More than a Seat in the General Assembly: The Recognition of de facto States

https://www.e-ir.info/2024/08/27/more-than-a-seat-in-the-general-assembly-the-recognition-of-de-facto-states/

FLORA MARLENE WILLIMEK, AUG 27 2024

We undoubtedly still live in a world of states. Although borders seem to become increasingly porous under today's conditions of interdependence and a plethora of new actors has started to populate the scene, the entity of the sovereign state still remains the prevailing category of reference in the disciplines of International Relations and International Law (Thomson 1995: 213). Deeply embedded in the classic Westphalian conception of the world order (Lake 2003: 305f), the concept seems to constantly elude our attempts of deconstruction or reinvention and continues setting the rules of enablement and constraint.

However, the sovereign state is not a reality for millions of people today who have settled in places which do not quite fit the established system. Disputed lands, partially or non-recognized territories elect their own representatives, trade with other nations and undeniably exert influence on the international stage (Caspersen 2011: 2ff). While some make their way into fully recognized statehood or are integrated into sovereign entities, others endure in an undecided status, enjoying the acceptance by some and suffering non-recognition by others. Nevertheless, this ambiguous position hardly prevents any of these entities from constructing their unique role in the international community of states and knitting close ties with like-minded partners (see, for example, Hsieh 2007: 765f). This seems to be the case, although the missing official recognition excludes them from a significant number of far-reaching rights and duties (Kelsen 1941: 606). If not the opening of an embassy or the granting of voting power in a regional organization, then which mechanisms are responsible for creating statehood and establishing a distinctive identity? This question leads us to the central puzzle of this essay: What difference do non-official recognition practices make to the sovereignty of de facto states?

I argue that, especially in the case of not fully recognized entities, signals of acceptance that go beyond bilateral diplomatic ties or the acquisition of a seat in the UN General Assembly can confer considerable degrees of statehood upon the territories in question. I contend that their particular status in today's ever-changing international order should and can only be understood through a critical constructivist lens that revisits traditional ideas and leaves room for the dynamic, relational and qualitative nature of recognition.

Theoretical Framework

Taking a look at the diversity of conditions under which non-fully recognized states find themselves today, it becomes quite clear that traditional theories of statehood and the recognition of sovereignty should have long been subjected to closer scrutiny. How can a change of viewpoint deepen our understanding and generate new knowledge about the contradictory recognition of de facto states?

A Traditional View on the Recognition of States

International recognition by the community of sovereign states is, until today, one of the main occupations of territories in the process of building their own statehood. Obtaining an international legal personality comes with a long list of rights and obligations (International Law Commission 1949). Not only enjoy the recognized state equal legal standing to all others, is free to choose its type of government, and adopts laws to advance its interest and

apply self-defense, but it also has to comply with the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other states, the respect of fundamental freedoms and the non-violation of obligations set forth in treaties and other international agreements (Hickey 1997: 1ff; Vance 1980: 73). From a realist perspective, these states become independent actors in competition with others, demanding recognition and acceptance of universal standards which complete their status as organized powers (Strang 2011: 22). While these rationalist approaches emphasize equality, non-interference and territoriality (cf. Bartelson 1995: 1ff), institutionalists, such as Alan James, rather point at constitutional independence, the force of law and the unitary source of policy control (James 1999: 457ff). But how is this kind of sovereignty conferred upon a state?

All these viewpoints acknowledge the absence of a supreme international entity capable of making authoritative decisions on sovereignty. In light of this observation, two main legal theories have developed over time to explain the phenomenon of recognition. The declaratory perspective assumes that statehood is created whenever the four criteria established in Article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States are fulfilled, meaning to have a defined territory, a government in control of this territory, a permanent population and the capacity to enter into relations with other states (Montevideo Convention 1933, Article 1). Recognition, therefore, becomes a mere consequence of an already existing fact and expresses the interest to enter into diplomatic relationships without actually impacting on the birth of the state itself (Eckert 2022: 23; Chen 1951: 4). The constitutive theory, on the contrary, adds the existence of recognition itself to the criteria and rejects the idea that statehood can be a natural phenomenon (Eckert 2022: 23ff). It considers the act of recognition by a community of sovereign states as fundamental for the emergence of legal personality (Lauterpacht 1947: 38ff).

Without a doubt, these two approaches aid immensely in explaining the majority of cases in which new states have formed and entered the international community. They simplify reality in a way that makes them well-suited for understanding the foundations of recognition, categorizing aspirant states, and debating the moment of state birth itself. But what if we start thinking about the long process it often takes for a state to come into being, about those communities that never fully seem to reach sovereignty or about the moments in which statehood appears to be strong despite a non-fulfillment of the Montevideo criteria? Can the truly enigmatic status of recognition, especially in cases where a territory's status is less distinct and unequivocal, really be captured in all situations by these conventional understandings? I contend that in order to answer my research question on the nature and effect of non-official recognition practices, it is necessary to carefully question the established frameworks and look beyond the common ways of knowledge production.

Towards a Critical Perspective

While the idea is certainly not new that the dichotomy of constitutive and declaratory fails to provide a suitable frame for the analysis of state-like entities, the existing bodies of scholarship lack until today a comprehensive and un-fragmented account of critical approaches to the phenomenon of recognition and a reflexive examination of its Western-centric and postcolonial heritages (D'Aspremont 2018: 2). This gap seems to have led to the dominance of legal, positivist and conservative discourses that fail to take into account the highly contextual and relational nature of recognition practices and the consequences on the lived realities of societies in partially or non-recognized states (cf. Mathieu 2018: 339ff). Gëzim Visoka, one of the few scholars to have dedicated an entire work to the attempt to develop a critical research agenda, makes an important point. According to him, traditional approaches additionally advance a narrow, orthodox understanding of recognition that is free from inconsistencies, emotions and variations and, therefore, becomes prone to reproducing potentially harmful power dynamics (cf. Visoka 2022: 134f). Rather, we should see recognition as a non-singular act, leaving room for the agency of the claimant states and as a process formed through "micro-moves, […] everyday practices, spaces, emotions and personal diplomacy" (ibid.: 135).

Kyris rightly adds to this observation that recognition should thus be conceptualized according to its varying types and degrees and its inherent changes that occur over time within the same unit of analysis. Understanding entities' status as reaching beyond the often-assumed binary of sovereign and non-sovereign, particularly in the case of partial recognition, opens the way for more dynamism, emphasizes the self-construction of states and draws our attention to the dual exclusive and inclusive function that recognition practices fulfill (cf. Kyris 2022: 3ff).

This pathway sounds promising, but we should not forget that breaking the chain of reproduction of monolithic and closed understandings will not happen overnight, especially in a systemic order that favors the continuity of such patterns (cf. Visoka 2022: 147). Shifting the focus ontologically and epistemologically takes time and does not automatically translate into a practical implementation of skepticism and critical inquiry.

Despite these intricacies, consciously enhancing one's understanding of the practice of recognition can certainly lead to a more emancipated revision of the problem (cf. Strang 2011: 23f). This viewpoint allows us to bring back this essay's main argument, namely that practices beyond official diplomatic ties confer a considerable degree of recognition on state-like entities, especially in the case of de facto states. In the following, I will, therefore, comprehend recognition as a multidirectional, fluent and relative process. The goal will be to show on the basis of the two cases of Taiwan and Western Sahara that recognition is created through a composite of public discourses and everyday diplomatic practices. I argue that a problematizing account of the dominant findings of research contributes to the generation of critical knowledge and adds to our ability to adapt the concept of state recognition to the contemporary nature of the international order with its ambiguities and contradictions.

A more flexible assessment of recognition also touches upon the pivotal concepts of the process of creation of statehood and sovereignty, their significance in differentiating state-like entities from one another, as well as their deep entrenchment in euro- and Western-centric narratives (cf. Balaton-Chrimes; Stead 2017: 9f). Understanding today how recognition as a constitutive element of world politics goes beyond its legal, conservative and positivist cornerstones is of inherent importance if the goal is to lift some of the blinding curtains that have historically enclosed our discipline (cf. Visoka 2022: 135).

The Guanxi of the International System

Let us go one step further. We have already identified recognition as a highly relational phenomenon. I suggest that taking it out of a context of substantialism in favor of a more relationalist examination will help further to refine our understanding of the everyday mechanisms of recognition. Recently, new theoretical lenses like practice theory and relationalism have contributed significantly to opening up the narrowed focus of constructivism (cf. McCourt 2016: 477). Born out of a rejection of the substantialist focus in all major IR theories ("the ontological primitives of analysis are 'things' or entities […] and all relations should be conceived as relations between entities", Jackson; Nexon 1999: 291), relationalism moves social processes themselves to the center of attention. In this essay, I follow Emirbayer's understanding of these dynamics as processual transactions "within ever-changing contexts" (Emirbayer 1997: 307), which shift from the end to the very beginning of the explanatory chain (Qin 2016: 37ff; cf. Nordin et al. 2019: 572ff). While our brain is designed to think in terms of given entities, such as individuals that exist before interaction even emerges, relationalism poses the uncomfortable task of inverse this pattern. I contend that this approach forces us to consider that social ties, or □□ (*Guanxi*, term used by Emilian Kavalski, cf. Kavalski 2018: 234), and their specific non-static configurations only let discrete substances come into being and are therefore at the source of constituting the international system (cf. Jackson; Nexon 1999: 291ff; cf. McCourt 2016: 478f).

How can this viewing angle help to answer our above-mentioned question? I argue that relationalism brings four advantages. Firstly, considering the status of sovereign territories and de facto states from a logic of interrelatedness allows us to conceive recognition itself as a dynamic, co-constitutive process, emphasizing its perpetual motion as well as its embeddedness in an ever-expanding network of relatedness between other social phenomena (cf. Schneider 2015: 192f). This also means, secondly, that the relational perspective opens up our view to the many small components that recognition consists of, for its ability to quantitatively and qualitatively change over time and for the necessity of other social actors, states or non-state actors to be involved in the process (cf. Kavalski 2018: 241). In addition, we are talking about social relations in a constant state of flux. Relationalism captures change better than theories emphasizing the individual coexistence of essences (Adler-Nissen 2015: 295).

Lastly, Qin draws our attention to how perceiving the world as a "complexly related whole" (Qin 2016: 36) can contribute to dismantling the individualistic Western bias inherent to IR theory, based on a view in which the world is composed of self-subsistent actors, separate from the relationships they enter into (cf. ibid.). Since this is one of the goals that this study wants to contribute to, a relationalist viewpoint will inform the following analytical considerations.

However, we should consider certain caveats when applying this theoretical framework. Not only are the mentioned concepts relatively challenging to measure and operationalize, but the heavy focus on micro-dynamics (cf. McCourt 2016: 480) also carries the risk of losing sight of the bigger picture. Concentrating on relationships rather than substances can blur the directions in which action flows and make a sequential examination more complex. These potential obstacles should be considered comprehensively and critically during the empirical analysis.

Empirical Analysis

In order to show which role unofficial practices of recognition play in the statehood of de facto states and to suggest a way forward for future research, I have chosen to examine the two cases of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Both of these regions enjoy only limited recognition. The former is unique due to the intricacy of the one-China principle, the view held by the People's Republic of China (PRC) that its government is the only one to legitimately represent the whole of China in the world and that other sovereign states cannot formally recognize itself and Taiwan at the same time (cf. Wei 2000: 1169). The latter emerges from a highly distinct context marked by occupation, decolonization and many years of UN presence (cf. Vance 1980: 45f, 51f). Despite or rather because of their profound differences, the two cases seem to be well-suited for the application of my theoretical considerations. Not only do they allow us to point out the flexibility and complexity of the process of recognition, but they also enable us to identify specific elements characteristic of each of them, which can lead to broader inferences about the nature of statehood and self-construction in both contexts.

Dwindling Allies of the Republic of China (ROC)

On the 9th of December 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua issued an official statement, announcing it "breaks diplomatic relations with Taiwan and ceases to have any contact or official relationship" (Reuters 2021). In January 2024, the Pacific Island Nation of Nauru followed this example (cf. AP News 2024). In recent years, more and more allies have turned their back on the territory that Mainland China claims its own and have ceded to the PRC's enormous economic, military and political strength. China regularly instrumentalizes its capacities in order to further destabilize Taiwan's status in the international system (cf. Maizland 2022), leaving it today with no more than 12 diplomatic partners, primarily smaller countries in Southern Africa, the Pacific, the Caribbean and Latin America (cf. AP News 2024).

Despite these losses and the difficulty of providing partnering countries with incentives that halt their potential shift of official recognition to the PRC, Taiwan seems to have established a steadfast image of an independent nation that engages rather than backs down. Horton puts it quite aptly when he talks about Taiwan's status as a "geopolitical absurdity" (Horton 2019). As the US's 9th largest trading partner and the world's 22nd biggest economy, the ROC occupies a vital place in the international system and is also of strategic significance for its allies and non-official supporters, such as the United States (cf. USCB 2017). This fact alone proves that official diplomatic recognition appears to be only one side of the coin. Despite its limited options, how else did Taiwan consolidate its status over the last decades? Referring back to our call for a more nuanced, critical understanding of sovereignty and statehood, I argue that the ROC today experiences varying levels of recognition, fluent in itself and inconsistent over time, mainly generated through constant diplomatic actions and discourses.

This becomes evident when we look at the numerous cultural collaborations and programs, such as exchanges with the National Taiwan University (cf. UOregon 2023), that Taipei has developed over time, its membership or observer status in over 60 intergovernmental organizations (cf. Hickson 2003: 1ff) or at soft power tools such as its participation in the Olympic Games or international beauty pageants (cf. Srinivas; Mattoo 2022: 9). We even have to note that the ambiguity surrounding the exact interpretation of the One-China principle has already helped Taiwan to explore different ways of making its voice heard on the international stage, for example through using a derivation of its formal name (e.g. Chinese Taipei) or representing itself as an 'entity' instead of a 'state' when joining international events or institutions (cf. Chiu; Lee 2021: 2159ff). This "as-if participation" (cf. Srinivas; Mattoo 2022: 12) gives Taiwan a chance to continuously learn from and adapt to the changing conditions and degrees of sovereignty: "The more Taiwan can walk and talk and act like a member of a regime that is open primarily to states, the more hope it has of securing the benefits of states […] in the international system" (DeLisle 2011).

Moreover, the visit by White House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in 2022, highly controversial and met with outrage and provocations on the side of the People's Republic, can be seen as an example of dynamic recognition. While the US remains firm on its official diplomatic ties with the PRC, the decision to send its third highest representative to the island shortly before the Communist Party's 20th annual Congress was interpreted as a strong sign of support for Taiwan (cf. Haenle; Sher 2022). Reactions on the ground, such as banners with greetings, the lighting of Taipei's tallest skyscraper and reports from supporters highlighting the atmosphere "felt like the countdown to the new year" (Kuo; Tsui 2022) show well how diplomatic symbols and interactions can strengthen a de facto state's identity and contribute to transferring a heightened sense of sovereignty.

I would briefly like to mention two other examples illustrating how continuous metaphoric practices in a local context can contribute to the creation of perceived recognition (cf. Visoka 2019: 171). The relationship between the Baltic state of Lithuania and Taiwan has recently intensified after a representative office, a de facto embassy, opened in Vilnius. Notwithstanding the prompt reaction from the PRC, both sides appear to derive benefits from close cooperation. It is very visible even on the level of civil society, where Lithuanians report "they have been greeted with toasts, handshakes from strangers, and free taxi rides" (France24 2022). Looking at a different continent, the link between Paraguay and the Republic of China stands out. This is not just the case because Paraguay is the only South American country left to officially recognize Taiwan over China despite the growing pressure from outside and within, but much more due to the fact that their resilient relationship seems to follow quite exactly the observation of Marina Duque: "[S]tates do not necessarily recognize the states with the most resources. Rather, they recognize states with similar values and resources" (Duque 2018: 578). While this case is one of actual recognition, it shows very convincingly how non-material, daily factors such as friendship, respect, shared historical trajectories and personal understanding between leaders seem so far to weigh more than the economic allurements that China has set up in order to isolate Taiwan (cf. Long; Urdinez 2021: 1ff).

According to the critical research agenda we have put forward in the beginning, the examples of Lithuania and Paraguay show that Taiwan itself is strongly implicated in constructing its unique form of statehood. The depicted relationships highlight how far from reality the binary of sovereign/non-sovereign is positioned in the case of the ROC and that recognition dynamics go far beyond the traditional narrow and legalistic understandings. This also puts emphasis on my hypothesis that taking the relations between states rather than states themselves as a point of departure will help conceptualize the reciprocity of action and the multidirectionality of negotiations over status and identity.

Fluctuations in the Case of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)

More than 12,000 kilometers further West, another territory fights for the international acknowledgement of its statehood. Also known under the name of Western Sahara and classified by the UN as a non-self-governing territory (cf. UN 2023), the SADR has experienced an unresolved conflict of control over its territory since the Spanish colonial forces left in 1975. This struggle confronts Morocco on one side, insisting on its historical claims over the region, and the Polisario Front on the other, governing organization of the Sahrawi people and in de facto control of approximately 20% of the area (cf. Riegl 2018: 453ff). Remarkable is the number of 45 UN member states that today officially recognize the self-declared SADR (amongst which, however, no 'big powers') and its full membership in the African Union. Formerly, 84, a large part of initial diplomatic relationships have been under the pressure of Morocco and have been (temporarily) frozen or broken. The history of the SADR has been marked by continuous transformations in recognition, periods where official diplomatic relations were stopped or resumed, often due to political motives, and where the aspirant state had to adapt its own construction of statehood and its choice of tools for the fight for sovereignty to the new changes (cf. ibid.). In the case of Honduras, the situation even remained unclarified for a long time until the Deputy Foreign Minister recently reaffirmed the willingness to establish close connections with the Western Sahara region (cf. SPS 2022). The very different approaches to Western Sahara's independence and the various terms and descriptions given to its status, for example, by the International Court of Justice, which declared to not have ascertained any forms of territorial sovereignty connections with Mauritania or Morocco (cf. ICJ 1974), show that there might be considerable leeway between official recognition and a complete rejection of SADR's right to existence. This not only proves my point about the non-static interrelatedness of recognition but also highlights how crucial these practices and their stability are for an entity that lacks international

legitimacy.

How much a feeling of being seen and heard depends moreover on everyday actions, especially of a diplomatic nature, also becomes visible in the case of Lesotho, whose relationship with the SADR changed with almost every new incumbent at the head of the Foreign Ministry. Numerous letters were sent to the Sahrawi government, declaring a suspension of any decisions until the issuance of a formal UN statement, supporting their right to self-determination or even urging Morocco to terminate its occupation of the territory (cf. SPS 2019).

Following the theoretical framework outlined above, I argue that particularly in the absence of formal recognition and when levels of consolidation and statehood are low, countries turn to discourses and language of themselves and others in order to prepare the ground for future sovereignty and to create higher salience for the perspective they have of their own statehood. These discourses can be influenced by written documents, such as the diplomatic notes sent in 2022 by the government in Nairobi to embassies in the region to confirm their support for the self-determination of the Sahrawi people after a controversial tweet by Kenya's President seemed to favor the Moroccan position (cf. Mutambo 2022). But the region's status is also highly connected to speeches produced by their own leaders, to the symbolism and strong rhetoric that they employ, like on the anniversary of the 1976 SADR proclamation, about which President Ghali said it "is a source of pride that protects Sahrawi's rights and embodies their hope to live in dignity and full sovereignty" (SPS 2021). As Charlotte Epstein rightly states, discourses have a vital function in enacting statehood because they are powerful tools for reproducing knowledge, shaping identities, and influencing interests (cf. Epstein 2008: 246).

Like the first case, the example of the SADR seems to support my main argument. It has shown that, especially for non-fully recognized states, unconventional methods of status formation can be more promising than the ongoing struggle for formal recognition, which remains centered at the intersection of legal rigidity and conservative congealment.

Brief Discussion & Comparison

Despite their distinctness, both cases tell us valuable stories about the micro-side of recognition and its embeddedness in the social world. The ROC and the SADR have in common that recognition for them goes beyond the formal acceptance of their status. The two actors have developed active and passive tools that help construct their statehood outside official forums and highlight the fluent and qualitative character of their self-understanding, which constantly changes over time. Through this empirical application, we have seen how "mainstream institutionalist perspectives hide the human agency and everydayness of sovereignty by focusing on its structural and normative properties" (Visoka 2019: 169). We can even hypothesize that in both cases, the attention drawn to the aspirant territory through its struggle for recognition and the continuing attempts of a neighboring bigger sovereign to curtail its sovereignty subconsciously confers more recognition and legitimacy on the entities than if China, Morocco or the international community completely ignored them.

Nevertheless, it remains important to point out that both cases should be treated with caution. Whether it is Taiwan's frantic attempt to prevent Paraguay from shifting official recognition to the PRC (cf. Stünkel, Tucker 2020: 1ff) or the open disappointment and incomprehension in the SADR when one of the only major middle powers to formally acknowledge its status, India, withdrew its recognition in 2000 (cf. Dasgupta 2000: 2914ff). Discourses on sovereignty or the most blazing speeches on independence cannot always replace material and legal incentives.

However, this consideration shows also how highly distinct situations are in which expressions of statehood and sovereignty come to the fore. Therefore, their examination requires special care and an analytical permeation of all tiers of the entity, from government to citizens, to grasp the effects that diverse degrees of recognition produce on different levels of society. Especially in (former) colonial contexts, it is high time to question the political implications and possible reproductions of asymmetric power relations. Are non-official recognition practices like the ones illustrated above a valid, bottom-up alternative that moves agency to the aspirant state and gives more room for their self-determined construction of statehood, or do they indeed create new dependencies between partner states? Looking at how Taiwan and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic build their self-understanding ultimately

highlights how recognition is not to be seen as a direct result of the decisions of two already existing, unitary actors but rather as emerging from continuous relational processes of social interaction, which flow in both directions and constantly elude the attempt to identify a clear end or starting point.

Conclusion and Where To Go From Here

The comparison of two distinct cases, as well as their critical consideration, enables us to go back to where we started. I argued that, particularly in the case of de facto states, non-formal recognition practices can play a major role in constructing sovereignty and statehood for the territory in question. The two highlighted examples seem to support this thesis and furthermore substantiate the thought that going forward, the nature of recognition should rather be seen through a constructivist lens that leaves room for non-realist and non-legalist accounts of a phenomenon that is more a relational process than a static condition, dynamically nourished by micro-actions rather than by decisions of unitary sovereigns.

Recognition seems to have long transcended the constraining borders of declaratory and constitutive conceptualizations, but not frequently enough is its qualitative and multidirectional nature taken into account upon its application to empirical contexts. Only by continuing to develop a nuanced and critical agenda for research that acknowledges the role that diverse assemblages of relations, as well as their potential hierarchical implications, play for local perceptions of statehood and independence can we endeavor to embark on the journey to decentralize, de-Westernize and decolonize our view on the ways in which international relations are woven today.

However, this should not be understood as a plaidoyer for ignoring the relevance of official recognition for aspiring states and the immense difference that the opening of formal embassies or the possibility of entering into comprehensive conventions with other states can make. But it enables us at least to explore new epistemological angles on today's multidimensional international order since "it was through practices of recognition, affirming sameness, and through practices of non-recognition, affirming difference, that international society came to constitute itself as such" (Ringmar 2014: 447). Concentrating on de facto states advances our understanding because it is precisely in these cases that all the ambiguities, all the profound absurdities of recognition and its place in the international system are revealed. Maybe we can even conclude that the less consolidated or the less officially accepted a state-like entity seems, the more essential become continuous practices, discourses and entanglements that fill the gap left by a missing seat in the UN General Assembly. In the end, Biersteker and Weber might still be right when they say that "[a]ttention to sovereignty tends to raise more questions about international relations than it answers" (Biersteker; Weber 2011: 2). But by challenging those truths seemingly carved in stone and by continuing to think in a critical and conscious way, we can at least contribute to finding answers for some of them.

Bibliography

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca (2015): "Conclusion. Relationalism. Why Diplomats find International Relations Theory strange", in: Sending, Ole J.; Pouliot, Vincent; Neumann, Iver B. (ed.): *Diplomacy and the Making of World Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 284-308.

Al Jazeera (2021): Who are Taiwan's diplomatic Allies?, in: *Al Jazeera*, Article from 10.12.2021, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/10/who-are-taiwan-diplomatic-allies, last accessed on 05.11.2022.

Balaton-Chrimes, Samantha; Stead, Victoria (2017): Recognition, Power and Coloniality, in: *Postcolonial Studies*, 20(1), p. 1-17.

Bartelson, Jens (1995): *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Biersteker, Thomas J.; Weber, Cynthia (2011): "The Social Construction of State Sovereignty", in: Biersteker, Thomas; Weber, Cynthia (ed.): *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 1-21.

Caspersen, Nina (2011): *Unrecognized States: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the modern International System* , New Jersey: Wiley & Sons.

Chen, Ti-Chang (1951): *The International Law of Recognition, with Special Reference to Practice in Great Britain and the United States*, New York: Praeger.

Chiu, Hung-Ju; Lee, Ping-Chao (2021): Should it be 'Chinese Taipei' or 'Taiwan'? A Strategic Relations Analysis of Name Rectification Referendum for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, in: *Sport in Society*, p. 2159-2183.

Dasgupta, Punyapriya (2000): Derecognition of Western Sahara. Foreign Policy Volte-Face, in: *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35(33), p. 2914-2917.

D'Aspremont, Jean (2017): "The International Law of Statehood and Recognition: A Post-Colonial Invention", in: Garcia, Thierry (ed.): *La Reconnaissance du Statut d'État à des Entités contestées*, Paris: Pedone, p. 1-18.

DeLisle, Jacques (2011): Taiwan. Sovereignty and Participation in International Organizations, in: *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, Article from 01.07.2011, https://www.fpri.org/article/2011/07/taiwan-sovereignty-and-participation-in-international-organizations/, last accessed on 31.01.2023.

Duque, Marina G. (2018): Recognizing International Status: A Relational Approach, in: *International Studies Quarterly*, 62, p. 577-592.

Eckert, Amy E. (2002): Constructing States: The Role of the International Community in the Creation of the New States, in: *Journal of Public & International Affairs*, 13, p. 19-39.

Emirbayer, Mustafa (1997): Manifesto for a relational Sociology, in: *American Journal of Sociology*, 103(2), p. 281-317.

Epstein, Charlotte (2008): *The Power of Words in International Relations. Birth of an Anti-Whaling Discourse* , Cambridge: MIT Press.

France24 (2022): 'Lithuania mania' sweeps Taiwan as China Spat sizzles, in: *France24*, Article from 09.03.2022, https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220309-lithuania-mania-sweeps-taiwan-as-china-spat-sizzles, last accessed on 30.01.2023.

Haenle, Paul; Sher, Nathaniel (2022): How Pelosi's Taiwan Visit has set a new Status Quo for U.S.-China Tensions, in: *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Article from 17.08.2022, https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/08/17/how-pelosi-s-taiwan-visit-has-set-new-status-quo-for-u.s-china-tensions-pub-87696, last accessed on 28.01.2023. 1

Hickson, Clay E. (2003): Taiwan in International Organizations. Internationalization of the Taiwan-China Relationship, in: *The Atlantic Council of the United States, Cross-Strait Seminar Series*, p. 1-7.

Horton, Chris (2019): Taiwan's Status is a Geopolitical Absurdity, in: *The Atlantic*, article from 08.07.2019, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/07/taiwans-status-geopolitical-absurdity/593371/, last accessed on 29.01.2023.

Hsieh, Pasha L. (2007): An unrecognized State in foreign and international Courts. The Case of the Republic of China on Taiwan, in: *Michigan Journal of International Law*, 28(4), p. 765-814.

International Court of Justice (ICJ) (1974): *Request for Advisory Opinion on the Status of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic*, https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/61, last accessed on 28.01.2023.

International Law Commission (1949): Draft Declaration on Rights and Duties of States, in: *1949 Yearbook of the International Law Commission*, https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/draft_articles/2_1_1949.pdf, last accessed on 05.11.2022.

Jackson, Patrick; Nexon, Daniel (1999): Relations before States: Substance, Process and the Study of World Politics, in: *European Journal of International Relation*, 5(3), p. 291-332.

James, Alan (1999): The Practice of Sovereign Statehood in Contemporary International Society, in: *Political Studies*, 47(3), p. 457-473.

Kavalski, Emilian (2018): The Guanxi of Relational International Affairs, in: *Chinese Political Science Review*, 3, p. 233-251.

Kelsen, Hans (1941): Recognition in International Law. Theoretical Observations, in: *American Journal of International Law*, 35(4), p. 605-617.

Kuo, Lily; Tsui, Karina (2022): How Taiwan reacted to Pelosi's Visit, from 'Welcome' to 'American Witch', in:*The Washington Post*, Article from 03.08.2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/08/03/nancy-pelosi-taiwan-visit-reaction/, last accessed on 29.01.2023.

Kyris, George (2022): State Recognition and Dynamic Sovereignty, in: *European Journal of International Relations*, 28(2), p. 287-311.

Lake, David A. (2003): The New Sovereignty in International Relations, in: *International Studies Review*, 5(3), p. 303-323.

Lauterpacht, Hersh (1947): *Recognition in International Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maizland, Lindsay (2022): Why China-Taiwan Relations are so tense, in: *Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounders*, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-taiwan-relations-tension-us-policy-biden#chapter-title-0-7, last accessed on 05.11.2022.

Mathieu, Xavier (2018): Sovereign Myths in International Relations. Sovereignty as Equality and the Reproduction of Eurocentric Blindness, in: *Journal of International Political Theory*, 16(3), p. 339-360.

McCourt, David (2016): Practice Theory and Relationalism as the New Constructivism, in: *International Studies Quarterly*, 60(3), p. 475-485.

Montevideo Convention (1933): *Convention on the Rights and Duties of States* , Montevideo, signed on 26.12.1933, https://www.ilsa.org/Jessup/Jessup15/Montevideo%20Convention.pdf, last accessed on 05.11.2022.

Mutambo, Aggrey (2022): Kenya Clarifies Position on Sahrawi after Gaffe, in: *The East African*, Article from 19.09.2022, https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/kenya-position-on-sahrawi-3953354, last accessed on 01.02.2023.

Nordin, Astrid; Smith, Graham; Bunskoek, Raoul (2019): Towards global relational Theorizing: A Dialogue between Sinophone and Anglophone Scholarship on Relationalism, in: *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 32(5), p. 570-581.

Qin, Yaqing (2016): A Relational Theory of World Politics, in: *International Studies Review*, 18(1), p. 33-47. ,

Reuters (2021): Nicaragua Breaks Ties with Taiwan, Switches Allegiance to Beijing, in: *Reuters*, Article from 10.12.2021, https://www.reuters.com/world/china/nicaragua-breaks-ties-with-taiwan-switches-allegiance-

beijing-2021-12-09/, last accessed on 05.11.2022.

Riegl, Martin; Dobos, Bohumil (2018): Power and Recognition: How (Super)Powers Decide the International Recognition Process, in: *Politics & Policy*, 46(3), p. 442-471.

Ringmar, Erik (2014): Recognition and the Origins of International Society, in: *Global Discourse*, 4(4), p. 446-458.

Schneider, Volker (2015): Relationalism in Political Theory and Research: The Challenge of Networked Politics and Policy-Making, in: *Przeglad Politologiczny*, 4(15), p. 1-16.

Sahara Press Service (SPS) (2019): Lesotho calls on Morocco to end its Occupation of Parts of Sahrawi Republic's Territory, in: *Sahara Press Service*, Article from 10.10.2019, https://www.spsrasd.info/news/en/articles/2019/10/10/22975.html, last accessed on 01.02.2023.

Sahara Press Service (SPS) (2022): 45 Anniversary of SADR: Sahrawi People will continue their Struggle until Independence, in: Sahara Press Service, Article from 27.02.2021, https://www.spsrasd.info/news/en/articles/2021/02/27/31634.html, last accessed on 01.02.2023

Sahara Press Service (SPS) (2022): Deputy Foreign Minister of Honduras affirms boosting relations with Sahrawi Republic, in: *Sahara Press Service*, Article from 14.02.2022, https://www.spsrasd.info/news/en/articles/2022/02/14/37928.html, last accessed on 05.11.2022.

Srinivas, Sitara; Mattoo, Shashank (2022): Taiwan's Battle for Diplomatic Space, in:*Observer Research Foundation (ORF) Occasional Paper*, 367, p. 1-24.

Strang, David (2011): "Contested Sovereignty: The Social Construction of Colonial Imperialism", in: Biersteker, Thomas; Weber, Cynthia (ed.): *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 22-49.

Stünkel, Larissa; Tucker, Julian (2020): Paraguay-Taiwan Relations: Convergent Trajectories, in: *Institute for Security and Development Policy*, Issue Brief, p. 1-10.

Su, Wei (2000): Some Reflections on the One China Principle, in: *Fordham International Law Journal*, 23(4), p. 1169-1178.

Thomson, Janice E. (1995): State Sovereignty in International Relations: Bridging the Gap between Theory and Empirical Research, in: *International Studies Quarterly*, 39, p. 213-233.

United Nations (UN) (2023): *Non-Self-Governing Territories*, https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/nsgt, last accessed on 29.01.2023.

United States Census Bureau (UNCB) (2017): *Top Trading Partners – January 2017*, https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/toppartners.html, last accessed on 29.01.2023.

University of Oregon (UOregon) (2023): *National Taiwan University Exchange*, https://geo.uoregon.edu/programs/asia-taiwan/national-taiwan-university-exchange, last accessed on 27.01.2023.

Vance, Robert T. (1980): Recognition as an Affirmative Step in the Decolonization Process. The Case of Western Sahara, in: *Yale Journal of World Public Order*, 7(1), p. 45-87.

Visoka, Gëzim (2019): Metis Diplomacy: The Everyday Politics of Becoming a Sovereign State, in:*Cooperation and Conflict,* 54(2), p. 167-190.

Visoka, Gëzim (2022): Statehood and Recognition in World Politics: Towards a Critical Research Agenda, in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 57(2), p. 133-151.

Walker, (1993): *Inside / Outside. International Relations as Political Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wu, Taijing; Moritsugu, Ken (2024): Nauru switches diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China, in: *AP News*, Article from 15.01.2024, https://apnews.com/article/taiwan-nauru-china-diplomacy-f8c6b74c03b61b51415c00b9e2bc32e1, last accessed on 12.05.2024