making behind [Russia's] back.'<sup>54</sup> According to a Russian official in Brussels, 'we [Russia] were just told that this is an FTA and that cooperation is simply going as planned, so Russia has nothing to worry about'.<sup>55</sup> Yet, once the texts were published, Russia realized that the planned level of cooperation under the EaP would collide with the existing CIS FTA and with Russia's own integration prospects. This was against Russia's understanding of the 2005 consensus that the EU and Russia would maintain strategic dialogue, while jointly promoting their integration initiatives in the common neighborhood. In line with this interpretation, Russia advocated for 'trilateral consultations, the

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<sup>52</sup> Author's interviews with officials from the European External Action Service, Brussels, on October 4 and 14, 2016; Author's interview with official from the European Commission (DG Trade), Brussels, October 6, 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 6, 2016.

<sup>54</sup> "Reply by the Official Representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Alexander Lukashevich to the Mass Media's Question Regarding Statements of Representatives of the European Commission (EC) Concerning the Prospects of Relations with Ukraine and Member States of the Customs Union (CU)," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, August 29, 2013, accessed September 15, 2016, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/maps/ua/-/asset\\_publisher/ktn0ZLTvbbS3/content/id/98490](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/maps/ua/-/asset_publisher/ktn0ZLTvbbS3/content/id/98490); "Press Conference of Sergey Lavrov, Brussels, 16 December 2013," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, accessed February 4, 2016, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/evropejskij-souz-es/-/asset\\_publisher/6OiYovt2s4Yc/content/id/83530](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/evropejskij-souz-es/-/asset_publisher/6OiYovt2s4Yc/content/id/83530).

<sup>55</sup> Author's interview with official from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016.

purpose of which would be fair review of all existing conditions between Russia, European Union and Ukraine without any attempts to hide something or to deceive each other.<sup>56</sup> Russian FM Lavrov called such a format ‘logical’ and ‘justified’ given that Ukraine was an important economic partner to both the European Union and Russia.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, for Russia, securing the trilateral format of relations in the common neighborhood and therefore preserving the 2005 consensus seemed to be even more important than to have its concerns about Ukraine’s AA settled. In October 2013, when Ukraine offered to discuss the economic consequences of the AA agreement with Russia and the EU at the working group level among experts, Moscow declined the opportunity. Commenting on this decision, Sergey Lavrov made it clear that Russia was not interested in post-factum consultations where there was no opportunity to change the format of relations between Russia, Ukraine, and the EU with the consideration of Russia’s interests.<sup>58</sup> When the idea of official consultation was raised by Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich following his meeting with President Putin in mid-November 2013, Russia supported it because Yanukovich’s proposition reflected closely Russia’s position on the talks. He advocated the review of the EU-Ukraine agreements reached so far and for Moscow to be consulted before anything could be signed with the EU.<sup>59</sup>

Yet, Brussels rejected the idea of changing the bilateral format of relations with Ukraine to include Russia. For the EU, this position was justified by the need to preserve relations with Ukraine independent of Russia’s influence. Brussels was open to dialogue with Moscow, but refused to make

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<sup>56</sup> “Interview by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to RIA Novosti News Agency,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, December 20, 2013, accessed September 16, 2016, [http://archive.mid.ru/brp\\_4.nsf/0/B507FFC4347E4FDC44257C4E0059D4FC](http://archive.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/B507FFC4347E4FDC44257C4E0059D4FC).

<sup>57</sup> “Press Conference by Sergey Lavrov, Brussels, 16 December 2013.”

<sup>58</sup> “Lavrov told Kozhara why consultations will not help Ukraine,”[in Russian], *Ukrayinska Pravda Kiev*, October 18, 2013, accessed October 20, 2017, <http://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2013/10/28/7000863/>.

<sup>59</sup> “Yanukovich: During the latest meeting with Putin the need for trilateral consultation of Russia, Ukraine and the EU was recognized,”[in Russian], *Interfax-Ukraine*, November 27, 2013, accessed October 20, 2017, <http://interfax.com.ua/news/political/177104.html>.

it a party to the AA talks, which it maintained with Ukraine as a sovereign and independent state.<sup>60</sup> According to the Lithuanian FM who chaired the European Council at that time, ‘the trilateral dialogue [was] not an option’ as the EU saw ‘no role for third countries’ in the process of concluding AAs.<sup>61</sup> The spokesman for the EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Peter Stano, also confirmed that any concerns regarding the EU-Ukraine deal could only be discussed bilaterally.<sup>62</sup> The same message came from European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, who called the trilateral consultation ‘unacceptable’.<sup>63</sup>

However, Russia saw such practice as undermining the point of consensus on collaboration and dialogue concerning the development of integration projects in the common neighborhood. According to Lavrov, the Russian side recognized the interests of the EU and Ukraine to develop their relations but it did not wish to be ‘ignored’ given that the agreement to be signed posed a serious concern for the entire CIS FTA and Russia’s integrationist prospects in the post-Soviet space.<sup>64</sup> In this context, having an inclusive format of relationship such as the trilateral consultations was Russia’s principal position.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, FM Lavrov explicitly linked Russia’s return to cooperation to a shift in the EU approach by saying that consultations in the trilateral format offered ‘the right confrontation-free path’ and that their success would depend on ‘the readiness of the EU not to conduct affairs in private’ but to take into account the Russian Federation.<sup>66</sup> The way the contention

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<sup>60</sup> “European Union does not want Russia-Ukraine-EU trilateral consultations,” [in Russian], *Kapital*, December 18, 2013, accessed October 20, 2017, <http://www.capital.ua/ru/news/10822-evrosoyuz-ne-khochet-trekhstoronnikh-peregovorov-rf-ukrainy-es>.

<sup>61</sup> “Statement of Foreign Minister of Lithuania Linas Linkevičius on Decision of Ukrainian Government,” Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2013, November 22, 2013, accessed October 20, 2017, <http://www.eu2013.lt/en/news/statements/statement-of-foreign-minister-of-lithuania-linas-linkevicius-on-decision-of-ukrainian-government>.

<sup>62</sup> “European Union is ready to start a dialogue with Ukraine without Russia,” [in Russian], *Media Group*, November 25, 2013, accessed October 20, 2017, <https://news.pn/de/politics/91975>.

<sup>63</sup> “Barroso Stated That the Consultation between Ukraine, Russia and the EU Are Unacceptable,” *Telegraf*, November 29, 2013, <https://telegraf.com.ua/ukraina/politika/916380-barrozu-zayavil-chto-konsultatsii-ukrainyi-rossii-i-es-nepriemlyi.html>.

<sup>64</sup> “Interview of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov to ‘Russia Today,’” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, December 24, 2013, accessed October 20, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/press\\_service/minister\\_speeches/-/asset\\_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/82586](http://www.mid.ru/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/82586).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> “Interview by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to RIA Novosti News Agency.”

over this issue developed demonstrated that Russia contested not the fact of the EU-Ukraine agreement as such, but the format of relations with the EU in the common neighborhood.

The second line of contestation between the EU and Russia developed over the terms of co-existence between their integration projects. Both actors advocated in favor of their own system of regional governance to be adopted on the basis of compatibility: the EU promoted its internal market regulations, while Russia insisted on keeping the WTO standards. The contestation developed as the EU refused to accept the regulatory structures of the Eurasian Union. From Russia's perspective this yet again violated the 2005 consensus, according to which the EU and Russia initiatives should have been developed 'in a mutually-beneficial manner.'

The EU AAs, which included the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive FTAs between the EU and the partners, obliged the EaP countries to adopt up to 80% of the EU *acquis communautaire*.<sup>67</sup> These agreements thus consolidated the expansion of the European market regulations into the area of the common neighborhood. Subsequently, they qualitatively changed the nature of the regional trade and economic governance otherwise based on the rules of the CIS Free Trade Area and broadly on the WTO regulations. This change inevitably undermined Russia's aspirations for developing the EEU, whose regulations and standards were not always identical with those of the EU.

Despite this fact, the EU did not perceive the terms of co-existence between regional integrations as an issue of contention. Whereas previously the EU was not explicit about its vision of co-existence between the integration projects, in 2013 it clarified its position. While talking about the need of compatibility between the EU and Eurasian integration, the EU defined compatibility in terms of the expansion of its own regulations and standards to EaP states, Russia, and the Customs/Eurasian Union. According to EU Commissioner Štefan Füle, the preference for European standards as the basis of relations between the two integration projects was justified by the fact that the 'one [was]

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<sup>67</sup> Paweł Dariusz Wiśniewski, "The Eastern Partnership - It Is High Time to Start a Real 'Partnership,'" 4.

tested by decades and the other one [was] just in the making.’<sup>68</sup> The Union already maintained the dialogue on convergence and approximation of legislation with the EaP countries through AAs and with Russia through the PCA as well as through the Partnership for Modernization. In addition, the EU was ready to open dialogue with the Eurasian Union Commission ‘on making the regulatory framework for the Customs Union as compatible as possible with the European Union rules.’<sup>69</sup> To that end, the EU argued that ‘European Union norms are often adopted internationally’, ‘are compatible with WTO rules’, and are already ‘increasingly adopted by the Customs Union.’<sup>70</sup> Therefore, having them as the basis for EU-EEU cooperation would help the EU partners including Russia ‘to modernise and open up to globalization.’<sup>71</sup> This position reflected the enactment of the EU’s normative power role, but it also signaled its protectionism in the form of intolerance to the Eurasian Union as an institutional alternative. In addition, when it came to specific cases such as Ukraine’s AA, the EU stressed legal incompatibility rather than convergence between the EaP and EEU frameworks.<sup>72</sup>

Russia interpreted the EU approach as going against the established consensus of co-existence between the two initiatives. Differently from the EU, Moscow considered that compatibility should be established between the two integrations, not on the basis of one at the expense of the other. In January 2014, Sergey Lavrov highlighted this point in an article for the *Kommersant* newspaper: ‘Our partners from the European Union must fully take into account that a large-scale integration project

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<sup>68</sup> Štefan Füle, “Speech "EU - Ukraine about Progress towards Signing the Association Agreement, Yalta,” European Commission, September 20, 2013, accessed September 18, 2016, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-727\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-727_en.htm).

<sup>69</sup> Štefan Füle, “European Neighborhood Policy – Priorities and Directions for Change, Annual Conference of Polish Ambassadors, Warsaw, Poland,” European Commission, July 25, 2013, accessed September 20, 2018, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-661\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-661_en.htm).

<sup>70</sup> “Commissioner Štefan Füle’s Statement on the Pressure Exercised by Russia on Countries of the Eastern Partnership at European Parliament Plenary, Strasbourg, 11 September 2013,” European Commission, accessed May 15, 2016, [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/armenia/press\\_corner/all\\_news/news/2013/2013\\_09\\_11\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/armenia/press_corner/all_news/news/2013/2013_09_11_en.htm).

<sup>71</sup> “Commissioner Štefan Füle’s Statement on the Pressure Exercised by Russia on Countries of the Eastern Partnership at European Parliament Plenary, Strasbourg, 11 September 2013.”

<sup>72</sup> “Štefan Füle, Address to the Members of the Ukrainian Parliament;” “Barroso Reminds Ukraine That Customs Union and Free Trade with EU Are Incompatible,” *Ukrinform*, February 25, 2013, accessed October 30, 2017. <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-economy/1461921>

[barroso\\_reminds\\_ukraine\\_that\\_customs\\_union\\_and\\_free\\_trade\\_with\\_eu\\_are\\_incompatible\\_299321.html](http://barroso_reminds_ukraine_that_customs_union_and_free_trade_with_eu_are_incompatible_299321.html).

is being implemented in the Eurasian space, which was initially built up taking into account the opportunities for its harmonization with integration processes within the EU, as a link between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>73</sup> Even though the Russian side admitted that the Eurasian Union was broadly based on the norms of the EU (such as freedom of movement of capital, goods, services, and labor), it still wished its own rules and institutions to be recognized. According to Igor Shuvalov, the Chair of the Commission for Economic Development and Integration in the Russian government, there were areas of legislation, which Russia preferred to keep unchanged within the Customs Union. These referred particularly to the technical issues of goods declaration, systems of technical standards and certification (so called GOSTs), and regulations on terms of origin. In these dimensions, according to Shuvalov, the EEU preferred to act on and develop ‘its own institutions, which are not the institutions of the EU.’<sup>74</sup>

Importantly, it was vital for Russia to maintain mutual co-existence as the issue of governance consensus because acceptance of the EEU as an institution with its own rules and regulations supported Russia’s role claim as a ‘contributor’ to regional order through integration. To that end, Russia’s preferred scenario was not the expansion of the European Union legislation towards the EEU but to have the ‘natural and objective integration processes among the CIS member-states [...] to go hand in hand with strengthening ties with the European Union.’<sup>75</sup> This corresponded with Russia’s interpretation of the 2005 governance consensus to have both the EU and Russia-led integration processes co-exist in the common neighborhood. At the same time, it also supported Russia’s role

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<sup>73</sup> “Article by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, ‘Russia-EU: Time to Decide’ Published in the Kommersant Newspaper of 13 February 2014,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, February 13, 2014, accessed February 1, 2016, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/evropejskij-souz-es/-/asset\\_publisher/6OiYovt2s4Yc/content/id/76622](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/evropejskij-souz-es/-/asset_publisher/6OiYovt2s4Yc/content/id/76622).

<sup>74</sup> Yana Milyukova, “The Union Won’t Be Possible,” Gazeta.Ru, August 26, 2013, accessed June 30, 2016, <https://www.gazeta.ru/business/2013/08/26/5607837.shtml>.

<sup>75</sup> Sergey Lavrov, “Speech ‘Europe’s Role in a Time of Changes’ at the Royal Institute for International Relations, Brussels,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, October 15, 2013, accessed October 15, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/press\\_service/minister\\_speeches/-/asset\\_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/92354](http://www.mid.ru/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/92354).

location to have its integration project recognized as a part of the wider European regional order and to build an ‘alliance of blocks’ between the European and Eurasian Union.<sup>76</sup>

Divergences in interpretations of the 2005 consensus and EU protectionism in setting up regional governance led to the situation of a role conflict between Russia and the EU, whereby role enactment of one actor deprived the other from pursuing its role.

### **5.2.3. Role Conflict and Its Consequences for the EU-Russia Security Environment**

The re-activation of contentions about the terms of role enactment and the co-existence of integration initiatives in the case of Ukraine supported the development of a role conflict between Russia and the EU. Earlier in this chapter, I argued that in 2009-2013 the EU and Russia integration processes developed in parallel, so that both actors were able to pursue their role objectives. I also argued that the lack of role achievement at that time resulted from constraints within the integration processes themselves and not from rivalry or the competing nature of the actors’ role conceptions. A different context emerged in 2013 after the EU explicitly framed Ukraine’s integration perspective as an ‘either...or’ option. I already argued that both Russia and the EU viewed Ukraine’s participation in their regional integration processes as a mark of the successful role achievement. Structuring the integration prospects of Ukraine as mutually exclusive contributed to the situation whereby role achievement by one actor deprived the other from pursuing its role, which is a variation of role conflict.

In 2013, the EU discourse on Ukraine’s AA linked the success of the EU role achievement to Ukraine’s reform process on the one hand, and to its non-participation in Russia’s Customs Union on the other. In the two speeches on 7 February 2013 addressed to the Ukrainian Government and to the Parliament, EU Commissioner on Enlargement Štefan Füle explicitly stated that EU-Ukraine association was ‘using the magnetism [...] of the European Union to modernize, to transform and to

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<sup>76</sup> Sergey Lavrov, “State of the Union Russia–EU: Prospects for Partnership in the Changing World,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 51 (July 9, 2013): 6–12, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12047>.

build more democracy in Ukraine’ in order to ‘anchor it on a European path.’<sup>77</sup> Noting the involvement of Ukraine in the CIS FTA Füle, nevertheless, stated that only through the agreement with the EU would ‘Ukraine be empowered by European toolbox and emerge as modern, competitive and democratic European state.’<sup>78</sup> In contrast, he argued that joining ‘another structure’ and ‘transferring the competences to its supranational body’ would make Ukraine’s integration with the EU impossible.<sup>79</sup> EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso was more explicit on the matter. Speaking at the EU-Ukraine Summit later that month, he said that the EU AA agreement required Ukraine to fulfill certain obligations and, therefore, it was impossible for the country ‘at the same time be a member of a customs union and be in a deep common free-trade area with the European Union.’<sup>80</sup> Although the EU did not put up an obstacle to the relations between EaP countries and Russia or the Eurasian Union, it encouraged them ‘to develop closer ties with Russia only in a way compatible with their AA/DCFTA obligations.’<sup>81</sup> In such a way the EU success as a normative power became linked not only to Ukraine’s reform performance but also to its non-participation in Russia’s integration frameworks.

The exclusivity discourse became even stronger following Russia’s assertive re-action to the finalization of the EU agreements with Ukraine, Moldova and Armenia in July 2013. According to the Ukrainian political analyst Oleksiy Haran, the Russian reaction made ‘Europe more serious about [Ukraine’s] integration’ making it ‘a matter of principle.’<sup>82</sup> In addition, Armenia announced on September 3, 2013 its plans to join the Customs Union instead of entering the Association with the

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<sup>77</sup> Štefan Füle, “Address of Commissioner Füle to the Members of the Ukrainian Cabinet,” European Commission, February 7, 2013, accessed September 17, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-106\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-106_en.htm).

<sup>78</sup> Štefan Füle, “Address to the Members of the Ukrainian Parliament,” European Commission, February 7, 2013, accessed September 17, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-107\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-107_en.htm).

<sup>79</sup> Štefan Füle, “Address to the Members of the Ukrainian Parliament.”

<sup>80</sup> “Barroso Reminds Ukraine That Customs Union and Free Trade with EU Are Incompatible.”

<sup>81</sup> Štefan Füle, “Ambitions of EU and East Partners for the Vilnius Summit, EU Neighborhood East Parliamentary Assembly in the European Parliament, Brussels,” European Commission, May 28, 2013, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-477\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-477_en.htm).

<sup>82</sup> Shaun Walker, “Ukraine’s EU Trade Deal Will Be Catastrophic, Says Russia,” *The Guardian*, September 22, 2013, accessed October 30, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/22/ukraine-european-union-trade-russia>.

EU, which raised worries in the EU that other partners might follow Armenia's example.<sup>83</sup> As a result, the EU 'exclusivity discourse' in the case of Ukraine became even sharper. The EU's High Representative Catherine Ashton announced on August 26, 2013 that 'we [the EU] cannot lose Ukraine [to Russia].'<sup>84</sup> Speaking on the next day in Kiev, EU Commissioner Štefan Füle particularly emphasized that any relations between Ukraine and Russia's integration initiatives were possible only if they did not contradict the AA/DCFTA.<sup>85</sup> The most explicit statement came from the European Parliament on September 12, 2013 that directly juxtaposed the EU and Russia's roles in the common neighborhood. It stated that 'Association Agreement with the EU entails political and legal reforms conducive to strengthening the rule of law, reducing corruption and securing greater respect for human rights; whereas joining the Customs Union, on the contrary, does not involve any values-based benchmarks or conditionality, and therefore cannot be considered as an incentive to domestic reform.'<sup>86</sup> These statements were in opposition to the 2005 consensus, which recognized both the EU and Russia integration processes as contributing to 'security and stability' of the 'greater Europe without dividing lines and based on common values'.

As a result, it was in 2013 that the deviation in the EU governance practice towards the promotion of exclusiveness between EaP and Eurasian integration supported the development of role conflict between the EU and Russia, as it deprived Russia from locating its own role. As I argued earlier, before mid-2013 Russia did not perceive the EaP as endangering its role as a contributor to regional order through integration. Still in April 2013, Sergey Lavrov said in an interview that 'particularly in the Eastern Partnership we do not see natural causes that might become a barrier to

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<sup>83</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 16, 2016.

<sup>84</sup> "Ashton: 'We Cannot Lose Ukraine,'" *Ukrayinska Pravda Kiev*, August 27, 2013, accessed October 30, 2017, <http://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2013/08/27/6996696/>.

<sup>85</sup> Štefan Füle, "Statement Following the Meeting with Andriy Klyuyev about the Road to Signing the Association Agreement," European Commission, August 27, 2013, accessed October 30, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-13-754\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-754_en.htm).

<sup>86</sup> "European Parliament Resolution of 12 September 2013 on the Pressure Exerted by Russia on Eastern Partnership Countries (in the Context of the Upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius) P7\_TA(2013)0383" (European Parliament, September 12, 2013), <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0383+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>.

harmonize with participation in CIS.<sup>87</sup> Russia's role expectation under the Eurasian Union was to provide 'a unification model' and 'to shape the future not only of our three countries [Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan], but also that of other post-Soviet nations.'<sup>88</sup> Moreover, according to Sergey Lavrov's article published in July 2013, Russia believed 'the EU understands that Eurasian integration is an objective reality',<sup>89</sup> which revealed that Russia was not yet in the situation of a role conflict. However, following the EU's protectionist handling of the Ukraine's case, Russia also started to take the integration processes in the common neighborhood as mutually exclusive which caused a role conflict.

Realization of the fact that the EaP project could deprive Russia of achieving its regional role and completing the Eurasian integration project came in August 2013, after the text of the EU-Ukraine AA became publicly available. Such an assessment was given by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov, who stated that Ukraine's participation in the Association with the EU would mean 'that there will be no Customs Union.'<sup>90</sup> He was echoed by Putin's advisor on European integration, Sergey Glazyev, who called Ukraine's AA with the EU 'a big blow for us [Russia]' and confirmed that it would make Ukraine's participation in the Customs Union impossible.<sup>91</sup> The same message was confirmed in September 2013 by Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who stated that signing the AA with the EU 'will practically close the door to the Customs Union for our Ukrainian partners.'<sup>92</sup> Although keeping Ukraine within Russia's sphere of influence was important for Moscow, it seemed that developing a fully-fledged Eurasian integration or union was a higher priority. In August 2013, Ukraine considered partial participation in the Customs Union that would not contradict its AA with the EU but that would give its relations with Russia stronger institutional

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<sup>87</sup> "Answers to Questions of Russian Mass Media by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Summarizing the Results of the Session of the Foreign Ministers Council of CIS Member-States, Tashkent, 5 April 2013."

<sup>88</sup> Lavrov, "State of the Union Russia-EU."

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Milyukova, "The Union Won't Be Possible."

<sup>91</sup> "Putin's Aide: After Signing the Agreement with the EU Ukraine Won't Remain a Subject of International Law," Regnum, August 27, 2013, accessed October 30, 2017, <https://regnum.ru/news/1699314.html>.

<sup>92</sup> "Russia Tells Ukraine: You Can Be with Us or EU but Not Both - an article published by Interfax News Agency on 9 September 2013," *BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union*.

backing. Russia dismissed this opportunity entirely. According to Dmitry Medvedev, Russia was ready to consider various formats of cooperation with Ukraine, but it was essential for Moscow to have all members of the Customs Union share the same amount of rights and responsibilities because Russia ‘wanted to create the full-scale Eurasian Economic Union and not some amorphous unity.’<sup>93</sup> Therefore, the format of 3+1 (3 countries of the CU plus Ukraine) was considered ‘unacceptable’.<sup>94</sup> This evidence suggests that establishing itself as a ‘contributor’ to regional order through integration processes on par with the EU was more important for Russia than a narrowly defined geopolitical ambition of simply keeping Ukraine within its orbit.

Moreover, analysis of the EU-Russia interaction over Ukraine suggests that the geopolitical perspective in the case of Ukraine emerged only in late 2013 as an outcome of the EU-Russia contestation and the development of role conflict. Prior to that, both actors emphasized that they did *not* intend their integration processes to contribute to geopolitical rivalry since this would undermine their prospects for successful role location.<sup>95</sup> Russia openly dismissed the logic of ‘block against block’ as well as the idea that its EEU aimed at rebuilding the Soviet empire. Instead, it actively tried to promote the ‘union of unions’ relationship with the EU and strived to get EEU recognized as another model of integration. Likewise, the EU explicitly stated that it did not wish to contribute to geopolitical contestation by developing the EaP, and strongly emphasized the potential economic benefits the EU normative and security agenda in Ukraine would have for Russia. Hence, geopolitical

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<sup>93</sup> “Transcript of the Meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation of the Russian-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission,” [in Russian], Government of Russia, October 15, 2015, accessed October 30, 2017, <http://government.ru/news/7425/>.

<sup>94</sup> “Transcript of the Meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation.”

<sup>95</sup> Štefan Füle, “Speech “EU - Ukraine about Progress towards Signing the Association Agreement, Yalta””; Štefan Füle, “Speech - EU-Ukraine: Dispelling the Myths About the Association Agreement,” European Commission, October 11, 2013, accessed September 18, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-808\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-808_en.htm); “Štefan Füle, Speech at the National Round Table on European Integration, Kyiv, Ukraine,” European Commission, October 11, 2013, accessed September 18, 2018, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-810\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-810_en.htm); “Answers to Questions of Russian Mass Media by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Summarizing the Results of the Session of the Foreign Ministers Council of CIS Member-States, Tashkent, 5 April 2013”; “Comment and Answers to Questions from the Russian Mass Media by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Summarizing the Results of the Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of CIS Member-States, Minsk, 24 October 2013,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, accessed September 18, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/integracionnye-strukturny-prostranstva-sng/-/asset\\_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/90890](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/integracionnye-strukturny-prostranstva-sng/-/asset_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/90890).

thinking was rather an outcome than a primary cause of Russia's - as well as EU's - approach to Ukraine.

So far I have argued that during July 2013-January 2014 contestation between Russia and the EU resulted from the deviation of the EU practice from the 2005 consensus about governing the common neighborhood. By refusing to enter in multilateral discussion over Ukraine's AA, insisting on the European regulations as the basis for regional governance and framing Ukraine's integration agenda the EU demonstrated protectionist logic in relation to Russia. The 'either...or' rhetoric in the EU's framing of Ukraine's AA resulted in the development of the role conflict between Russia and the EU. The next section argues that the conflictual security environment that became consolidated in the region after Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support of the Donbass insurgency still did not prevent its cooperative behavior in the trilateral talks with Ukraine and the EU during 2014-2015. I argue that Russia's shift towards cooperation was caused by the shift in the EU governance approach towards inclusiveness and back to 2005 consensus.

### **5.3. The EU-Russia-Ukraine Trilateral Talks**

Russia's annexation of Crimea and support for the separatist movements in Eastern Ukraine marked a point of no return in its relations with the EU. As argued in Chapter 3, different interpretations of the events in Ukraine supported the development of rivalry role conceptions between actors. I also argued that because EU-Russia interaction was strongly guided by developments in the Ukrainian crisis, the conflictual security environment was being reproduced between actors. Despite the conflictual security order, the interaction over Ukraine's AA developed into a cooperative security trend in 2014-2016. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was signed on March 21, 2014 (the political part) and June 27, 2014 (the economic part). Russia, which previously opposed the deal and threatened to exclude Ukraine from the CIS FTA should the agreement be signed, moderated its

stance. Moscow agreed to preserve the preferential trade regime with Ukraine and stopped insisting on changing the text of the AA to include Russia's concerns.<sup>96</sup>

In this section I argue that Russia's cooperative stance resulted from the shift to more inclusive approach in EU policy. The EU engaged in trilateral consultations with Ukraine and Russia at the political level, which opened an opportunity to resolve the issues of contention over the format of the relationship between actors, and the terms of co-existence of their integration initiatives. EU inclusiveness encouraged Russia to moderate its assertiveness. Moreover, trilateral consultations had a strong prospect of reaching a new governance consensus. However, this cooperative trend was not sustained for two reasons: the role conflict between actors still remained unresolved as well as the issues of contention, and the conflictual security environment generated by the war in Ukraine overshadowed the talks, thereby preventing a positive outcome.

### **5.3.1. The EU Shift to Inclusiveness and Russia's Cooperation**

The shift in the EU approach from protectionist to inclusive in relation to Ukraine's AA happened in June 2014, when EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso offered to hold a political level dialogue (trilateral consultations) between Russia, Ukraine, and the EU.<sup>97</sup> The announcement came after the EU and Russia held three technical consultations at the ministerial level to discuss the EU-Ukraine AA bilaterally (in November 2013, March 2014 and June 2014).<sup>98</sup> The offer of trilateral dialogue with the involvement of Russia marked a significant shift in the EU approach, since previously Brussels excluded any possibility of Russia's involvement in the EU relations with the neighbors. Altogether 6 Ministerial Meetings and about 20 expert consultations took place between July 2014 and January 2016.

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<sup>96</sup> "Russia Is No Longer Objecting the EU-Ukraine DCFTA Deal - Klimkin," *Hvilya*, May 18, 2015, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://hvilya.net/news/digest/rossiya-uzhe-ne-protiv-zst-ukrainyi-i-evrosoyuza-klimkin.html>.

<sup>97</sup> "EU-Russia Consultations: Effects of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement on Russia's Economy (17/06/2014)," Delegation of the European Union to Russia, accessed February 1, 2016, [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/press\\_corner/all\\_news/news/2014/20140617\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20140617_en.htm).

<sup>98</sup> Internal document of the European Commission obtained by the author.

The decisive shift in the EU's position to engage Russia through the talks over AA was linked to the development of conflict in Eastern Ukraine, which escalated in the summer of 2014. The idea of political consultations was initiated by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, one of the EU representatives in the Minsk Peace process on Ukraine, who pushed the EU Commission significantly to start talks with Russia in the hope of creating a positive atmosphere for the Minsk talks.<sup>99</sup> To that end, Merkel announced that the EU-Ukraine agreement would be implemented only after holding consultations with Russia and only after Russia's concerns would be addressed.<sup>100</sup> Although officially Brussels preferred to see the EU-Ukraine deal implemented with no delay and was not willing to invite Russia to the talks, the EU eventually subscribed to the vision of Germany.<sup>101</sup> Several interviewees confirmed that it was important for the EU to demonstrate a 'gesture of goodwill' towards Moscow in order to ease the conflict resolution process in Ukraine. Brussels still considered Russia's concerns to be vague and unjustified and was not prepared to change its position on Ukraine but it agreed to engage in political consultations with Russia, even though the EU had very little expectations for a positive outcome. If successful, trilateral talks could create a context for easier conflict resolution in Ukraine and advance the EU role as a 'security promoter', but if failed they would still allow the EU to claim that it 'did its best' and blame the failure on Russia.<sup>102</sup>

Despite being just a gesture from the side of the EU, the inclusive approach was taken 'very positively' by the Russian side.<sup>103</sup> Even though Ukraine had already signed the Association Agreement with the EU prior to the start of consultations, the trilateral dialogue was still viewed by Russia as an opportunity to renegotiate the consensus over governing the common neighborhood with

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<sup>99</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 6, 2016.

<sup>100</sup> "The EU is not ready to wait for the consultations between Poroshenko and Putin regarding the DCFTA," [in Russian], *Vesti*, July 1, 2014, accessed October 31, 2017, <http://vesti-ukr.com/strana/58981-es-ne-gotov-zhdat-konsultacij-poroshenko-s-putiny-m-po-zst>.

<sup>101</sup> "The EU is not ready to wait for the consultations."

<sup>102</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 6, 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Author's interview with official from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016.

the EU. The bargaining unfolded along the three issues of contention: the format of interaction in the common neighborhood, substance of governance and the non-exclusiveness of integration processes.

**The format of interaction.** The EU shift to the trilateral format was clearly a decisive factor for Russia to moderate its assertiveness and even accept the EU-Ukraine approximation through the Association Agreement. In the previous section, I argued that Moscow's antagonism towards the development of Eastern Partnership policy through AAs/DCFTAs was caused by the so called 'secret' nature of the EU negotiations with the 'focus states', which Russia interpreted as the violation of 2005 consensus. In this context, EU support for trilateral consultations was seen by Moscow as a return to the appropriate format of relations in the common neighborhood through 'collaboration and dialogue'. Doing so, the EU also *de facto* recognized Russia's right to have a say in the EU relations with the common neighbors, which resolved the existing contention. The EU agreed to delay the implementation of the agreement with Ukraine until December 31, 2015, creating room for Russia's contribution to the dialogue, which brought early progress to cooperation. In return, Russia committed to preserve the preferential trade regime with Ukraine under the CIS FTA during the consultation process.<sup>104</sup> The same format of trilateral consultations was offered by Russia to Moldova that also signed the AA with the EU in June 2014. However, in this case, consultations did not take place and Russia continued with the preventive trade measures against Moldova.<sup>105</sup>

It was especially important for Moscow to make the trilateral talks a permanent format of relations with the EU in the common neighborhood and institutionalize it as a new governance consensus. According to Russia's chief negotiator Aleksey Ulyukhaev, it was more important for Russia to reach 'better understanding with the European colleagues on how our relations [in the neighborhood] should be structured', rather than to settle specific concerns in the case of Ukraine's

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<sup>104</sup> "Joint Ministerial Statement on the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine AA/DCFTA, Brussels," (European Commission, September 12, 2014), accessed November 3, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_STATEMENT-14-276\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-276_en.htm).

<sup>105</sup> Andrey Devyatkov, "Moldove between the European and the Post-Soviet integration projects," [in Russian], *Evraziyskie Issledovania*, July 25, 2017, accessed November 14, 2017, <http://eurasian-studies.org/archives/4392>.

AA.<sup>106</sup> To that end, one of Russia's key positions during the talks was to sign a legally-binding agreement that would ensure the commitments of the EU, Russia and Ukraine with regard to the implementation of the AA. This position was advocated by Vladimir Putin, who called for turning consultations into negotiations with the aim of introducing 'systemic adjustments to the association agreement' that would take into account the 'full range of risks to Russian-Ukrainian economic ties.'<sup>107</sup> Ulyukhaev also called during the talks to 'clearly fix the mandate' for the trilateral negotiations to discuss the proposal for amendments to the Association Agreement.<sup>108</sup> Although framed within the case of Ukraine's AA these proposals tackled 'a much wider net' of issues than the EU-Ukraine agreement.<sup>109</sup> EU Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht interpreted Russia's proposal as an attempt to become a third party to the EU-Ukraine relations.<sup>110</sup> One of the EU participants in the trilateral talks also confirmed that Russia's proposals for the legal agreement exceeded the issues of the AA and went as far as to cover the 'future scenarios' of the EU relations with Ukraine.<sup>111</sup> Thus, Russia was actively pushing for a new consensus with the EU that would secure its involvement in the relations between the EU and the common neighbors when it came to the integration processes.

However, the EU was not prepared to change the bilateral nature of its relations with the neighbors to include Russia, and therefore rejected any legally binding solution.<sup>112</sup> It insisted that AA/DCFTA could not be amended 'neither directly, not indirectly' because doing so would turn it from a bilateral to a trilateral document with the veto right of a third power (Russia).<sup>113</sup> Instead, the EU offered to take 'a political commitment' and address the 'concrete practical concerns' that

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<sup>106</sup> ««We Do Not Cut Anything. It Is Freezing»,» [in Russian], *Vedomosti*, December 6, 2015, accessed, November 3, 2017, <https://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/characters/2015/12/07/619874-nichego-rvem-zamorazhivanie>.

<sup>107</sup> Peter Spiegel, "Putin Demands Reopening of EU Trade Pact with Ukraine," *Financial Times*, September 25, 2014, accessed November 3, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/a4de51ae-44ca-11e4-9a5a-00144feabdc0>.

<sup>108</sup> "EU Rejects Putin Demand for Ukraine Deal Changes," *Sott.net*, September 26, 2014, accessed November 3, 2017, <https://www.sott.net/article/286406-EU-rejects-Putin-demand-for-Ukraine-deal-changes>.

<sup>109</sup> "EU Rejects Putin Demand for Ukraine Deal Changes."

<sup>110</sup> Spiegel, "Putin Demands Reopening of EU Trade Pact with Ukraine."

<sup>111</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 14, 2016.

<sup>112</sup> "Factsheet on Trilateral Talks on DCFTA Implementation," (European Commission, December 21, 2015), accessed January 22, 2017, [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2015/december/tradoc\\_154126.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2015/december/tradoc_154126.pdf).

<sup>113</sup> "Factsheet on Trilateral Talks on DCFTA Implementation."

DCFTA may bring for Russia after its implementation.<sup>114</sup> However, Russia declined the offer, which was yet further proof that legally securing the trilateral format of interaction in the common neighborhood was more important for Moscow than having its economic concerns addressed. Russia even stopped insisting on the ‘systemic adjustments’ to the text of AA and instead offered to sign a ‘protocol to the Ukraine-EU agreement, or a separate agreement that would make a single package with the [EU-Ukraine] agreement and would enter into force simultaneously with it.’<sup>115</sup> The inability to gain EU consent on this issue of contention left it unresolved. It was also, eventually, named by the Russian side as the main reason for withdrawing from the trilateral cooperation process.<sup>116</sup>

**The substance of regional governance.** Another issue of contention discussed during the trilateral talks was the co-existence between the AA/DCFTA and the Customs Union governance frameworks. I argued earlier that it was important for Russia to keep the CIS FTA/Customs Union rules regulations operational in the EaP region not so much for the economic reasons but for political considerations. The recognition of the Customs Union legislation in the common neighborhood meant an implicit recognition of the Russian integration project on par with the EU and in line with Russia’s role location agenda. It also enabled Russia to secure the prospect of incorporating Ukraine into its Customs Union regardless of the state of its association with the EU and thus still allowed for Russia’s successful role achievement. In a sixty-page proposal that the Russian side prepared for the trilateral consultations, all amendments to the AA that concerned regulations and standards were linked to the prospects of the Customs Union/Eurasian economic integration. Namely, Russia argued that the implementation of any regulations under the AA/DCFTA might harm the prospects of integration in the post-Soviet space. Therefore, the agreement ‘should not prevent the adoption and implementation

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> “Meeting with Government Members,” President of Russia, May 20, 2015, accessed November 5, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/49495>.

<sup>116</sup> “Aleksey Ulyukhaev: extraordinary efforts needed in order to avoid trade embargo and non-preferential trade regime with Ukraine on January 1, 2016,” [in Russian], Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, December 1, 2015, accessed November 3, 2017, <http://economy.gov.ru/minec/press/news/2015120108>; “Aleksey Ulyukhaev: We faced with firm reluctance of our European and Ukrainian partners to take into consideration the concerns of the Russian Federation regarding the association,” [in Russian], Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, December 21, 2015, accessed November 3, 2017, [http://economy.gov.ru/minec/press/news/2015\\_01\\_21\\_12](http://economy.gov.ru/minec/press/news/2015_01_21_12).

of [...] the legislation of the integration unions to which Ukraine is a current or a perspective member.<sup>117</sup> Moscow also insisted that the AA include provision that the implementation of the EU-Ukraine agreement should not prevent the preservation, or creation of customs unions, free trade areas, and cross-border trade agreements, or undermine Ukraine's participation in these frameworks, and should secure Ukraine's sovereign right to participate in these integrations.<sup>118</sup> For these reasons Russia advocated the parallel co-existence of the EU and EEU Customs Union regulations and standards in the case of Ukraine.

Unlike the issue of the format of interaction discussed above, the contention over the substance of regional governance had a real potential for resolution. The prospect for consensus was set at the trilateral meeting of May 2015. The joint operational conclusions of the meeting clearly set the commitment of the parties to work towards such a format. For example, in the dimension of Technical Barriers to Trade the parties agreed to establish a working group to work on 'the harmonization process with a view to minimizing the impact of the regulatory changes', and recognized 'the importance of convergence of technical regulations and standards as a tool to facilitate trade flows.'<sup>119</sup> On customs regulations they considered the revision and updates to the existing regulatory framework between Russia and Ukraine within the CIS FTA, while simultaneously enhancing the informal dialogue between the EU and Russia on customs cooperation.<sup>120</sup> The EU also agreed to discuss the regulations in energy and investment sectors that were not directly linked to Ukraine's AA but were listed among Russia's concerns.

Russia was very positive about the EU's inclusiveness, which supported the progress in cooperation. According to Aleksey Ulyukhaev the May 2015 meeting created 'a sense of cautious

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<sup>117</sup> "Proposals of the Russian Side on the Amendments to the Association Agreement between the EU and Its Member States on the One Side and Ukraine on the Other Side Aimed at Minimizing the Risks Related to the Implementation of This Agreement". [in Russian], *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya*, September 10, 2014, accessed November 3, 2017. [https://zn.ua/static/file/russian\\_proposal.pdf](https://zn.ua/static/file/russian_proposal.pdf).

<sup>118</sup> "Proposals of the Russian Side."

<sup>119</sup> "Outcome of the Trilateral Consultations on the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine AA/DCFTA," European Commission, Trade, May 18, 2015, November 3, 2017, <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1313>.

<sup>120</sup> "Outcome of the Trilateral Consultations on the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine AA/DCFTA."

optimism' that 'they [the EU] started listening to us [Russia] and are actually hearing what we say.'<sup>121</sup> Russian Vice-Minister of Economic Development Aleksey Lichachev also called the outcomes of the May consultations 'a step forward'.<sup>122</sup> Interviewed EU officials confirmed that this issue was indeed 'resolvable' and admitted that the parties came very close to reaching an agreement.

**Non-exclusiveness of institutional alternatives.** During the trilateral consultations both actors restrained from deepening the contestation over mutual exclusiveness of their integration processes. Earlier I argued that interaction over Ukraine's AA contributed to the development of a role conflict between the EU and Russia, as both equated Ukraine's participation in their regional integration processes as successful role achievement. In contrast, during the trilateral talks, the actors returned to the idea of tolerance to each other's institutional alternatives. For example, the first joint statement of the trilateral consultations issued in September 2014 stated that 'both the EU Association with Ukraine and the CIS FTA should jointly contribute to the creation of the integrated economic space in the region.'<sup>123</sup> Hence, it restated the point of consensus reached in 2005 regarding the recognition of both the EU and Russia-led integration processes in the common neighborhood.

The Russian side removed its objection to the EU-Ukraine approximation but insisted, as I argued above, on securing the prospect for Ukraine's participation in the Eurasian integration. Simultaneously, Russia returned to the idea of cooperation between the EU and the EEU. To that end, Aleksey Ulyukhaev noted that Russia was ready to broaden the agenda of the trilateral consultations to issues of co-existence between the Eurasian Union and the European Union. Indeed, Russia's proposed amendments to the EU-Ukraine AA presupposed cooperation with the EEU as a third party. For example, Russia offered to notify not only Ukraine but also Customs Union/EEU members on the 'legislative amendments and other procedural changes' under AA to ensure that these amendments would not 'result in predicaments for Ukraine-Customs Union's member-countries

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<sup>121</sup> "Meeting with Government Members."

<sup>122</sup> "Russia Was Invited for Consultations about EU-Ukraine Association on June 2nd," Lurer.com, May 26, 2015, <http://lurer.com/?p=187014&l=ru>.

<sup>123</sup> "Joint Ministerial Statement on the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine AA/DCFTA, Brussels."

trade.<sup>124</sup> Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Nebenzya elaborated further on this idea by stating that such a dialogue would help the resolution of the EU-Russia contentions with regard to Eastern Partnership and the case of the EU-Ukraine AA in particular.<sup>125</sup> In such a way, Russia considered using Ukraine's case as another opportunity for pushing its role location recognition and to convince the EU that 'it is politically short-sighted [...] to ignore the new Eurasian reality.'<sup>126</sup>

However, the EU was less in favor of the idea to start a political dialogue with the EEU. While admitting that approximation between the two institutional alternatives was possible at the technical level, Brussels was reluctant to implement it in reality, particularly in the case of Ukraine. After the latest EU-Russia summit in January 2014, the EU considered the relationship with the Eurasian Union at the technical level and was preparing for possible negotiations of such a relationship.<sup>127</sup> However, after Russia's annexation of Crimea, the idea was off the table.<sup>128</sup> Constrained by the conflictual security environment, Brussels was not prepared to compromise on this issue of contention and it remained unresolved.

At the same time, the EU still recognized that its relationship with the Customs/Eurasian Union 'will have an important role to play' for the regional order in Europe.<sup>129</sup> The parallel co-existence between the EU and Russia integration processes was not impossible, as the example of Armenia shows. Armenia negotiated the Association Agreement with the EU, together with other EaP partners, but refuted the deal in order to join the EEU in September 2013. In 2015, Armenia and the EU reopened negotiations to conclude an AA that would be consistent with the commitments of Armenia

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<sup>124</sup> "Proposals of the Russian Side."

<sup>125</sup> "Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Nebenzya's Interview with the TASS News Agency, 31 December 2014," The Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, January 1, 2015, accessed November 14, 2017, [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/880046](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/880046).

<sup>126</sup> "Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Nebenzya's Interview with the TASS News Agency, 31 December 2014."

<sup>127</sup> Author's interview with the official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 14, 2016.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Stefan Füle, "'EU-Ukraine: There Is No Time to Rest', Contribution at the European Parliament Plenary Debate of EU-Ukraine Association Agreement Ratification, on Behalf of the HR/VP."

under the EEU.<sup>130</sup> So far, Moscow did not raise any objections to the EU-Armenia approximation.<sup>131</sup> Neither did Moscow express any concerns regarding the EU enhanced partnership with Kazakhstan concluded in December 2015.<sup>132</sup> According to a Russian official in Brussels, Moscow would have not objected the EU-Ukraine association either, should it be a simple FTA and not a deep and comprehensive agreement that presupposed changes to Ukraine's legislation, which made its participation in Eurasian integration impossible.<sup>133</sup>

The shift of the EU towards an inclusive approach and the trilateral talks thus offered a real opportunity to resolve the issues of contention. Both the EU and Russia representatives admitted in interviews that resolution was possible and progress was made during the talks. However, the final outcome was still unsuccessful. As I argue in what follows, the failure to recreate governance consensus, and Russia's return to assertiveness in 2016 resulted from actors' inability to resolve the role conflict. In addition, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war added to the negative political context, which prevented the cooperative trend to pick up.

### **5.3.2. Inability to Resolve the Role Conflict and Russia's New Assertiveness**

So far I have argued that the EU's inclusive approach in the trilateral talks opened an opportunity to resolve the issues of contention with Russia in the common neighborhood. It caused Russia to moderate its assertive trade policies against Ukraine and demonstrate some cooperation through dialogue. An EU official involved in the talks confirmed that there was a possibility of reaching an agreement with Russia during the consultations.<sup>134</sup> Russia's negotiator, Aleksey Ulyukhaev, evaluated the 2015 consultations as 'making good progress' and called the discussion with the EU

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<sup>130</sup> "EU and Armenia Launch Negotiations for a New Agreement," EEAS - European External Action Service, December 7, 2015, accessed January 23, 2018, [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/4489/EU\\_and\\_Armenia\\_launch\\_negotiations\\_for\\_a\\_new\\_agreement](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/4489/EU_and_Armenia_launch_negotiations_for_a_new_agreement).

<sup>131</sup> "Armenian-EU Negotiations Edge Forward," Institute for War and Peace Reporting, accessed May 31, 2016, <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/armenian-eu-negotiations-edge-forward>.

<sup>132</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 14, 2016.

<sup>133</sup> Author's interview with official from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU, Brussels, October 18, 2016.

<sup>134</sup> Author's interview with official from the European External Action Service, Brussels, October 14, 2016.

‘very positive.’<sup>135</sup> However, the outcome of the consultations was still unsuccessful. Even before the final meeting of the EU, Russia, and Ukraine took place, Moscow announced that it would not maintain the preferential trade regime with Ukraine and would apply additional restrictive trade measures against the country. Here I argue that Russia’s return to assertiveness resulted from the failure to resolve the role conflict with the EU. Despite the initial agreement to delay the implementation of the DCFTA part of the agreement until Russia’s concerns are addressed, the EU strongly backed Ukraine in implementing the AA, as consultations were still ongoing. This ‘creeping implementation’ as Russia labeled it, increased rather than decreased Russia’s economic concerns. More importantly it ruled out in practice any prospect for expanding the Eurasian integration to Ukraine and thus for Russia’s successful role achievement.

The EU agreement to launch trilateral consultations, and to postpone the implementation of the AA with Ukraine until Russia’s concerns were erased, provided an opportunity for Moscow to resolve the situation of role conflict. I noted earlier that Russia’s agenda for the trilateral talks included the issue of co-existence between the EU and Russia integration processes in the common neighborhood. Namely, Russia proposed the EU and Ukraine to accept the provision that guaranteed ‘Ukraine’s full participation not only in the CIS integration but also in the Customs Union and in perspective in the Eurasian Economic Space.’<sup>136</sup> Should the provision be accepted, the fact that Ukraine already signed the AA with the EU would no longer prevent it from entering the Russian-led integration framework, and would grant Russia an opportunity for successful role achievement. However, both the EU and Ukraine were keen to start the application of the Association Agreement before Russia could secure this outcome in trilateral consultations.

The ratification of the AA, which was initially delayed because of Russian concerns and the start of the trilateral talks, took place immediately after the parties reached a provisional compromise

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<sup>135</sup> “Aleksey Ulyukhaev: extraordinary efforts needed in order to avoid trade embargo and non-preferential trade regime with Ukraine on January 1, 2016.”

<sup>136</sup> “Proposals of the Russian Side.”

on September 12, 2014.<sup>137</sup> The EU and Ukraine agreed to delay the implementation of the DCFTA part of the agreement for the period of consultations but followed up with the ratification of the agreement a few days after a meeting on September 16. Moreover, Ukraine announced that it would start applying the AA from the very first day. This statement came from Ukraine's Prime Minister Arseniy Yatseniuk, whose government unilaterally approved the Action Plan to implement the AA *in full* the next day after its ratification by the Parliament, with the target to accomplish the process by the end of 2017.<sup>138</sup> Under the Action Plan, Ukraine planned to implement not only the political but also the economic provisions of the agreement, including the adoption of European regulations and standards about which Russia raised its initial concerns.<sup>139</sup> Ukraine's enthusiasm was encouraged internally since its leaders believed that the faster Ukraine implemented all the conditions of the AA, the sooner it would have a chance to apply for the EU membership.<sup>140</sup>

EU support for Ukraine's AA implementation was linked to its role performance. Fast implementation signaled Ukraine's commitment to the reform process and thus confirmed and secured the EU successful role achievement as a normative power. Therefore, addressing the European Parliament on the day of ratification, EU Commissioner Štefan Füle promised the EU's full support for Ukraine's implementation plan by stating: 'the European agenda for reforms as agreed with Ukraine, which is very much about the implementation of the Association Agreement, will go ahead. The Action plan which is also going to be adopted by Verkhovna Rada today and which is

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<sup>137</sup> "Implementation Plan of the EU-Ukraine Agreement Is Set for Three Years," [in Russian], Deutsche Welle, September 16, 2014, accessed November 9, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/ru/план-имплементации-соглашения-об-ассоциации-украины-и-ес-рассчитан-на-три-года/a-17923861>.

<sup>138</sup> "Cabinet of Ministers Approved the Implementation Plan for the Association Agreement with the EU and Warned Russia," *Ukrayinska Pravda Kiev*, September 17, 2014, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/09/17/7038042/>.

<sup>139</sup> "Plan of Implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU - Debated in the Government Today," Video, [in Ukrainian], TSN Ukraine, September 17, 2014, accessed January 23, 2018, <https://ru.tsn.ua/video/video-novini/plan-implementacii-soglasheniya-ob-associacii-s-es-segodnya-rassmatrivaet-pravitelstvo.html>.

<sup>140</sup> "Cabinet of Ministers Approved."

operationalizing the Association Agreement - its implementation goes ahead.’<sup>141</sup> The provisional application of the political parts of the agreement began on November 1, 2014.

The ratification of the AA and the adoption of the Action Plan did not directly violate the compromise reached with Russia during the September consultations. The EU and Ukraine committed to delay the implementation of the DCFTA part, but not the Association Agreement in general. However, the ratification and the practical implementation of the AA in its original form reduced the chances for Russia to influence its content through consultation, and thus to secure the opportunity for its own role achievement. In such a way, the practical implementation of the AA in Ukraine consolidated the situation of the EU-Russia role conflict, whereby the EU role achievements deprived Russia from performing its role. This is why Russia interpreted the actions of Ukraine and the EU as a violation of the September agreement. The day after AA ratification, President Putin send an official letter to the European Commission and to the Ukrainian President threatening to apply ‘protectionist measures’ should Ukraine and the EU proceed with the implementation process.<sup>142</sup> Russia labeled Ukraine’s actions as ‘creeping implementation’ that allowed *de facto* application of the agreement before Russia’s concerns could be addressed. As the trilateral consultations progressed, it became evident for Russia that the EU-Ukraine agreement would not be changed. The opportunity to secure the prospective development of the Eurasian Union in the agreement, and therefore successful role achievement, did not materialize. In his response to President Putin’s letter EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso underlined that ‘the Association Agreement remains a bilateral agreement and that, [..], any adaptations to it can only be made at the request of one of the parties and with the agreement of the other.’<sup>143</sup> Prior to the final round of consultations in December 2015, Barroso’s successor Jean-Claude Juncker confirmed that ‘the Deep and Comprehensive Free

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<sup>141</sup> Füle, “‘EU-Ukraine: There Is No Time to Rest’, Contribution at the European Parliament Plenary Debate of EU-Ukraine Association Agreement Ratification, on Behalf of the HR/VP.”

<sup>142</sup> Spiegel, “Putin Demands Reopening of EU Trade Pact with Ukraine”; “Putin Wrote a Warning Letter to Poroshenko Prior to the Start of Consultations About the Implementation of the Association - Western Media,” [in Russian], Media Group, September 23, 2014, accessed November 9, 2017, <https://news.pn/ru/politics/114663>.

<sup>143</sup> “Letter from President Barroso to President Putin, 1 October 2014,” European Commission, October 1, 2014, accessed November 14, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_STATEMENT-14-294\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-294_en.htm).

Trade Area will enter into force on 1 January [2016] and cannot be amended - neither directly nor indirectly.<sup>144</sup> In addition, the EU clearly stated that it would not support the idea of prolonging the negotiation process and insisted on the initially agreed deadlines of AA implementation, regardless of the negotiation outcomes. As President Juncker put it: ‘if we keep postponing and postponing and postponing we will never reach the end [...] we have to have it [AA] enter into force on 1 January 2016.’<sup>145</sup> The EU inflexibility deprived Russia of the opportunity to secure its own role achievement by introducing the provision on the Eurasian integration into the content of AA agreement. The role conflict between actors thus remained unresolved, which led to the return of Russia’s assertive behavior. On December 22, the Russian Parliament voted unanimously to suspend the FTA regime with Ukraine. This decision as entered into force simultaneously with the DCFTA part of the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine entered into force.

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

This chapter argued that the shifts in Russia’s behavior followed the changes in the EU governance approach and practice. Firstly, the EU compliance with or deviation from the previously established governance consensus determined whether the issues of contention with Russia were activated and whether the existing role relationship was sustained or undermined. Secondly, the nature of the EU governance approach (inclusive or protectionist) determined whether the issues of contentions were resolved, and consequently whether the cooperative or confrontational trend was sustained in relations with Moscow.

The fact that the policies of the EU and Russia followed the governance consensus from 2009 to mid-2013 ensured non-confrontation between them, despite the competition between their integration projects and the unsuccessful development of their role bargaining process at that time.

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<sup>144</sup> “Statement -Meeting of President Juncker and President Tusk with President Poroshenko, Brussels, 16 December 2015,” European Commission, December 16, 2015, accessed November 14, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-15-6356\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-6356_en.htm).

<sup>145</sup> “EU Ukraine Summit - Extracts from President Juncker’s Remarks at the Final Press Conference of EU-Ukraine Summit, 27 April 2015,” European Commission, April 27, 2015, accessed November 14, 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-15-4882\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-4882_en.htm).

The deviation of the EU policy practice from this consensus in 2013 provoked Russia's assertiveness against EaP states and re-activated its contention with the EU in the common neighborhood. In contrast, greater inclusiveness on the side of the EU during the 2014-2015 trilateral talks encouraged the cooperative security trend on the side of Russia. At the same time, the inability to overcome the role conflict prevented the positive outcome of trilateral consultations, so the cooperative trend was not sustained.

Differently from alternative explanations (e.g. geopolitical rivalry, competing regionalism, conflict of norms and values between the EU and Russia), the interaction-based explanation allows for a more nuanced understanding of the EaP case. It demonstrated that although the elements of competition, normative considerations and a certain degree of rivalry have been present, Russia's confrontational or cooperative turns were reactive to the shifts in the shifts in the EU governance approach. The next chapter discusses the South China Sea Code of Conduct, which is another case showing how the shifts in the ASEAN's governance approach evoked cooperative or confrontational responses from China.

## **CHAPTER 6: SECURITY DYNAMICS OF ASEAN-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA: THE CASE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Conflict over the South China Sea develops along three parallel security patterns. China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan all have competing claims over the territory and the adjacent waters of the South China Sea islands, which constitutes the first layer of confrontation. The involvement of ASEAN as a regional security promoter and the United States as an outside actor add another two layers to this conflict. The ASEAN-China pattern of interaction is structured around the negotiations of the regional Code of Conduct (COC), a binding agreement that should establish rules of conduct in the South China Sea. The US-China confrontation developed over the US involvement in the conflict management after 2010, when the United States claimed having a national interest in the freedom of navigation<sup>1</sup>.

The ASEAN-China security dynamics of the SCS conflict constitutes the main puzzle addressed in this chapter, as it deviates from the general pattern of the role bargaining process. The major escalations between ASEAN members and China occurred in 2011-2012 at the point when the parties enjoyed a well-entrenched cooperative security environment (win-win partnership based on role agreement). Moreover, China withdrew itself from the Code of Conduct talks with ASEAN, which reduced the prospect of conflict resolution. These developments interrupted a decade of peace established in the region after ASEAN and China signed the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in 2002. They also came as a surprise to the international observers, who predicted a ‘calm period’ in the SCS after 2010 since ASEAN and China worked jointly on the guidelines for DOC implementation at that time.<sup>2</sup> From 2013 parties returned to cooperation and the

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<sup>1</sup> “Comments by Secretary Clinton in Hanoi, Vietnam,” US Department of State, July 23, 2010, accessed December 14, 2016, <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2010/07/20100723164658su0.4912989.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Mingjiang Li, “China Debates the South China Sea Dispute,” in *The South China Sea Dispute: Navigating Diplomatic and Strategic Tensions*, ed. Ian Storey and Cheng-Yi Lin (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2016), 54.

progress in COC talks was achieved in 2015, despite the fact that tensions at sea were rising again between China, claimant states and the US.

Existing explanations of South China Sea conflict dynamics are limited to explain only one security trend. Peaceful co-existence between ASEAN and China in 2002 - 2010 is attributed to the DOC, which arguably provided a normative foundation for regional peace and helped to maintain the overall stability in the region.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the Declaration was unable to prevent the escalation of the dispute in 2011/12. The negative security developments in the SCS are often attributed to the growing Chinese assertiveness. Some scholars explained it by the advancing military capabilities of the PRC on the one hand and the rise of nationalism inside China on the other hand. Conflict escalations were thus ‘the displays of [China’s] superior power.’<sup>4</sup> They helped to raise domestic support for China’s leadership by playing the nationalist card.<sup>5</sup> Yet another group of scholars connected Beijing’s assertive sea policy with the US ‘Pivot to Asia’ announced in 2011. They argued that the growing US presence provoked China to take a harder stance on the issue, which resulted in a number of clashes with claimant states who are close US allies and the withdrawal from COC talks.<sup>6</sup> Yet, neither growing nationalism, nor the increased US engagement prevented China from returning to cooperation with ASEAN on SCS and COC in 2013.

I argue that the dynamics of conflict and cooperation in the South China Sea is subject to the interplay between the ASEAN-China role location process and the governance practice of actors.

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<sup>3</sup> Shicum Wu and Huaifeng Ren, “More Than a Declaration: A Commentary on the Background and the Significance of the Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea,” *Chinese Journal of International Law* 2, no. 1 (2003): 311–320; “Managing Security in the South China Sea: From DOC to COC,” *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, accessed December 17, 2016, <https://kyotoreview.org/issue-15/managing-security-in-the-south-china-sea-from-doc-to-coc/>; Pham Lan Dung and Tran Huu Duy Minh, “Some Legal Aspects of the Current Developments in the South China Sea,” in *Examining the South China Sea Disputes*, Papers from the Fifth Annual CSIS South China Sea Conference (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2015), 61–70.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Yahuda, “China’s New Assertiveness in the South China Sea,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 81 (May 2013): 452, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2012.748964>.

<sup>5</sup> Oriana Skylar Mastro, “The Sansha Garrison: China’s Deliberate Escalation in the South China Sea,” *East and South China Seas Bulletin* 5 (2012): 1–6; Lidya Christin Sinaga, “China’s Assertive Foreign Policy in South China Sea Under Xi Jinping: Its Impact on United States and Australian Foreign Policy,” *Journal of ASEAN Studies* 3, no. 2 (2016): 133–149.

<sup>6</sup> Robert S. Ross, “The Problem With the Pivot: Obama’s New Asia Policy Is Unnecessary and Counterproductive,” *Foreign Affairs* 91, no. 6 (November 1, 2012): 70–82; Ralf Emmers, “The US Rebalancing Strategy: Impact on the South China Sea,” *The South China Sea and Australia’s Regional Security Environment, National Security College Occasional Paper* 5 (2013): 41–44.

China's policy in the South China Sea was contingent on the state of consensus with ASEAN regarding regional governance and the shift in their role bargaining process, as summarized in Table 6.1.

*Table 6.1. Security Dynamics of the ASEAN-China relations in the case of the Code of Conduct*

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Regional Security Dynamics</b>	<b>Outcome (China's Response)</b>
<b>2002-2010</b>	Successful role bargaining (role agreement); governance practices are consistent with the achieved consensus	Sustained cooperation
<b>2011-2012</b>	Deviation of ASEAN's practice from the governance consensus and the intersubjective role structure.	China's assertive response, issues of contention re-activated; cooperative security order undermined;
<b>2013-2016</b>	Positive shift in the role bargaining process; ASEAN applies inclusive approach towards China; governance practices are consistent with the new consensus	Sustained ASEAN-China cooperation; (China resorts to assertiveness, but not against ASEAN); cooperative security order maintained, despite some negative externalities.

*Source: Own Account*

This chapter is structured as follows. In the first section I demonstrate how the positive shift in ASEAN-China role location allowed parties to overcome the existing contentions in SCS governance and conclude the DOC agreement as well as how their governance practices sustained relative peace. In the second section I show how the deviation of ASEAN's governance practice from the intersubjective role structure in 2011/12 led to the escalation of the tensions at sea and the termination of COC talks with China. Positive turn in the nature of ASEAN-China role relationship enabled progress in COC dialogue after 2013, as section three demonstrates. Furthermore, actors' shift towards a more inclusive governance approach resulted in the positive cooperation outcomes during 2015-2016. Finally, this chapter will demonstrate that the impact of other factors (such as the US involvement or escalation of bilateral disputes) was only significant when they penetrated ASEAN-China interaction. Otherwise, they constituted separate security patterns with no impact on the nature of regional order.

## **6.1. The First ASEAN-China Governance Consensus on the South China Sea**

In this section I argue that peace in the South China Sea between 2002 and 2010 resulted from the positive co-impact between the ASEAN-China role location process and their governance practice. The establishment of role agreement in 2002 allowed actors to overcome the existing contentions and to establish consensus over governing the SCS through the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties. To maintain recognition for their roles institutionalized in the DOC ASEAN and China had to comply with its principles. As a result, despite the actual implementation of DOC, the actors restrained from confrontation and maintained a cooperative security environment in the region.

### **6.1.1. Initial Contentions over the South China Sea and the Deadlock of Negotiations**

ASEAN and China have been exploring the idea of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea since 1990. By 1999 tensions were building up in the region not only between ASEAN and China but also between ASEAN claimant states themselves, particularly between the Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia.<sup>7</sup> Yet, while the need for regional governance became more and more pressing, neither ASEAN nor China had an interest in official multilateral discussions. The major issue of contention that prevented the conclusion of any agreement at that time was the contention over the substance of regional governance. As I discussed in Chapter 2, bargaining over this issue evolves over how well actors' role conceptions are reflected in the system of regional rules and regulations and to what extent actors can define their content. I argued in Chapter 4 that before 2002 ASEAN and China role bargaining was shaped mainly by economic issues and developed towards complementarity. However, the roles of actors and their expectations for each other in the dimension of regional security promotion remained uncertain, which prevented the easy resolution of contentions over the substance of SCS governance.

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Richardson, "On Eve of Annual Talks, ASEAN Members Are Split Over Spratlys Dispute," *International Herald Tribune*, sec. News, 6, July 23, 1999,.

ASEAN as an organization aspiring for leadership in regional security-building insisted on the fast conclusion of the legally-binding document akin of a treaty ‘open for accession’ to outside actors but centered on ASEAN.<sup>8</sup> Although the idea of regional leadership was not questioned within ASEAN, the nature of the COC and the level of China’s engagement in the drafting of the document were debated. Some of the ASEAN member states (Malaysia and Vietnam) preferred a less sophisticated and non-legalistic document.<sup>9</sup> Malaysia also insisted that the document should be reduced only to the disputed areas (namely the Spratleys), thus excluding its coastal waters,<sup>10</sup> while Vietnam preferred explicit reference to the Paracels.<sup>11</sup> On China’s engagement, Malaysia objected the idea endorsed by the Philippines to engage China in COC negotiations at the earliest stage to ensure fast conclusion of the agreement.<sup>12</sup> Other members also preferred to have the ASEAN draft first. Internal differences within ASEAN regarding the nature of the Code and the level of China’s contribution to it prevented the easy resolution of the contention.

China’s role conception was also not fully specified at that time and China had concerns over the possible development of ASEAN regional security role. China believed that ASEAN was exercising ‘a straightforward pressure’ with regard to SCS to constrain China’s behavior by supporting the claimant states against China and using its institutional forums to impose behavioral constraints and to drag the external powers into the issue.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, PRC preferred the Code of Conduct ‘to serve only as a guideline and not be a legal document’ and to be developed ‘in a gradual manner and with all seriousness and prudence.’<sup>14</sup> For instance, China rejected the idea of specific reference to particular islands or areas at sea and insisted on ‘more flexible’ wording of the document.

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<sup>8</sup> Jacob Paul, “Asean Drafts Code of Conduct on South China Sea,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, July 21, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> “Joint Investment Roadshows Get Assent from All,” *New Straits Times*, July 25, 1999, sec. National.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Brady, “Disputed Archipelago Still Fuelling Tension; Spratleys Islands,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 22, 1999, sec. International news.

<sup>11</sup> Jonathan Manthorpe, “South China Sea Dispute Simmers: China Is Unlikely to Sign an Asean Agreement to Avoid Conflict over Rival Territorial Claims in the Region,” *The Vancouver Sun*, February 19, 2000, sec. Business.

<sup>12</sup> Richardson, “On Eve of Annual Talks, ASEAN Members Are Split Over Spratlys Dispute.”

<sup>13</sup> Li Mingjiang, “Security in the South China Sea : China’s Balancing Act and New Regional Dynamics,” *RSIS Working Papers*, no. 149 (2008): 8.

<sup>14</sup> Jacob Paul, “Manila’s ‘Showpiece’ Initiatives Meet with Resistance,” *The Straits Times*, November 26, 1999, sec. South-East Asia.

This allowed China to keep bilateral disputes outside of the multilateral governance framework<sup>15</sup> and also left room for China's further role specification. Accordingly, China wished the COC draft to reflect its own vision of governance and thus refused to accept the document prepared by ASEAN, insisting instead on the discussion of its own draft.<sup>16</sup>

Role uncertainty and the contention over the substance of COC within ASEAN and between ASEAN and China led the discussion of the Code of Conduct into a 'continued deadlock'<sup>17</sup> making the progress 'painfully slow.'<sup>18</sup> The breakthrough became possible only after the shift in ASEAN-China role location processes towards the establishment of the role agreement. As I argue in the next sub-section, the role agreement turned the existing contention over SCS governance into a non-issue. It not only allowed actors to agree on the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in 2002, but also helped to sustain a cooperative security trend for the next decade.

### **6.1.2. ASEAN-China Role Agreement and SCS Governance**

The breakthrough in the South China talks occurred in 2002, when ASEAN and China institutionalized the relationship of role agreement, when ASEAN recognized China's role as a contributor to the regional security order, while China recognized ASEAN's centrality and leadership in the region. The shift towards role agreement forced ASEAN and China to 'leave their disagreements behind'<sup>19</sup> for the sake of the benefits brought about by the new strategic partnership. Although the governance contentions over SCS were not fully resolved, role agreement effectively turned the exiting contentions into a non-issue and shifted the ASEAN-China security pattern in this issue toward cooperation. As a result, ASEAN and China were able to agree on the DOC (instead of

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<sup>15</sup> Lynne O'Donnell, "ASEAN Oil on Troubled Waters," *The Weekend Australian*, July 21, 2001, sec. World.

<sup>16</sup> Alex Decanay, "ASEAN Fails to Reach Spratlys Accord China Wants More Time to Consider Agreeing to Code of Conduct in Disputed Area," *The Nikkei Weekly (Japan)*, December 6, 1999, sec. Asia-Pacific.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Richardson, "Beijing Tries to Cool Spratlys Dispute; China Tells Southeast Asia It Will 'Never Seek Hegemony' Over Islands," *The International Herald Tribune*, November 29, 1999, sec. News.

<sup>18</sup> Brendan Pereira, "Spratlys Conduct Code Worries Hanoi; Vietnam Does Not Want a Non-Binding Declaration on the Conduct of Claimants Proposed by KL to Be an End in Itself," *The Straits Times*, July 31, 2002, sec. East and Southeast Asia.

<sup>19</sup> Kavi Chongkittavorn, "Can ASEAN Find Balance among Major Powers?," *The Korea Herald*, November 12, 2002, sec. The Nation Asia News Network.

the initially planned Code of Conduct) as an ‘interim accord’ pending the conclusion of the legally binding agreement.<sup>20</sup>

The ASEAN-China role agreement was institutionalized at Phnom Penh Summit in Cambodia in 2002, where the actors signed three strategic documents that consolidated the new nature of their partnership: Agreement on Economic Cooperation (with intention to conclude FTA in 10 years), Joint Declaration on Non-Traditional Security and Joint Declaration on Fighting Terrorism. The talks on the COC and the preparation of the DOC were integrated into this process. It was expected that the COC would be signed in Phnom Pen together with the other agreements. Therefore, both ASEAN and China were interested in finding a compromise and both adopted a more inclusive approach to the South China Sea governance prior to the historical summit in Cambodia. Instead of reaffirming their sovereignty claims (which was the usual practice before 2002), both ASEAN and China started to see South China Sea through the prism of their role agreement.

In this context, the organization believed that ‘removing uncertainty over the South China Sea’ was vital for increasing ASEAN economic competitiveness and connectivity in the age of globalization.<sup>21</sup> For ASEAN that lost much of its regional relevance after the 1997-1999 Asian financial crisis ensuring secure economic recovery was seen as a number one priority, not only economically but also politically. As I argued in chapter 4, generating regional ‘economic dynamism’ was seen by the organization as a tool to regain recognition for its regional roles. For the same reason, ASEAN needed to consolidate the economic partnership with China, which would be unlikely if disagreements over the South China Sea proliferate. Likewise, China wanted ‘no conflict to flare up’ in the South China Sea, so it could remain focused on its economic development and explore the benefits of its newly gained WTO membership<sup>22</sup> and ASEAN-China FTA. Willingness to sign the

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<sup>20</sup> Ralf Emmers, “Keeping Waters Calm in South China Sea,” *The Straits Times*, November 21, 2002, sec. Commentary.

<sup>21</sup> Hardev Kaur, Saiful Azhar Abdullah, and Roziana Hamsawi, “United Stand against Terror,” *New Straits Times*, November 5, 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Chongkittavorn, “Can ASEAN Find Balance among Major Powers?”

COC with ASEAN also supported China's role claim of a non-hegemonic power pursuing peaceful rise.

Redefinition of the South China Sea issue in line with the new role claims made possible important concessions that happened only weeks away from the landmark Phnom Penh summit, so that the DOC could be signed together with the other strategic documents. Even though the final text of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties resembled closely the Chinese vision of the sea governance, the document still represented a governance consensus that reflected the role conceptions of both ASEAN and China.

In line with China's request ASEAN excluded geographic references from the text, removed the phrase 'erection of new structures' and included the words 'on the basis of consensus' to the paragraph on the Code of Conduct negotiations.<sup>23</sup> At the same time the wording of the Declaration was ambiguous enough for ASEAN to raise specific issues of concern in the further discussions. For instance, non-specified geographic scope allowed ASEAN to consider Paracels and Spratleys as 'disputed islands'.<sup>24</sup> It was also ASEAN that proposed to negotiate a political declaration instead of the legally binding code (the proposition came from Malaysia in July 2002)<sup>25</sup> in order to overcome the problem of geographic ambiguity. According to ASEAN Secretary General Rodolfo Severino 'it was questionable whether the countries could be party to a legally-binding treaty such as 'code of conduct', without being precise as to the area that it covers.'<sup>26</sup> A political declaration instead of a treaty allowed overcoming this technical problem.

On its side China made a major compromise by accepting the multilateral approach to the South China Sea governance in addition to the bilateral track that it previously advocated.<sup>27</sup> By

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<sup>23</sup> Hardev Kaur, Saiful Azhar Abdullah, and Roziana Hamsawi, "Consensus Reached on South China Sea," *New Straits Times*, November 3, 2002, sec. ASEAN.

<sup>24</sup> Emmers, "Keeping Waters Calm in South China Sea."

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Rodolfo C. Severino, "ASEAN and the South China Sea," *Security Challenges* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2010): 45.

<sup>27</sup> Tran Truong Thuy, "Recent Developments in the South China Sea: Unconstrained Waves of Tensions" (First Manila Conference on the South China Sea: Toward a Region of Peace, Cooperation, and Progress, Manila, Philippines, 2011), 43.

signing the Declaration China officially recognized ASEAN's role as a collective actor and as a party in the issue with whom China committed to negotiate the Code of Conduct as a permanent legally binding governance framework. Thus, ASEAN expectations for the binding Code of Conduct were not completely refuted.

Hence, even though the contention over the substance of regional governance was not fully resolved, the shift towards role agreement offered supportive environment for actors to agree on a compromise document that allowed them to deactivate it. Although DOC was a watered down version of the originally planned Code, it still represented an 'agreement of understanding' with regard to appropriate governance practice and thus was positively evaluated by both sides. The Chinese side called it 'an important advancement' of ASEAN-China relations.<sup>28</sup> ASEAN leaders were moderate in their remarks, yet they also confirmed the added value of the Declaration. The Philippines called it a 'landmark agreement' that would ensure security and the 'freedom of navigation'.<sup>29</sup> Malaysia admitted that 'the words used [in the document] may appear to be slightly more loose than the original proposal, but this is an agreement that is very assuring for all the countries - it will help us manage the situation in the South China Sea.'<sup>30</sup> Hence, the assumption that positive shift in role location helps to overcome the contentions at the level of governance can be confirmed.

However, the question still remains as to how the cooperative security trend established by the DOC was sustained after 2002. The Declaration itself was not equipped to sustain peace in the region. It remained essentially a political statement and none of the activities that it identified for conflict prevention were actually implemented. It was not until 2005 that ASEAN and China had their first meeting to discuss the implementation of the DOC and it took them another six years to agree on the

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<sup>28</sup> "Former Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji Attends the 6th China-ASEAN Summit Held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 4 November 2002," *Xinhua News Agency*, accessed January 22, 2018, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-10/23/content\\_5239322.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-10/23/content_5239322.htm).

<sup>29</sup> "Landmark Agreement on South China Sea," *Courier Mail*, November 5, 2002.

<sup>30</sup> Rick Sine, Kevin Doyle, and David Kihara, "Asia's Top Ministers Finish 2002 Summits," *The Cambodia Daily*, November 6, 2002, accessed January 23, 2017, <https://www.cambodiadaily.com/archives/asias-top-ministers-finish-2002-summits-35710/>.

Guidelines for implementing the Declaration.<sup>31</sup> Despite these obvious failures peace in the South China Sea was kept for almost a decade until the escalations in 2011/12.

In what follows I argue that the cooperative security pattern in the South China Sea was sustained because actors were interested to maintain each other's acceptance for their role claims. The fact that the DOC reflected these role conceptions discouraged violations that could have undermined the successful outcomes of the role location process. Hence, actors' governance practices stayed in line with the DOC consensus, even though none of the actual conflict prevention mechanisms were implemented.

### **6.1.3. DOC and Sustained Cooperative Security Trend**

Between 2002 and 2012 neither ASEAN nor China significantly deviated in their SCS policies from the governance principles established in the DOC. Here I argue that the reason for actors' compliance with the DOC was not the Declaration as such or its normative impact (as many scholars have argued), but the fact that its violation could have led to the withdrawal of role recognition. China needed to follow DOC in order to provide further evidence for its peaceful rise, while ASEAN needed to maintain neutrality as this was a precondition for accepting its regional role as a collective actor.

DOC specified three principals of appropriate role enactment. The first principle provided for the bilateral format of settling sovereignty disputes by peaceful means between sovereign states directly concerned (Paragraph 4). It limited acceptable governance practice to peaceful means (however defined) for both actors, but granted no role for ASEAN in dispute resolution. The second principle provided that consensus between ASEAN and China should be the main basis for decision-making in the issues of confidence-building, joint cooperation projects and negotiations of the Code of Conduct (Paragraph 5,6,10). Here ASEAN's collective role was accepted within the outlined areas, but consensus with China was required first. The third principle called on the outside actors to respect the provisions of the Declaration (Paragraph 9). This essentially meant that outsiders were not

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<sup>31</sup> Carlyle A. Thayer, "ASEAN, China and the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea," *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2013): 77, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sais.2013.0022>.

welcome to intervene into the South China Sea governance process. The United States who claimed involvement in the issue based on their concern over the freedom navigation was the main actor in point.

Between 2002 and 2011 the governance practices of ASEAN and China stayed in line with these principles. ASEAN maintained its role as neutral facilitator. It refrained from engaging in or even commenting on the territorial disputes between its members and China. For instance, the organization did not support Vietnam, when it was threatened by China for its offshore explorations in the disputed waters.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, ASEAN did not intervene in 2009 when bilateral disputes flared up after the claimant states made submissions to the UN Commission on Continental Shelf (see the discussion in the on this in the section 6.2.1). The organization's neutrality was directly linked to the role agreement with Beijing. According to an ASEAN diplomat China 'didn't want [SCS disputes] discussed [at ASEAN level] and it wasn't,'<sup>33</sup> which was in line with the DOC. Even though privately worries about the potential conflict existed within ASEAN members, the disputes were not on the top of ASEAN agenda.<sup>34</sup> By complying with the DOC consensus the organization secured further acceptance from China for its involvement in the SCS and for its role as collective actor. Beijing continued to grant support for ASEAN in the SCS dispute as 'a valuable facilitator to promote mutual trust among the Parties.'<sup>35</sup> At the same time, it also became more sensitive to address ASEAN as a collective regional security actor, because ASEAN insisted that the DOC was an 'agreement of understanding' between China and ASEAN as a grouping. Therefore, China 'increasingly paid more attention to non-claimants' not to set a grouping as a whole against itself.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Philip Browning, "Crying Wolf," *The International Herald Tribune*, June 3, 2009, sec. Opinion.

<sup>33</sup> Greg Torode, "A Diplomatic Victory for China," *South China Morning Post*, October 31, 2009, sec. News.

<sup>34</sup> Torode, "China Is Searching for New Asean Strategies," *The Nation (Thailand)*, October 19, 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Xue Hanqin: China-ASEAN Cooperation: A Model of Good Neighborliness and Friendly

Cooperation, Singapore, 19 November 2009, quoted in Rodolfo C. Severino, "ASEAN and the South China Sea," *Security Challenges* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2010): 46.

<sup>36</sup> "China Is Searching for New Asean Strategies."

China also refrained from assertive behavior as it had no incentive to undermine its role of a peaceful regional power on which it based its successful cooperation with ASEAN. The organizations ‘look[ed] to China to take the lead in promoting good neighborly relations and regional cooperation by handling sensitive issues with surrounding countries in a matter that is guided by the spirit of equality, respect, consultation and mutual benefit.’<sup>37</sup> In this regard, any conflict in the region including the South China Sea would have undermined China’s role claim. Therefore, Beijing became proactive in turning the South China Sea into a ‘sea of peace’ or ‘sea of friendship’. Although with some difficulties, but it managed to persuade the Philippines in 2004 and then Vietnam in 2005 to participate in joint seismic studies in the disputed waters of the South China Sea.<sup>38</sup> In October 2008 Beijing also banned its fishing fleet from operating in waters claimed by neighboring countries.<sup>39</sup> These efforts supported China’s broader ‘charm offensive’ aimed at ASEAN. Beijing needed to make sure that its rising power would not ‘ignite new tensions or stir up old fears’ in the region.<sup>40</sup> As China remained ‘quite worried’<sup>41</sup> about the perceptions it raised in ASEAN, its South China Sea policy aimed at cooperation.

Self-restraint, exercised by China, did not alleviate entirely the concerns of the neighbors, but it did help Beijing to secure acceptance for its role claim from ASEAN. In 2006 Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi admitted that ‘perceiving China as a threat was wrong.’<sup>42</sup> Likewise, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo of the Philippines (the country with whom China had the largest number of SCS incidents) acknowledged that ‘engagement with China has been good for the Philippines and it has been good for Asean.’<sup>43</sup> In May 2009 the Chinese Ambassador to ASEAN

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<sup>37</sup> Carlos H. Conde, “Trade Deal Helps Bring China Close to Asean; Beijing Also Picks up Support for Talks with North Korea,” *International Herald Tribune*, January 15, 2007, sec. News.

<sup>38</sup> Zhai Kun and Wendy Wang, “China, Asean Must Boost Trust,” *The Straits Times*, September 7, 2009, sec. Review-Others.

<sup>39</sup> Michael Richardson, “Good Time to Calm Troubled Waters,” *The Straits Times*, November 18, 2008, sec. Review-Other.

<sup>40</sup> “China Searches for a New Asean Paradigm,” *The Nation (Thailand)*, June 23, 2008.

<sup>41</sup> “China Searches for a New Asean Paradigm.”

<sup>42</sup> Donald Greenlees, “Asean Hails the Benefits of Friendship with China,” *The International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 2006, sec. News.

<sup>43</sup> Greenlees, “Asean Hails.”

Xue Hanqin confirmed this perception after completing a round of visits to eight ASEAN countries. She noted ‘a family-like atmosphere’ and the absence of any anxiety about China in the countries she visited.<sup>44</sup> As such solid governance practice of both actors contributed to the consolidation of roles and cooperative regional security environment in line with the theoretical prediction.

To sum up, the shift to a cooperative security pattern in the South China Sea was related to the establishment of the ASEAN-China role agreement. It helped actors to smooth the contentions over SCS governance caused by role uncertainty and to agree on the DOC as a compromise governance document. Solid governance practices sustained the cooperative security trend during 2002-2011. Actors’ compliance with the DOC resulted from the need to maintain each other’s recognition for their role claims. In the next section I argue that this positive development was interrupted, when ASEAN’s governance practice deviated from the DOC consensus and from the accepted role relationship.

## **6.2. Deviation in ASEAN’s Approach and China’s Assertiveness, 2011/12**

A decade of relative stability and peace in the South China Sea was interrupted by major escalation at sea between China and Vietnam in 2011<sup>45</sup> and between China and the Philippines in 2012.<sup>46</sup> At the same time China also terminated the COC dialogue with ASEAN after almost a decade of discussions. In this section, I argue that the conflict escalation of 2011/12 happened because of the deviation of ASEAN’s approach from the DOC consensus and accepted role. This deviation resulted from the actions of Vietnam and the Philippines, which believed that ASEAN’s policy in the case of the SCS should be modified in order for the organization to successfully perform the role of the regional leader

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<sup>44</sup> Sim Chi Yin, “Asean Is like Family, Says Chinese Ambassador; Far from Sensing Anxiety among the Grouping’s Members, the Asean Envoy Felt Kinship during Eight-Nation Tour.” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, May 6, 2009.

<sup>45</sup> In two incidents, Chinese vessels harassed Vietnamese oil exploration ships within the Vietnamese EEZ in May and June 2011. In response, Vietnam announced live-fire naval exercises off its coast. In March 2011, Chinese ships also chased away a Philippine seismic survey ship near the Spratly Islands.

<sup>46</sup> A two months stand-off occurred between Chinese and Philippine vessels at Scarborough Shoal. Negotiations between the two sides, with the involvement of the US, ended with what the US and the Philippines believed to be a commitment of withdrawal, which the Chinese side denied having agreed. However, most of the Chinese and Philippine vessels still withdrew because of the onset of the typhoon season. Three Chinese government ships remained at the Shoal after the incident.

and security promoter. Namely, they succeeded in re-defining ASEAN's role as regional security promoter to cover bilateral disputes with China and actively used the framework of the organization to encourage the involvement of the United States into bilateral disputes. Both developments went counter to the DOC consensus. This not only caused internal split within ASEAN (as many scholars have rightly noted), but more importantly undermined ASEAN-China role agreement. In order to force ASEAN back on track China resorted to assertive actions. The role agreement between actors was undermined and so was the cooperative regional security environment.

### **6.2.1. Rising Tensions in the South China Sea Prior to the 2011-2012 Escalation**

Several alternative explanations of the escalation of the South China Sea conflict in 2011-2012 might be considered. Although each added to the nature of regional security environment, I argue that they themselves did not cause shifts in the ASEAN-China security pattern. Firstly, the sovereignty claims that were effectively buried during the so-called 'golden decade' of ASEAN-China cooperation got activated in May 2009 when several ASEAN claimant states made submissions to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UNCLCS) with the intention to expand their sovereign jurisdiction over the continental shelf in the southern and central parts of the South China Sea. This move could be seen as provocative given that most of the South China Sea is disputed. However, countries simply addressed the international deadline (May 13, 2009) established for the members of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 'to make submissions or to risk losing their rights.'<sup>47</sup> As a result, destabilizing practices returned to the region. China announced in July 2009 that it would send more patrol ships to the disputed islands. The Philippines conveyed the intention to improve military infrastructure on the islands within their claimed waters.<sup>48</sup> In response to the UNCLCS submissions Beijing issued its famous nine-dash-line map showing China's claims over almost the entire South China Sea area.<sup>49</sup> These actions were against the spirit of

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<sup>47</sup> Sam Bateman and Clive Schofield, "Tensions Rising over Maritime Claims," *The Straits Times*, July 14, 2009, sec. Review.

<sup>48</sup> Bateman and Schofield, "Tensions Rising."

<sup>49</sup> Robert Beckman, "Vexing Claims May Help Clarify Issues," *The Straits Times*, August 18, 2010, sec. Review.

the DOC, which explicitly prescribed to refrain from any actions that may complicate or escalate the disputes (Paragraph 5).

However, the revival of sovereignty claims did not interrupt the cooperative security environment between ASEAN and China at that time because both actors remained committed to the accepted role claims. The governance practice of actors remained within the bilateral track (submission of counterclaims, exchange of diplomatic responses, and exchange of *Note Verbale* within the UN) and thus met the conditions of appropriateness under DOC.<sup>50</sup> ASEAN's collective response stayed within the scope of its role as neutral facilitator. Instead of engaging in the disputes the organization focused on confidence-building and enforcement of regional governance. For example, ASEAN succeeded in gaining Chinese agreement for the Guidelines for the Implementation of the DOC in 2011 and many observers 'expected a period of relative calm in the South China Sea' to follow.<sup>51</sup>

Another reason for regional tension to escalate in 2009 were the two incidents in the South China Sea between Chinese vessels and US Navy ships, which caused a heated diplomatic exchange between Beijing and Washington.<sup>52</sup> In the following year (2010) the US announced its 'pivot to Asia', which among other things signaled its intention to become a mediator in the South China Sea governance process. This move predictably caused sharp criticism from China, which led many scholars to assume that Chinese assertive behavior during 2011-2012 was a response to America's 'pivot'.<sup>53</sup> The US involvement was indeed perceived by China as aiming against its rising influence in Asia.<sup>54</sup> However, in 2011-2012 no single incident in SCS occurred between China and the United States. At the 2011 EAS Summit in Bali Premier Wen 'reacted calmly when U.S. President Obama

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<sup>50</sup> Beckman, "Vexing Claims."

<sup>51</sup> Minjiang Li, "China Debates the South China Sea Dispute," 54.

<sup>52</sup> On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 US ocean surveillance ship *Impeccable* clashed with a Chinese patrol ship in the waters of Hainan island. On June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Chinese submarine ran into a sonar array of the USS John McCain U.S. Navy destroyer close to the Philippine coast.

<sup>53</sup> Ross, "The Problem With the Pivot: Obama's New Asia Policy Is Unnecessary and Counterproductive"; Emmers, "The US Rebalancing Strategy."

<sup>54</sup> Mingjiang Li, "China Debates the South China Sea Dispute," 49–50.

and other leaders raised maritime security concerns including the South China Sea<sup>55</sup> and confirmed China's commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes. Instead, the major confrontation in 2011/12 developed between China, the Philippines and Vietnam on the one hand (incidents at sea), and between ASEAN and China on the other hand (termination of COC dialogue).

Thirdly, the escalations of 2011-2012 were at least partially attributed to the rise of popular nationalism and the expansion of China's navy and maritime law enforcement agencies.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, South China Sea developments fueled the nationalist sentiment in China. However, the official handling of the conflict still reflected Beijing's preference for the policy of self-restraint. The Chinese MFA even had to defend its moderate stance against the hardline nationalist calls voiced through the Chinese media.<sup>57</sup> Chinese diplomats denied that China's response was weak and defended moderate policy approach since 'no one wants military conflict in the region.'<sup>58</sup> Likewise, Chinese navy and law enforcement agencies that are often seen as favoring assertive actions have also exercised restraint. For example, the incident between Chinese submarine and US Navy ship John McCain on June 11, 2009 was recognized by both sides as an accident and not harassment.<sup>59</sup> In March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2011 two Chinese patrol vessels left the disputed waters claimed by China after giving a warning to the Philippine survey ship and did not return to harass the ship again.<sup>60</sup> These examples prove that assertiveness is not necessarily an immediate policy choice for China, even though its capabilities indeed grew within the last decade.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>56</sup> Thomas J. Christensen, "The Advantages of an Assertive China," *Foreign Affairs*, February 21, 2011, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/east-asia/2011-02-21/advantages-assertive-china>; Mastro, "The Sansha Garrison"; Felix K. Chang, "China's Naval Rise and the South China Sea: An Operational Assessment," *Orbis* 56 (January 1, 2012): 19–38, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2011.10.002>; Yahuda, "China's New Assertiveness in the South China Sea."

<sup>57</sup> Ian Storey, Cheng-Yi Lin, and Li Mingjiang, eds., "China Debates the South China Sea Dispute," in *The South China Sea Dispute: Navigating Diplomatic and Strategic Tensions* (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2016), 53.

<sup>58</sup> Zhang Jiuheng, former Director General of the Department of Asian Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China quoted in Li Mingjiang, eds., "China Debates the South China Sea Dispute," 53.

<sup>59</sup> "USS John McCain 'Inadvertent Encounter' with Chinese Submarine," Incidents Timeline - Maritime Awareness Project, accessed June 29, 2017, <http://maritimeawarenessproject.org/gallery/incident-timeline/>.

<sup>60</sup> Mingjiang Li, "China Debates the South China Sea Dispute," 57.

Although the revival of sovereignty claims, the US ‘pivot to Asia’ and development of Chinese military capabilities contributed to the growing concerns about the possibility of conflict in the South China Sea, yet none of them seemed to be able to account for the 2011-2012 escalations. As I argue below, confrontation in 2011/2 resulted from the changes in ASEAN’s governance approach. ASEAN’s deviation from the accepted governance consensus and the accepted role provoked China’s assertive behavior. Contrary to what the Chinese moderate foreign policy prescribed, Beijing engaged in maritime clashes with the Philippines and Vietnam and terminated COC discussions with ASEAN. As a result, the cooperative nature of regional security was undermined.

### **6.2.2. Changes in ASEAN’s Governance Practice and Reactivation of Contentions**

Under the DOC China provided acceptance for ASEAN’s participation in South China Sea governance process based on the organization’s role as a neutral facilitator in the dispute. However, in 2011/12 Vietnam and the Philippines, the two countries with whom China has the longest history of maritime clashes, acting on behalf of ASEAN changed the governance practice of the organization advocating for its involvement in bilateral disputes and greater reliance on the US in enforcing regional security. They also succeeded in consolidating this shift as a new ASEAN role conception at July 2012 ASEAN summit. Beijing’s confrontational turn represented a response to this deviation. China exercised assertive behavior at sea exclusively against the Philippines and Vietnam. To signal its rejection of ASEAN’s role modification it withdrew itself from the COC talks. As a result, role agreement was undermined and the regional security environment turned confrontational.

The changes in ASEAN’s governance approach started when Vietnam assumed the role of the chair of ASEAN (2010) and the Philippines became a country coordinator for ASEAN-US dialogue (2009-2012). Both states used their institutional positions within ASEAN to gather greater international support for their bilateral sovereignty disputes with China. On the one hand, they expected to strengthen their stance by using the collective leverage of ASEAN against China. On the other hand, they hoped to secure stronger support and more active engagement of the United States

in the disputes using the ASEAN-US partnership. Yet, what they perceived as more effective role enactment for ASEAN, was a deviation from the DOC consensus established with China.

Vietnam started to test grounds for raising SCS issue internationally already in November 2009 by organizing a conference in Hanoi, where 150 scholars and officials from across Asia came to discuss disputes in the South China Sea. According to the scholars attending the workshop, the position of Vietnam was ‘to solve the disputes peacefully, but let international community raise the issue.’<sup>61</sup> At the meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao in September 2011, President of the Philippines Benigno Aquino referred to South China Sea as ‘a regional problem’, whose solution ‘should involve the Association of the South East Asian Nations and possibly the US.’<sup>62</sup> In a similar fashion Philippine officials urged ASEAN in 2012 to form ‘a diplomatic offensive’ against China by ‘calling on ASEAN to actively monitor and intervene in the disputes based on the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea’ and suggesting that ‘if incidents between the Philippines and China or any other claimant in the South China Sea occur, they must be reported to ASEAN, the UN, or the US.’<sup>63</sup> The biggest accomplishment in this regard was to have SCS discussion at July 2010 ASEAN Regional Forum. Vietnam was in the position to shape the agenda of this event as the chair and the host of the ARF. In this regard, Hilary Clinton’s famous speech in Hanoi, where she identified freedom of navigation in the SCS as the America’s ‘national interest’ and suggested that the US might be engaged as mediator in conflict management, was reported as ‘a significant victory for Vietnamese.’<sup>64</sup>

The Philippines and Vietnam also succeeded in making the South China Sea a part of ASEAN-US dialogue relations. In September 2010 the countries pushed for the SCS issue at US-ASEAN Leaders Meeting in Washington. Speaking at the meeting President Benigno Aquino hinted on the

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<sup>61</sup> Edward Wong, “Vietnam, Taking on China, Seeks Allies in Island Clash,” *The International Herald Tribune*, February 5, 2010, sec. News.

<sup>62</sup> Barbara Dae Dacanay, “China and Philippines Agree to Peace over South China Sea,” *Gulf News*, September 2, 2011.

<sup>63</sup> Barbara Dae Dacanay, “ASEAN Urged to Solve Issue of South China Sea,” *Gulf News*, April 17, 2012.

<sup>64</sup> Mark Landler, “Offering to Aid Talks, U.S. Challenges China on Disputed Islands,” *The New York Times*, July 23, 2010, accessed July 30, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/24/world/asia/24diplo.html>.

importance of the US involvement in bilateral disputes. When speaking about ‘a growing concern’ over competing territorial claims in the South China Sea, he noted that the United States ‘has been our [ASEAN’s] staunchest partner in security cooperation in the region,’<sup>65</sup> which suggested the preference for the US involvement in the issue of territorial claims. The meeting also produced a joint statement with reference to the situation in SCS highlighting ‘the importance of regional peace and stability, maritime security, unimpeded commerce, and freedom of navigation...and the peaceful settlement of disputes.’<sup>66</sup>

The internationalization policy initiated by Vietnam and the Philippines explains why Chinese assertive actions at sea targeted only these two countries. The database of the Center for a New American Security reported 8 incidents with Vietnam and 7 with Philippines in 2011/12, while no incidents involved other claimants.<sup>67</sup> According to Wang Hanling, a maritime law expert from the Chinese Academy of Science, Beijing ‘was forced to make a strong reaction’ amid aggressive moves by its neighbors to drag Washington in the disputes.<sup>68</sup> However, China also turned against ASEAN as a whole, since Vietnam and the Philippines used its institutional framework, which undermined ASEAN’s role in the eyes of China. The early warning came from China already at 2010 ARF meeting, where the US firstly claimed its renewed interest in the SCS conflict. The speech of Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi that followed Clinton’s famous remarks about the ‘US national interest’ in the dispute seemed to address ASEAN more than the US. Chinese FM reminded that the South China Sea was ‘a part of regional countries’ consensus that everybody admitted’ and that non-

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<sup>65</sup> Ernest Z. Bower, “2nd U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Meeting: Elevating the Partnership to a Strategic Level,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, September 28, 2010, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/2nd-us-asean-leaders-meeting-elevating-partnership-strategic-level>.

<sup>66</sup> “Joint Statement of the 2nd U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Meeting,” The White House - President Barack Obama, September 24, 2010, accessed January 25, 2017, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2010/09/24/joint-statement-2nd-us-asean-leaders-meeting>.

<sup>67</sup> “Security in the East and South China Sea Timeline: 1955-present,” Center for a New American Security, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://www.cnas.org/flashpoints/timeline>.

<sup>68</sup> Greg Torode, “Stalemate in the South China Sea; Analysts Fear That Regional Stability Is at Stake in a Stand-off between China and the Philippines,” *South China Morning Post*, May 11, 2012, sec. News.

claimant ASEAN members confirmed they did not take sides on the issue.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, he argued that any attempt to break this consensus by internationalization would ‘only make matters worse and the resolution [of the disputes] more difficult.’<sup>70</sup>

The turning point in ASEAN-China interaction occurred in July 2012, when China withdrew from the COC talks following ASEAN summit, which failed issuing a joint communiqué due to disagreements over SCS. International observers argued that China’s reaction resulted from the failure of ASEAN’s collective actorness, which weakened the organization’s position in the region<sup>71</sup> and encouraged China ‘to take advantage.’<sup>72</sup> However, I argue that China’s withdrawal from COC talks was a response to ASEAN’s deviation from its role inscribed in the DOC, which 2012 ASEAN summit revealed. This is why, even though the role shift was not eventually consolidated through the summit communiqué (due to Cambodia’s veto), China still withdrew itself from the COC talks the next day after the summit to signal its rejection of changing ASEAN’s role.

International observers largely attributed the failure of ASEAN to issue a joint communiqué at 2012 summit to Cambodia, who vetoed the final document reportedly acting under pressure from China.<sup>73</sup> In contrast, Cambodian Foreign Minister put the blame on Vietnam and the Philippines, whose intention to include references to the specific bilateral disputes in the final statement prevented

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<sup>69</sup> “Chinese FM Refutes Fallacies on the South China Sea Issue,” *China Daily*, July 25, 2010, accessed December 29, 2017, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/25/content\\_11046054.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/25/content_11046054.htm).

<sup>70</sup> “Chinese FM Refutes Fallacies on the South China Sea Issue.”

<sup>71</sup> Donald K. Emmerson, “ASEAN Stumbles in Phnom Penh,” East Asia Forum (blog), July 23, 2012, accessed August 22, 2017, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2012/07/23/asean-stumbles-in-phnom-penh-2/>; Panchali Saikia, “Polarised ASEAN: Highlighting the Factions,” Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, July 31, 2012, accessed August 2, 2017, [http://www.ipcs.org/print\\_article-details.php?recNo=3722](http://www.ipcs.org/print_article-details.php?recNo=3722); Carlyle A. Thayer, “ASEAN’S Code of Conduct in the South China Sea: A Litmus Test for Community-Building?,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal | Japan Focus* 10, no. 4 (2012): 1–22.

<sup>72</sup> “Gunboat Diplomacy, China-Style, Only Heightens Tensions,” *Canberra Times (Australia)*, July 30, 2012, sec. A, 9.

<sup>73</sup> Bower, Ernest Z. “Commentary ‘China Reveals Its Hand on ASEAN in Phnom Penh,’” Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 20, 2012, accessed January 31, 2017, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/china-reveals-its-hand-asean-phnom-penh>; Guy De Launey, “Has Chinese Power Driven Asean Nations Apart?,” *BBC News*, July 19, 2012, sec. Asia, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18897855>; “SE Asia Meeting in Disarray over Sea Dispute with China,” *Reuters*, July 13, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-summit-idUSBRE86C0BD20120713>.

ASEAN from reaching consensus.<sup>74</sup> However, the transcript of the meeting presented in Thayer (2012) confirmed that consensus was actually achieved by the member states.<sup>75</sup>

The draft communiqué for 2012 ASEAN Summit was prepared by the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia. The text of the document had direct reference to the Philippines' standoff with China over Scarborough Shoal and to the award of oil exploration leases by the China National Offshore Oil Company within Vietnam's Exclusive Economic Zone. Out of the 120 items listed in the draft document only the paragraph on SCS caused heated debates at the summit and became essentially the only topic of the ASEAN Ministers' Meeting.<sup>76</sup> It is this discussion that revealed a shift in ASEAN's role conception away from the one accepted by China and institutionalized through the DOC.

The Philippines and Vietnam joined hands at the July 2012 summit to persuade ASEAN to rethink its South China Sea approach arguing that the modification is necessary for the organization to enact effectively its role as regional leader and security promoter. Foreign Minister of the Philippines Albert del Rosario spoke first and made a suggestion for ASEAN to step away from neutrality and adopt a strong statement on SCS referencing concrete bilateral incidents. He argued that Chinese actions against Philippines at sea in Scarborough Shoal incident violated the DOC and therefore threatened ASEAN centrality, leadership and solidarity in the region. Therefore, in order for ASEAN to 'operationalize' its role 'as a driving force' on regional political and security issues it should reference bilateral disputes in the communiqué.<sup>77</sup> He was echoed by his Vietnamese colleague Pham Binh Minh, who also emphasized that the organization should reflect on bilateral disputes because '[it is] important for ASEAN to show central role in regional peace and security ... speak with one voice, [and] maintain unity.'<sup>78</sup> The follow-up discussion confirmed that most of the ASEAN

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<sup>74</sup> "Asean Nations Fail to Reach Agreement on South China Sea," *BBC News*, July 13, 2012, sec. Asia, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18825148>.

<sup>75</sup> Thayer, "ASEAN'S Code of Conduct in the South China Sea: A Litmus Test for Community-Building?"

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

Foreign Ministers picked up the same discourse arguing more or less explicitly in favor of having an ‘ASEAN outlook’ and the ‘clear expression of our [ASEAN’s] concerns’ about the South China Sea in the communiqué.<sup>79</sup> This showed that ASEAN role with regard to the South China Sea conflict indeed shifted from the previously maintained neutrality.

Only Cambodia rejected the turn that ASEAN was taking and argued that the organization ‘should not take position that may lead to creating or escalating tension in the SCS’ especially given the ongoing ASEAN-China informal meeting on drafting the Code of Conduct taking place on the sides of the same summit.<sup>80</sup> Cambodia reputedly rejected any attempts to include reference of bilateral disputes in the document even after much softer versions of the text were offered and eventually vetoed the final document to great dissatisfaction of other members.

The 2012 summit discussion demonstrated that even without issuing an official statement ASEAN still stepped out of its role as neutral facilitator since the general consensus in favor of stretching the organization’s role to cover bilateral disputes was present. It is this shift that caused rejection from China through the termination of the COC process. On July 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, prior to the ASEAN Ministers’ Meeting Cambodia confirmed that Beijing agreed to start talks on the Code of Conduct with ASEAN in September 2012.<sup>81</sup> However, immediately after the ASEAN summit on July 11th, ‘China’s attitude suddenly changed and it refused to begin talks [on Code of Conduct].’<sup>82</sup> Instead, China started to insist on the ‘full and effective’ implementation of the DOC prior to any talks on the binding Code of Conduct could be launched, although previously both processes were expected to run in parallel.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 9, 11.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>82</sup> “Divisions Serve to Weaken ASEAN,” *The Japan Times*, July 21, 2012, accessed February 2, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2012/07/21/editorials/divisions-serve-to-weaken-asean/>.

<sup>83</sup> “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Liu Weimin’s Regular Press Conference on July 11, 2012,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, July 12, 2012, accessed February 8, 2017, <http://wcm.fmprc.gov.cn/pub/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t951040.htm>.

The rejection of the COC process and the new emphasis on the DOC can be interpreted as China's preference for the existing status quo and a rejection of the new ASEAN role. According to Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Liu Weimin 'deliberately hyping the [South China Sea] issue is turning a blind eye to regional countries' consensus.'<sup>84</sup> Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao also stated that 'China and ASEAN signed the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea a decade ago, and we reached an agreement on the principles. We do not want the South China Sea issue to be internationalized.'<sup>85</sup> To some extent China even felt 'betrayed' that after a decade of Chinese charm offensive ASEAN resorted to internationalization.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, although Beijing continued to recognize ASEAN's role in the South China Sea dialogue, it preferred the organization to remain strictly within the boundaries prescribed in the DOC and distinguish between bilateral and multilateral tracks. Failure of ASEAN to act in line with the agreed principles caused China's withdrawal from cooperation.

This section demonstrated that China shifted towards assertiveness in the South China Sea conflict in response to the internationalization policy started by Vietnam and the Philippines. This is why clashes at sea in 2011-2012 happened between China and these two countries. The policy of Vietnam and Philippines also shifted ASEAN's governance practice and role thinking, which caused China's withdrawal from COC talks. As I argue in what follows, the deviation of ASEAN from the established consensus also undermined the basis for cooperative regional order, as both actors started to question each other's roles.

### **6.2.3. Cooperative Security Order Undermined**

The deadlock in SCS talks had negative implications for the ASEAN-China role agreement and their intersubjective security environment. Although both claimed that SCS issue should not impact the overall positive nature of their relationship, it led actors to question each other's regional roles. Even

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<sup>84</sup> "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Liu Weimin's Regular Press Conference on July 11, 2012."

<sup>85</sup> Qin Jize and Cheng Guangjin, "China Remains an 'Engine' in Global Economy," *China Daily*, November 21, 2012, sec. Economy.

<sup>86</sup> Tan See Seng, e-mail to the author, 3 March 2017.

though ASEAN and China preserved their strategic partnership, cooperative security environment between them was undermined.

The deviation of ASEAN's governance practice towards internationalization of bilateral disputes caused concerns in Beijing that ASEAN's regional role might become less sensitive to Chinese national interests and more favorable to external great power intervention (the US being the biggest concern). Therefore, the official communication from Beijing signaled its preference for ASEAN's regional role to remain unchanged. Speaking at ASEAN-China summit in November 2012 Wen Jiabao remarked that for 20 years ASEAN and China worked successfully together in overcoming various challenges and urged ASEAN members 'to draw on historical experiences' and 'stay in the right direction' in order 'to revitalize East Asia.'<sup>87</sup> Wen reconfirmed China's support for ASEAN 'centrality' in regional affairs, but reminded the organization about the need for 'accommodation of each other's concerns.'<sup>88</sup> He also warned against the idea of 'regional affairs being managed or dominated by big powers,'<sup>89</sup> which could be interpreted as a comment against ASEAN's increased leaning towards the US.

ASEAN was less pronounced in raising its doubts with China and never openly questioned China's role conception. In official communication China remained the 'dynamic and important strategic dialogue partner' of ASEAN and the organization continued to appreciate China as a 'contributor.'<sup>90</sup> Internally, however, ASEAN's suspicion about China in relation to its South China Sea policy was growing. The clashes of 2011/12 left ASEAN wondering about the consistency of China's peaceful rise and its regional role as responsible power. They raised questions among

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<sup>87</sup> "Premier Wen Jiabao Attends the 15th China-ASEAN Summit," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 11 2012, accessed March 2, 2017, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/topics\\_665678/pwjamoalapovcat\\_665698/t992061.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/topics_665678/pwjamoalapovcat_665698/t992061.shtml).

<sup>88</sup> "Premier Wen Jiabao Attends the 15th China-ASEAN Summit."

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> "Chairman's Statement of the 14th ASEAN-China Summit, Bali, Indonesia, 18 November 2011 (ASEAN, November 18, 2012), <http://www.asean.org/storage/archive/documents/19th%20summit/CH-CS.pdf>; Chairman's Statement of the 15th ASEAN-China Summit, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 19 November 2012 (ASEAN, November 19, 2012), [http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/documents/Final\\_Chairman's%20Statement\\_15th%20ASEAN-China%20Summit.pdf](http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/documents/Final_Chairman's%20Statement_15th%20ASEAN-China%20Summit.pdf)."

ASEAN leaders about ‘what China wants and what it wants to be.’<sup>91</sup> In addition, China never clarified the confusion about its actual claims in the SCS, which only added to ASEAN concerns. For example, Beijing never confirmed officially that South China Sea is one of its ‘core interests’. Yet, it never disproved the statement either,<sup>92</sup> which raised concerns among ASEAN members about China’s regional agenda.

As the roles were questioned, so was the intersubjective security environment in the region. The Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister observed that although the situation is ‘under control’ still ‘everyone thinks it's very dangerous, very turbulent, because of the South China Sea issue.’<sup>93</sup> A similar observation was made by ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan, who noted that the situation in the SCS could ‘get out of hand’ with ‘a very disturbing effect on the wider region’ and international community at large.<sup>94</sup>

Moreover, with their roles being challenged, ASEAN and China were unable to overcome the governance contention caused by the deviating governance practices, so the negative security trend continued to pick up. In October 2012 actors had a lengthy discussion of the South China Sea and the Code of Conduct at the preparatory meeting for East Asia Summit in Pattaya (Thailand). The meeting was supposed to help the parties overcome divergences in SCS issue in order to proceed with COC discussion, but seemed to have consolidated their contention instead.<sup>95</sup> ASEAN continued to insist on its practice of internationalization, which was unacceptable for Beijing. At the same time, China’s assertive reaction justified the engagement of ASEAN as collective actors and international community in the SCS bilateral disputes. Inability to reach agreement over the appropriate governance practices caused a new deadlock in COC process.

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<sup>91</sup> Ernest Z. Bower, “The ASEAN and East Asia Summits: U.S. Walks Softly While China Wields a Big Stick,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 21, 2012, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/asean-and-east-asia-summits-us-walks-softly-while-china-wields-big-stick>.

<sup>92</sup> Edward Wong, “Beijing Lets a Delicate Issue Lie; Government Is Divided over How Strident to Be over South China Sea,” *The International Herald Tribune*, March 31, 2011, sec. News.

<sup>93</sup> Kor Kian Beng, “China: Don’t Interfere or Provoke; Beijing Warns ‘External Parties’ off South China Sea Issues Ahead of East Asia Summit,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, November 18, 2012, sec. News; World.

<sup>94</sup> “Avoiding a Breakdown in Asean-China Relations,” *The Nation (Thailand)*, December 3, 2012.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

The revival of cooperation became possible in 2013 after ASEAN and China returned to role agreement. In the next section I argue that similarly to the DOC case in 2002 changes in ASEAN-China role location helped to refute the negative security trend. However, unlike in 2002 the positive shift in role location was supported by the inclusive governance approach to SCS process, which enabled actors to resolve governance contentions and make an actual progress in COC cooperation. Moreover, ASEAN and China sustained cooperative security trend despite the destabilizing activities unfolding in the region since 2015 because of the need to maintain each other's role recognition.

### **6.3. Official Consultations on the Code of Conduct and the Second ASEAN-China Consensus**

China agreed to resume consultations with ASEAN on the Code of Conduct and even hosted the first Senior Officials Meeting on the issue in September 2013. This development is puzzling given that only half a year before China refused to enter any discussions with ASEAN on COC. I argue that the return to cooperation became possible after the new shift in ASEAN-China role location occurred that created supportive environment for the new consensus about SCS governance. Furthermore, if in 2002 ASEAN and China simply buried their divergences for the sake of role agreement, in 2013 they managed to resolve them due to the new inclusive governance mechanism for COC. The need to win acceptance for the re-defined role claims encouraged solid governance practice and led to sustained cooperation, despite the negative security trends on the rise in the region.

#### **6.3.1. New Role Complementarity and Implications for the Code of Conduct**

In 2013, China presented its international role under the new foreign policy concept labeled 'major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.'<sup>96</sup> It presupposed taking 'due responsibility' and making 'greater contribution to world peace and global development' and thus represented a role

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<sup>96</sup> "Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic Of China, June 27, 2013, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjb\\_663304/wjbz\\_663308/2461\\_663310/t1053908.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/2461_663310/t1053908.shtml).

upgrade.<sup>97</sup> Regionally it translated into the claim for co-leadership with ASEAN in regional affairs as discussed in Chapter 4. Relations with Southeast Asian neighbors received particular significance because they determined ‘where China’s relationship with the world will go next.’<sup>98</sup> Surrounded by ‘potentially unfriendly’ great powers like India, Russia and the US, China was left with ASEAN as its only neighbor that could grant role acceptance.<sup>99</sup> In this context, China was particularly concerned about courting ASEAN and restoring the positive image within the organization lost after the 2011-2012 SCS escalations. Cooperation on the South China Sea issue thus became important for gaining acceptance on China’s new regional role claim. Moreover, returning to COC talks with ASEAN sent the positive signal to the international community and reduced the incentives for the external powers (mainly the US) to get involved in the region.<sup>100</sup>

After the 2012 summit failure, ASEAN also needed external role recognition to restore credibility as a unified actor, central to regional peace and security. Cohesion on SCS issue and the neutral approach were seen in ASEAN to be the key for remaining at ‘the forefront of regional [security] architecture’.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, pursuing a binding Code of Conduct topped the agenda of Brunei as ASEAN Chair in 2013,<sup>102</sup> while early start of negotiations and early conclusion of the COC were identified as a priority by ASEAN’s new secretary general Vietnamese Le Luong Minh.<sup>103</sup>

As both ASEAN and China redefined their role expectations, they also changed their discourse on the South China Sea, which made possible the return to cooperation. China revived the concept of ‘joint development at sea’ in order to frame South China Sea as an area of cooperation rather than conflict. According to Chinese FM Wang Yi, who presented the new vision of China’s foreign policy

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<sup>97</sup> “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy”

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Author’s interview with Termsak Chalermpananupap, ASEAN Studies Centre, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, March 31, 2017.

<sup>100</sup> Author’s interview with Li Mingjiang, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore, March 31, 2017.

<sup>101</sup> Sarah Schonhardt, “New ASEAN Chief Seeks South China Sea Talks,” Voice of America (VOA), January 9, 2013, <https://www.voanews.com/a/new-asean-chief-seeks-south-china-sea-talks/1580362.html>.

<sup>102</sup> Termsak Chalermpananupap, “Toward a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea,” *The Nation*, January 22, 2013, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/news/opinion/aec/30198345>.

<sup>103</sup> Schonhardt, “New ASEAN Chief Seeks South China Sea Talks.”

to the World Peace Forum in June 2013, China planned ‘to be actively engaged in bilateral and regional maritime cooperation to turn the surrounding seas into seas of peace and friendship.’<sup>104</sup> To fulfill this perspective China called on ASEAN to ‘shelve differences and engage in joint development’ of the South China Sea pending the settlement of disputes. To set up the joint development track China utilized actively the ASEAN-China Maritime Cooperation Fund, launched the new Maritime Silk Road Initiative and offered a number of smaller incentives to ASEAN in order to demonstrate its goodwill in the SCS issue. These were, for example, opening of China-ASEAN marine cooperation center, setting up of maritime emergency helpline, and launching of the China-ASEAN Ocean College.<sup>105</sup> However, the agreement to start consultations on the Code of Conduct with ASEAN came only after the organization also changed its approach to SCS conflict.

ASEAN’s redefinition of the SCS issue aimed at two goals: finding internal consensus and getting China back to cooperation. Both became possible after ASEAN shifted the SCS discourse away from bilateral disputes and instead started to portray SCS as an area of concern for the wider regional peace and security essential for all stakeholders. ASEAN leaders put forward the issues like maritime security, search and rescue operations and safety of navigation that required the establishment of practical governance mechanisms among all relevant countries.<sup>106</sup> With these priorities in mind speeding up the conclusion of a legally-binding COC became ASEAN’s new policy goal. The new approach helped the organization to rebuild the internal consensus. In April 2013, SCS issue was discussed at ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and ASEAN Summit without any deadlocks of 2012. The Philippines, which previously tried to turn ASEAN forum into a dispute settlement mechanism, subscribed to the new ASEAN vision. President Aquino welcomed the fact that SCS issue was present in ASEAN agenda and confirmed ASEAN’s ‘unity of purpose’ in pushing for

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<sup>104</sup> “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy.”

<sup>105</sup> Prashanth Parameswaran, “China’s Plan For ASEAN-China Maritime Cooperation,” *The Diplomat*, April 1, 2015, accessed February 4, 2017, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/chinas-plan-for-asean-china-maritime-cooperation/>.

<sup>106</sup> “Chairman’s Statement of the 23rd ASEAN Summit, Brunei, 2013” (ASEAN, October 9, 2013), [http://www.eria.org/2013\\_1009\\_Chairman%20Statement%20of%2023rd%20ASEAN%20Summit.pdf](http://www.eria.org/2013_1009_Chairman%20Statement%20of%2023rd%20ASEAN%20Summit.pdf)

COC.<sup>107</sup> At the summit the organization also agreed on the new draft of the Code to be discussed with China.<sup>108</sup>

Apart from restoring consensus, ASEAN also became more conscious about keeping neutrality, which was the major expectation from China. At the press conference following 2013 summit ASEAN Chair Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei confirmed that the block agreed on ‘two step approach’ for SCS, that is to leave overlapping claims for the claimant states, but have ASEAN-China dialogue on COC.<sup>109</sup> Clear distinction between bilateral disputes and multilateral COC track signaled that ASEAN was back to its previous role as a neutral facilitator, which was acceptable for China.

Role redefinition and the reframing of the SCS issue thus allowed ASEAN and China to come back to the negotiating table. In August 2013 the parties adopted a shared perspective on the Code of Conduct ‘to be a rule-based framework in managing activities or conduct of parties in the South China Sea’ and agreed to start official consultations in September 2013.<sup>110</sup> However, as I argue below, the actual progress on COC was possible because actors adopted more inclusive governance mechanism to manage South China Sea issue. It helped the parties to resolve the existing contentions and achieve actual outcomes (COC framework draft, conflict prevention mechanisms at sea). As a result, cooperative security environment between ASEAN and China was restored.

### **6.3.2. Inclusive Governance Approach and the New Consensus**

The new governance consensus on COC between ASEAN and China became possible because partners shifted to more inclusive governance approach, which had two important implications. Firstly, it allowed actors to resolve two existing contentions in SCS governance (over the substance

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<sup>107</sup> “ASEAN Summit Dominated by South China Sea,” *Al-Jazeera*, April 25, 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/04/201342571858678984.html>.

<sup>108</sup> Thayer, “ASEAN, China and the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea,” 4.

<sup>109</sup> Aurea Calica, “Asean Pushes Sea Code, Talks with China,” *The Philippine Star*, April 26, 2013, accessed August 4, 2017, <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2013/04/26/935041/asean-pushes-sea-code-talks-china>.

<sup>110</sup> “Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers Meeting, Beijing, China, 30 August 2013,” Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, August 30, 2013, accessed February 4, 2017, <https://www.kln.gov.myarchive/content.php?t=3&articleId=3306048>.

of the COC and over managing SCS governance). Secondly, resolution of contentions led to the establishment of the actual conflict-prevention mechanisms, which was a new progressive development since the signature of the DOC.

The two major institutional frameworks facilitating Code of Conduct consultations since 2005 were ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) and ASEAN-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Implementation of the Declaration on the South China Sea. Since 2013, the format of these meetings qualitatively changed reflecting a more inclusive approach. Previously, ASEAN and China used them to discuss the texts of the COC prepared internally. Since 2013 they engaged in the joint drafting of the rules of conduct. ASEAN subscribed to the Chinese vision of the format for COC dialogue. The organization agreed to consultations rather than negotiations, the step-by-step approach instead of the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct, and the regional scope of the document as opposed to the open treaty. On its side, China accepted the contribution of non-claimant states to the COC process. Previously Beijing preferred non-claimants to remain silent at SOM or JWM meetings, yet since 2013 it took a softer approach and encouraged all ASEAN states to offer suggestions for the COC.<sup>111</sup> Since 2013 official consultation on the Code of Conduct became a regular agenda item of every SOM, which ensured 'a tangible process and maintain[ed] continuity of discussion.'<sup>112</sup>

Agreement on the inclusive format allowed progress on the issues of contention. With regard to the substance of regional governance China preferred the implementation of the informal DOC rather than a binding Code. Therefore, it favored the discussion on commonalities, general objectives and the outline, rather than on concrete substance of the document. In contrast, ASEAN prioritized binding agreement and pushed for the discussion on specific measures and clear rules constraining assertive behavior. The joint drafting of the COC allowed actors to remove this contention at least to some extent. In 2014, ASEAN and China adopted the First List of Commonalities that represented

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<sup>111</sup> Author's interview with Carlyle Thayer, Australian Defense Force Academy (via Skype), March 22, 2017.

<sup>112</sup> "Interview with Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Thailand Sihasak Phuangketkeow," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, September 15, 2013, accessed January 15, 2017, <http://www.mfa.go.th/main/en/media-center/28/39130-Permanent-Secretary-for-Foreign-Affairs-gave-an-in.html>.

the general agreement on COC framework such as the recognition of UNCLOS, TAC and Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. In 2015, the Second List of Commonalities was approved that included more specific provisions for the future COC draft. The 2015 SOM also agreed on ‘the list of crucial and complex issues [for SCS] and the list of elements for the outline of the Code of Conduct.’<sup>113</sup> According to a former ASEAN official, the agreement on the outline was already a big step forward, given how difficult it was for ASEAN to force China into the discussion of the actual COC content.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, it enabled actors to proceed to a ‘new phase’ of consultations and to start the actual drafting of the COC in 2015.<sup>115</sup>

The contention over managing SCS governance was resolved because ASEAN and China agreed on the dual track approach as a new form of appropriate role enactment. Dual-track approach was offered by China in 2013 as a precondition to COC consultations. It presupposed addressing ‘relevant disputes by countries directly concerned through friendly consultations and negotiations in a peaceful way’ (bilateral track), while ‘peace and stability in the South China Sea [was] jointly maintained by China and ASEAN countries’<sup>116</sup> (multilateral track). In a way, the same principle was already specified in the DOC, and for ASEAN countries this pre-condition was not so detrimental and therefore acceptable. They figured out that it is more important to accept Beijing’s approach, rather than risk the termination of the COC process altogether.<sup>117</sup>

However, China made a special effort in making dual track approach more explicit and precise to reducing the possibility of multiple interpretations. For example, China insisted that under bilateral track claimant states could not seek any external support (from ASEAN, outside powers or even

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<sup>113</sup> “Tenth Senior Officials Meeting On the Implementation of the Declaration On the Conduct of the Parties In the South China Sea Held in Chengdu,” Foreign Ministry of the People’s Republic of China, October 20, 2015, accessed January 17, 2017 [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjbxw/t1307573.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/t1307573.shtml).

<sup>114</sup> Author’s interview with former ASEAN official, Singapore, March 31, 2017.

<sup>115</sup> “Tenth Senior Officials Meeting On the Implementation of the Declaration On the Conduct of the Parties In the South China Sea Held in Chengdu.”

<sup>116</sup> “China Supports ‘Dual-Track’ Approach to Resolve Dispute,” *China Daily*, August 10, 2010, accessed February 4, 2017, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-08/10/content\\_18280181.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-08/10/content_18280181.htm).

<sup>117</sup> Author’s interview with Li Mingjiang, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore, March 31, 2017.

UNCLOS). This clarification came in response to the Philippines' submitting of arbitral case as China wanted to exclude the same possibility in the future.<sup>118</sup> Likewise, multilateral track was defined more precisely as ASEAN-China talks on COC regarding general issues of SCS governance (norms of behavior).<sup>119</sup> The clarification came because of two reasons: China's perception of the COC as dictated by the US and concern that strong ASEAN consensus on the Code would push China into a more constraining agreement. Therefore, China defined multilateral track as being exclusively between ASEAN and China to exclude the US. It also limited ASEAN's role only to the discussion of security management issues thus leaving out the possibility of collective discussion about sovereignty claims.

Several interviewees confirmed that ASEAN accepted this approach. Although it never made public statement about it, the organization followed dual track in practice. Claimant states indeed stopped seeking the support from ASEAN in bilateral disputes. Since 2013, they started to speak for themselves and deal with China separately.<sup>120</sup> For example, in January 2013 the Philippines filed the Legal Notification and Statement of Claim to the UN for Arbitral Tribunal against China without seeking prior consultation with ASEAN.<sup>121</sup> Vietnam considered the solution of the South China Sea problem through its communist party connections with China.<sup>122</sup> Malaysia used bilateral relations with China to negotiate the issue.

In its multilateral track ASEAN also followed China's expectation (non-involvement of the US and focus on security management rather than dispute resolution). However, it also carefully guarded its unity against the Chinese attempts to divide the organization, in order to sustain its

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<sup>118</sup> Author's interview with former ASEAN official, Singapore, March 31, 2017.

<sup>119</sup> Author's interview with Shawn Ho, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore, March 30, 2017.

<sup>120</sup> Author's interview with Termsak Chalermpanupap, ASEAN Studies Centre, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, March 31, 2017.

<sup>121</sup> Carlyle A. Thayer, "South China Sea Developments in 2013: ASEAN Unity Restored, Sino-Philippine Tensions and ASEAN-China Consultations on a Code of Conduct" (The 5th International Workshop on The South China Sea: Cooperation for Regional Security and Development, Hanoi, Vietnam, 2013), 5, <https://southeastasiansea.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/184568991-thayer-south-china-sea-developments-in-2013-asean-unity-restored-sino-philippine-tensions-and-asean-china-consultations-on-a-code-of-conduct.pdf>.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

regional role ASEAN was particularly sensitive not to pursue the issues bilaterally, but to maintain unity and negotiate COC as collective actor in order to sustain its role as regional security promoter. The following example illustrates this point well. In June 2016 China announced a ‘four point consensus’ reached with Brunei, Cambodia and Laos on handling the SCS issues. The agreement on SCS governance between China and three ASEAN countries came after the round of bilateral visits by the Chinese FM in April the same year. However, ASEAN disconfirmed the Chinese interpretation of the visits. The post-meeting statements issued by Brunei and Laos did not reference SCS at all, while Cambodian spokesperson announced that ‘there was no agreement or discussions with China’ on the issue.<sup>123</sup> ASEAN secretary-general also doubted the existence of a consensus outside of the organization, saying that ASEAN ‘was not aware of the agreement between China and the three ASEAN countries’ and ‘heard nothing’ about it from either of them.<sup>124</sup>

A similar situation occurred at the special ASEAN-China meeting in Kunming in June 2016, when the organization issued but then recalled a strongly worded statement on the South China Sea. China was accused of preventing ASEAN consensus and blamed for the absence of the communiqué.<sup>125</sup> Yet, this interpretation is not entirely accurate. The internal tensions within the organization indeed took place between the claimant states (mainly Vietnam and Philippines) and ‘friends of China’ (Cambodia and Laos). However, ASEAN maintained a unified stance, when it categorically rejected a ten-point consensus on the South China Sea proposed by Beijing.<sup>126</sup> The two examples prove that while ASEAN subscribed to Beijing’s approach in handling SCS issue, the organization made sure not to undermine its own regional role and preserved unified stance in negotiating the rules of SCS governance with China.

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<sup>123</sup> Shawn Ho, Bhubhindar Singh, “China’s Bogus South China Sea ‘Consensus,’” Text, *The National Interest*, June 14, 2016, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/chinas-bogus-south-china-sea-consensus-16589>.

<sup>124</sup> Ho and Singh, “China’s Bogus South China Sea.”

<sup>125</sup> Loke Hoe Yeong, “Fiasco at ASEAN-China Summit on South China Sea: Who Is to Blame?,” ASEAN Today, June 26, 2016, <https://www.aseantoday.com/2016/06/fiasco-at-asean-china-summit/>; Goh Sui Noi, “Asean-China Talks in Disarray amid Sea Row,” Text, *The Straits Times*, June 16, 2016, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/asean-china-talks-in-disarray-amid-sea-row>.

<sup>126</sup> Bhubhindar Singh, “China’s Bogus South China Sea ‘Consensus.’”

As contentions between ASEAN and China regarding the content of the COC and handling the governance process were removed, they were able to agree on concrete security management mechanisms and established a deadline for agreeing on the draft framework for COC to be mid-2017. This was the progress that previous fifteen ASEAN-China meetings (since 2005) could not deliver. It was for the first time that both sides agreed on the official deadline in COC consultation and the draft framework indeed came out in May 2017. More importantly, several conflict-prevention mechanisms were operationalized prior to the conclusion of the COC agreement: the establishment of Hotline Communications for Search and Rescue operations, Hotline Communications in Response to Maritime Emergencies, Table-top Exercises on Joint Search and Rescue,<sup>127</sup> the MFA hotline in order to handle maritime emergencies and the agreement to apply Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the SCS.<sup>128</sup>

Some observers doubted the actual effectiveness of these mechanisms arguing that they need to be implemented in the first place before having any impact and even if implemented would have limitations.<sup>129</sup> For example, CUES was limited to the operation of the navies and did not include other vessels. This significantly reduced its positive impact for SCS security, because the majority of incidents occur between civilian boats (boarder guard vessels, maritime police and fishermen vessels) and not the navies. However, even with these limitations the new mechanisms contributed to more secure regional order in the perception of the stakeholders. They served according to a Philippine representative as ‘a miniature code of conduct’<sup>130</sup> that put in place concrete rules pending the conclusion of the final ASEAN-China agreement.

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<sup>127</sup> “ASEAN-China on Common Positions on COC,” ASEAN Information Center, October 12, 2015, accessed January 15, 2017, [http://thailand.prd.go.th/ewt\\_news.php?nid=612&filename=index](http://thailand.prd.go.th/ewt_news.php?nid=612&filename=index).

<sup>128</sup> Kor Kian Beng, “China and Asean to launch hotline, adopt code on encounters at sea,” Text, The Straits Times, August 17, 2016, accessed February 2, 2017, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/china-and-asean-to-launch-hotline-adopt-code-on-encounters-at-sea>.

<sup>129</sup> Hoang Thi Ha, “Taking Baby Steps in the South China Sea,” ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, September 8, 2016, accessed February 10, 2017, <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/medias/commentaries/item/3939-taking-baby-steps-in-the-south-china-sea-a-commentary-by-hoang-thi-ha>.

<sup>130</sup> Michaela del Callar, “China, ASEAN Eye Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea,” *GMA News Online*, August 31, 2016, accessed January 17, 2017, <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/579615/news/nation/china-asean-eye-code-for-unplanned-encounters-at-sea-sources>.

In the next section, I argue that cooperative trend was sustained despite the negative security developments in SCS. Both ASEAN and China needed to demonstrate progress in COC talks in order to sustain their role claims. Therefore, consultation continued, despite the negative security developments at sea.

### **6.3.3. Consequences for the Intersubjective Security Environment**

From 2014, new concerns emerged in the region related to the land reclamation projects started by China and some of the claimant states in the disputed areas of the SCS. To-date China reclaimed altogether 3200 acres of land, mainly in the Spratleys, Vietnam acquired 120 acres, Taiwan reclaimed 8 acres and the Philippines estimate to reclaim 365 acres.<sup>131</sup> These developments provoked maritime military build-ups in the South and East China Sea<sup>132</sup> with Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines all announcing upgrade of their navy capabilities in response to Chinese advancements at sea.<sup>133</sup> Australia, Taiwan, Japan, India and South Korea all voiced their concerns about the Chinese behavior<sup>134</sup> and are expected to provide weapons to SCS claimants in the future.<sup>135</sup> Although both ASEAN and China admitted the growing tensions, they still sustained their cooperation on SCS governance and maintained cooperative security order. Within the last five years actors demonstrated gradual progress in COC discussions, agreed on the draft framework of COC in May 2017 and intend to present the final draft in August 2017. Not only ASEAN but also China started to advocate for the ‘speeding up’ of the consultations and the early conclusion of the COC. I argue that this cooperative

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<sup>131</sup> “Island Tracker,” Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, accessed August 19, 2016, <https://amti.csis.org/island-tracker/>; David Russell Schilling, “The Future of Manila Depends on Land Reclamation Project,” *Industry Tap*, January 30, 2017, accessed May 8, 2017, <http://www.industrytap.com/future-manila-depends-land-reclamation-project/40536>.

<sup>132</sup> Raul Dancel, “Maritime Spats ‘Stirring Undersea Arms Race’; Submarine Build-up May Spark More Clashes: Think-Tank,” *The Straits Times*, December 22, 2014, sec. Top of the News.

<sup>133</sup> Bryan Lynn, “Asia Arms Race Heats Up Over South China Sea,” Voice of America (VOA), April 2, 2017, accessed July 7, 2017, <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/arms-race-heats-up-in-asia-amid-china-military-build-up-in-south-china-sea/3790851.html>.

<sup>134</sup> Paul Dibb, “Chinese Expansion Calls for Firm Challenge,” *The Australian*, June 5, 2015, sec. Commentary; “Taiwan Committed to Peaceful Cooperation in South China Sea,” *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, June 6, 2015, sec. Forum Letters; “G7’s Veiled Criticism Deviates from Truth,” *China Daily*, June 10, 2015, accessed January 1, 2016, [http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-06/10/content\\_20955766.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-06/10/content_20955766.htm).

<sup>135</sup> Lynn, “Asia Arms Race Heats Up Over South China Sea.”

pattern was sustained because actors needed the progress in COC talks in order to sustain their desired role claims. Therefore, just like in the case of DOC and unlike in the case of 2011/12 escalations, they remained committed to the governance consensus. As a result, cooperation continued, despite the negative developments.

For China, the COC process was needed to consolidate its role of a co-leader with ASEAN in the regional security order. The progress in ASEAN-China COC dialogue was seen by Beijing as the best way to demonstrate China's 'sincere' commitment to regional security community building. COC cooperation was portrayed by China as a way towards 'reshaping Asia's security order' into ASEAN-China 'community of common destiny.'<sup>136</sup> According to Beijing, ASEAN and China were 'equally obliged to maintain peace and stability'<sup>137</sup> in the SCS and had to work 'independently from other nations' (mainly the US) on the Code of Conduct. COC process enabled Beijing to shape specific rules of conduct and even gain recognition as a co-leader in regional security. In this context, participation in the COC talks confirmed China's ability 'to play the due role'<sup>138</sup> in managing regional security.

Despite Beijing's efforts, ASEAN granted only partial acceptance to China's role claim. The organization suspected it to be a delay tactic intended by China 'to buy time' for consolidating its sovereignty claims in SCS.<sup>139</sup> Nevertheless, ASEAN still took 'a leap of faith'<sup>140</sup> with China. It kept its commitment to COC talks 'to sustain the momentum of a dialogue'<sup>141</sup> and to preserve 'the ecosystem of peace and security'<sup>142</sup> in the region. Importantly, ASEAN needed progress on COC in

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<sup>136</sup> Gang Ding, "South China Sea Calmer than It Appears," *Global Times (China)*, October 30, 2014.

<sup>137</sup> Shicum Wu, "Diplomacy Can Help Resolve Sea Disputes," *China Daily*, April 1, 2015.

<sup>138</sup> Yi Wang, "A Changing China and Its Diplomacy - Speech At Center for Strategic and International Studies," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, February 26, 2016, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjb\\_663304/wjbz\\_663308/2461\\_663310/t1345211.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/2461_663310/t1345211.shtml).

<sup>139</sup> Manuel Mogato and Martin Petty, "Push for South China Sea Code Stirs ASEAN Suspicions about Beijing's Endgame," *Reuters*, April 27, 2017, accessed June 7, 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-asean-analysis-idUSKBN17T0A5>.

<sup>140</sup> Mogato and Petty, "Push for South China Sea Code."

<sup>141</sup> "Press Release by the Chairman of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat (AMM Retreat)," ASEAN, February 21, 2017, <http://asean.org/press-release-by-the-chairman-of-the-asean-foreign-ministers-retreat-amm-retreat/>.

<sup>142</sup> "Retno: ASEAN Should Be Flexible and Efficient," *The Myanmar Times*, June 9, 2017, accessed August 5, 2017, <http://www.mmmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/26329-retno-asean-should-be-flexible-and-efficient.html>.

order to sustain its own regional role as a collective actor and security promoter with China's acceptance. In the previous section I already discussed the two cases where ASEAN managed to keep its internal coherence despite the attempts of China to divide the block. Yet, the organization had to safeguard its internal consensus on SCS not only *against* China but also its regional consensus *with* China on the issue in order to keep the cooperation going.

Earlier in this chapter I noted that China had a very specific interpretation of the SCS governance consensus under the dual track approach (neutrality on bilateral disputes, discussions on COC with China independently from other actors). In this regard, China made its own behavior contingent on ASEAN's compliance with this interpretation. For example, China implied that 'as the most influential multilateral platform in the region' ASEAN should stay neutral on bilateral SCS disputes and follow the dual track approach in line with the regional consensus.<sup>143</sup> It announced that 'decreasing troubles and confrontation in the SCS' was only possible for China 'if the dual track approach is well implemented'.<sup>144</sup> Any deviation from this consensus was interpreted by Beijing as undermining ASEAN's regional role. From 2013, ASEAN was careful to maintain its governance practice in line with Chinese expectations, which is why the cooperative security trend was sustained.

Despite the growing concerns about China's increased presence and activities in the disputed areas, the organization carefully worded its official statements not to over-emphasize SCS issue.<sup>145</sup> It also did not allow bilateral disputes to guide its vision of the conflict. In this context, the diplomatic momentum was strengthened by the Philippines, whom China believed to be 'behind ASEAN's finger pointing at Beijing'.<sup>146</sup> President Duterte of the Philippines decided not to enforce the arbitration

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<sup>143</sup> "Code of Conduct Key to South China Sea," *China Daily*, April 30, 2015.

<sup>144</sup> Jin Yongming, "China's Claim in Sea Legal and Justified," *China Daily*, March 19, 2015.

<sup>145</sup> "South China Sea Row Tops ASEAN Summit Agenda," *Al-Jazeera*, September 8, 2016, accessed February 11, 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/south-china-sea-row-tops-asean-summit-agenda-160908052213165.html>;

"Asean will not make statement on South China Sea ruling: Diplomats," Text, *The Straits Times*, July 14, 2016, accessed February 11, 2017, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/asean-to-keep-mum-on-south-china-sea-ruling-diplomats>.

<sup>146</sup> "Code of Conduct Key to South China Sea."

ruling against China in 2016 and not to include it into ASEAN's summit agenda in 2017.<sup>147</sup> As a result, consensus with China on handling SCS issue was preserved and Beijing 'greatly approve[d] of ... ASEAN countries taking charge of impartiality and safeguarding fairness' when dealing with the issue.<sup>148</sup> However, ASEAN's role was immediately questioned by China even under the slightest deviations. For example, in March 2015 ASEAN Secretary General Le Luong Minh mentioned in the press interviews China's sovereignty claims within the nine-dash-line. China called his statement 'incompatible with his identity of ASEAN Secretary General' and undermining 'the whole of ASEAN'.<sup>149</sup>

Apart from keeping neutrality, ASEAN was also careful not to engage outsiders and especially the US in managing SCS conflicts. Earlier in this chapter I argued that ASEAN's engagement with the US in 2011-2012 undermined regional consensus and contributed to the deterioration of ASEAN's relations with China. In contrast, the period after 2013 saw the opposite development. ASEAN increasingly detached itself from the US in favor of preserving consensus with China. The example of ASEAN Plus Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) in November 2015 illustrated this shift in ASEAN-China-US triangle very well. ADMM Plus meeting brought together 10 ASEAN members and their dialogue partners – the US, China, Australia, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand and Russia. All participants reportedly granted their acceptance for the inclusion of the South China Sea issue in the draft of the joint communiqué before the meeting.<sup>150</sup> However, the document was not issued because of the lack of consensus between the 'plus countries' on the referencing of SCS. China rejected the explicit mentioning of the dispute in the text, while the US pressured ASEAN to adopt a

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<sup>147</sup> Trisha Macas, "Duterte Firm on Not Bringing up Arbitration Ruling during ASEAN Meet," *GMA News Online*, April 27, 2017, accessed July 7, 2017, <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/608638/duterte-firm-on-not-bringing-up-arbitration-ruling-during-asean-meet/story>.

<sup>148</sup> Neil Connor, "China Claims Victory as ASEAN Countries Issue Watered down Statement on South China Sea," *The Telegraph*, January 18, 2016, accessed February 11, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/25/china-claims-victory-as-asean-countries-issue-watered-down-statement/>.

<sup>149</sup> Liping Xu, "Reckless Remarks Damage ASEAN Integration," *Global Times (China)*, March 18, 2015.

<sup>150</sup> Tan See Seng, "Claims of Asean Disunity at Summit Unfounded," *The Straits Times (Singapore)*, November 26, 2015, sec. Opinion.

stronger wording.<sup>151</sup> As a result, ASEAN recalled the communiqué and instead issued a Chairmen's statement mentioning the general need for the 'effective implementation of the DOC' and 'early conclusion' of the COC.<sup>152</sup>

International media explained ASEAN's decision to drop the joint communiqué by the hidden pressure from China.<sup>153</sup> However, accounts of the participants of the meeting revealed that China and Russia actually supported the draft communiqué, while the US and other 'plus countries' refused to grant their acceptance.<sup>154</sup> As reported by the representative of the Philippines, the original draft did mention the SCS. The copy of remarks by the Malaysian Defense Minister, who hosted the meeting, also included a statement that 'collisions in open seas and skies must be avoided at all costs', while ASEAN and other leaders should prioritize regional security.<sup>155</sup> This referencing must have been satisfactory for China. In the post-meeting press statements China reported that the draft communiqué reflected ASEAN-China consensus and that Beijing regretted the fact that it was not issued, putting the blame on 'individual countries outside the region.'<sup>156</sup> China interpreted ASEAN's decision to recall the joint communiqué as compliance with the governance consensus and praised ASEAN loyalty, which resulted in stronger support for ASEAN's regional role. According to Beijing this case

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<sup>151</sup> Yeganeh Torbati and Trinna Leong, "ASEAN Defense Chiefs Fail to Agree on South China Sea Statement," *Reuters*, November 4, 2015, accessed February 5, 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-malaysia-statement-idUSKCN0ST07G20151104>.

<sup>152</sup> "Chairman's Statement of the 3rd ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (3rd ADMM-PLUS), Kuala Lumpur, 5 November 2015," (ASEAN, November 5, 2015), accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/2015/November/statement/Chairmans%20Statement%20of%20the%203rd%20ADMM-Plus.pdf>.

<sup>153</sup> "Joint Declaration Axed at Asean Defense Meet over S. China Sea," *The Bangkok Post (Thailand)*, November 5, 2015; Torbati and Leong, "ASEAN Defense Chiefs Fail to Agree on South China Sea Statement"; "Asean Talks End without Statement amid South China Sea Row," *BBC News*, November 4, 2015, sec. Asia, accessed July 7, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34718196>.

<sup>154</sup> See Seng, "Claims of Asean Disunity at Summit Unfounded."

<sup>155</sup> "No Signing of Joint Declaration at Asean Defense Forum," *Malay Mail Online*, November 4, 2015, accessed July 7, 2017, <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/no-signing-of-joint-declaration-at-asean-defence-forum-says-source>.

<sup>156</sup> "China Regrets Failure to Issue Joint Declaration at ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus," *Xinhua News Agency*, November 4, 2015, accessed July 7, 2017, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-11/04/c\\_134782768.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-11/04/c_134782768.htm).

proved ASEAN's unity, centrality and control over regional affairs against the influence of the United States.<sup>157</sup>

Changes in ASEAN-China-US dynamics shown in this example were also reflected broadly in the Chinese discourse on the SCS. Since 2015, it shifted in favor of ASEAN and against the US, which signaled the separation between the two security trends in the region. Cooperative trend was sustained between China and like-minded ASEAN states who 'have every capability'<sup>158</sup> to maintain peace in the SCS on their own. The confrontational trend developed between China and the US who was seen as undermining Sino-ASEAN concord and against whom China now has to defend SCS.<sup>159</sup> As a result, the cooperative security environment between ASEAN and China got consolidated as both actors complied with the governance consensus in order to sustain their role claims (co-leadership for China, regional leader and security promoter for ASEAN). Unlike in 2011/12 ASEAN made sure that its governance practice was not guided by the bilateral disputes with China or by its relations with the US, so China also had to maintain its commitment.

In this section I argued that the return to cooperation between ASEAN and China in 2013 became possible after the cooperative shift in their role location. This further proves the theoretical assumption that positive changes in the role structure create supportive environment for overcoming issues of contention. I also argued that actors managed to actually resolve some of the contentions and set up security management mechanisms because of the inclusive governance approach for SCS governance. Finally, I argued that the cooperative security environment between ASEAN and China was sustained despite the negative security trends of recent years, because both actors needed to follow the governance consensus in COC talks in order to sustain their role claims.

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<sup>157</sup> "ASEAN Defense Chiefs Cancel Joint Statement," *China Daily - Asia*, November 4, 2015, accessed July 7, 2017 [http://www.chinadailyasia.com/asia/2015-11/04/content\\_15339592.html](http://www.chinadailyasia.com/asia/2015-11/04/content_15339592.html).

<sup>158</sup> Wang Yi, "A Changing China and Its Diplomacy - Speech At Center for Strategic and International Studies."

<sup>159</sup> "Opinion: US Provocation in South China Sea a Dangerous Game of Brinkmanship," *China Daily*, October 27, 2015; "China Says 'Really Needs' South China Sea Defenses in Face of United States," *Afternoon Voice (India)*, February 25, 2016.

## 6.4. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the dynamics of conflict and cooperation in the South China Sea between ASEAN and China was determined by the shifts in their role location process on the one hand, and the state of consensus over governance issues on the other hand. Positive shifts in role location in 2002 and 2013 allowed ASEAN and China to deactivate contentions over governance and contributed to the cooperative turns in the regional security environment. Moreover, in the second case actors managed to resolve the issues of contention and achieve concrete cooperation outcomes (draft COC framework, conflict prevention mechanisms), due to inclusive governance mechanism set up for the SCS. In both cases cooperation in SCS was maintained because the need to gain acceptance for the role claims forced actors to keep their governance practice in line with the agreed consensus. Cooperative security between ASEAN and China was undermined during 2011-2012, when ASEAN deviated in its governance practice from the established consensus and intersubjective role structure. This deviation not only caused assertive response from China, but also triggered the redefinition of ASEAN and China regional roles. Finally, this chapter also demonstrated that the impact of external factors on regional security dynamics (the involvement of the US) should also be perceived through the role bargaining process. In this regard, bilateral disputes and the involvement of the US had impact on ASEAN-China relationship only in 2011-2012, when both became parts of ASEAN's own governance practice/role redefinition. At other times, bilateral disputes and engagement of the US represented independent lines of confrontation, which did not impact the ASEAN-China security environment.

Overall, the analysis of the South China Sea conflict confirmed the findings from the EU-Russia case of the Eastern Partnership. It supported the main argument of the dissertation that the processes of role bargaining and governance contestation determine the nature of the regional security orders.

## CONCLUSION

The main question addressed in this dissertation was: *when and how do regional orders transform into cooperative or conflictual environments*. I have argued that the best way to understand the dynamics of regional security is to shift from conceptualizing regional orders as static ‘sub-systems’ or ‘social worlds’, to focusing on the processes of interaction between key actors. I developed a role theory approach to regional security dynamics, theorizing two, interlinked processes of regional security order transformation: role bargaining and governance practices. I have argued that these processes are constitutive of dominant regional security patterns and intersubjective regional environments. A role theory approach to regional security dynamics was applied to understand the evolution of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China intersubjective security orders from the end of the Cold War until 2017. It was then used to explain the deviating security patterns in the cases of EU-Russia contention over Ukraine in the Eastern Partnership, and ASEAN-China contention over the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. In this final Conclusion, I first restate the main arguments developed in this dissertation and then revisit the two puzzles outlined in the Introduction before discussing my main research findings. This is followed by an analysis of the theoretical and empirical contribution of this dissertation. In the final section, I discuss possible avenues for future research that could expand upon the work undertaken in this dissertation, thereby underscoring that it provides a potentially rich agenda for future research.

### **The Main Argument**

This dissertation argued that two processes of interaction guide regional security dynamics: role bargaining and governance practices of actors. These two processes occur in a region simultaneously, yet each at its own speed and logic of path-dependency. Their temporal intersections can provoke changes in the trajectory of each process. Hence, only if taken together can these account for shifts in regional security dynamics and transformations of regional security order.

Role bargaining was defined as a process whereby actors try to locate suitable roles for themselves in a regional order. While adopting this definition, I conceptualized the outcomes of a role bargaining process as *role relationships* between actors. I argued that these relationships are indicative of the nature of the regional security environment. Depending on the type of role relationship between actors, a cooperative or a conflictual intersubjective security order emerges. Types of role relationships allowed me to better conceptualize the quality of regional security orders. Unlike existing theories that distinguish between theoretically-imposed types and degrees of order, role relationships grasp the quality of the actual intersubjective environment between actors, which informs their foreign policy choices. Role relationships provide us with a better understanding of the nature of order, and actors' behavior in it, than roles *per se*. Although roles serve as triggers for certain actions and reactions, I argue that it is the nature of role relationships that enables or constrains certain security outcomes. For example, actors may successfully locate their desired roles in regional order, yet if the nature of their role relationship is contradiction or rivalry, the regional security environment would be unlikely to develop towards cooperation.

Another dimension of regional security dynamics is the *governance practice* of actors. Governance practices represent the actual foreign policies and actions that reveal actors' preferences for sustaining or undermining existing role relationship inscribed in the system of regional governance. Similar to role bargaining, regional governance constitutes a subject of contestation, and may generate security trends of its own. While role bargaining evolves around the issues of role appropriateness for an actor in regional order, contentions over regional governance develop over issues of substance, conditions of role enactment, and tolerance to institutional alternatives. Whether or not actors can effectively resolve these issues, and establish governance consensus, depends on their preference for an inclusive or a protectionist governance approach. I argued that governance practices generate security trends of their own, which may become consequential for the process of role bargaining and the nature of regional orders. Focus on the two interrelated processes (role bargaining and governance practice) allows the dynamic nature of intersubjective security orders to

be captured. It contributes to our understanding of regions not only as ‘appropriate level[s] of analysis,’<sup>1</sup> where domestic and global security patterns interact, but as spaces shaped by power, action, and interaction that generate security dynamics of their own.

### **Research Puzzles Revisited**

Conceptualizing regional orders through role relationships that emerge in the process of role bargaining allowed me to explain how and why particular intersubjective security environments developed in the cases of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction, and why they were or were not sustained over time. It enabled me to address the first research puzzle of the dissertation: why was a cooperative security environment sustained in Asia but not in Europe, despite expectations to the contrary? In Chapter 3, I argued that the EU and Russia did not sustain a cooperative security order because they failed to establish a mutually accepted role relationship through bargaining. Despite the initial complementarity of roles, their interaction evolved into role contradiction and, eventually, role rivalry, which kept reproducing a conflictual security order. In contrast, the ASEAN-China role bargaining process represented a more successful pattern. Each actor managed to locate and maintain a desired role in regional order through role complementarity and role agreement, which sustained a cooperative security order. The development of intersubjective security environments in both cases thus confirmed the theoretical assumption A1.

As shown in Table 7.1, the EU-Russia and the ASEAN-China role bargaining processes diverged in three dimensions: role expectations, preferred approach to role bargaining, and the presence of mechanisms for appropriate role enactment.

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<sup>1</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 43.

*Table 7.1 Comparison of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China Role Bargaining*

	<b>EU and Russia</b>	<b>ASEAN and China</b>
<b>Role expectations</b>	Diverging	Converging
<b>Approach to role bargaining</b>	Enforcement	Accommodation
<b>Mechanisms for role enactment</b>	No	Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<i>Failed</i>	<i>Successful</i>

*Source: Own Account*

The ASEAN-China case fulfilled the conditions of successful role location process as defined by Thies: actors adopted role conceptions in line with their own expectations, as well as cues from each other, and set the mechanisms for the appropriate role enactment.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the conditions specified by Thies, the choice of role bargaining strategy was also important for the outcome. In the ASEAN-China case, actors approached role bargaining using an ‘Accommodate’ strategy, defined as a situation when an actor selectively accommodates fitting roles of other actors without changing or giving up his or her own role conception. Role accommodation helped the establishment of mutually accepted role relationship, enabling ASEAN and China to move quickly from the initial role consensus to role complementarity, and eventually to role agreement. Institutionalization of this role bargaining outcome, through the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in 2002 and related frameworks during 2002-2012, consolidated this role relationship and provided appropriate mechanisms for role enactment. As a result, a cooperative intersubjective security environment endured between ASEAN and China, even during the major regional crisis over the South China Sea in 2011-2012. The internal redefinition of ASEAN’s and China’s role conceptions in 2012 sparked a new round of role bargaining, yet the preference for role accommodation allowed actors to maintain complementarity relationships and preserve a cooperative intersubjective security environment, despite negative security developments in the region such as militarization of the South China Sea.

<sup>2</sup> Cameron G. Thies, “International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions.”

In contrast, the EU-Russia role bargaining process was successful only during the period 1994-2006, when actors adopted roles based on their own expectations, as well as cues from each other. Similarly to ASEAN and China, they also had the prospect of institutionalizing their role relationship and creating the mechanisms for appropriate role enactment through the framework of the Four Common Spaces in 2005, and potentially, through the updated Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The positive trend, however, was not sustained. Internal role redefinition in both the EU and Russia after 2004 shifted the trajectory of the role bargaining process. Internal role redefinition caused the actors to 'Reject' the cues from each other, and instead to 'Force' their own roles and role demands, so that they were unable to arrive at a mutually acceptable role bargaining outcome. As a result, contradictory roles became consolidated through the role bargaining process, which seriously undermined, although has not yet refuted, the intersubjective cooperative security environment. The Ukrainian crisis of 2013-2014, and the Russian-Ukrainian war that followed it, served as intervening factors into the EU-Russia role bargaining process. Different interpretations of the Ukrainian revolution by Russia and the EU contributed to mutual role rejection, and shifted interaction towards the reproduction of role rivalry. As a result, a conflictual intersubjective security environment was reproduced between the actors.

The impact of a crisis on role bargaining is of particular interest in each case. Role theorists have mostly focused on the impact of the crisis on domestic role contestation and shifts in the role enactment strategy.<sup>3</sup> My analysis of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction showed that in each case, the crisis not only influenced the role definition of actors but also intervened in their external role bargaining process. It returned actors back to a situation of uncertainty, and therefore undermined existing role bargaining outcomes. It changed the trajectories of the role bargaining process by influencing actors' role conceptions and expectations of each other, as well as their role bargaining

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<sup>3</sup> Raimund Wolf, "Terrorized America? 9/11 and Its Impact on US Foreign Policy," in *Role Theory in International Relations*, ed. Sebastian Harnisch, Cornelia Frank, and Hanns W. Maull (Routledge, 2011), 19; Niklas Nilsson, "Beacon of Liberty: Role Conceptions, Crises and Stability in Georgia's Foreign Policy, 2004-2012," *DIVA*, 2015, <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:sh:diva-28208>; Mikko Huotari, "Finding a New Role in the East Asian Financial Order," in *China's International Roles*, ed. Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jorn-Carsten Gottwals, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 145-69.

strategies. At the same time, crisis presented an opportunity for role location, as actors could use it as an instrument to 'Force' desired roles.

Chapter 3 argued that different interpretations of the revolution in Ukraine set the role conceptions of Russia and the EU further apart. Russia rejected the EU's role claim of a 'normative guide' and 'security promoter', and instead adopted a perspective of the EU as a 'contributor to insecurity' in the region. At the same time, Russia used conflict in Donbass to 'Force' the recognition of its Eurasian integration process, and itself as a 'contributor' to security in Europe. The EU, however, used the Ukrainian crisis as another justification to 'Reject' Russia's regional roles as a 'partner' and 'contributor' to European security order. Furthermore, the crisis strengthened the expectation of the EU to create a more EU-centered, rather than EU-Russia shared neighborhood, and thus made the EU even less likely to accept Russia's role as 'a contributor' to regional order in the future.

In the ASEAN-China case, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, both actors used the 1997-1999 Asian financial crisis as an opportunity to succeed in their role location process. The crisis affected domestic role contestation in both ASEAN and China so that their role expectations for each other converged. Both actors used the crisis as an instrument of the role location process, and a complementary role relationship was quickly established between them. Escalation of the South China Sea conflict in 2011-2012 triggered the opposite development, similar to the impact of Ukrainian crisis in the EU-Russia case. Chapter 6 demonstrated that incidents at sea between China and some ASEAN member states undermined the existing cooperative security environment and led actors to question each other's roles in the regional security order. ASEAN used the escalation as an instrument to locate itself as a multilateral actor in bilateral dispute resolution. China, instead, was trying to 'Force' ASEAN out of this role. Unlike the EU-Russia case, however, the negative security trend did not escalate, because both ASEAN and China re-interpreted their roles and changes their governance approach to South China Sea after a leadership transition in 2012. This caused a change in their internal interpretations of the crisis and returned their role bargaining back towards

complementarity, resulting in a positive impact on the intersubjective security environment. These findings suggest that the impact of a crisis on the nature of regional order should be understood in terms of how actors' engage it within their role bargaining process.

The deviations of regional security patterns from the intersubjective security order represented the second puzzle addressed in this dissertation. The two cases with deviating security pattern were the EU-Russia interaction over Ukraine in the Eastern Partnership and ASEAN-China interaction over the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. In the first case, non-confrontational security patterns emerged under a conflictual security environment. The second case offered a reverse situation ,when a conflictual security pattern developed under a cooperative regional order.

Applying the two-dimensional model of regional security dynamics to these case studies allowed me to explain specific security outcomes, as summarized in Table 7.2 (below). I argued that in both cases, deviation resulted from the shifts in actors' governance approaches and governance practices. On the one hand, the shifts towards conflict or cooperation were contingent on whether actors applied an inclusive or protectionist governance approach. On the other hand, conflictual or cooperative security trends depended on whether the actual governance practices deviated from, or sustained, the existing governance consensus. A role theory approach allowed me to account for a 'vertical' dimension in regional security dynamics in terms of their relational impact on each other. When the security patterns in regional governance intertwined with the process of role bargaining, and *vice versa*, these intersections became consequential for specific regional security outcomes and the intersubjective nature of regional security order.

The ASEAN-China Code of Conduct case demonstrated that cooperative shifts in role bargaining led to corresponding shifts at the governance level towards an inclusive governance approach, which resulted in the successful resolution of the issues of contention, and consolidation of a cooperative security environment (2002-2012, and 2013-2016). The shift towards role conflict in the case of Ukraine contributed to the protectionist governance approach and consolidation of a conflictual security environment (June 2013-June 2014). The coherent governance process in the case

of the Eastern Partnership supported non-confrontational security patterns between the EU and Russia under a conflictual security environment (2009-2013, and 2014-2016). In the South China Sea case, coherent governance practice ensured sustained peace and cooperative security order (2002-2012, and 2013-2016), while the deviation of 2011-2012 led to confrontation similar to the case of Ukraine's AA.

*Table 7.2 Co-influence of Role Location Process and Governance Practice*

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Eastern Partnership (Ukraine's AA)</b>	<b>Time period</b>	<b>South China Sea (Code of Conduct)</b>
<b>May 2009 - June 2013</b>	Conflictual role structure (role contradiction)/inclusive governance approach, coherent practice	<b>2002-2012</b>	Cooperative role structure (role agreement)/ coherent governance practice
<b>Outcome</b>	Non-confrontation	<b>Outcome</b>	Sustained cooperation
<b>June 2013 - June 2014</b>	Conflictual role structure (role conflict)/ deviating practice and protectionist governance approach	<b>July 2012 - September 2013</b>	Cooperative role structure (role agreement)/ deviating practice
<b>Outcome</b>	Conflict	<b>Outcome</b>	Confrontation
<b>June 2014 - January 2016</b>	Conflictual role structure (role rivalry)/ inclusive governance approach and coherent practice	<b>September 2013-2016</b>	Cooperative role structure (complementarity)/ inclusive governance approach and coherent practice
<b>Outcome</b>	Non-confrontation	<b>Outcome</b>	Sustained cooperation

*Source: Own account.*

Case analyses demonstrated that overall the co-impact between the two processes (role bargaining and governance practice) followed the theoretical assumptions A2-A4. The nature of this co-impact, however, was relational rather than causal, as the security outcomes in each case still depended on autonomous developments in each of the two processes. For example, the inclusive governance approach and coherent practice from June 2014 to January 2016 supported the shifts towards non-confrontation in the EU-Russia case, yet did not result in the corresponding shift towards a cooperative security environment. Despite an inclusive approach, and the real prospect of resolving issues of contention in regional governance, the EU and Russia failed to overcome their role conflict. As a result, their role bargaining process reproduced rivalry, and a cooperative trend was not sustained. In the ASEAN-China case, the well-entrenched cooperative security environment was not

able to prevent a deviating governance practice and confrontation in 2011-2012 that emerged as the issues of contention got activated.

### **Contributions of the Dissertation**

The role theory approach to regional security dynamics has several advantages for understanding transformations in regional orders compared to the existing theories. First, a focus on role location process, and role relationships as its outcomes, allows the actual or immediate nature of regional social orders as they emerge between actors to be theorized. This approach differs from existing theories that distinguish between *stable* regional order types based on power distribution, patterns of amity/enmity, or collective identity and thus, provide explanations of their durability rather than change. In contrast, a focus on role bargaining and governance practices as the process-factors of regional security orders enhances our understanding of regions as ‘complex webs of power, interaction and imagination that are constantly in motion.’<sup>4</sup> As my research has demonstrated, power matters in structuring regional security patterns, but the intersubjective nature of regions (and the usage of power for that matter) strongly depends on the roles that regional actors create for themselves and others and, even more so, on how these roles are located through bargaining.

Role relationships are more flexible and thus better able to capture regional security transformations than, for example, Buzan and Waever’s patterns of amity/enmity. Whereas patterns of amity/enmity are historically path-dependent, durable, and therefore self-explanatory categories, role relationships are inherently contested, temporary (even situational), and continuously (re)produced.<sup>5</sup> The transformation of the patterns of amity/enmity is possible only due to ‘major alteration in the pattern of hostility.’<sup>6</sup> However, those changes occur infrequently and trigger long-term transformations of historical or civilizational scale. In contrast, role relationships are formed

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<sup>4</sup> Sita Ranchod-Nilsson, “Regional Worlds: Transforming Pedagogy in Area Studies and International Studies,” *Regional Worlds University of Chicago*, 2000, 8, <http://regionalworlds.uchicago.edu/pub.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 50.

<sup>6</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear*, 179.

and transformed all the time and thus better capture security dynamics at a smaller scale that occur within regions, as actors calibrate their role conceptions and expectations for each other, responding to immediate internal and/or external challenges. Focusing on roles and role relationships, therefore, provides a more relevant account of regional security dynamics for analysts as well as policy-makers.

Conceptualizing regional order through role bargaining and role relationships opens a promising research avenue for analyzing multi-directional changes of regional security orders that are not restricted to linear or evolutionary transformations, such as Lake and Morgan's 'stages' of order, Hettne and Söderbaum's 'levels of regionness', or Adler and Barnett's 'stages' of security communities.<sup>7</sup> Role bargaining may account for *any* change in the nature of regional security, including reverse developments. For instance, it would be difficult for existing approaches to theorize the disintegration of a security community, or any such return back to a balance of power system. A role theory approach instead allows theorizing both positive developments (towards role agreement) and negative developments (towards role rivalry) in regional orders. Although role bargaining is a historical and therefore a path-dependent process, it is not a deterministic one. Role relationships help explain a set of temporary stable security order outcomes, yet do not constitute a pre-determined evolutionary pattern. As such, my approach is better suited to tracing the development of security order 'as an actual [...] situation or state of affairs, not as a value, goal or objective.'<sup>8</sup>

The distinction between the two levels of regional security dynamics (role bargaining and governance practice) allowed me to explain implications that overlapping security trends produce for regional order. Adler and Greve, who were the first to conceptualize 'overlap', understood it as 'coexistence in political discourse and practice' of 'analytically and normatively distinct orders.'<sup>9</sup> They conceptualized functional, temporal, and relational overlap, arguing that each has normative and empirical implications.<sup>10</sup> In addition, my dissertation focused on what could be labeled as a

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<sup>7</sup> Lake and Morgan, *Regional Orders*; Hettne and Söderbaum, "Theorising the Rise of Regionness"; Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*.

<sup>8</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, xii

<sup>9</sup> Emanuel Adler and Patricia Greve, "When Security Community Meets Balance of Power," 59.

<sup>10</sup> Adler and Greve, 60.

dimensional overlap: when governance practices of actors are inconsistent with the existing role bargaining outcome (a cooperative trend under a conflictual role relationship and *vice versa*). The Eastern Partnership and the South China Sea cases, discussed above, were selected as examples of such a dimensional overlap. The overlapping process of role bargaining and governance practice produced a variety of regional security outcomes at different points in time (see Table 7.2). This finding empirically confirms Adler and Greve's claim that regional orders are subject to overlapping security processes, and that overlap should be made a 'subject of study *in its own right*.'<sup>11</sup> It also further supports the central argument of the dissertation that regional security orders should be seen as process-driven, rather than stable constructs.

The role theory approach to regional security dynamics allowed for a better understanding of the participation on non-state actors, such as regional organizations, in international socialization processes. Analysis of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China role bargaining demonstrated that regional organizations can manage the presence of great powers in the region by selectively accommodating their role claims, and by offering institutional mechanisms for appropriate role enactment. For example, the accommodation of Russia's role as an EU 'partner' in the European security order through the ESDP supported the cooperative relationship between the EU and Russia in this dimension in the early 2000s. Likewise, ASEAN's accommodation of China's role under the ADMM Plus supported the consolidation of its role as 'contributor' to regional security and provided it with ASEAN-controlled mechanism for appropriate role enactment. The impact of role accommodation is different from interest accommodation (the recognition of other actors' interest but not their social positions), and from socialization (internalization of rules and norms). The influence that regional organizations had on great powers' role location processes through accommodation confirmed Acharya's argument that 'local responses to power may matter even more [than external power penetration] in the construction of regional orders.'<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., emphasis in original.

<sup>12</sup> Amitav Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics," 630.

The regional security dynamics framework enabled a more specific understanding of the impact generated by the intervention of other regional or extra-regional factors. It demonstrated that third party factors became consequential for the nature of regional security only when they intervened in the actors' role bargaining process. In Chapter 6, for example, I argued that the involvement of the US in the South China Sea conflict had an impact on the ASEAN-China security environment only in 2011-2012, when ASEAN used the US engagement in its role bargaining with China. However, the active presence of the US in the dispute during 2013-2016 had no impact on the ASEAN-China intersubjective environment, because at that time the patterns of the ASEAN-China and the US-China relationship constituted separate security trends. The same logic could be applied to understand Russia's responses to the crisis in Ukraine. Russia's intervention in Crimea and in the Eastern Ukraine was not the direct product of its role bargaining process with the EU. According to President Putin, it represented a preventive response to the perceived involvement of the US in the region.<sup>13</sup> Yet, while targeting the US, Russia's actions significantly influenced the direction of the EU-Russia role bargaining process and the nature of intersubjective security order with the EU. As I showed in Chapter 3, the EU interpreted Russia's actions in Ukraine as directed against Europe, while Russia started to equate the Eastern Partnership with NATO expansion. As a result, the EU-Russia and the US-Russia security patterns converged, with implications for the nature of the European security order. These observations suggest that the actual or perceived influence of external actors in regional order should also be understood through the process of regional role bargaining.

My research also allowed the link between domestic role contestation and external role bargaining to be clarified. It demonstrated how domestic role contestation might interfere into the external role location process. Domestic contestation might shift actors' expectations of each other, or their interpretation about appropriate role enactment. It might also affect actors' choices of a role bargaining strategy. In both cases, domestic role contestation would influence the development and

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<sup>13</sup> "Putin Says Annexation of Crimea Partly a Response to NATO Enlargement," *Reuters*, April 27, 2014, accessed January 31, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-putin-nato/putin-says-annexation-of-crimea-partly-a-response-to-nato-enlargement-idUSBREA3G22A20140417>.

the outcomes of the role bargaining process. In this regard, it is possible to add domestic role contestation as a third process shaping regional security dynamics (more on this in the next section).

Contrary to the understanding that power capabilities increase the chances for states, especially that of great powers, to achieve their desired roles, power might not be the necessary pre-condition for successful role location. Despite significant capabilities, Russia was not able to ‘Force’ the desired roles for itself in Europe. Likewise, it is not through the exercise of military power that China managed to locate its roles in Southeast Asian regional order. Although China’s role location strategy might be changing with its advanced aspirations for regional and global leadership under Xi Jinping, the country is restrained in using its capabilities in order not to undermine its current status of a ‘responsible power’ pursuing peaceful development. The case of China demonstrated that well-entrenched role conceptions do have a restraining impact even on the most powerful actors.

Finally, focus on the processes of regional security dynamics, rather than on actor types or structural composition of the region, makes the framework of regional security dynamics applicable in different regions, for different actors and contexts. It was successfully applied to explain the divergent cases of EU-Russia and ASEAN-China interaction. Although the EU-Russia and the ASEAN-China relationships produced different intersubjective security environments, their processes of role bargaining and governance practice followed the same logic. Despite the differences in the distribution of power, type of actors, and the contexts of their interaction, the *processes* of the security dynamics that unfolded in Europe and Asia are thus *comparable*. This finding provides an answer to the everlasting problem of comparison in comparative regionalism: what to compare? It also takes away the methodological issue of having only n=1 or small N number of cases.<sup>14</sup> Processes of regional bargaining and governance contestation occur within and across regions, between different regional actors as well as within, and across, issues areas. Hence, a focus on regional order

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<sup>14</sup> Philippe De Lombaerde et al., “The Problem of Comparison in Comparative Regionalism,” *Review of International Studies* 36, no. 3 (July 2010): 731–53, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000707>.

processes rather than outcomes, or regionalism models, provides a fruitful avenue for cross-regional comparison.

### **Avenues for Future Research**

Several empirical and theoretical research trajectories might develop from the current research. The main empirical research perspective is to apply a role theory approach to regional security dynamics to current developments in EU-Russia and the ASEAN-China interaction. The ASEAN-China case would be of particular interest in this regard. In October 2017, Xi Jinping delivered a three-hour long speech to the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Communist Party of China and proclaimed a ‘New Era’ for China under his leadership, when the country is expected to ‘move closer to center stage.’<sup>15</sup> Western analysts already labeled his doctrine as aiming to restore China’s great power status in global order.<sup>16</sup> It is yet to be seen how Xi’s new doctrine will influence the regional role bargaining process of ASEAN and China. China’s economic success and regime durability continue to attract admiration from ASEAN member states.<sup>17</sup> Yet, collectively, as an organization, ASEAN does not want to lose its own position of ‘centrality’ in the regional order. The role bargaining outcome would likely depend on the strategy that China will choose to claim a role upgrade, and whether it will continue to recognize ASEAN’s regional leadership. It would also depend on the responsive strategy of ASEAN and particularly on how the organization would be able to secure a positive role bargaining outcome with China without losing recognition for its own role.

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<sup>15</sup> Xi Jinping, “A Report at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC),” *Xinhua News Agency*, October 18, 2017, accessed January 31, 2018, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/special/2017-11/03/c\\_136725942.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/special/2017-11/03/c_136725942.htm).

<sup>16</sup> Chris Buckley, “China Enshrines ‘Xi Jinping Thought,’ Elevating Leader to Mao-Like Status,” *The New York Times*, October 24, 2017, sec. Asia Pacific, accessed January 31, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/24/world/asia/china-xi-jinping-communist-party.html>; Buckley; Jiayang Fan, “At the Communist Party Congress, Xi Jinping Plays the Emperor,” *The New Yorker*, October 18, 2017, accessed January 31, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/at-the-communist-party-congress-xi-jinping-plays-the-emperor>.

<sup>17</sup> “Southeast Asia’s Strongmen Looking to China as Trump Visits Asia,” *East Asia Forum*, November 6, 2017, accessed January 31, 2018, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2017/11/06/southeast-asias-strongmen-looking-to-china-as-trump-visits-asia/>.

The future development of the EU-Russia relations could also be analyzed through the theory of regional security dynamics. Although no significant changes in Russia's foreign policy are expected, since President Putin will likely be elected for a third term in 2018, there still might be re-interpretations in Russia's role bargaining or role enactment strategy, which could impact the current trajectory of EU-Russia role bargaining. The change in expectations is currently more likely on the side of the EU. As briefly discussed in Chapter 3, internal debate about a more pragmatic approach to Russia is developing within in the EU. Should this debate shape the interpretation of the appropriate role enactment for the EU, or its role expectations for Russia, this might lead to a shift in role bargaining or even to Russia's role accommodation.

Another interesting empirical research avenue flowing from this dissertation would be to analyze a more specific impact of a crisis on the external role bargaining process. As noted above, any crisis returns actors to a situation of uncertainty and encourages the reinterpretation, or even redefinition, of roles. Its influence on external role bargaining, however, is not self-evident. This dissertation has discussed cases of crises that had a decisive impact on actors' role bargaining process (the Ukrainian crisis in 2013-2014, the Asian financial crisis in 1997-1999 and the South China Sea crisis in 2011-2012). Yet, there were crises that did not feature prominently in role bargaining. For example, the 2004 revolution in Ukraine, the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, the 2006 and 2009 EU-Russia gas crises were part of EU-Russia interaction but *not* their role bargaining process. Likewise, the fact that crises might have a positive and a negative impact on the role location process might be further investigated.

One possible way to develop and expand on the theoretical aspect of this dissertation could be theorizing the impact of domestic role contestations on the external role bargaining process. In the scope of my dissertation, I only took note of this impact in the form of changing domestic role interpretation and the choice of the role bargaining strategies. However, a more targeted research is needed to understand in what ways (if at all) actors consider internal differences important when they reject or recognize each other's roles, as well as how they approach the choice of role bargaining

strategies. The nature of this impact suggests that domestic role contestation could be added as the third dimension of regional security dynamics, together with role bargaining and governance practices.

The impact of domestic role interpretation on external role bargaining outcomes was especially evident in the cases of the EU and ASEAN. As collective actors, regional organizations are less coherent in their interpretation of foreign policy roles than states. Here I do not imply foreign policy coherence, which is discussed extensively by the literature on regional actorness, but the coherence of the role interpretation guiding this foreign policy. Even when unanimity between member states was reached on the appropriate role, different interpretations shifted the understanding of what constitutes a successful enactment of this role, with implications for external role bargaining outcomes. The ASEAN case is particularly telling in this regard: because of its loose institutionalization, and lack of strong supranational structures, ASEAN's international roles were contingent on the interpretation that its members ascribed to them when assuming chairmanship in the organization. Although ASEAN's regional roles over the period of time analyzed here remained unchanged, individual member states manipulated their interpretation or enactment, causing shifts in the organizations governance approach or practice. For example, the security dynamics in the South China Sea case, discussed in Chapter 6, developed depending on how different ASEAN chairs shifted the organization's role interpretation (Vietnam and the Philippines directed ASEAN towards upgrading its role, while Cambodia advocated for preserving the existing interpretation of appropriate role enactment).

Despite being a more supranational and heavily institutionalized entity than ASEAN, the EU also had instances when the organization's external role bargaining or role enactment shifted because of the interpretations provided by specific member states. For example, a change in the EU's role bargaining in 2006 (the suspension of EU-Russia negotiations on the new partnership agreement to 'Force' its role expectations on Russia) was directed by Poland and Lithuania. Likewise, the enactment of EU roles through the Eastern Partnership policy was strongly shaped by the Polish

Presidency in 2011 and by Germany in mid-2013 (signing the AA in Vilnius) and in mid-2014 (trilateral talks with Ukraine and Russia).

Similar trends were observed in Russia and China. The case studies demonstrated that internal actors engaged in external role bargaining processes on behalf of Russia and China, having different interpretations of the appropriate role or role enactment. This was especially evident in the case of the EU-Russia-Ukraine trilateral talks, when a more moderate vision of Russia's role (promoted by Russia's Ministry for Regional Development representing the Russian party to the talks) was eventually substituted by a more radical interpretation, imposed by the Russian government (not directly involved in the consultations). Likewise, different interpretations of the South China Sea issue by the Chinese MFA (which promoted a moderate policy) and its military (which advocated in favor of an assertive policy) created confusion about China's international role with regard to this issue.

The second aspect related to domestic role contestation is the choice of a role bargaining strategy. In this dissertation, I re-conceptualized the strategies for role dissonance reduction offered by Thies (e.g. Force, Resolve, Reject) as bargaining strategies. I also conceptualized an additional 'Accommodate' strategy as a selective recognition of a role by an actor without changing his or her role conception or expectations. However, why actors opt for particular strategies and not others remains unclear. It is possible to assume that the choice of a particular strategy is related to the nature of the role conception of an actor. My empirical research demonstrated that actors, at times, opted for different role bargaining strategies under the same role conception. Alternatively, one could hypothesize that great powers might prefer a 'Force' strategy, as they have necessary power capabilities to perform it successfully. Yet, the choice of this strategy was not straightforward. For example, China restrained in forcing its regional role claims even when having the capabilities and opportunity to do so in the RCEP talks.

The empirical findings of the dissertation also allowed me to draw some conclusions as to the impact of a particular role bargaining strategy on the outcomes of the process. Mutual role

enforcement is less likely to result in a cooperative role relationship than role accommodation. The nature of the capabilities might also matter for the success of role location. To ‘Force’ its role claims, Russia used energy blackmailing, trade sanctioning, and military intervention as strategies to ‘Force’ its role, yet it failed to gain EU recognition. In contrast, China relied on economic capabilities, financial resources, ‘soft’ power, and to a lesser extent military might, and successfully located its role through bargaining with ASEAN. More targeted research should be made to test these assumptions.

This dissertation started with a quote from the latest EU Global Strategy recognizing that ‘in a world caught between global pressures and local pushback, regional dynamics come to the fore.’<sup>18</sup> A similar idea was raised during one of my interviews with an ASEAN expert, who observed that ASEAN becomes an ‘inward-looking’ organization whose policy is shaped by regional rather than global security issues.<sup>19</sup> Regional thinking prevails as global governance initiatives fail to address numerous crises and ensure compliance of actors with international rules and regulations. Little progress has been made in the WTO Doha Round to agree on further global trade liberalization. A major push back to international climate change negotiations was the withdrawal of the US from the Paris climate protocol. The UN Security Council continues to be paralyzed by divergent interests and ideologies of its permanent members. It failed to respond effectively to the situation in Syria or to the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. In this context of global diffusion of power, it is regions that are expected to provide ‘critical spaces of governance in a de-centered world.’<sup>20</sup> Understanding how and why regional security orders turn cooperative or conflictual thus becomes ever more important. As this dissertation has demonstrated, the interaction processes between key regional actors shape regional security environments. It also showed that the impact of domestic and global processes on the quality of security orders is subject to interpretation of these processes and impacts by the regional

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<sup>18</sup> “A Global Strategy for European Union's Foreign and Security Policy,” 32.

<sup>19</sup> Author’s interview with Bhubhindar Singh, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore, March 30, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

actors. Thus, regions should not be understood merely as units of analysis, where the domestic and global security patterns interact, but as autonomous spaces that generate security trends of their own with implications for local politics and global order.

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