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# **International Leadership and German foreign policy.**

A (unfulfilled) quest for followership during A. Merkel's  
chancellorship

Talk given at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,  
Institute of European Studies

# Outline

1. Leadership roles vs. hegemony: a conceptual clarification
2. International leadership: mechanisms and characteristics
3. Three case studies:
  1. Eurocrisis
  2. Ukrainian crisis
  3. Migration crisis
4. Conclusion



The Economist 8th July 2017

# The argument

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1. Role theory is the most appropriate tool to understand Germany's recent quest for international leadership, calling into question recent accounts of Germany establishing a hegemony in the European Union.
2. Leadership roles are composed of agenda-setter, representative and moderator role elements, which in turn all require complementary followership behavior by other nations.
3. Leadership roles may be categorized by number of leaders (uni-, bi or multilateral) and in- or exclusiveness vis-à-vis the followership.
4. Three short episodes of German leadership during the Eurozone, Ukrainian and Migration crisis show that while regularly being plurilateral and inclusive, German leadership has failed to garner sufficient followership to 'solve' the crisis at hand without resulting in considerable policy contestation, both domestically and internationally.

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# Step 1

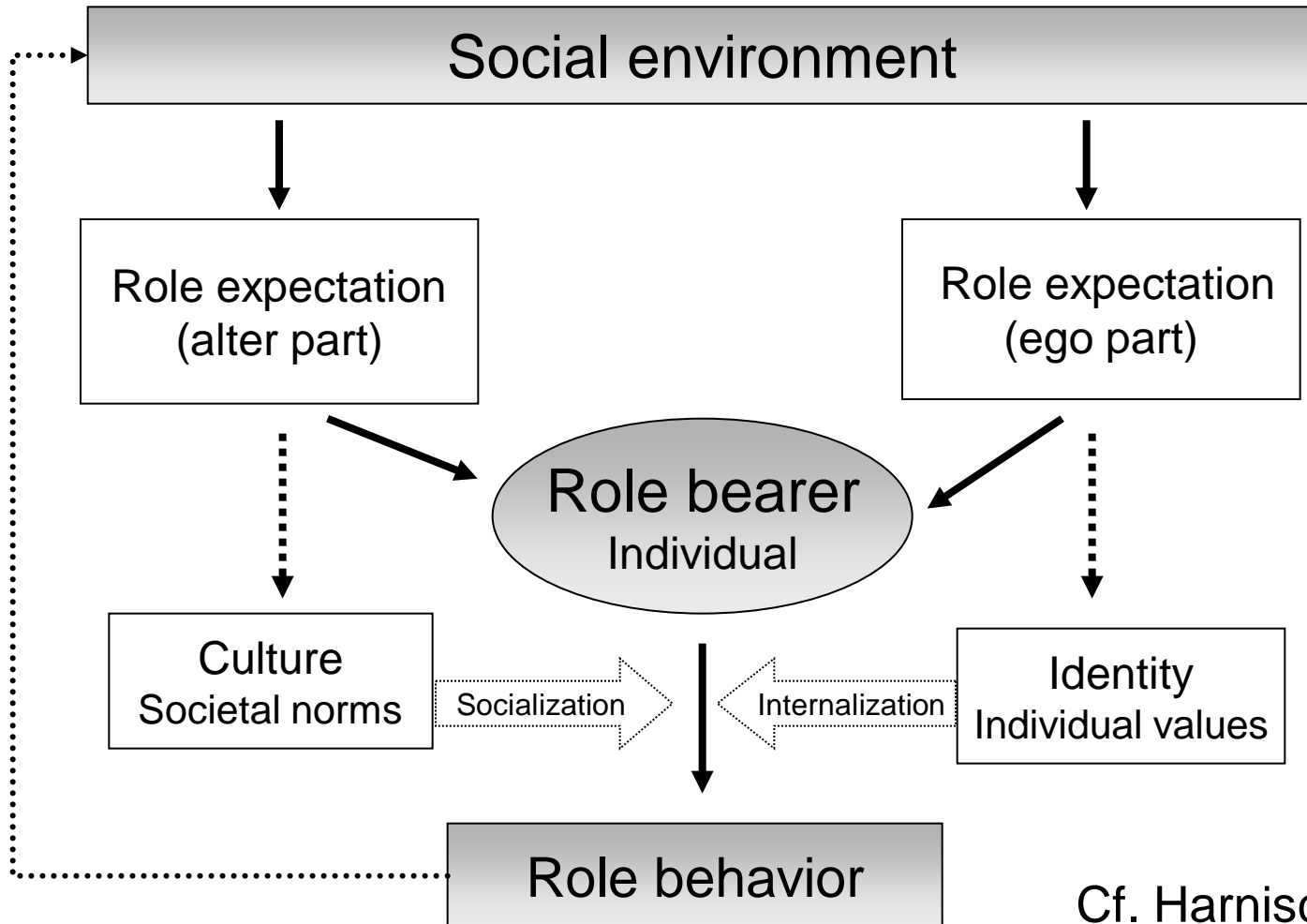
## Leadership roles vs. Hegemony: a conceptual clarification

# Hegemony as an analytical concept

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- 1. Hegemony has been used widely in literature on German foreign policy:** Crawford 2006; 2014; Kaelberer 1997; Morisse-Schilbach 2011; Blyth/Matthijs 2011; Kundnani 2012, 2014; Paterson 2011, 2014; Bulmer/Paterson 2013, 2016; Kleine-Brockhoff/Maull 2011; Schönberger 2011.
- 2. Hegemony in Marxism/Gramscianism (Cox 1983; Gramsci 1971 Gill 1990, Rupert 1995):** a leading class dominates 'lesser classes' through coercion and consent. Dominant class reaches „historic bloc“, i.e. legitimized rule in three-stage process.
- 3. Hegemony in English School (I. Clark 2007, 2011):** One or several Great Power exert legitimate rule over int. Society. Hegemons meet expectations of other Great Powers but not of lesser powers and non-governmental actors.

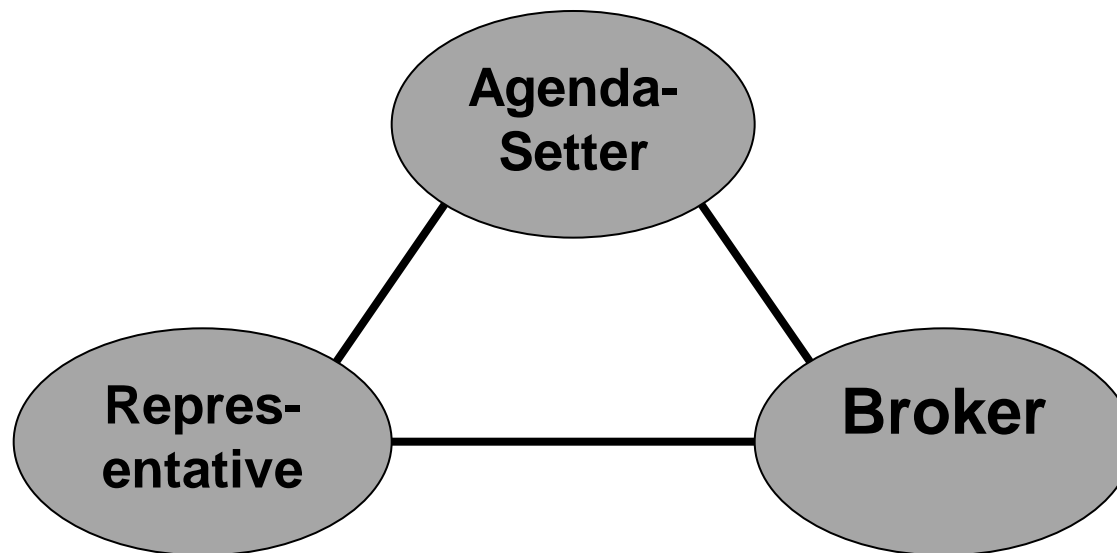
# “Roles” in International Relations



Cf. Harnisch 2011

# International Leadership: Role definition and characteristics

- International leadership may be defined as a social role which is composed of internal and external (ego-alter) expectations directed towards taking up a set of functional role elements by one or several leaders to achieve a commonly held group goal.



Cf. Harnisch 2014

# Conceptual Comparison: Leadership vs. Hegemony

	<b>Int. Leadership</b>	<b>Hegemony</b>	<b>Hypothesis</b>
<b><i>Temporality</i></b>	variant	continuous	The more contested, the shorter leadership role will be
<b><i>Functionality</i></b>	Specified	unspecified	The more functionally specified leadership is, the broader its acceptance is
<b><i>Obligation</i></b>	Informal (through follower role)	formalized	The more formalized, the more contested
<b><i>Orientation</i></b>	Group-oriented	Status preserving	The more inclusive, the less contested
<b><i>Divisibility</i></b>	High: temporally/ functionally	Low: permanent/ unlimited	The more representative leadership is, the wider the followership

Cf. Harnisch 2017



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# Step 2

## International Leadership: Mechanism and characteristics

# External expectations I: Remarks to the Citizens in Mainz, President George H.W. Bush, Mainz, May 31, 1989

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- **And the historic genius of the German people has flourished in this age of peace, and your nation has become a leader in technology and the fourth largest economy on Earth. But more important, you have inspired the world by forcefully promoting the principles of human rights, democracy, and freedom. The United States and the Federal Republic have always been firm friends and allies, but today we share an added role: partners in leadership.**
- Of course, leadership has a constant companion: responsibility. And our responsibility is to look ahead and grasp the promise of the future. I said recently that we're at the end of one era and at the beginning of another. And I noted that in regard to the Soviet Union, our policy is to move beyond containment. For 40 years, the seeds of democracy in Eastern Europe lay dormant, buried under the frozen tundra of the Cold War. And for 40 years, the world has waited for the Cold War to end. And decade after decade, time after time, the flowering human spirit withered from the chill of conflict and oppression; and again, the world waited. But the passion for freedom cannot be denied forever. The world has waited long enough. The time is right. Let Europe be whole and free.
- To the founders of the alliance, this aspiration was a distant dream, and now it's the new mission of NATO. If ancient rivals like Britain and France, or France and Germany, can reconcile, then why not the nations of the East and West? In the East, brave men and women are showing us the way. Look at Poland, where Solidarity, Solidarnosc, and the Catholic Church have won legal status. The forces of freedom are putting the Soviet status quo on the defensive. And in the West, we have succeeded because we've been faithful to our values and our vision. And on the other side of the rusting Iron Curtain, their vision failed.

*Quelle: <http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga6-890531.htm>*

# External Expectations II: Mr Radek Sikorski, Foreign Minister of Poland, Berlin, 28 November 2011

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- Sixth, that because of your size and your history you have a special responsibility to preserve peace and democracy on the continent. Jurgen Habermas has wisely said that "If the European project fails, then there is the question of how long it will take to reach the status quo again. Remember the German Revolution of 1848: When it failed, it took us 100 years to regain the same level of democracy as before."
- What, as Poland's foreign minister, do I regard as the biggest threat to the security and prosperity of Poland today, on 28th November 2011? It's not terrorism, it's not the Taliban, and it's certainly not German tanks. It's not even Russian missiles which President Medvedev has just threatened to deploy on the EU's border. The biggest threat to the security and prosperity of Poland would be the collapse of the Euro zone.
- **And I demand of Germany that, for your own sake and for ours, you help it survive and prosper. You know full well that nobody else can do it. I will probably be first Polish foreign minister in history to say so, but here it is: *I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear German inactivity.***
- **You have become Europe's indispensable nation. You may not fail to lead. Not dominate, but to lead in reform.**

Quelle: [https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/event\\_downloads/radoslaw\\_sikorski\\_poland\\_and\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_the\\_eu\\_0.pdf](https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/event_downloads/radoslaw_sikorski_poland_and_the_future_of_the_eu_0.pdf)

**West-Orientation  
(positive Other: Model)**

Significant Others  
West European states

Significant Others  
USA/Allies

Significant Others  
East European states

**Globalization  
(pos.+ neg. Others:  
Self assertion)**

United Nations

Generalized  
Other

**Diversification of  
Significant others**

Current  
Self

Actor

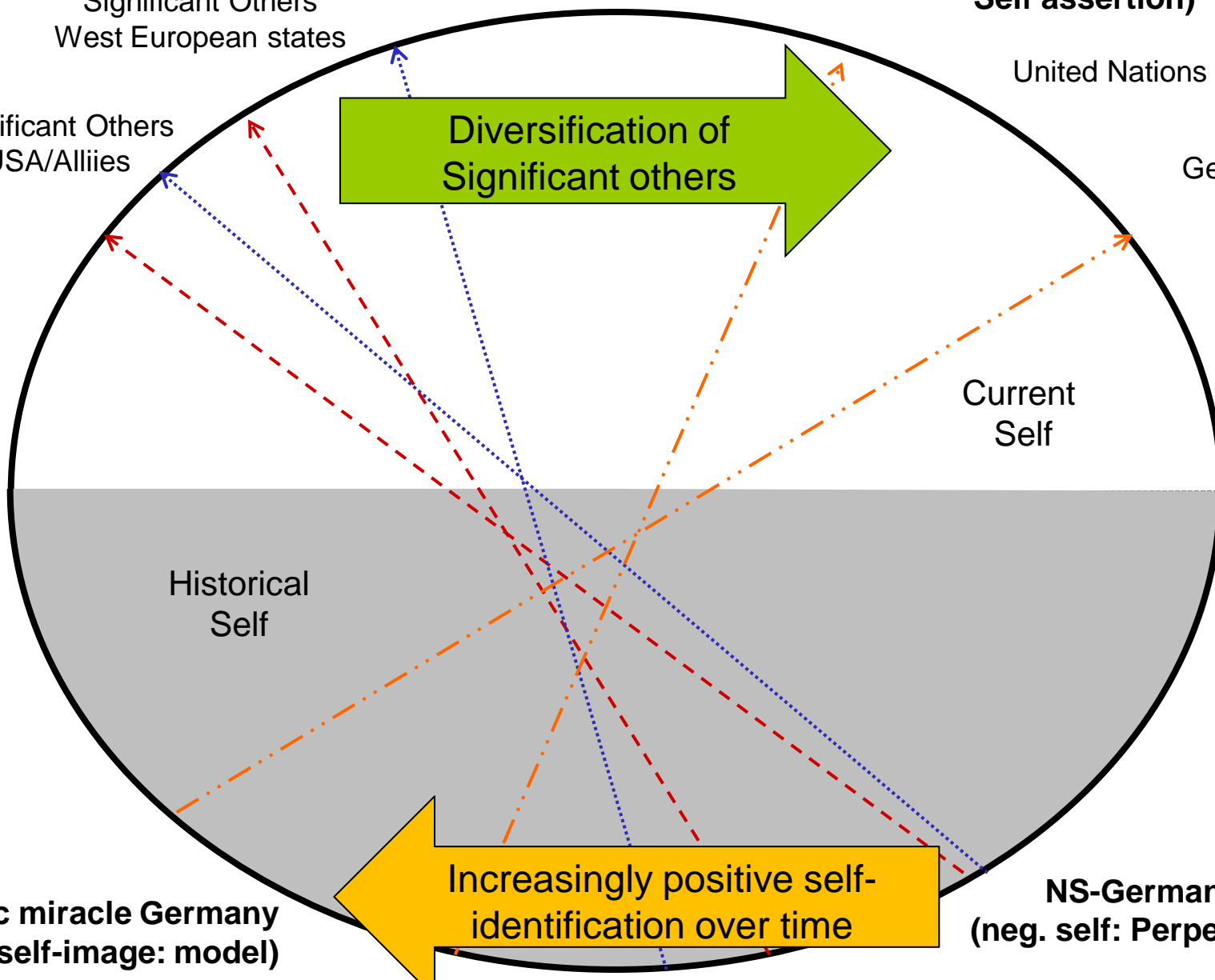
Structure

Historical  
Self

**Economic miracle Germany  
(positive self-image: model)**

**Increasingly positive self-  
identification over time**

**NS-Germany  
(neg. self: Perpetrator)**



# Typology of international leadership roles

Composition of leadership / Scope of followership	Uni-Bilateral	Collective
Coalition	Euro Corps	E3
Inclusive	Leadership in €-Crisis I Leadership in Ukrainian Crisis	EU <sub>3+3</sub> EU/Leadership in UNFCCC

Cf. Harnisch 2014

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# Step 3

Three case studies:  
Dynamics of German leadership in Euro-  
Crisis, the Ukrainian and Migration crisis

# Eurocrisis: Changing dynamics of German leadership

- Phase 1: FRG prefers bilateral aid for Greece with IMF support.
- Phase 2: FRG initiates EFSF/ESM with France; Reform of SGP; rejection of €-Bonds.
- Phase 3: FRG accepts ECB as lender of last resort, balancing the Eurogroups austerity policy.

<b>Composition of leadership/Scope of followership</b>	<b>of</b>	<b>Singulär</b>	<b>Kollektiv</b>
<b>Coalition</b>			Phase 2 (intergouvernemental-exclusive)
<b>Inclusive</b>		Phase 1 (national-inclusive)	Phase 3 (intergouvernemental-supranational inclusive)

Cf. Harnisch 2014

# Crisis in Ukraine: Leadership dynamics and German Foreign Policy

- Phase 1: FRG calls for EU restraint during Maidan-Protests.
- Phase 2: FRG brokers German-France-Polish-Russian agreement February 21, 2014.
- Phase 3: FRG uses Geneva and Normandy Groups (excl. POL+EUHR) to negotiate Minsk I+II agreement; Berlin supports Swiss-OSCE-Chairperson initiated Monitoring-Mission.

## **Economic sanctions:**

- FRG calls for sequentialized sanctions against domestic contestation (Industry Association)
- FRG brokers between Southern EU/MS (Sceptics) and Eastern EU-MS (protagonists) of sanctions.
- FRG ties sanctions to Minsk agreement implementation.

## **Military instruments:**

- FRG sees no military crisis solution.
- FRG prefers rotational, non premanent deployment of NATO troops in Poland/Baltic states.
- FRG initiates/supports Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF)
- FRG initiates Transatlantic Capability+Enhancement Initiative (TACET)

Vgl. Harnisch 2017



# Migration crisis: Leadership dynamics and German Foreign policy

- Phase 1: FRG prefers Firstcountry entry rule of Dublin system (until August 2014).
- Phase 2: Fed. Migration Agency (BAMF) declares end of Dublin implementation for Syrian refugees (4.09.2014): Chancellor Merkel negotiates transfer agreement with Hungary/Austria
- Phase 3: Failure of internal EU-transfer of migrants leads to EU-Turkey refugee agreement (March 2016).

<b>Composition of leadership role/Scope of followership</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Collective</b>
<b>Coalition</b>	Phase 2 (national-exclusive)	Phase 3: intergouv.-exclusive
<b>Inclusive</b>	Phase 1 (national-inclusive)	

Cf. Harnisch 2017

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# Step 4

## Conclusion

## Case comparison: social mechanisms and role change

	<b>Euro Crisis</b>	<b>Ukrainian Crisis</b>	<b>Migration Crisis</b>
<b>Role taking</b>	Domestic +ext. contestation; increasingly multilat. +incl. role	Ja, außenpol. Rolle kontestiert (Insurgenten) Selektiv kollektiv	Erhebliche innen- u. außenpol. Kontestation
<b>Role making</b>	No new permanent role	No new permanent role	New leadership role strongly contested
<b>Alter casting</b>	Strong: FCC, Financial markets	Absence of Great Powers; pro-Russian insurgents	Strong: failure of Dublin, internal + ext. contestation
<b>Theoretical Findings</b>	Collective leader functionally limited, non-state + supranat. Actors	Collect. Leader; temporal/functional limited; non-state actors	Unilat. Leaders, temporal/functional limited, non-state actors

# Variance in German international leadership role

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1. German leadership is (still) regularly multilateral, directed towards the EU and tied to a preference for diplomatic and economic instruments.
2. German leadership is (strongly) influenced through state-and non-state actors both externally and domestically. Hegemony concepts do not account for this contestation + influence.
3. German leadership resulted in weak + contested institutionalization (Eurcrisis), no substantial institutionalization (Ukrainian crisis) and strongly contested institutionalization during the migration crisis.
4. German leadership assertion, particularly in migration crisis, has resulted in various unintended consequences, substantially challenging current domestic and EU-Institutions (German party system, coalition dynamics, state elections, Dublin system, Brexit, Eastern European challenge to EU rule of law)

# Outlook

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- I. Several schools in the debate on a „new German foreign policy“, „ a normal Germany (Gordon)“, „a self-assertive Germany (Hellmann), „ a geoeconomic Germany(Kundnani), a „new responsibility (Gauck, Steinmeier) may be better assessed in their veracity when viewed through a role perspective and vis-à-vis other roles (UK/France, US, China).
- II. German leadership today is characterized by four trends: the absence/change of US/UK leadership roles, domestic contestation and subsequent domestication of leadership; strong external expectations, rivaling non-governmental expectations.
- III. Strong(er) domestic expectations are misinterpreted as „new self-assertion“ although they result in temporally/functionally limited leadership that remains weakly institutionalized.
- IV. Germany’s response to the US withdrawal from a liberal global leadership role under D. Trump remains EU\_centered and functionally limited, allowing for multilateral cooperation with other partners (JCPOA; ICC, AIIB).

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# Comparing International Roles, Identities and Status

<b>Roles</b>	<b>Identity</b>	<b>Status</b>
Pattern of behavior	Sustained actorness	Social position
Limited over time	Consistent over time	Time insensitive
Functionally differentiated	Functionally insensitive	Functionally insensitive
Group related	Other related	Group and ranking related
Social coordination	Self-assurance	Self-appraisal
Social concepts		

Cf. Kratochwil 2006, McCourt 2014; Harnisch 2014

# FP-Analysis: systemic + subsystemic approaches

