

Nuclear Ambitions and Their Implications

*Analysing the Effect of Nuclear Weapons' Purpose on Role Conceptions
and Ontological Security*



LUNDS
UNIVERSITET

Abstract

China and Russia are two influential powers within the international system which have different understandings of the threshold of nuclear use. The purpose and effect of possessing nuclear weapons have been widely researched but have yet to be utilised to analyse the broader effect on security. This thesis intends to understand the relationship between nuclear weapons' purpose and the role and ontological security of a state. By utilising a theoretical framework consisting of role theory and ontological security, the paper analyses the military policies of China and Russia to identify the influence of nuclear weapons' function on state identity and security. The paper uses the method of qualitative content analysis which allows for an analysis of the embedded purposes and meanings in official documents. The analysis comparatively examines the policies of a singular state. In turn, the discussion is comprised of a comparative analysis of the findings of the Chinese and Russian policies. The results illustrate how the purpose and changes to the purpose of nuclear weapons affect which role a state adopts and how the function of nuclear weapons and the enacted role influences the ontological security of the state.

Key Words: Nuclear Weapons, Role Theory, Ontological Security, Military Policies, China, Russia

Word Count: 9795

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Purpose and Research Question	5
1.2	Thesis Structure	5
2	Previous Literature	6
2.1	Nuclear Weapons and International Politics	6
2.2	Role Theory and Ontological Security	7
3	Theoretical Framework	9
3.1	Role Theory	9
3.2	Ontological Security	11
4	Methodology	13
4.1	Case Selection	13
4.2	Material	14
4.3	Analytical Framework	15
4.4	Operationalisation	17
5	Analysis	18
5.1	China's Nuclear Policies	18
5.1.1	The Example	19
5.1.2	The Defender of the Peace	21
5.2	Russia's Nuclear Policies	24
5.2.1	The Regional-Subsystem Collaborator	24
5.2.2	The Regional Leader and Protector	26
6	Discussion	29
7	Conclusion	31
8	Bibliography	33

1 Introduction

“Nuclear weapons are the most destructive power ever created. They offer no security - just carnage and chaos”

- António Guterres (UN 2022).

If this statement is valid, why is the purpose of nuclear weapons differentiated between states? This paper is in opposition to Guterres’ statement and argues that nuclear weapons’ purpose can conduce to the security of states’ roles internationally and ontological security.

China has had a consistent nuclear strategy since it acquired the weapons in 1964 with a recurring pledge of no-first-use (Cunningham - Fravel 2015: 12; Fravel - Medeiros 2010: 50, 52, 56). By contrast, the Soviet Union had a pledge of no-first-use which was abandoned during the Yeltsin presidency (Shoumikhin 2011: 112). Currently, it has been argued that Russia has the lowest nuclear use threshold (Schneider 2008: 397-8). Hence, it can be understood that China and Russia have different understandings of nuclear use. The utility of nuclear weapons is important to understand given the destructiveness of these weapons.

Additionally, China has perceived nuclear weapons to be a source of national pride and a demonstration of China’s international status as a major power (Cunningham - Fravel 2015: 12; Fravel - Medeiros 2010: 58). Likewise, it has been argued that nuclear weapons are the primary requisite for pretensions of Russian major power status (Schneider 2008: 400). This illustrates how nuclear weapons contribute to states’ identities. Furthermore, China has been modernising its nuclear arsenal since 2011 which includes the development of new nuclear missiles (Kristensen - Norris 2011: 81). Comparatively, the Russian nuclear force structure has been modernised since most weapons dated back to the Soviet era (Colby 2016: 6, Shoumikhin 2011: 100). Thus, this development allows for an analysis of how changes in nuclear weapons’ purpose might affect states’ roles and ontological security which contributes to an understanding of the utility of nuclear weapons.

1.1 Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this paper is to understand how two major power within the international system, China and Russia, reason regarding their nuclear weapons. The aim is to illustrate how the purpose ascribed to nuclear weapons contributes to an understanding of how nuclear weapons inform the state's perception of its role in the international system and ontological security. Furthermore, this paper aims to contribute to the research field by utilising role theory and ontological security theory to analyse nuclear policies. Therefore, this essay will contribute with a qualitative and comparative analysis of two influential nuclear weapons states.

The research question is as follows: *How does the purpose of nuclear weapons affect states' role conception and ontological security?*

To answer this question, the following questions will be utilised: *How do nuclear weapons give China and Russia a role? How does this generate ontological security for the states?*

1.2 Thesis Structure

Following this introduction, previous research on nuclear weapons and international politics will be presented as well as research discussing role theory and ontological security from the perspectives of China and Russia. This will illustrate how this paper contributes to existing literature. Subsequently, the theoretical framework will be presented which entails an operationalisation of how nuclear weapons' purpose and the theories adhere to one another. Consecutively, the methodological framework will describe the case selection, material and analytical structure of this paper. The analysis will illustrate how nuclear weapons' purpose affects the states' roles and ontological security as well as changes over time. The discussion will be comprised of a comparison between the states. Lastly, the conclusion will answer the aforementioned research questions and propose possible future research.

2 Previous Literature

The research puzzle of this paper concerns the purpose of nuclear weapons and their implications for the role and ontological security of the state. Firstly, a description of research on nuclear weapons and international politics will be presented. Subsequently, research regarding Russian and Chinese role conceptions and ontological security, respectively, will be presented. This section illustrates how the paper contributes to the research field.

2.1 Nuclear Weapons and International Politics

The study was inspired by earlier research concerning how the acquisition of nuclear weapons affects foreign policy. Bell has contributed with a typology concerning how the acquisition of nuclear weapons incentivises states to enact specific behaviours, focusing on the effect on foreign policy. The author argues that nuclear weapons affect foreign policy because they provide capabilities which the state previously lacked and allows states to protect and pursue interests (Bell 2015: 88, 91-2). Conversely, this paper intends to further the research field by analysing how long-term possession and changes in the function of nuclear weapons can affect the role of a state.

The research has further argued that the likelihood of war has decreased because nuclear weapons have a deterring function (Futter - Zala 2021; Jervis 1989; Lieber - Press 2020; Powell 1985). Deterrence is the practice of using threats of brute force to avert unwanted behaviour and actions (Schelling 1966: 72). This reasoning has largely been applied to dyads of nuclear-armed states and is based on the premise that two nuclear-armed states can inflict an equal degree of destruction upon one another permitted that both states have secure second-strike capabilities. The term “secure second-strike capability” refers to the instance when a state’s nuclear arsenal can survive a nuclear attack (Jervis 1989: 5). This circumstance

is often referred to as “mutually assured destruction” (MAD) which is the instance of nuclear stalemate when neither state can gain advantages in the military balance (Green 2020: 13). Waltz even argued that nuclear proliferation could benefit inter-state security due to the small risk of war between nuclear-armed states (Waltz 1981 in Sagan 1994: 69-70).

However, scholars have emphasised two paradoxes of deterrence. The first theorises that the more stable deterrence is on the nuclear level, the less likely it is to deter conventional conflict, titled the stability-instability paradox (Bell - MacDonald 2019; Jervis 1989; Lieber - Press 2020). The other is epitomised by the following statement: “If deterrence creates stability then it would cease to deter” (Boulding 1986 in Jervis 1989: 20). Nonetheless, some scholars have argued that deterrence using nuclear threats can be credible if the threats leave something to chance. This concept presumes that threats are made in circumstances of uncertainty that make the involved actors not entirely in control of events (Powell 1985; Schelling 1961). It has also been argued that deterrence by superpowers is overdetermined. Thus, research should focus on regional nuclear powers, which have different capabilities, to gain insight into the functions and implications of deterrence (Narang 2013: 479). Hence, it is apparent that nuclear weapons have implications for security. This study aims to further the research by examining if nuclear weapons’ purpose affects ontological security.

2.2 Role Theory and Ontological Security

The research on Chinese role conceptions has generally focused on foreign policy analysis and has consistently identified themes regarding peaceful coexistence (Shih 1988; Michalski - Pan 2017). According to Michalski and Pan, China attributes a large part of its identity to being a rising power. This identity is often conceptualised in terms of peaceful rising or development (Michalski - Pan 2017: 616). Comparatively, research on role theory concerning Russia has mostly focused on the implications of the dissolution of the Soviet Union for Russian identity. Thibault and Lévesque argue that Russian foreign policy diverged from the policies of the Soviet Union. The earlier policies of Russia appeared to adopt a Westernist position. However, this position was criticised for neglecting the pursuit of Russian interests,

specifically regarding Russian relations with former Soviet states and the status as a military superpower (Thibault - Lévesque 1997: 20-1).

Furthermore, China's role conceptions contribute to their understanding of the international system (Michalski - Pan 2017: 617). Additional research by Demirduzen and Thies examines how consolidated role conceptions amongst leaders and factions can impact the development of grand strategy. It is argued that if there is consensus regarding the role conception then the grand strategy will remain the same, independent of the current leader's foreign policy. The authors found that the Chinese grand strategy was influenced by the roles of internal development and regional leadership (Demirduzen - Thies 2021: 2-3, 16-7). Correspondingly, Russia was initially divided into three political ideologies which promoted different roles that Russia should adopt and different foreign policies. Generally, neither faction would accept the Russian decline in the international order nor the loss of a great power status which complicated the formation of a collective identity (Chafetz 1996: 672, 674, 679; Narozhna 2022: 85, 87).

Research on Chinese ontological security has shown that China's formulation of "peaceful rise" is described as a way for the state to change its identity and communicate peaceful intentions to the world which indicates ontological security (Krolikowski 2008: 121). Correspondingly, Narozhna argues that Russia experienced ontological insecurity after the dissolution of the Soviet Union with the only persistent narrative being that of Russia as a "natural" great power (Narozhna 2022: 86). Hence, the role of the state can be posited to affect its sense of ontological (in)security which is congruent with the operationalisation of this paper.

This paper posits that nuclear weapons can sustain certain relationships between states which is argued to increase the sense of ontological security. Research has analysed the relationship between China and Japan and argues that the relationship is based on routinised recognition of the other's identity which affects how the states behave bilaterally (Gustafsson 2016: 622-3, 625). Similarly, research on Russian ontological security has discussed the relationship between Russia and the European Union. Russia is argued to have secured its identity by constructing the West as a threat (Akchurina - Della Sala 2018: 1644; Splidsboel Hansen 2016: 366). This research illustrates how states can achieve ontological security through narratives of their own identity.

3 Theoretical Framework

This study aims to understand how nuclear weapons affect the role and ontological security of a state. The purpose of the study is based on the previous research and intends to further the research by connecting nuclear weapons to role theory and ontological security. The theoretical framework presented in forthcoming sections describes role theory and ontological security and how nuclear weapons can affect the forthput conceptualisations.

3.1 Role Theory

Role theory originates from social psychology, micro-sociology and anthropology and was first applied to foreign policy analysis in the 1970s (Grossman 2005, Thies 2010). Given the theory's fields of origin, it was developed to study individual behaviour. The fundamental assumption of the theory is that behaviour is a function of the expectations associated with one's position within a social system. Grossman argues that two further assumptions are required for the theory to be applicable on a systemic analysis level. The first assumption is that national leaders and policymakers are important for the formulation process of policies. This implies that these actors determine the roles a state will pursue and behave accordingly to the predetermined roles. Further, the international system can be determined to function as a social system. Thus, role theory assumes that states will act accordingly to their perceived role within the international system (Grossman 2005: 336). This theory will be utilised to examine how nuclear weapons policies correspond with the role of the state.

Role theory construes the presence of roles through different conceptualisations, such as *role conceptions* and *role performance*, which will be described henceforth. Role conception refers to a state's perception of its position, the behaviour it perceives as congruous related to the position and the function it should perform in the international and regional systems

(Holsti 1970: 239, 246). The theory presumes that a definition of the state's role is based on considerations of domestic factors such as national territory, capabilities, and international influence (Grossman 2005: 336). Correspondingly, role performance references the behaviour, decisions and attitudes that a state implements to adhere to its role conception (Holsti 1970: 240). Consequently, role conception affects foreign policy behaviour to the extent that it limits the perceived available policy options and determines the behaviour which is recognised as the most appropriate or expected. The limitations deduced from role conception are likely to become more pervasive as the role becomes more integrated into the political culture of a state (Grossman 2005: 337-8). As stated, role conception can be based on the state's capabilities which imply that nuclear weapons can affect the type of role a state pursues. Therefore, it could be argued that the nuclear policies of a state will correspond with its role conception. Further, nuclear policies can be recognised as role performance as policies stipulate the behaviours a state will enact, it illustrates the decisions a state makes regarding its nuclear structures and demonstrates the purpose of nuclear weapons.

In Holsti's influential article, the author propounded at least 17 categories of role conception. Given that this paper postulates that the purpose of nuclear weapons affects the role conception of a state, the selected roles are presumed to coincide with different functions of nuclear weapons. The *regional-subsystem collaborator* aspires to reach cooperative efforts with other states to build wider communities whereas a *regional leader* perceives itself to have responsibilities and duties vis-à-vis states in a region with which the state identifies. The role conception of *regional protector* emphasises the state's function as the provider of protection for adjacent regions and states within this region. The role of *the defender of the peace*, in contrast to a regional protector, does not reference a specific region but rather asserts a commitment to universally defend against threats to peace and aggression. States which perceive themselves as an *example* enunciate the priority of gaining influence and promoting prestige in the international system through the pursuit of domestic policies (Holsti 1970: 261-2, 265, 267-8, 272-3). It is presumed that depending on the purpose a state prescribes for its nuclear weapons, the state will identify with and enact role conceptions which correspond with the adopted purpose. Furthermore, the role conception and performance of a state are connoted to affect its ontological security.

3.2 Ontological Security

The aforementioned conceptualisation of role theory acknowledged that role conception is the state's understanding of its position internationally and that it will enact the behaviour congruent with the role. Therefore, it can be argued that role conception is similar to ontological security as the certainty of the Self. Correspondingly, this paper posits that considerations of ontological (in)security will differ depending on the behaviour associated with the adapted role.

The theory of ontological security emanates from the fields of sociology and psychoanalysis in which the literature has focused on anxiety in relation to the constitution of the Self. Kinnvall and Mitzen argue that ontological security involves both sentiments of anxiety and fear. Ontological insecurity that originates from anxiety is described as “a state of disruption” during which the ability to sustain a linear narrative is obscured. States can augment the sense of insecurity by reconstructing existential anxieties into identifiable threats. Practices of this frequently involve the construction of an Us and Them which allows for a more grounded narrative of the identity. Ontological insecurity stemming from fear is often conceptualised as anarchy within the academic literature. In this position, states attempt to maintain a consistent sense of Self to enhance their ontological security in relation to other states (Kinnvall - Mitzen 2018: 827-8). Thus, ontological security can be understood as arising from perceptions of threats. The role conceptions presented above infer different understandings of threats. For example, the role of a regional protector implies that the region requires protection from a threat. Thereupon, it is argued that the state's role has implications for its ontological security.

This paper posits that the consistency of role conceptions can impact the ontological security of a state, meaning that if the role of a state is changing then it could impact the state's security of being. The concept of ontological security can be conceived as the stability, certainty and consistent experience of the Self in which the actor experiences control and agency over his identity (Rumelili 2015: 58). Hence, ontological insecurity emerges from deep uncertainty which hinders the actor's ability to pursue its objectives and affects its sense of agency. Objectives can be stated to be integral in the formation of identity which infers that uncertainty regarding how to pursue desired objectives contributes to the insecurity of

identity. Therefore, actors are compelled to establish routines and routinised relationships to achieve ontological security (Mitzen 2006: 342-3). Role performance can provide insight into how states perceive their ability to achieve objectives.

Furthermore, states which are ontological security-seeking can prefer to sustain conflictual or harmful relations with other states and thus form an attachment to conflict. The routinisation of behaviour is in essence habitual which implies that information is not updated and options are not considered which generates basic trust regarding the Self as a knowable entity and behaviour that is appropriate (Mitzen 2006: 342-3). Thus, actors will reproduce existing narratives of a threatening Other and conflictual relationship with the Other as this is a source of stability and certainty for the Self (Rumelili 2015: 59). Similarly to how a consolidated role can limit the behaviours perceived as appropriate, the attachment to conflictual relations affects the state's behaviour because the behaviour becomes routine. Thus, the persistence of a role and routinised relations can reinforce one another.

This paper further argues that role performance can contribute to the ontological security of a state, which can manifest in a routinised relationship with an Other. Mitzen theorises that the nature of basic trust can either result in flexible or rigid attachments. Flexible attachment allows the actor to accept some uncertainty since it does not perceive routines as ends but rather views its environment as sufficiently stable to pursue its goals. Thus, actors with healthy basic trust can pursue objectives beyond seeking physical security such as developmental or self-esteem goals. However, actors with rigid attachment view routines as an end because the routine is perceived as a part of the actor's identity. In this instance, actors will adhere to the routine although it reproduces physical insecurity. Thus, states can become attached to cooperative and conflictual routines (Mitzen 2006: 350, 343). The different conceptualisations of roles indicate pursuits of different objectives. Therefore, the role can illustrate the nature of attachment and basic trust of the state. As stated, nuclear weapons can impact role conception which implies that nuclear weapons can become a part of the state's identity. Thus, the representation of nuclear weapons as important to states' security can illustrate a rigid attachment as the purpose of nuclear weapons is a part of the routine and hence an end. Conversely, a state which places less emphasis on nuclear weapons can indicate a flexible attachment as the state can focus on other objectives.

4 Methodology

Nuclear policies demonstrate a state's considerations of possible nuclear use and the utility of nuclear weapons. This paper aims to analyse how nuclear weapons and their purpose is described in policy documents in relation to the state's role and ontological security. The theoretical framework presented above will be utilised in the analysis to understand themes and extracts from the material. The forthcoming section will present the case selection of this study as well as discuss the material, analytical framework and operationalisation. These discussions illustrate how the material and theoretical framework will constitute the analysis and how the research will be approached.

4.1 Case Selection

This study utilises a small-N study which is characterised by the analysis of two or more cases. One benefit of a small-N study is that it is internally valid, meaning that the extent to which an independent variable can be claimed to produce an effect is high. Additionally, case studies tend to have lesser external validity but a small-N study often generates greater conceptualisations of general ideas (Halperin - Heath 2020: 162, 237-8). The cases selected for this paper exist within a particularly small population of possible cases. There are only a handful of states which possess nuclear weapons and some countries, such as Israel and North Korea, do not publish their nuclear policies for the wider public to view. Nonetheless, the cases were selected because they share similarities but differ in other relevant aspect. Therefore, the utilisation of a small-N study can illustrate the relevance of nuclear weapons for states' role conceptions and ontological security because it allows for an in-depth analysis of the state's policies. Furthermore, given the small population of cases, this paper can provide results which are relevant for the larger population.

The selection of cases in a small-N study is highly important because there is a risk of selection bias. The researcher can be affected by their assumed hypotheses when selecting cases (George - Bennett 2004: 30-1). This study has utilised the practice of selecting cases which share some similarities but differ in other aspects. This model is called “*Most Similar Systems Design*” which bases the selection on cases that share theoretically important variables but differ in one significant independent variable. The benefit of choosing cases based on this model is that the similarities act as controlling variables. This allows for the analysis to test whether the difference in an independent variable is associated with the potential variation of the dependent variable (Halperin - Heath 2020: 238-9, 243; Seawright - Gerring 2008: 304). Although India and Pakistan could be a relevant dyad to analyse, this paper intended to study two major powers in the international system where one is more inclined to use nuclear weapons than the other. In this study, the independent variable is nuclear weapons which are argued to affect a state’s conception of its role and ontological security, the dependent variables. The main similarities between these cases are that both have acquired nuclear weapons and that the states are influential actors in world politics. The main difference between the states’ purpose of nuclear weapons is that Russia is more prepared to use nuclear weapons than China. Therefore, the analysis of these cases is interesting because it can illustrate how the purpose of nuclear weapons affects their role conceptions and ontological security differently.

4.2 Material

The material utilised in this thesis consists of national policy documents from the Chinese and Russian governments respectively. The Chinese official documents are *China’s Endeavours for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation* from 2005, *China’s National Defense* from 2006, *China’s Military Strategy* from 2015 and *China’s National Defense in the New Era* from 2019. Comparatively, the Russian official documents comprise the *Basic Provisions of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* from 1993, the *National Security Concept* from 2000, the *Military Doctrine* from 2010 and 2014, and the *Basic Principles of State Policy* from 2020.

These documents contain the state's rationale regarding its nuclear policies and general stance concerning nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the documents provide an account of how each state perceives military threats and their ambitions internationally. Hence, the material will be utilised to answer the question of how nuclear weapons can affect a state's perception of its role within the international system and ontological security. Although the selection of material was limited due to the availability on the government websites, the documents were chosen because they allow for an analysis over time which illustrates possible continuity and alterations of the purpose of nuclear weapons. Thus, the wider time period covered by the material indicates whether changes in the purpose of nuclear weapons coincide with changes in role conception and ontological security.

Given that this paper focuses on nuclear weapons' effect on the role conception and ontological security of states, the analysis will focus on segments of the documents that discuss nuclear weapons. However, if other statements are relevant to the orientation of the nuclear arsenal then they may be used to contextualise the nuclear policies. Moreover, the 2010 Russian military doctrine was gathered through Carnegie which is a foundation providing non-partisan research and strategic policy ideas to decision-makers. The organisation aims to foster peace, cooperation and reduce nuclear security risks among other objectives (Carnegie n.d). Therefore, it can be assumed that the organisation published this doctrine to enhance transparency regarding Russia's military strategy and to allow researchers and the wider public to review the policy.

4.3. Analytical Framework

This paper utilises a qualitative content analysis as the analytical framework. The method is based on the systematic analysis of textual information which is appropriate for the analysis of official documents. One advantage of content analysis is that the exposure to bias is reduced because it does not entail obtrusive methods such as interviews or surveys that may be affected by the participating persons. Furthermore, content analysis allows for the systematic analysis of official statements concerning attitudes or perceptions regarding a

subject (Halperin - Heath 2020: 373-4). As the material of this paper consists of various military policies, content analysis is an appropriate method for this paper.

The method of qualitative content analysis examines the latent content of a text which involves the exposing of meanings, motives and purposes in the text. Thus, the method analyses the embedded purposes of documents and infers underlying and hidden meanings of interest (Weber 1990 in Halperin - Heath 2020: 376). The material in this paper was of the capacity that each source could be read in its entirety. The analysis will examine how the purpose of nuclear weapons is presented and how this purpose affects role conception and ontological security. Given that the material was chosen to illustrate possible changes over time, some roles were identified in fewer policies. Therefore, certain roles will only be discussed in relation to the relevant documents. Additionally, the Chinese and Russian documents contained different role conceptions. Thus, the analysis will discuss the most prominent roles identified in the material for each state.

Moreover, it can be reasoned that states express motives, meanings and purposes in military documents in a secretive manner because it describes objectives of national security which states realistically do not want potential adversaries to fully understand. Specifically, meanings and purposes regarding nuclear weapons are assumed to be especially covert since they are often perceived as the ultimate weapon and as such provides great security measures for the state. Therefore, qualitative content analysis is a relevant method for this paper as it can extend the understanding of states' purpose and meanings regarding nuclear weapons.

Additionally, qualitative content analysis can be affected by the researcher's reflexivity which refers to how the researcher attributes meaning to texts. Hence, the underlying meanings found in the material can differ depending on the researcher (Halperin - Heath 2020: 388). Throughout the analysis, the operationalisation of the theoretical framework was utilised to guide the analysis of the material and served as demarcations, as described henceforth.

4.4 Operationalisation

During the analysis, the primary question asked to the material was *What is the purpose of having nuclear weapons?* The second question asked was *Has the purpose changed compared to the earlier material?* Additionally, to identify different role conceptions and ontological (in)security, this paper utilised conceptualisations and operationalisations of the themes (see Table 1.). The term region was further conceptualised to include indirect references to regions, such as the terms *Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)* and *Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)* which are mentioned in the Russian doctrines.

Table 1. Conceptualisation and operationalisation scheme.

Themes	Defender of Peace	Example	Regional-Subsystem Collaborator	Regional Leader	Regional Protector	Ontological (in)security	Flexible/ rigid attachment
Conceptualisation	Defend, Universal, Peace, Aggression	Influence, Prestige, Domestic Policies	Cooperation, Build communities	Responsibilities, Duties, Region	Provide protection, Region, States in region	Threat, Us and Them, Continuity of Self	Development objectives, Self-esteem objectives, an Other, routines
Operationalisation	Does states express a commitment to defend peace or against aggression universally?	Does states assert that domestic policies as prestige? Are these policies described as increasing influence?	Does states express intent to cooperate with regional states? If so, does this intent reference the building of communities?	Does states express duties or responsibilities to states in its region?	Does states aim to provide protection? Is the protection for regions or states in a region?	Are threats mentioned and if so, how are they described? Is there a narrative of Us and Them? Are the roles consistent or changing?	Can objectives of development or self-esteem be identified? Are the same threats of an Other mentioned in multiple doctrines? Are the options to handle this updated or not?

Note: This table was independently made based on the theoretical framework (Holsi 1970, Kinvall - Mitzen 2018, Mitzen 2006, Rumelili 2015).

5 Analysis

Nuclear weapons are posited to affect the state's role conception which is demonstrated in the military and nuclear policies. These documents are understood as role performances because their contents describe the behaviour a state perceives as appropriate for their role conceptions. The following analysis will examine how the ascribed purpose of nuclear weapons influences role conceptions. Subsequently, the enacted roles are argued to affect ontological security because different roles emphasise different behaviours and different objectives. Therefore, certain roles may promote behaviours congruent with flexible attachment whilst other roles coincide with rigid attachments and routinised relationships. Furthermore, role conceptions are postulated to inform a state's sense of ontological security as they can contribute to a state's linear narrative.

5.1 China's Nuclear Policies

As stated previously, following China's acquisition of nuclear weapons the state adopted its "no-first-use policy" (Fravel - Medeiros 2010) which is still a prominent feature of its military doctrines. The policy is mentioned consistently and often it is described in terms of resolute commitment to the policy under any circumstances. Related to the assurance of a no-first-use policy, the Chinese military doctrines further reiterated a pledge not to threaten to use nuclear weapons against nuclear-weapon-free zones or non-nuclear states. Another concept which is frequently mentioned is the adherence to a nuclear strategy that is "defensive in nature". Consequently, China affirmed that its nuclear weapons capabilities are developed to sustain the minimum level required to ensure national security (The State Council Information Office [SCIO], 2005; 2006; 2015; 2019).

The concepts found in the doctrines illustrate a congruent purpose of nuclear weapons for the Chinese state. According to role theory, this understanding of national capabilities influences China's role conception. Notably, nuclear weapons consistently serve the purpose of maintaining national security and providing defensive guarantees with a focus on non-engagement in nuclear escalation through the guarantee to not utilise nuclear threats or the brute force of nuclear weapons use. In the forthcoming sections, these purposes will be analysed in relation to identified roles to understand how nuclear weapons have affected role conceptions. Additionally, the analysis will examine how roles have implications for ontological security.

5.1.1 The Example

As stated, the Chinese nuclear policies are based on the premise of being “defensive in nature” and a no-first-use policy. The policy from 2005 made repeated references to China's efforts for disarmament and arms control. The strive for nuclear disarmament is described as an important policy since the founding of the Republic. This policy included the advocacy to completely prohibit and destroy nuclear weapons. Additionally, the doctrine declared China's “significant contributions” to nuclear weapons-related treaties (SCIO 2005: ch III, para 2, 9). China also argued that nuclear-armed states should reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security and abandon policies which allow for first use (ibid: ch II, para 10). These extracts indicate a role conception of the example. The policies described Chinese efforts for disarmament as significant for the existence of treaties and as a point of reference for other states to follow. Especially the no-first-use policy can be understood as a prestige for the Chinese state as it urged other nuclear states to adopt similar policies. Moreover, the commitment to disarmament is indicated to have contributed to China's ability to influence relevant treaties.

Consequently, it is assumed that China was ontologically secure at this time because the policy described several instances when China had accomplished or contributed to objectives which illustrate agency to pursue desired goals. According to ontological security, the ability to pursue objectives is integral to the formation of identity (Mitzen 2006). Furthermore, the

policy from 2005 discussed general threats to inter-state stability and no statements concerning threats to China could be identified (SCIO 2005). Thus, the document does not demonstrate any conceptualisations of Us and Them which substantiate the argument that China experienced ontological security at this time. The objectives described above can be stated to serve self-esteem or developmental goals since they aimed to promote prestige and further the strive for disarmament. Therefore, it can be argued that China perceived its environment as stable, allowing the pursuit of goals which are not solely concerned with security. This further indicates a flexible attachment in China's behaviour.

Similarly, the 2006 doctrine reiterated that the security environment of China and the region was considered stable. The policy vowed to never enter into a nuclear arms race with other states. It further stated that China's international influence had increased which was exemplified by describing cooperation efforts with major, regional and developing countries (SCIO 2006: ch I, para 7, ch II, para 8). This indicates that China continued to perceive itself to have the role of the example. The purpose of nuclear weapons is described as defensive. It is apparent that China did not view nuclear weapons as a legitimate means during conflict, exemplified by its commitment to not enter into arms race. Furthermore, the defensive purpose of nuclear weapons could have facilitated Chinese cooperation because it provided China with a reputation for not being militarily aggressive. Thus, the domestic policies regarding nuclear weapons can be argued to have increased Chinese prestige and international influence which allowed the state to pursue cooperation with multiple states.

The doctrine did mention the enhancement of American military capabilities in the region and the strengthening of the United States-Japan alliance as a challenge. Additionally, Taiwanese "separatist forces" and independence efforts are mentioned as a grave threat to Chinese sovereignty and the United States' decision to sell weapons and strengthen military ties with Taiwan is questioned (SCIO 2006: ch I, para 6, 8). Although Taiwan was mentioned in the 2005 policy, it was only mentioned in two sentences which opposed external involvement in the issue with no mentions of threat (SCIO 2005: ch II, para 29). Therefore, the 2006 doctrine indicates an altered understanding of threats affecting Chinese security. China can be postulated to have characterised Taiwan as an Other since the Taiwanese independence efforts are described as a threat to Chinese sovereignty. Furthermore, the US can also be argued to be conceptualised as an Other in the policy. Therefore, it is postulated that China experienced some sense of ontological insecurity which was remedied by the

construct of identifiable Others. Nonetheless, the doctrine continued to describe China's efforts of cooperation with other states in both military and developmental spheres and its commitment to maintaining peace and stability (SCIO 2006: ch II). Therefore, China experienced a sufficient sense of ontological security to pursue broader objectives and accept some uncertainty regarding the "Taiwanese issue" which indicates a level of flexible attachment. The policy indicates that China did not view the threats in a routine manner as it pursued objectives unrelated to the issue.

5.1.2 The Defender of the Peace

As stated, the no-first-use policy and the defensive purpose of nuclear weapons are continuously emphasised in the doctrines. The maintenance and promotion of peace is also a recurrent theme within and across the material. The same formulation of China's armed forces being "a staunch for maintaining peace" reoccurred in all the policies (SCIO 2005; 2006; 2015; 2019). One of the main objectives of the national defence is also stated to be guarding against and resisting aggression (SCIO 2006: ch II, para 4; 2019, ch II, para 2). The policy from 2005 stated that China did not believe nuclear weapons contribute to neither universal peace nor China's domestic security and it urged other nuclear states to assert security assurances to non-nuclear states (SCIO 2005: ch II, para 23, ch III, para 6). The defensive purpose of nuclear weapons and commitment to a no-first-use policy is argued to have influenced China to espouse the role of the defender of peace. Furthermore, the statement that nuclear weapons do not provide peace nor security indicates that China tries to defend the peace by encouraging nuclear states to affirm security assurances because this could be believed to decrease the likelihood of war. It can be postulated that the no-first-use policy is inveterate in the political culture of the state. Thus, this could have informed and strengthened the adherence to this role.

The nuclear policy of no-first-use and the role as the defender of peace can be posited to have provided China with a stable and consistent experience of its identity. Given the long history of the no-first use policy, it can be argued that this has become a part of China's linear narrative. The existence of a linear narrative regarding identity indicates that China was

ontologically secure at this time. As mentioned, the policies from 2005 and 2006, respectively, described China's security environment as stable. In the 2005 policy, threats were discussed in a general manner whereas the 2006 doctrine identified the US and Taiwan as specific threats. Thus, it can be argued that China remained focused on pursuing objectives and portraying behaviour congruent with its role despite the identification of threats. Therefore, this demonstrates that China had a flexible attachment because the pursued objectives could have served to sustain its self-esteem as a defender of peace.

However, statements regarding peace appear to become less frequent in the later doctrines and the context changes in which peace is mentioned. As stated, the Chinese nuclear force structure has undergone modernisation efforts since 2011 which includes the development of new missiles (Kristensen - Norris 2011). In the policies from 2015 and 2019 respectively, the term peace is mentioned in regard to the aspired reunification with Taiwan. The military doctrine from 2015 stated that China aspires to maintain peace in accordance with the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. Further, it affirmed that the pursuit of national rejuvenation inevitably included reunification with Taiwan (SCIO 2015: Preface, para 1, ch I, para 5). In the subsequent policy, China stated that it will pursue any measures necessary to reunite with Taiwan including the possible use of force. Nevertheless, the policy later reinforced that China has always loved peace, will not inflict war or aggression on another state and is committed to promoting world peace (SCIO 2019: 7-8). Consequently, the improvements, development and modernisation of the nuclear arsenal could be argued to have resulted in the erosion of the role as a defender of peace since the more recent documents contain contradictions regarding the conceptualisation of peace and the use of force, which could include nuclear weapons use.

The inconsistent adherence to the role of defender of peace can indicate uncertainty regarding identity. It could be postulated that the modernisation of nuclear weapons was implemented to sustain a routinised relationship with Others and to gain certainty of the Self. Following ontological security theory, this disrupted narrative can result in the transformation of existential anxieties into identifiable threats. In the 2015 doctrine, the task of safeguarding territorial integrity, national unification and development interests is described as arduous. The US continued to be construed as a threat with the enhancement of military presence being specifically mentioned. The threat of Taiwanese independence is interpreted as an obstacle to reunification, long-term development and for the first time political and social

stability is mentioned as threatened (SCIO 2015: ch I, para 4, 5). These formulations indicate a decreased level of flexible attachment because the threats are described as hindrances to the achievement of desired objectives which is an indicator of ontological insecurity. This could compel China to establish a routinised relationship with Taiwan and the US as a means to acquire ontological security.

This development can be claimed to be correlated with the modernisation of nuclear forces and the decreased references to the role of a defender of peace. The policy from 2019 reinforced the narrative that Taiwan and the US constituted as threats to Chinese security. The policy emphasised American military deployment and intervention as problematic for the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Concerning Taiwan, the perception of separatist and independence forces as a threat persisted with the use of force and “taking all means necessary” being described as plausible to realise the goal of reunification. Further, it stated that the army will “resolutely defeat” any actor which tries to separate Taiwan from China. The opposing and containing Taiwanese independence efforts are described as a fundamental goal of the Chinese national defence (SCIO 2019: 3, 7-8). These statements constitute a continued routinised relationship as China positions itself in a conflictual narrative against Taiwan and the US. Consequently, China can be argued to have formed a rigid attachment to this narrative because the aim of reunification is described as a primary goal of the defensive strategy. Thus, the routinised relationship and rigid attachment described in the later policy documents could be a means to enhance ontological security as the conflict could have become a part of the Chinese identity.

5.2 Russia's Nuclear Policies

The Russian military policies indicate that the purpose of nuclear weapons has changed from the first doctrine in 1993 to the latest policy from 2020. The purpose of nuclear weapons in 1993 was described as defensive and the document proclaims the intention to not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states unless an attack on Russia by such a state includes a nuclear-armed state as one adversary. This intent is congruent with the stated aspiration of the eventual complete elimination of nuclear weapons (Russian Federation Security Council [SCRF] 1993: ch 5, para 1, ch 2.1, para 5). Conversely, in the 2000 doctrine, the purpose of nuclear weapons is acutely altered. It asserts that nuclear weapons must retain the capability to inflict desired damage upon any aggressor adversaries under any circumstances and conditions (Putin 2000: ch IV, para 40). The military doctrine from 2010 further expands on the purpose of nuclear weapons and asserts the right to utilise nuclear weapons in response to aggression with conventional weapons against Russia (Doctrine 2010). The same formulation stipulating the conditions of when nuclear weapons might be utilised is reiterated in the policies from 2014 and 2020 (Putin 2014: art. 27; Putin 2020: art. 17). Hence, the purpose of nuclear weapons has significantly altered from the rather strict conditions of nuclear use in the 1993 policy to the broadened plausible nuclear use from 2010 and onward.

5.2.1 The Regional-Subsystem Collaborator

The 1993 doctrine was formulated in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. One implication of this was the fact that the Soviet Union had stationed nuclear weapons which became independent states after the dissolution (Schneider 2008: 404). Thus, Russia presumably experienced uncertainty regarding its nuclear capabilities which in turn affected its role conception. Therefore, it can be postulated that this uncertainty contributed to the enactment of a cooperative role because it could provide Russia with the security guarantees which it perhaps did not acquire from its nuclear weapons.

The document from 1993 continuously emphasises collaborative efforts with other states. For example, relations with primarily its immediate neighbours are described as important to

ensure Russian security and vital interests. It states that Russia implements the relevant measures to strengthen efforts for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons jointly with other states. Specifically, the policy aims to sustain cooperation with the other nuclear-armed states, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and states in Eastern and Central Europe (SCRF 1993: ch 2.1, para 2, 5). The aspiration of possible nuclear elimination and the defensive purpose of nuclear weapons, mentioned above, could foster a cooperative attitude since the nuclear capabilities were organised in a non-combative manner. These statements indicate a role conception of regional-subsystem collaborator which is the commitment to cooperative efforts to build wider communities as shown by the aspiration to cooperate with the CIS, nuclear-armed states and neighbouring states.

The 1993 doctrine further asserts that the plausibility of large-scale nuclear war is reduced and even possibly eliminated (SCRF 1993: ch 3.1, para 1) which can explain why the purpose of nuclear weapons is described as primarily defensive in nature. Furthermore, it is stated that Russia pursues a nuclear strategy which entails a reduction of nuclear forces to the minimum level required to deter aggression. Although the doctrine stated potential external military dangers to Russia such as territorial claims, nuclear use and expansion of alliances, the potential threats are described in a general manner. It is also firmly concluded that Russia does not view any state as its enemy (SCRF 1993: ch. 2.1, para 10, 3). Therefore, it can be argued that Russia does not express dangers as threats to its survival which indicates a sense of ontological security. There is a lack of an Us and Them narrative in the policy which further supports the claim that Russia experienced ontological security at this time.

Furthermore, Russia stated its commitment to facilitating ideals of social progress, democracy and universal security and peace (SCRF 1993: ch 5, para 2). The promotion of nuclear weapons elimination is understood as promoting Russia's self-image because it positions Russia as an actor that opposes the utilisation and possession of nuclear weapons. This extract also highlights the cooperative role of Russia which could have contributed to an attachment to cooperative routines. It is argued that this could have strengthened Russian ontological security because it could have conduced toward the certainty of the Self. Therefore, the doctrine indicates a flexible attachment because it emphasises objectives which promote development and self-esteem.

5.2.2 The Regional Leader and Protector

In the later doctrines, the purpose and utility of nuclear weapons appear to have altered which is postulated to affect role conception. It can be posited that the development of nuclear weapons' purpose derives from more certainty regarding Russia's nuclear capabilities. The 2000 policy asserted the importance of exercising deterrence against any aggression towards Russia or its allies. The following sentence claimed that Russia "must possess nuclear weapons" capable of inflicting damage against any aggressor. It further identified one obligation of the Russian forces to be the military presence in strategically important regions (Putin 2000: ch IV, para 39, 40, 43). The extracts illustrate how Russia perceives itself to have responsibilities vis-à-vis its allies and states in its region. Furthermore, these responsibilities are conceptualised in terms of providing protection through military force and potential nuclear use. Thus this demonstrates role performances of a regional leader and protector. However, it is unclear if having nuclear weapons for the purpose to inflict damage extends to Russia's allies but since the statement regarding deterring aggression against allies is directly followed by the statement concerning nuclear weapons it can be argued that the two are connected.

Moreover, Russia's nuclear capabilities appeared to have influenced its role as a regional leader. The document described Russia as a "great power" and an "influential centre" and cooperation with the CIS members and traditional partners is described as a primary objective. It is also argued that Russia enacted an important role globally due to its national capabilities such as military potential and its location in Eurasia (Putin 2000: ch II, para 9, ch I, para 5). Based on the extracts, it can be understood that Russia views itself as the most influential state in its region and that it has a responsibility to cooperate with regional states as this is described as a primary objective.

One threat to national security mentioned in the doctrine is the potential loss of world-leading positions and the undermining of its military capabilities (Putin 2000: ch III, para 3; 15). This illustrates that Russia experienced anxieties which could be because its role as a regional leader and protector had not yet been established as a linear narrative of the Self. According to ontological security, anxieties can be transformed into identifiable threats to achieve ontological security (Kinvall - Mitzen 2018). In contrast to the 1993 doctrine, the 2000

doctrine identified specific threats such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's expansion in the East, the weakening of Russian influence and the weakened integration process in the CIS, amongst others (Putin 2000: ch III, para 15). Hence, it is evident that the uncertainty and anxieties regarding Russia's role conception were augmented by the construction of identifiable threats. The threats mentioned can be argued to be correlated to the role of a regional leader and protector. Therefore, the establishment of a routinised relationship with NATO as the identified adversary is hypothesised to originate from the 2000 doctrine.

In the doctrine from 2010, Russia reserved the right to utilise nuclear weapons as a response to a nuclear attack on its allies. The Russian armed forces are further stated to be organised in a manner which ensures the protection of itself and its allies. Moreover, an armed attack on a CSTO member state is viewed as an attack on all during which Russia affirmed that it will implement counter-active measures (Putin 2010: art. 18, art. 22, art. 21). The same formulations regarding the right to use nuclear weapons in response to a nuclear attack on its allies are found in the subsequent policies (Putin 2014: art. 27; Putin 2020: art. 17). The doctrines also permitted the use of nuclear weapons as a response to a conventional attack on Russia which threatens the existence of the state (*ibid*; *ibid*). Thus, the protection of allies seems to be contingent on Russia's nuclear capabilities which reaffirms the argument that the purpose of nuclear weapons influences a state's role conception. Furthermore, the role of a regional leader and protector appears to have become a part of the political culture in Russia given its repeated inclusion in the policies.

The purpose of nuclear weapons is argued to directly influence Russia's role conception because the descriptions of nuclear use are related to the protection of allies and responsibilities towards the region. The consolidation of the role as a regional leader and protector could have provided Russia with a linear narrative which implies ontological security. However, the doctrines indicated that Russia experienced existential anxieties regarding the survival of the state. The 2010 and 2014 doctrines continued to describe NATO, its expansion and military mobilisation in the proximity of Russia as threats (Putin 2010: art. 8(a); Putin 2014: art. 12(a)). The 2020 nuclear policy did not explicitly mention NATO but described military build-up by a nuclear-armed adversary on territories adjacent to Russia and its allies as a threat (Putin 2020: art. 12(a)). Given that NATO possesses nuclear weapons, it can be argued that the 2020 policy infers that NATO could be perceived as an adversary. This further indicates a narrative of Us and Them.

Therefore, the threats identified are argued to illustrate the existence of a routinised relationship and rigid attachment. The role of a regional protector implies that the region requires protection which would explain why Russia had become attached to the perceived conflict with Nato as this reinforces Russia's role as a protector and enhances its ontological security. Furthermore, the utility of nuclear weapons as a primary means to protect allies posits that Russia believed this behaviour to be appropriate. This indicates that the behaviour had become routine since the options deemed appropriate have remained consistent over ten years. Russia continued to reproduce the narrative of NATO as the Other which shows that the routine has become a part of the Russian identity and serves to stabilise the identity of the Self.

Moreover, the anxieties regarding threats to the existence of the Russian state are postulated to disrupt the narrative of Russia as a regional leader. Thus, it can be argued that Russia experienced uncertainty regarding its ability to pursue objectives because Russia could not enact its role as a leader or protector if it did not exist. The purpose of nuclear weapons as assuring that Russia would repel an attack is assumed to create a certainty that Russia will retain its role conceptions. Consequently, the recurring affirmation that nuclear weapons would be utilised indicates that Russia did not consider other options to achieve its objectives which illustrates that the routine had become habitual. This explains why Russia sustained a conflictual relationship with NATO as this could enhance its ontological security because the narrative of a threatening Other can attribute stability to the narrative of the Self and allows the behaviour of nuclear use to be perceived as appropriate.

6 Discussion

Based on the analysis, it can be argued that the purpose ascribed to nuclear weapons will affect the role a state adapts and enacts. In the majority of the Chinese policies, the function of nuclear weapons was described as being defensive in nature. Further, the policy of no-first-use is mentioned in all the doctrines and appears to be a source of pride for China. The role of an example is posited to be derived from the policy of no-first-use. The earlier policies describe China's ambition to influence other states to adopt a similar policy. This indicates that this domestic policy is a way for China to gain influence internationally and that the policy allows China to promote itself as prestigious because it is depicted as a pioneering policy. The enactment of the defender of peace is also postulated to be based on the considerations of a defensive nuclear strategy and no-first-use. Given the framing of the purpose of nuclear weapons, it is argued to be reasonable for China to adopt a role which promotes the defence of peace and against aggression. The nuclear strategy is portrayed in a manner which does not permit the use of nuclear weapons which corresponds with the behaviour of the defender of peace. Thus, the Chinese nuclear policy has resulted in the adoption of influential and peaceful roles.

Conversely, the Russian policies mostly depict the purpose of nuclear weapons to arise from their potential use in conflict to deter aggression from other states towards Russia and its allies. The identified function of nuclear weapons is postulated to have espoused Russia to enact the role of a regional leader and protector. In turn, the conceptualisation of the regional leader and protector infers the existence of obligations and threats respectively. Given that Russia is the sole nuclear power in its region, it can be argued to be reasonable that Russia references its nuclear capabilities in connection to its perceived obligations, duties and protection of the region. Therefore, it can be assumed that functions of nuclear weapons which allow nuclear use, in combination with a state being the only nuclear power in its region, is likely to result in a role conception that emphasises the state's duties in the region and protection of the region.

Furthermore, the analysis illustrates how changes in the purpose and structure of nuclear weapons results in changes of the role conception. The Chinese modernisation of nuclear weapons and the authorisation of nuclear use regarding the “Taiwanese issue” is argued to have eroded its role as the defender of peace. Thus, it can be postulated that future efforts of modernisation could lead to the adaptation of a new role. Similarly, the analysis of the Russian documents demonstrates how changes in the function of nuclear weapons will result in different role conceptions. The 1993 doctrine described the nuclear strategy as defensive and discussed the potential elimination of nuclear weapons which is in contrast to how the later doctrines described the function of nuclear weapons. The analysis illustrated that the uncertainty regarding Russia’s nuclear capabilities in 1993 and the defensive strategy precipitated the adoption of a cooperative role since this could provide security assurance. The later doctrines attribute a greater function to nuclear weapons and increasingly expand the provisions for nuclear use. It is argued that this evolution of the purpose of nuclear weapons explains the altered role conception of Russia.

The role conception of a state has also been shown to have implications for ontological security. Based on the analysis, it appears that nuclear strategies which oppose nuclear use and roles that emphasise cooperation, peace and influence result in more flexible attachments. This is exemplified in the analysis of China as an example, China as the defender of peace in earlier policies and Russia as the regional-subsystem collaborator. However, when the states discussed nuclear use as appropriate, the analysis found that this led to routinised relationships and rigid attachments. In these instances, more descriptions of identifiable threats and narrative of an Other was found, against which nuclear weapons could be used. Therefore, states that allow nuclear use appear to become more attached to conflictual relations. Additionally, both states are argued to currently experience uncertainty regarding their identity and role which each state appears to rectify by pursuing routinised relationships with significant Others. Nonetheless, the analysis found that the consolidation of roles generated ontological security but that the stability of the Self could originate from different attachments, cooperative or conflictual respectively.

7 Conclusion

By analysing the military policies of China and Russia, this paper has shown that the purpose of nuclear weapons influences the roles states adopt and that this, in turn, affects the ontological security of a state. The analysis indicated that the defensive purposes of nuclear weapons lead to the adoption of cooperative and peaceful roles. Conversely, policies which described conditions that would allow nuclear use contained fewer references to cooperative roles and more references to protective roles. Although protective roles were not identified in the recent Chinese policies which allowed nuclear use during certain circumstances, the analysis found that the role of the defender of peace was eroding which is argued to result in the espousal of a new role. Furthermore, the analysis showed that the role of a state can generate ontological security. Comprehensively, the results indicate that a consolidated role generated ontological security because it produces a consistent biographical narrative of the Self. However, the analysis also demonstrated how the adoption of protective roles resulted in rigid attachment styles and routinised relationships whereas when cooperative roles were identified there were fewer references to threats and showed more flexible attachments.

Moreover, the analysis exhibited how changes to the function of nuclear weapons precipitated the espousal of new roles. A distinctive example of this is the analysis of the Russian policies which demonstrated how the extended authorisation of nuclear weapons' use led to the assumption of a protective role and subsequently, the consolidation of that role. This development further illustrated how nuclear weapons' purpose and role conception generates ontological security as Russia appeared to achieve certainty of the Self through conflictual routines. However, the analysis found that nuclear weapons' function, role conception and ontological security can be argued to be mutually reinforcing. Therefore, additional research on the phenomena is warranted. Future research could analyse all nuclear-armed states to test whether the findings of this paper are valid across the population of cases. Alternatively, the research could study states before and after the acquisition of nuclear weapons as well as changes to the purpose to confirm the findings that nuclear weapons' purpose affects role conception and ontological security.

The paper has demonstrated that one aspect of the utility of nuclear weapons is that it contributes to security through the adoption of roles consistent with the purpose, which in turn contributes to ontological security. These findings have contributed to the research field on nuclear weapons by demonstrating that nuclear weapons affect policies after the initial acquisition. Further, the study has shown that nuclear weapons do not solely provide traditional security for states but also security in the form of identity through role conceptions and ontological security. Correspondingly, the paper has contributed to the research concerning role theory by showing how the purpose of nuclear weapons affects role conception and illustrating how this has implications for ontological security. This has provided alternative explanations regarding role conception and ontological security for each state which has broadened this research field.

8 Bibliography

Akchurina, Viktoria - Della Sala, Vincent, 2018. "Russia, Europe and the Ontological Security Dilemma: Narrating the Emerging Eurasian Space", *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 70, no. 10, pp. 1638-1655.

Bell, Mark S., 2015. "Beyond Emboldenment: How Acquiring Nuclear Weapons Can Change Foreign Policy", *International Security*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 87-119.

Bell, Mark S. - MacDonald, Julia M., 2019. "How to Think about Nuclear Crises", *Texas National Security Review*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 41-64.

Carnegie, n.d. *About/ The History of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. [Electronic] <https://carnegieendowment.org/about/our-story> Retrieved: 2023-05-06.

Chafetz, Glenn, 1996. "The Struggle for a National Identity in Post-Soviet Russia", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 111, no. 4, pp. 661-688.

Colby, Elbridge, 2016. "Russia's Evolving Nuclear Doctrine and Its Implications", *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique*, no. 1, pp. 1-12.

Cunningham, Fiona S. - Fravel, Taylor M., 2015. "Assuring Assured Retaliation: China's Nuclear Posture and U.S-China Strategic Stability", *International Security*, vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 7-50.

Demirduzen, Cagla - Thies, Cameron G., 2021. "A Role Theory Approach to Grand Strategy: Horizontal Role Contestation and Consensus in the Case of China", *Journal of Global Security Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 1-19.

Fravel, Taylor M. - Medeiros, Evan S., 2010. "China's Search for Assured Retaliation: The Evolution of Chinese Nuclear Strategy and Force Structure", *International Security*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 48-87.

Futter, Andrew - Zala, Benjamin, 2021. "Strategic Non-nuclear Weapons and the Onset of a Third Nuclear Age", *European Journal of International Security*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 257-277.

George, Alexander L. - Bennett, Andrew, 2004. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, Mass/London: MIT Press.

Green, Brendan Rittenhouse, 2020. *The Revolution that Failed: Nuclear Competition, Arms Control and the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grossman, Michael, 2005. "Role Theory and Foreign Policy Change: The Transformation of Russian Foreign Policy in the 1990s", *International Politics*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 334-351.

Gustafsson, Karl, 2016. "Routinised recognition and anxiety: Understanding the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations", *Review of International Studies*, vol. 42, no. 4, pp. 613-633.

Halperin, Sandra – Heath, Oliver, 2020. *Political Research. Methods and Practical Skills*. 3rd ed. Glasgow: Oxford University Press.

Holsti, Kalevi J., 1970. "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 233-309.

Jervis, Robert, 1989. *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Kinvall, Catarina - Mitzen, Jennifer, 2018. "Ontological Security and Conflict: The Dynamics of Crisis and the Constitution of Community", *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 825-835.

Kristensen, Hans M. - Norris, Robert S., 2011. "Chinese Nuclear Forces, 2011", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 67, no. 6, pp. 81-87.

Krolikowski, Alanna, 2008. "State Personhood in Ontological Security Theories of International Relations and Chinese Nationalism: A Sceptical View", *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 109-133.

Lieber, Kier A. - Press, Daryl G., 2020. *The Myth of the Nuclear Revolution: Power Politics in the Atomic Age*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Michalski, Anna - Pan, Zhongqi, 2017. "Role Dynamics in a Structured Relationship: The EU–China Strategic Partnership", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 55, no. 3, pp. 611-627.

Mitzen, Jennifer, 2006. "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma", *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 341-370.

Narang, Vipin, 2013. "What Does It Take to Deter? Regional Power Nuclear Postures and International Conflict", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 478-508.

Narozhna, Tanya, 2022. "Misrecognition, Ontological Security and State Foreign Policy: The Case of post-Soviet Russia", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 76, no. 1, pp. 76-97.

Powell, Robert, 1985. "The Theoretical Foundations of Strategic Nuclear Deterrence", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 100, no. 1, pp. 75-96.

Rumelili, Bahar, 2015. "Identity and Desecuritisation: The Pitfalls of Conflating Ontological and Physical Security", *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 52-74.

Sagan, Scott Douglas, 1994. "The Perils of Proliferation: Organisation Theory, Deterrence Theory, and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons", *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 66-107.

Schelling, Thomas, 1961. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press.

Schelling, Thomas, 1966. *Arms and Influence*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Schneider, Mark, 2008. "The Nuclear Forces and Doctrine of the Russian Federation", *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 27, no. 5, pp. 397-425.

Seawright, Jason - Gerring, John, 2008. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research", *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 2, pp. 294-308.

Shih, Chih-yu, 1988. "National Role Conception as Foreign Policy Motivation: The Psychocultural Bases of Chinese Diplomacy", *Political Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 599-631.

Shoumikhin, Andrei, 2011. "Nuclear Weapons in Russian Strategy and Doctrine" in Blank, Stephen J. (eds.), *Russian Nuclear Weapons: Past, Present and Future*. Carlisle: US Army War College, pp. 99-160.

Splidsboel Hansen, Flemming, 2016. "Russia's Relations with the West: Ontological Security through Conflict", *Contemporary Politics*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 359-375.

Thibault, Jean-Francois - Lévesque, Jacques, 1997. "The Soviet Union/Russia: Which Past for Which Future?" in Le Prestre, Philippe G. (eds.), *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, pp. 15-39.

Thies, Cameron, 2010. "Role Theory and Foreign Policy", *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*.

UN - United Nations, 2022. *UN Chief Calls for an End to 'Nuclear Blackmail' and Risk of 'Humanitarian Armageddon'*. [Electronic] <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127961>
Retrieved: 2023-04-16.

Material

Putin, Vladimir, 2000. *National Security Concept of the Russian Federation*.

Putin, Vladimir, 2010. *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*.

Putin, Vladimir, 2014. *Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*.

Putin, Vladimir, 2020. *Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence*.

SCIO - The State Council Information Office, 2005. *China's Endeavours for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation*.

SCIO - The State Council Information Office, 2006. *China's National Defense in 2006*.

SCIO - The State Council Information Office, 2015. *China's Military Strategy*.

SCIO - The State Council Information Office, 2019. *China's National Defense in the New Era*.

SCRF - Russian Federation Security Council, 1993. *The Basic Provisions of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*.