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The role approach as a theoretical framework for the analysis of foreign policy in third world countries

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The study of foreign policy usually focuses on the foreign policy of strong states. It is less common to analyze the foreign policy of Third World countries, not only because Third World countries are regarded as too weak and vulnerable to be influential externally, but also because finding an appropriate theoretical framework for the study of foreign policy in Third World countries is an extremely complex task. Against this background, this paper has endeavored to challenge these pessimistic perspectives by assessing the effectiveness of one of the approaches to the study of foreign policy, that is, the Role Approach, in analyzing foreign policy in Third World states. This critical assessment has skilfully explored that the Role Approach is a functional theoretical framework for the analysis of foreign policy in Third World countries that have recurrently endeavored to play a range of roles at the international, regional and sub-regional levels.

Key words: The role approach, role perception (conception), role performance (conduct), foreign policy analysis, the study of foreign policy, Third World countries (states).

INTRODUCTION

Broadly, the study of foreign policy is a combination of diverse means and activities, which are dedicated to understanding and explaining foreign policy processes and the behavior of significant actors in the international system (Neack et al., 1995). Foreign policy analysis is an investigative process, which primarily aims to examine the behavior of international units, usually states, towards their external environment, that is, beyond their material borders. According to Deborah J. Gerner, "the central focus of foreign policy analysis is on the intentions, statements and actions of actors - often, but not always, a state - directed towards the external world and the response of other actors to these intentions, statements and actions" (Gerner, 1995). For Gerner, a defining factor of the study of foreign policy is its focus on both the international and domestic spheres and the consequent need to move between individual, state and systemic levels of analysis (Gerner, 1995). Foreign policy is therefore studied from a variety of perspectives. It may entail the analysis of various actors such as the state, non-state entities and sub-state entities; a range of levels, including the individual-level, state-level and the macro (systemic)-level; different milieus such as the internal and external and other variables, including discourse, strategies, policies and actions.

A range of theories, approaches, notions and models were devoted to the study of foreign policy. This includes Decision-Making Approach, Rosenau's Pre-Theory, The Theory of Bureaucratic Politics with Allison's models of (i) Rational Actor, (ii) Organizational Processes and (iii) Governmental/Bureaucratic Politics, Cognitivism, The notion of Cognitive Mapping, The concept of belief System, The Approach of Domestic Political Explanation, The notion of Two-level Games, Nested Games, The Role Approach, Discourse Analysis, Social Constructivism and so on.

The study of foreign policy usually focuses on the foreign policy of strong states. Strong states have influential foreign policy because they have huge capabilities, considerable influence and substantial credibility. It is less common to focus on the foreign policy of Third World countries, even though some Third World foreign policies merit study and analysis.

Realistically, building a stable state and a strong economy should be the priorities in the current political agenda of any Third World country. Only after establishing strong/self-reliant economies, stable political and social environments and strong-sophisticated military forces should decision-makers in Third World countries think about how to implement influential foreign policies

and play active roles, whether internationally or at the macro-regional levels.

Therefore, in the majority of Western or Eurocentric approaches to foreign policy analysis, active foreign policies can be only conducted by major powers, while Third World countries are regarded as too weak and vulnerable to be influential externally, as they are undeveloped, unstable and their international weight is limited. However, analysis of the foreign policies of certain Third World countries demonstrates that such perspectives are not always sound. For instance, Third World countries such as Castro's Cuba, Algeria of the 1960s and 1970s, Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser's leadership and India during the Nehru's regime have all conducted effective foreign policies and played major roles at the North-South and South-South levels. Moreover, some Third World countries had managed to resolve several crises, which strong-powers had been powerless to settle. Algeria's mediation during the Iranian/American hostage crisis (4 November 1979 - 20 January 1981) illustrated that Third World countries could play certain roles in international politics when the great-powers and super-powers were unable to do so.

Indeed, poor capabilities and limited influence are not the only obstacles when studying foreign policy in Third World states. Finding an appropriate theoretical framework for the study of foreign policy in Third World countries is also a difficult task. Many scholars who have attempted to establish a theoretical framework in this field have faced a range of impediments, as several questions arise when choosing a theoretical framework for the study of foreign policy in Third World states. These can be summarized as follows:

1. Is it unproblematic to have sufficient access to reliable data on decision-making in Third World countries?
2. To what extent is the examiner of foreign policy in Third World countries able to investigate Roseneau's five variables in countries where there is little access to data concerning officials and structural frameworks?
3. How much is known about the confidential bureaucratic networks in Third World countries? Do Third World countries have highly sophisticated bureaucratic and institutional networks such as those found in developed countries? Moreover, in Third World countries that are generally characterized by the domination of an individual ruler over decision-making process, what is the role of bureaucrats in foreign policy decision-making?
4. Is it possible to get close enough to Third World decision-makers to observe their cognitive and psychological attributes?
5. To what extent can a systematic domestic political explanation be applied to the analysis of foreign policy in Third World countries where the domestic environments are well known for instability and conflict?
6. Is there access to sufficient data on foreign policy language in Third World countries? Moreover, is the poli-

tical discourse of Third World leaders always genuine and does it enhance the understanding of mind-sets and actions? This is difficult to ascertain in countries where the political discourse usually aims to mobilize the masses and legitimize the regime?

7. In newly independent Third World countries, where identity was inchoate prior to the colonial era and has since then been subject to continuous fragmentations, how helpful are cultural identity and social constructivism in the study of foreign policy?

The above mentioned questions and concerns reveal that any attempt to establish and develop a theoretical framework for the analysis of foreign policy in Third World countries is not a trouble-free.

Against this background, this article will endeavor to challenge these pessimistic standpoints by assessing the effectiveness of one of the approaches to the study of foreign policy, that is, the Role Approach, in analyzing foreign policy in Third World states. With other words, this article will investigate to what extent the Role Approach is applicable to the study of foreign policy in Third World countries.

In order to attain this aim, the article will initially define the Role Approach. Since the Role Approach has been through major developments before its emergence as a theoretical tool in the field of foreign policy analysis, the article will put the development of the Role Approach in a historical context. Subsequently, the article will explore the main principles of the Role Approach. And eventually, the article will attempt to investigate the effectiveness of the Role Approach in the study of foreign policy in Third World countries.

THE DEFINITION OF THE ROLE APPROACH

Theorists of international relations, historians, officials and members of the media employ terms such as "neutral", "aggressor", "mediator" and "anti-imperialist" when referring to states. Such characterizations stem from actions and decisions taken by actors. For example, if a state is described as a "mediator", it means that the state has adopted policies, decisions and goals related to perceived mediation duties and responsibilities, internationally or regionally.

Broadly, the Role Approach is a theoretical framework devoted to the study of behavior using the notion of role. In the field of foreign policy, decision-makers imagine and suppose that their state should adopt and accomplish a range of duties, tasks and commitments in the international system or in subordinate regional systems. According to the proponents of the Role Approach, these duties, tasks and commitments are known in the field of foreign policy as "roles".

Based on the Role Approach, the world's states can be presented as playing a variety of roles, the best known of

which are Liberation Supporter, Regional Leader, Regional Protector, Active Independent, Anti-Imperialist Agent, Defender of the Faith, Mediator, Developer, Model, Peace Maker, Policeman, Faithful Ally and Anti-Terrorism Agent.

It is significant to highlight that an individual state may play several roles simultaneously, for instance an individual state may be: Liberation Supporter, Anti-Imperialist Agent, Regional Leader and Regional Protector. In fact, roles are not merely played by individual states with sovereignty. Deep analysis of the international system reveals that other international units perceive an array of tasks and duties in the international system or in subordinate regional systems.

For instance, an international organization such as the United Nations (UN) has been, since 1945, playing a range of roles in the international system, especially in the fields of "peace-keeping", "peace-building" and "development".

Despite their neo-colonial and imperialist character, financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Paris and London Clubs, have all been attempting to play two major roles: (i) the role of "developer" and the role of "guardian of the international monetary and banking order".

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are also known for their endeavors to play active roles internationally and regionally, notably in the fields of "human-rights promotion", "socio-economic development" and "environment protection".

Accordingly, it is not erroneous to state that employing the notion of role in the study of international relations implies a description of international relations as a theatric show in which every international unit is an actor playing a role or an array of roles. However, the paper will focus on states and the roles adopted by sovereign states because sovereign states are still seen as the major actors in foreign affairs.

This leads the author to define some of the prominent roles adopted by sovereign states.

1. Liberation supporter: A state feels that it has a duty to support liberation movements and export revolution as a result of a horrendous colonial experience, a revolutionary background, or a victorious war for independence.
2. Regional leader: A state perceives itself to have sufficient resources and capabilities to enable it to dominate a regional sphere.
3. Regional protector: Due to its regional standing or various capabilities, a state feels that it has a duty to protect its regional arena.
4. Active independent: A state takes on the task of pursuing an independent and active foreign policy, that is, a foreign policy which serves state interests rather than foreign pressures and aims to increase and diversify interactions with different international units.
5. Anti-imperialist agent: A state adopts the stance of being

anti-imperialist as a result of its historical background, such as having been a victim of colonization, or as a consequence of supporting certain ideologies such as communism.

6. Defender of the faith: A state feels that it has a duty to protect and promote certain principles and beliefs. These beliefs can be political such as the protection and promotion of democracy and freedom or religious such as the protection and promotion of Christianity, Judaism or Islam.

7. Mediator: A state perceives itself as capable of carrying out specific tasks in order to reconcile conflicts and misunderstandings between states, blocs and individuals.

8. Developer: A state feels that it has a duty to assist and develop the underdeveloped world.

9. Model: A state pursues certain policies in order to promote its prestige, to gain influence and to be a role model either in the international system or in a particular region or regions.

10. Peace maker: A state takes on the task of promoting peace and concord in the world.

11. Policeman: A state feels that it has a duty to fight and punish evil states and regimes.

12. Faithful ally: A state known by its lasting and absolute support for another state or a bloc of states.

13. Anti-terrorism agent: A state takes on the task of fighting terrorism due to experiences of terrorist threats or experience in combating terrorism.

As already mentioned, the article will now investigate the emergence of the Role Approach as a theoretical framework for the study of foreign policy.

The Emergence of the Role Approach as a Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Foreign Policy

American and European philosophers, psychologists and anthropologists, early writers in the discipline of behavioral science, were among the major precursors of the Role Approach. They included: American sociologists and social philosophers such as Wendell James, Josiah Royce and John Dewey; American sociologists and anthropologists such as Charles Horton Cooley, Edward Ross, William Isaac Thomas, Florian Znaniecki, Lewis Henry Morgan, Elton Mayo and Robert Ezra Park; European psychologists, including Alfred Binet, Pierre Janet, Charles Aime Alfred Blondel and European sociologists, anthropologists and social philosophers such as Emile Durkheim, Max ferdinand Scheler, Jokob Levy Morono and Moritz Eggert (Biddle and Thomas, 1966). These early writers sought to employ the tools and experiences of scientific research in the fields of sociology and psychology.

Afterward, the development of the Role Approach in

social studies was made possible by the significant contributions of several social psychologists and sociologists, including Daniel Levinson (1959), Michael Banton (1965), Edwin Thomas (1966, 1979), Bruce Biddle (1966, 1979, 1986), Frederick Bates (1968), Alvin Bertrand (1972), Ralph Turner (1979), Louis Zurcher (1983), Helena Lopata (1991), Leslie Hammer (2003), Cynthia Thompson (2003) and Adam Blatner (2000, 2006).

Bruce J. Biddle (Department of Psychology and Sociology, The University of Missouri) and Edwin J. Thomas (School of Social Work and Department of Psychology, The University of Michigan) have significantly contributed to the development of the Role Approach in their work on *Role Theory: Concepts and Research* (1966). Their objectives included establishing "Role Theory as a discipline of study in the behavioral sciences" and addressing the fact that "the field has no text, no collection of readings and no comprehensive statement of its concepts, theory and knowledge" (Biddle and Thomas, 1966). For Biddle and Thomas, "the field of 'Role Theory' has chosen as its domain of study nothing more nor less than complex real-life behavior" (Biddle and Thomas, 1966). They drew a parallel between actors in a play where "performance is determined by the script, the director's instructions, the performances of fellow actors and reactions of audiences as well as by the acting talents of the players" (Biddle and Thomas, 1966) and the roles of individuals in society where role performance "is determined by social norms, demands and rules and by the role performances of others in their respective positions; by those who observe and react to the performance and by the individual's particular capabilities and personality" (Biddle and Thomas, 1966).

In a further attempt to develop the notion of role as a theoretical framework in social studies, Bruce Biddle distinguished between five major models: (i) Functional Role Theory, (ii) Symbolic Interactionist Role Theory, (iii) Structural Role Theory, (iv) Organizational Role Theory and (v) Cognitive Role Theory (Biddle, 1986).

Ongoing attempts to promote the status of the Role Approach in social studies led to the development of a special form of social conflict, known among Role theorists as "Role Conflict". This is an inconsistent situation which occurs when an individual is forced to simultaneously implement incompatible roles that carry conflicting expectations (Hammer, 2003).

During the current decade, Adam Blatner conducted a series of constant inquiries on the Role Approach (Blatner, 2000, 2006). In one of his systematic investigations, Blatner added the term "Role Dynamics" to the terminology of the Role Approach (Blatner, 2006).

The success of behavioral approaches in the fields of psychology and sociology led researchers and academics to employ them in analyzing politics and international relations. Studying the behavior of political actors has become a significant tool in the analysis of political phenomena and events.

The use of the Role Approach to study foreign policy and international relations was initiated in 1970 by Kal Holsti. He examined the connections between national role conceptions and models of participation in world political affairs (Holsti, 1987). In his article on "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy", Holsti found some concepts that could be used in analyzing foreign policy: " 'Role Performance', which encompasses the attitudes, decisions and actions governments take to implement their self-defined national 'Role Conceptions' or the 'Role Prescriptions' emanating under varying circumstances from the alter or external environment. Actions always take place within a position, that is, a system of 'Role Prescriptions' " (Holsti, 1987).

Other international relations specialists followed this lead, including Stephen G. Walker in his "National Role Conceptions and Systemic Outcomes" (Walker, 1979). Walker linked the conflictual behavior directed toward the two superpowers by third nations to the national role conceptions of third nations and the expectations of the superpowers concerning the behavior of third nations (Walker, 1987). Walker has noted that the determinants and sources of national roles have been the focal point of a series of ongoing investigations and analyses carried out by Comparative Research on the Events of Nations (CREON) at Ohio State University since the early 1980s (Walker, 1987). In 1987, Walker published a major book entitled, *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, in which he brought together and evaluated essays on Role Theory and foreign policy analysis (Walker, 1987).

During the same decade, that is, the 1980s, Role Approach was the subject of a major study carried out by Christer Jonsson and Westerlund Ulf, in which the authors have examined the utilization of the Role Approach in foreign policy analysis as part of an overall analysis of cognitivism in international studies (Jonsson and Ulf, 1982).

In 1999, Steven J. Campbell used Role Approach concepts to analyze U.S. foreign policy in a paper entitled "Role Theory, Foreign Policy Advisers and U.S. Foreign Policy-Making". The paper examined correlations between role perceptions, the expectations of U.S. foreign policy advisers and U.S. foreign policy decision-making (Campbell, 1999).

In an attempt to outline a conceptual framework that focuses on the reasoning of national foreign policy-makers and their understanding of international relations in post-Cold War Europe, Lisbeth Aggestam has skillfully examined the correlation between role conceptions in post-Cold War Europe and the politics of identity in foreign policy (Aggestam, 1999).

In 2008 (September-October), the Role Approach was the main subject of a conference program entitled "Role Theory Research in International Relations: Conceptual Challenges and Political Promise". The conference program was organized by the University of Trier and the University of Heidelberg. The speakers discussed

different aspects of the Role Approach and took Europe, the U.S. and Japan as case studies (Frank et al., 2008). After this chronological account, the article will now examine the main principles of the Role Approach.

THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF THE ROLE APPROACH

Four main questions have guided the investigations of proponents of the Role Approach when analyzing foreign policy. These are:

1. What are the sources of the role conceptions held by policy-makers?
2. Under what circumstances was the national role conception built?
3. What is the impact of foreign policy sources and circumstances on foreign affairs decisions and actions?
4. To what extent are strategies and actions in concordance?

Role theorists have used these questions to relate their analyses of foreign policy to the Role Approach and to divide the latter into role sources, role perceptions (conceptions) and role conduct (performances). Both Holsti and Walker see role performances in the form of foreign policy decisions and actions deriving primarily from policy makers' role conceptions. Factors, including domestic needs and demands, critical events or trends in the external environment, the expectations of other governments, legal norms, general usage, (and) treaties shape "foreign policy orientation", create "role perceptions" and place the state in a position whereby the government is expected to carry out certain "role performances" (Holsti, 1987). Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane have defined role conceptions as a "set of norms expressing expected foreign policy behavior and action orientation. It can be thought of as a 'road map' that foreign-policy makers rely on to simplify and facilitate an understanding of a complex political reality" (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993). This "road map" includes goals and strategies stemming from various circumstances and sources, stagnant or changing, external or internal. The sources and circumstances can derive from culture, history, domestic laws and institutions, national values, personality, the political needs of policy makers, capabilities, resources, location, traditional roles, ideology, domestic needs and demands, or external circumstances and resources connected with the international milieu such as treaty commitments, the structure of the international system, or a feeling of danger from enemies or neighbors. These circumstances and sources form a policy maker's conception of the nation's orientations and tasks in the international system or in subordinate regional systems and create particular state positions known in the Role Approach as role perceptions or role conceptions. According to Holsti, "a national role

conception includes the policy-makers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems" (Holsti, 1987).

The range of actions dedicated to performing and conducting role perceptions are known as role conduct which "encompasses the actual foreign policy behavior in terms of actions undertaken" (Aggestam, 1999). These actions allow outsiders to have a particular picture of the state's roles in certain regions or in the global system (Holsti, 1987). The same foreign policy sources could conceivably influence role orientations and role conduct simultaneously. In addition, these sources can create a situation of non-concordance between the role perception and its conduct. Therefore, the Role Approach begins by exploring the impact of the sources of foreign policy orientation in shaping role perceptions and subsequently examines the interaction between role perceptions and role performances.

In some cases, states are obliged to simultaneously perform incompatible roles that require a contradictory set of behavioral actions. This places foreign policy decision-makers in a confusing situation identified as "Role Conflict".

After establishing the main principles of the Role Approach, this paper will look next at the effectiveness of the Role Approach in analyzing foreign policy in Third World states.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ROLE APPROACH IN THE STUDY OF FOREIGN POLICY IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

In general, the Role Approach has been extensively criticized for restricting foreign policy analysis on "roles" (role perceptions and role performances). The Role Approach might be rich in terms of terminology. However, foreign policy process is a complex and multi-dimensional procedure which can not be solely seen through the lens of roles. Thus, too heavy emphasis on the concept of "role" when analyzing foreign policy might limit the contributions made by the Role Approach to no more than a lexis account.

Despite the above-mentioned limitation, using the Role Approach when analyzing foreign policy is in general practical and effective for at least two main reasons:

1. Broadly, the definitions of foreign policy are ambivalent. This is in part due to the lack of a common definition offered for the term foreign policy. What does the term "foreign policy" really mean? Does foreign policy indicate general goals and strategies adopted in foreign relations or does it refer to decisions related to external relations or does foreign policy mean the conduct and the

substantial application of the goals adopted in foreign relations? Or does foreign policy refer to a combination of goals, strategies, decisions and actions?

The systematic use of the Role Approach reduces the scope for confusion when defining foreign policy and offers a clear understanding of foreign policy process as it facilitates the division of foreign policy process and analysis into at least six categories: (i) the exploration of the various determinants and factors that influenced foreign policy, (ii) the examination of the impact of these factors on foreign policy process, (iii) the study of the nature and characteristics of foreign policy orientation (role perceptions), (iv) the study of the nature and characteristics of foreign policy conduct (role performances), (v) the study of decision-making process and finally (vi) the examination of concordance between foreign policy orientation (role perceptions) and foreign policy conduct (role performances).

2. The Role Approach is a flexible theoretical instrument as it allows its users to combine procedures and principles drawn from different paradigms and approaches within the same framework and leaves the analyst free to employ a range of tools. For example, when exploring the sources of foreign policy, users of the Role Approach sometimes turn into proponents of the realist paradigm, which attaches great importance to state capabilities and state resources in determining a state's foreign policy behavior. By contrast, analyzing foreign policy orientation could involve discourse analysis while analyzing decision-making seems to favor the approach of Snyder et al and could involve notions of Allison's Bureaucratic Approach. Employing the Role Approach might involve a discussion of the cognitive processes and psychological attributes of decision-makers and could entail the psychological hypotheses of some foreign policy theorists such as Kal Holsti, Margaret Hermann and Robert Axelrod. Moreover, employing the Role Approach in foreign policy analysis could involve social constructivism when investigating the impact of cultural identity on decision-makers' perceptions.

In relation to the utilization of the Role Approach in the study of foreign policy in Third World states, there are several points which need to be highlighted:

i) Role perceptions originate from factors and determinants which are usually related to the state's capabilities and riches and role performances require an active-influential foreign policy. Strong capabilities are not available in a number of poor Third World countries. In view of that, many Third World countries are powerless to play major roles internationally and regionally.

In some cases, the lack of strong capabilities in poor Third World states leads to a situation of a self-contained foreign policy: "keeping myself to myself". Foreign policy decision-makers in a number of poor Third World countries do not necessarily look at their state's external

behavior through the lens of roles since they are not always concerned with playing roles in the regional or international arenas. Accordingly, the Role Approach can be used to analyze the foreign policy of some Third World states, but not all.

The deep analysis of the literature that employed the Role Approach in analyzing foreign policy in Third World countries reveals that the major contributions in this framework were devoted to the study of Arab states foreign policies. Bahgat Korany, Ali Hillaal Dessouki and other international relations scholars employed the Role Approach in two multi-case texts, both devoted to study the foreign policies of Arab states (Korany and Dessouki, 1984) (Korany, Dessouki et al., 1991). In an attempt to explore the relationship between institutions, roles and role conflict, Michael Barnett took the Arab states system as a case study (Barnett, 1993). This exclusive focus on the Arab World was probably due to the importance of the Middle East region and the existence of a major conflict in the area, namely the Arab-Israeli conflict. Nevertheless, another major reason is also valid: Compared to other parts of the Third World, the Arab region comprises wealthy states. Thus, many Arab states have been attempting to play different roles at the international, regional and sub-regional levels. This attracted the attention of academics and researchers who endeavored to study the correlation between roles attempts and foreign policy in this wealthy Third World region, which validates the above-mentioned thought on the linkage between roles and state capabilities in the Third World.

ii) Employing the "Role Approach" involves realist assumptions such as the relative autonomy and the predominance of the state. Due to their economic, technological and sometimes political and military dependency on the industrialized countries, Third World countries are often powerless to maintain their capabilities. For instance, during the 1970s, many Third World oil and gas exporting countries have attempted to use oil and gas in order to bargain in the North-South frame. Nevertheless, oil prices depend on international market forces which have been largely beyond the control of Third World oil and gas exporting countries, despite the existence of OPEC. Thus, in contrast to the 1970s, using oil as a weapon lost its credibility during the 1980s.

Third World states, which attempted to play roles internationally or regionally, have frequently experienced role conflict as a consequence of their multi-dimensional forms of dependency on the Western industrialized world. Comparing foreign policy conduct (role performances) with foreign policy orientation (role perceptions) in some Third World countries explores an incompatible situation, as dependence which involves state vulnerability has played a major role in creating a divergence between these two levels of the foreign policy process.

Algeria can be used as an illustrative instance in this

framework. On the eve of their independence, Algerian foreign policy-makers perceived an array of roles for their country, both in the international system and in subordinate regional systems, including the roles of "Mediator in the North-South and South-South Frameworks", "Regional Leader in the Maghreb", "Example to the Third World Countries", "Anti-Imperialist Agent" and "Liberation Supporter". Nevertheless, independent Algeria's initial role aspirations were bound to run up against domestic and foreign constraints and Algeria's foreign policy conduct has on many occasions been at odds with its foreign policy orientation. Algeria's multi-dimensional dependency on the West, notably on France and the European Community/Union, has played a major part in frustrating the realization of Algeria's roles attempts and creating role conflict situations. The desire to conduct the roles of "Regional Leader in the Maghreb" and "Example to the Third World Countries" involved Algeria in an industrialization program that required technological and financial assistance from the West (or the so-called imperialist/colonialist world). This contradicted with Algeria's endeavors to play the roles of "Anti-Imperialist Agent" and "Liberation Supporter" which created a major role conflict situation.

iii) Along with dependency, political instability is also a frequent phenomenon in many Third World countries. Political instability can easily undermine the credibility of the state and its opportunities to play active roles, whether internationally or at the macro-regional level. In this perspective, Nasser's Egypt can be used as an illuminating example.

Egypt under President Gamal Abdel Nasser played major roles internationally and regionally, including the roles of "Arabs Leader", the "Arab World's Protector" (against Israel), "Model" for the Developing World, Liberation Supporter (notably in Africa and the Middle East) and Anti-Imperialist Agent (notably Nasser's nationalization campaign of foreign-ownership between 1955 and 1957, including the Suez Canal).

Undeniably, Nasser's role aspirations were to some extent undermined by the Israeli victory over the Arab armies in the Six Day War. Nevertheless, Egypt's political instability during the 1960s, notably the opposition to Nasser's authoritarianism and the stiff suppression of the opposition by Nasser's regime, can be seen to have severely weakened Nasser's performance in foreign policy and curtailed Egypt's capacity to play out its role perceptions at that time.

iv) Role perceptions in Third World countries are not always genuine. Roles which are related to sovereignty, revolution, colonialism and imperialism are in some cases used by Third World leaders to mobilize the masses and enhance the legitimacy of the regime. In order to clarify this, the policies of Zimbabwe's President, Robert Mugabe, can be used as a prime sample.

Mugabe rose to prominence since the 1960s as the Zimbabwe African National Union leader in the guerilla

warfare against white-minority rule in Rhodesia. After leading a long-victorious war for independence, President Mugabe was regarded in Africa as a hero and was widely accepted in Africa's anti-imperialist camp. Aware of the existence of disparity in terms of wealth between the white-minority and the black-majority, as Zimbabwe's best lands were reserved for mainly white landlords, President Mugabe perceived for himself and his country the task to implement an Anti-Imperialist Role. President Mugabe believed that the struggle against imperialism and colonialism involves a war on two fronts: fighting imperialism at the exterior and its agents in the interior. Mugabe accused the United Kingdom and the United States of promoting white imperialism and accused opposition figures to his government of being allies of white imperialism.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the Role of Anti-Imperialist Agent by Mugabe's regime entailed a range of pejorative actions, including the expropriation of thousands of white-owned farms, racist acts against white people, waves of oppression against opposition groups and a massive killing of innocent people, which have elicited domestic and international condemnation. Thus, the Role of "Anti-Imperialist Agent", which shaped Mugabe's domestic and foreign policy, was used somewhat disingenuously since the principle of "Anti-Imperialism" was also used as an umbrella for political predominance and leadership aspirations.

Mugabe's example has validated the author's assumption in relation to some Third World leaders who use some role perceptions to mobilize the masses and enhance the legitimacy of the regime.

v) It has to be admitted that some Third World countries perceive for themselves irrational role perceptions. For instance, due to its huge natural resources capability, notably in terms of oil and gas and owing to the nature of its leadership, Col. Gaddafi's Libya was involved in an anti-West/US foreign policy. Along with his attempts to lead and protect the Arab and Moslem Worlds and lately the African continent, Gaddafi perceived for his country anti-West/US role perceptions, including the roles of "Anti-Imperialist Agent", "Liberation Supporter" and "Citadel of Revolution". The implementation of these perceived roles involved Libya in anti-Western/US terrorist actions.

It was unsound to suppose that a country of four million inhabitants could stand up to the West, notably to a state as powerful as the US. Not surprisingly, Tripoli and Benghazi were bombed by the US in 1986 in an Endeavor to "bring Libya back into line". Libya has also endured economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation, as a result of its involvement in the Lockerbie bombing. After long years of endurance, Gaddafi had finally understood that the only way to have his country accepted back into the international community is to give in to Western pressure and give up his irrational anti-West/US role perceptions. Consequently, Libya has formally avowed its

responsibility for the actions of its officials in respect of the Lockerbie bombing, it allowed the extradition of the two Libyans accused of planting a bomb on Pan Am Flight 103 and agreed to pay compensations to: the families of the Lockerbie bombing victims and the American victims of the 1986 Berlin discotheque bombing and the 1989 UTA Flight 772 bombing.

vi) The employment of the Role Approach in the study of foreign policy in Third World states requires access to data related to the “black box” of foreign policy decision-making, including the cognitive processes and psychological attributes of decision-makers. The traditional elements of the ordinary political agendas, including sovereignty, the nation and statehood, are still fresh and subject to internal debate in many Third World countries. Therefore, gaining access to primary material related to role perceptions and role performances by dealing with Third World officials is not a task that anyone can easily accomplish, as the political environment in the Third World region is generally characterized by confidentiality and mistrust.

Indeed, the above-mentioned obstructions do not only exist in Third World states and are not only restricted to the use of the Role Approach in the study of foreign policy in Third World countries.

For instance, great powers adopt role perceptions which are sometimes dishonest and irrational. In this perspective, the current American occupation of Iraq which intended to conduct the role perceptions of the Bush administration, including the roles of “Defender of the Faith” (protecting and promoting democracy and freedom), “Policeman” and “Anti-Terrorism Agent”, was in fact motivated by dishonest and irrational calculations which primarily aimed to fulfill a colonization project.

On the subject of the difficulty to have access to primary data when analyzing roles attempts in Third World states, it is important to emphasize the fact that the difficulty to get access to privileged information which extends beyond foreign policy principles to deal with foreign policy strategies is not only limited to the study of foreign policy in the Third World. Any attempt to open the “black box” of foreign policy decision-making of any country, developed or underdeveloped, will experience obstructions, as issues related to foreign policy, including role perceptions and role performances, are usually classified as matters of national security in any country in the world.

Moreover, the existence of the above-mentioned impediments cannot be used as an excuse to decline the usefulness of the Role Approach in analyzing foreign policy in the Third World. In contrast, using thoughts from the Role Approach when analyzing foreign policy in Third World countries; is sometimes feasible as the Role Approach does closely correspond to the actual course and conduct of foreign policy in many Third World states. Many Third World countries are known for their endeavors to play a range of roles, either in the international

system or in subordinate regional systems. The most prominent are:

Algeria: As previously stated, Algeria is known for its attempts to play an array of roles including the roles of “Mediator in the North-South and South-South Frameworks”, “Regional Leader in the Maghreb”, “Example to the Third World Countries”, “Anti-Imperialist Agent” and “Liberation Supporter”. Since 1992, Algeria has perceived for itself the role of “Anti-Terrorism Agent” as a substitute to its prominent role of “Liberation Supporter”.

Brazil: Owing to its remarkable economic achievements, compared to other developing countries, Brazil has emerged as a significant political and economic power in Latin America and a key player in international affairs. This helped Brazil to play prominent roles, including the role of “Leader” in Latin America and the rest of the Third World and the role of “Mediator” in the North-South and South-South frameworks.

Cuba: Despite the existence of many contradictions in Castro’s foreign policy, Castro’s Cuba has been unquestionably renowned for its endeavors to play a range of roles, including (i) the role of “Anti-Imperialist Agent” (as an opposition to United States-sponsored imperialism), (ii) the role of “Liberation Supporter” and (iii) the role of “Leader” of the so-called the Third World’s radical bloc.

Egypt: Nasser’s Egypt played major roles internationally and regionally, including the roles of “Regional Leader in the Arab World”, “Protector of the Arab World”, “Model” for the Developing World, “Liberation Supporter” and “Anti-Imperialist Agent”. Most of Egypt’s role perceptions were abandoned since the signature of The Camp David Accords by the Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat in 1978, which led to the 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty. Since then, Egypt has been renowned for its constant endeavors to play the roles of “Peace-Maker” and “Mediator” in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

India: Since the Nehru era, India has played an active role in strengthening South-South cooperation for development. India was the founder member of the Non-aligned Movement and played a vital role in turning the Movement into a momentous Third World representative. Due to its huge nuclear capabilities and considerable economic growth, India’s aspirations to conduct the roles of “Third World Leader” and “South-South/North-South Mediator” remained active during the post-Cold War era.

Iran: Since the Iranian revolution of 1979, Iran has been attempting to play a range of roles, including the roles of “Defender of the Faith” (protecting Islam), “Regional Leader in the Moslem World” (notably against Israel),

“Anti-Imperialist Agent” and “Liberation Supporter” (particularly, Iran’s total support for the Palestinian cause).

Libya: As discussed previously, Libya’s foreign policy under the rule of Gaddafi has been characterized by several attempts to play the roles of “Anti-Imperialist Agent”, “Liberation Supporter” and “Citadel of Revolution”.

Nigeria: Since Nigeria’s independence in 1960, the African continent has been the centrepiece of its foreign policy. Armed with huge petroleum resources, Nigeria has endeavored to play several roles at the continental level, including the roles of “Africa’s Leader”, “Africa’s Protector”, “South-South Mediator” and “Liberation Supporter”. The African orientation of Nigeria’s foreign policy led Nigeria to play an active role in the “North-South” Mediation.

Pakistan: The author’s choice to include Pakistan among the examples is primarily due to Pakistan’s prominent role in the US-West anti-terrorism campaign following September 11th. Despite some disruptive events, Pakistan has skilfully played the role of “Anti-Terrorism Agent”, notably during President Musharraf reign. Pakistan’s role in the anti-terrorism campaign has been called “crucial” by the United States. Despite the departure of President Bush, Pakistan’s potential in the war against terror remains unshaken, as Pakistan’s role is essential in ending insurgency in Afghanistan.

Venezuela: The foreign policy of Venezuela under its current President, Hugo Chávez, has been globally well known for its ongoing endeavours to play major roles in both the North-South and South-South frames. These include the roles of “Anti-Imperialist Agent”, “South-South/North-South Mediator” and “Protector of the South”. In order to conduct these perceived roles, Chávez foreign policy has been based on two major elements: “Latin American Integration” and the so-called “Oil Diplomacy”.

Zimbabwe: As discussed earlier, Zimbabwe’s foreign policy has been characterized by Mugabe’s ongoing attempts to conduct the role of “Anti-Imperialist Agent”.

Conclusion

Despite the existence of shortcomings in the Role Approach, the paper has demonstrated that the Role Approach is in general a reasonable and efficient theoretical framework.

In relation to the utilization of the Role Approach in the study of foreign policy in Third World countries, the paper has illustrated that this theoretical tool is not always practical. The reasons behind the impracticality of the

Role Approach when analyzing foreign policy in Third World countries can be divided into three categories:

1. Reasons related to the nature of Third World states which are mostly known for their poor capabilities, dependency, limited international weight and political instability.
2. Reasons related to the nature of Third World regimes which are often known for being dishonest and sometimes irrational.
3. Reasons related to the research process, as similar to most researchers in the field of foreign policy, the user of the Role Approach in the study of foreign policy in Third World countries faces the dilemma of getting access to primary data regarding role perceptions and role performances.

However, the existence of impediments such as poor capabilities, dependency, limited international weight and political instability, does not mean that all Third World countries are powerless to play major roles in international and macro-regional arenas. In contrast, the paper has skillfully proved that several Third World countries are renowned for their attempts to play active roles internationally and regionally.

The existence of features such dishonesty and irrationality when adopting role perceptions in Third World states is not a pretext to decline the usefulness of the Role Approach when analyzing foreign policy in Third World countries, not only because these negative features exist even in Western-democratic regimes (as demonstrated previously), but because the use of the Role Approach as a theoretical tool is the only way to explore whether these features exist or not, which promotes the position of the Role Approach as a theoretical framework for the analysis of foreign policy in Third World states.

In relation to the difficulty to have access to primary data when analyzing roles attempts in Third World states, the paper has illustrated that gathering primary data is an obstruction facing any analyzer of foreign policy, no matter the country (Third World or not) and no matter which theoretical framework is used (the Role Approach or other).

The “Role Approach” is therefore an essential theoretical framework for the analysis of foreign policy in Third World countries that have recurrently endeavored to play a range of roles at the international and regional levels, as it does closely correspond to the course of foreign policy in these particular Third World states.

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