

# **Institution Building in the Pursuit of Security or Security as a Consequence of Institution Building: The Case of NATO**

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## **Abstract**

The role of the United States in NATO decision-making has always been of vital importance. This power dynamic has been well covered, but the role of decision-making within the United States government has been equally, if not more significant to NATO development. The motivations and objectives behind American decisions vis-à-vis NATO enlargement have been guided, in varying degrees by the theories of neoliberalism/institutionalism and realism. This thesis explores the relationship between these grand strategies and American actions concerning the phases of NATO enlargement by testing hypotheses against the historical record.

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## Introduction

As a cornerstone of Western defense policy, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) serves an important role as a guarantor of European and North American ideological, societal and economic sovereignty. NATO has expanded multiple times, but, the earliest of these enlargements occurred within the context of the Cold War and ostensibly, out of a desire to improve the security of its members and deter Soviet aggression. Much has been written about the wisdom of more recent expansions and the role that the alliance should assume in the twenty-first century. The traditional role of NATO as a collective security organization originated at a time of extreme securitization in Europe between ideologically opposed foes.

In its modern incarnation, NATO has sought to redefine itself as security management organization to justify its existence in the post-Cold War world.<sup>1</sup> Realist logic would dictate that the collapse of ideological and military foes, would usher in a period of desecuritization in Europe. This occurred to an extent in the 1990s, but in its efforts to redefine itself and serve a democratizing role in Eastern Europe, NATO assumed new roles. Increasing the geographic reach of NATO would seem to degrade its effectiveness and increase tensions with Russia, which contradicts realist theory regarding the nature of a purely security alliance. Recent attempts to portray NATO as not merely a collective security alliance, but as a democratizing, security management organization seem to run counter its historical nature from the realist paradigm.<sup>2</sup> Liberal institutionalists offer a differing interpretation for the rationale behind the enlargements of NATO. As the major force behind NATO, the role of United States (US) policy has been

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<sup>1</sup> Sens, Allen G. *NATO After 50 Years. From Collective Defense to Cooperative Security? The New NATO and Nontraditional Challenges and Mission*. 186-187.

<sup>2</sup> Carpenter, Ted Galen. *NATO After 50 Years. NATO's search for Relevance*. 31-32.

paramount to the decisions behind enlargement. This thesis seeks to examine the American motivations behind the phases of NATO enlargement during and after the Cold War.

### ***0.1 Theoretical Framework***

NATO presents itself as an interesting case study given the nature of its founding, the background of its operations and the ways it has interacted with state actors, both inside and outside of the framework of the Alliance. Although NATO is, at its core, a mutual defense pact, it has always served a secondary role as a unifying force. The extent to which the actions of the Alliance have been guided by security concerns, the balance of power, integration, cooperation and democratization aims are debatable. In its history, NATO has shifted its methods, if not its aims. Whether building Euro-Atlantic integration and spreading Western values through membership and association with NATO is a side effect of its role as a collective security organization or vice versa depends, to an extent, on how we view the Alliance and what theoretical paradigm we operate within.

#### **0.1.1 Realist Perspectives**

Realist theory operates under the assumption that states are the primary actors in the international system and that they seek to maximize their power and influence above all other concerns. In this sense, the value of a collective security organization lies purely in its ability to enhance the power of its membership. The early development of NATO is filled with examples that support this realist perspective. The founding members had deep concerns about European security in the wake of the Second World War, which led

them to seek cooperation. Mearsheimer informs us that uncertainty regarding the nature and intentions of other states is inevitable.<sup>3</sup> The decisions of the Low Countries, France and Britain were all informed by their experiences fighting two world wars. Fear of a potential German revival of militarism and uncertainty regarding the aims of the Soviet Union were of vital importance to the security of those states. Faced with the prospect of losing their status as Great Powers, the United Kingdom and France were forced into the realization that they could no longer provide adequately for their own defense needs without access to North American military and economic resources. Given the uncertain nature of the international system at the time of NATO's birth, it is important to account for what Morgenthau describes as the importance to the state of reducing ambiguity in interstate relations, a proposition that is dependent upon how states go about protecting their interests.<sup>4</sup> For the Western European states, this meant seeking the resources they needed by allying themselves to the US, with its vast capabilities. For the US, NATO offered an opportunity to maintain a hegemonic position through which to defend its vital interests, which, during the Cold War, were focused on the containment of communism.

Broadly assessed, NATO fulfills the criteria laid out by the preeminent thinkers within the realist paradigm. The Cold War Alliance revolved around the American desires to retain influence in Europe, counter Soviet actions and maintain their hegemonic role. It was not until the end of the Cold War period that the nature of the Alliance began to drift away from these principles and transform itself into a more

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<sup>3</sup> Mearsheimer, John. *The False Promise of International Institutions*. In: *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994-1995). 10.

<sup>4</sup> Morgenthau, Hans J. *Changes and Chances in American-Soviet Relations*. In: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (April 1971). 441.

political institution.<sup>5</sup> As the primary contributor to NATO forces and budget, the US found itself with no enemy to contain and a hegemonic position, which did not require the same level of expenditure to secure vital interests. According to realist theory, the balance of power is vital to any understanding of the international system and the emergence of a unipolar world has led to an imbalance, which, if history is any indicator, will correct itself in due time. Waltz points to the Yugoslav Wars as an example of the dangers of a unipolar world and shows that intervention was only undertaken due to internal political pressures and an unenthusiastic desire to maintain leadership within Europe, rather than external security concerns.<sup>6</sup> The lack of a balancing force in international society has given the US a great deal of autonomy in regard to its foreign policy orientations. According to realist theory, one of the key drivers of policy is the pursuit of goals that are in the *national* interest, rather than in the interests of a particular group within the national leadership, as such, the effects of internal American political considerations on NATO can be seen as an aberration from the customary ethical rules governing statesmanship.<sup>7</sup>

Realists would point to the fact that the historical existence of grand coalitions in the pursuit of a balance of power has never endured long beyond the end of hostilities. This is true of the wartime alliances assembled against Napoleon, the Central Powers and the Axis Powers. Realists view the continued existence of NATO after its primary enemy had collapsed as an example of the strength of American power over European policy,

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<sup>5</sup> Art, Robert J. *Why Western Europe Needs the United States and NATO*. *Political Science Quarterly* 111, no. 1 (1996): 12-13.

<sup>6</sup> Waltz, Kenneth N. *NATO expansion: A Realist's View*. *Contemporary Security Policy* 21, no. 2 (2000): 24-25.

<sup>7</sup> Gilpin, Robert G., *The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism*. In: *International Organization*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Spring 1984). 303.



rather than a sign that international institutions themselves are resilient and vital to the international system.<sup>8</sup> In contrast to liberal theories regarding the endurance of NATO as a strong institution in its own right, realists argue that the failure of European states to create their own integrated security structures and willingness to let the US drive policy is further proof that international institutions, like NATO, are created by powerful states to serve their interests.<sup>9</sup> Realist theory can also point to historical examples of victorious powers acting indifferently toward their defeated enemy to demonstrate why the arguments against NATO expansion make much more sense, than those supporting such action. In 2007, Waltz claimed that expanding NATO had a destabilizing effect on the Alliance as it aggravated Russia, increased NATO responsibilities at a time of reduced expenditure and forced NATO to address issues in destabilized regions by virtue of its commitments to new members in the East.<sup>10</sup>

It should be noted that realist theory does not preclude the concept that NATO has a certain degree of utility in the post-Cold War era. Robert Art has claimed that the persistence of NATO is helpful in maintaining the European peace and avoiding a return to security competition amongst European states now that the external threat from the Soviet Union is gone.<sup>11</sup> As such, one of the primary disagreements between realists and liberals over NATO is not whether the Alliance has a role to play, but whether policy is driven by the institution itself or by the state actors which dominate it. Although realist theory predicted that the end of the Cold War would result in the end of NATO, realist

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<sup>8</sup> Waltz, *NATO expansion: A Realist's View*, 28-29.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 29-30.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 32-34.

<sup>11</sup> Art, *Why Western Europe Needs the United States and NATO*, 6.

scholars argue that the survival of NATO says more about the will of the US than it does about institutional influence.

From the realist paradigm, American enlargement of NATO during the Cold War, is relatively straightforward. As one of two hegemonic powers left after the Second World War, American foreign policy was driven by a desire to increase its relative power by creating a security Alliance encompassing its fellow Western democracies. The creation of such an organization was not done out of any sense of benevolence, rather, it was done to amplify American power, establish a presence in Europe to oppose its chief foe, subsume the ideologically aligned powers of Europe, and ensure that the balance of power dynamics were maintained to the benefit of American interests. In the post-Cold War period, the enlargement of NATO was an opportunity for America, now the sole remaining superpower, to further increase its relative power, vis-à-vis both Russia and its NATO partners, particularly the reunified Germany. Despite traditional realist thinking predicting the end of NATO in this period, newer realist theorization points to the amplification of hegemonic power, the desire to maintain a presence in the European security milieu, the desire to take advantage of Russian weakness, and to spread its own version of Western democracy to out of area regions in pursuit of enhancing its prestige and power in the international system.

### **0.1.2 Liberal Institutional Perspectives**

The NATO shift Eastward in the 1990s was a turning point. The inclusion of the former Warsaw Pact nations was not done out of a vital security necessity, as had been cited as a primary motivator for expansions during the Cold War. Rather, a new outward

emphasis was placed upon the spreading of Western values of democracy, which would help to stabilize the security situation of the region.<sup>12</sup> Bruce Russett, in discussing the Kantian restraints on warfare, conjectures that there are three primary limitations: economic factors, such as trade relations the constraining power of institutions, which hold leaders accountable by actively promoting peaceful relations and the role of democracy in limiting violence between states sharing democratic norms.<sup>13</sup> Democratic peace theory holds that democracies are hesitant to engage in hostilities against other democracies because of the constraints within a democratic society, such as elections, limits on executive authority and the perceived desire to resolve conflicts peacefully within democratic societies, all of which make the negative repercussions of such actions outweigh the potential benefits.<sup>14</sup> The level of transparency within democratic societies is important because it aligns with the liberal institutionalist concepts of why cooperation occurs. Liberal institutionalists can look to lessons learned from game theory and the prisoner's dilemma to see why information is so important to cooperation.<sup>15</sup> Democracies, as societies built around constraints and transparent systems, are inherently more open than other forms of government, which fits well the assumptions of liberal institutionalists about the importance of information in overcoming the uncertainty that defines the international system. Moravcsik builds upon this when discussing collective

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas Risse has expended a great deal of effort detailing the links between international security institutions, like NATO, and their ability to promote democracy. Risse argues that the democratic character of states affects the intergroup relations in institutions, thus reducing the security dilemma and decreasing fears of cheating and relative gains. Risse approaches this topic through a hybrid liberal-constructivist position, as such, I do not engage explicitly with his theories here, but they are of relevance to the topics discussed in this thesis.

<sup>13</sup> Russett, Bruce. *International Relations Theories Discipline and Diversity*. 101.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 120.

outcomes that are the result of aggregated individual outcomes based on the information available and uncertainty.<sup>16</sup>

Realists and liberals are fundamentally at odds regarding the decisions behind NATO expansion. In contrast to realist theory, liberal institutionalists, such as Robert Keohane, view states as rational egoists who cooperate only when there is a significant overlap of interests in a world where hierarchy is unenforceable.<sup>17</sup> Building on these ideas, Layne tells us that NATO serves an important role in preventing the states of Europe from falling back into “those same bad old habits that the Alliance was supposed to cure—power politics, nationalist rivalries, and ethnic turmoil.”<sup>18</sup> In many ways, realism and liberalism share similar motivations, but claim different ideological underpinnings to support them. During the Cold War, realists rationalized American intervention in Vietnam as necessary to stop the “domino effect” in Southeast Asia and preserve the prestige of the Western Democratic order. Few reasonable arguments could be made that the situation in South Vietnam was of a vital national security interest to America. Similarly, American-led NATO intervention in the former Yugoslavia was less about American strategic security and more about maintaining a situation in which regional security and economic stability is preserved, while simultaneously testing the effectiveness of post-Cold War American leadership and effectiveness within the context of NATO, the UN and European Community.<sup>19</sup> Rather than viewing itself as a competing paradigm, many leaders in the field believe that liberal institutionalism helps to explain

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<sup>16</sup> Moravcsik, Andrew. *Liberal intergovernmentalism and integration: a rejoinder*. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 33, no. 4 (1995): 68-69.

<sup>17</sup> Keohane, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Layne, Christopher and Benjamin Schwarz. *American Hegemony – Without an Enemy*. In: *Foreign Policy*, No. 92 (Autumn 1993). Pg. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Layne, *American Hegemony – Without an Enemy*. 12.

the conditions under which realist propositions in regard to alliances, cooperation and institutions are valid.<sup>20</sup> In fact, Keohane goes so far as to claim that this is proof that institutionalism can subsume realism in this regard,<sup>21</sup> a position that is vehemently denied by Mearsheimer.

The leading role of the US within NATO is not one of the primary disagreements between the realist and liberal paradigms. Rather, both acknowledge the prominent position of the US within NATO. It would be difficult not to do so, given the preponderance of American funding and material contributions to the organization.<sup>22</sup> Rather, liberal institutionalism looks to the ability of the institution to increase cooperation and integration amongst member states, including the smaller nations, which are given a greater level of input on matters of policy by virtue of their NATO membership. This is particularly true of the post-Cold War period, in which the bipolar world order, founded on balance of power issues gave way to the contemporary order, in which NATO finds itself without a counterbalancing alliance. Wallander explains the continuing existence of NATO by the generally lower maintenance costs associated with adapting existing institutions versus the creation of new ones.<sup>23</sup>

Those espousing liberal institutionalism as a basis for the enduring utility of NATO have a number of salient issues to point to in defense of their position. For her part, Wallander makes the case that NATO's enduring presence in the post-Cold War era is due to its institutional history and the decades of transparency, negotiation and integration amongst members, in addition to the assets that have been developed which

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<sup>20</sup> Keohane, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*, 42.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>22</sup> "NATO – Topic: Paying for NATO". [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_67655.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_67655.htm). Accessed: May 16, 2017.

<sup>23</sup> Wallander. *Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO After the Cold War*. 706.

can be manipulated to meet future challenges.<sup>24</sup> One of the primary challenges posited by Mearsheimer is that institutionalism focuses too heavily on the importance of political economy over security, something Keohane takes particular issue with, arguing that a single framework can be used to deal with both.<sup>25</sup> Of particular importance to institutionalists is the significance of information and the mechanisms within NATO that allow for intelligence sharing. Keohane argues that the importance of intelligence sharing is of central importance to institutional theory and that the mechanisms created by NATO is thus directly applicable to security studies. The realist focus on the anarchic nature of the international system often relies on analysis of the worst case scenario, something institutional theory and its intelligence sharing capabilities can help to counteract, given the importance of intelligence to realist analysis of security issues.<sup>26</sup>

The theory of liberal intergovernmentalism, as developed by Andrew Moravcsik, is important to the liberal understanding of why and how NATO has endured the end of the Cold War and transformed itself into an institution for a new political and strategic era. Within this theory, Moravcsik suggests that state decisions to cooperate within international structures can be broken down into a three-stage framework: defining national preferences, bargaining agreements and the creation or adjustment of institutions to meet the uncertain outcomes or needs of the future.<sup>27</sup> Moravcsik further argues that unplanned, undesirable and/or unexpected consequences are often best dealt with through traditional ideas postulated by liberal institutionalism with its emphasis on the ability of international institutions to help coordinate the actions of disparate national programs by

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<sup>24</sup> Wallander, *Institutional Assets and Adaptability*, 712.

<sup>25</sup> Keohane, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*, 43.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>27</sup> Moravcsik, *Liberal Intergovernmentalism*, 68-69.

helping states reach consensus that is collectively superior by providing additional information regarding the intentions of partners within an institutional framework.<sup>28</sup> Here again, Wallander addresses the structure of NATO in focusing not merely on the Soviet threat, but also on establishing an institutional framework in which members of the Alliance were able to mediate disputes, such as those between Greece and Turkey and also to work on establishing coordinated budgets and dealing with burden sharing in the economic, political and strategic spheres.<sup>29</sup> As such, liberal perspectives of institutionalism were important, but oft ignored factors in the integration of diverse matters within the Alliance, as well as for the management of disputes between members. These frameworks, once established, proved adaptable to the post-Soviet threat within the context of European security and integration strategies. Keohane couches this analysis within the realist versus liberal debate by arguing that the discussion is not over whether institutions are independent or dependent, but on “*why* institutions are created and *how* they exert their effects.”<sup>30</sup>

Unlike their contemporaries from the realist theoretical paradigm, liberal institutionalists emphasize the importance of the institution in fostering security and cooperation amongst allies. For institutionalists, the role of American hegemony within the Cold War enlargements of NATO was secondary to the importance of cooperation, the fostering of institutions and the sharing of vital intelligence. In this theory, American policy was informed, not by the desire to maximize power, but to assemble a coalition of partners and to strengthen and spread its values, such as democracy, through collaboration. In the post-Cold War period, institutionalists can point to roughly the same

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>29</sup> Wallander, *Institutional Assets and Adaptability*, 714.

<sup>30</sup> Keohane, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*, 48.

American motivations for enlargements. The desire to expand NATO into Central and Eastern Europe and beyond was done out of a desire to provide stability to regions lacking the tradition of Western democracy and to increase security and cooperation to the entire continent. The allure of this was not merely to enhance American power in a balance of power sense, but to create an environment conducive to cooperation in the same way as expansions during the Cold War. One major difference between the theories is that institutionalism does not preclude the idea of Russia joining this cooperative institution, rather than being further marginalized by the spread of it, as realist doctrine suggests.

## ***0.2 Methodology***

In order to effectively examine American motivations underpinning NATO enlargement through the paradigms of liberalism and realism, it is necessary to look at documentation and statements from the pertinent administrations regarding enlargement. In order to accomplish this, I will look to a combination of archival research and public statements made by US government officials. During the Cold War era, there is a preponderance of accessible policy information and primary documents available through online resources, however, the post-Cold War period would benefit from the declassification of primary documents. As more of these primary documents are declassified, it will be possible to discern specific policy goals for the more recent period. Public statements have limitations when analyzing foreign policy goals, which are often unclear unless one has access to classified materials from the same period. There are resources available at presidential libraries via archival research, but given time and



budget constraints, accessing them was not possible for this examination. Using the available information for this topic, I will perform a reconstruction of motivation through analysis of declassified documents, records of Congressional hearings, public statements and other secondary sources. Triangulating these sources allows for a better understanding of the motivations behind expansion of NATO.

In order to perform this examination, I will look to the congruence method as developed by Harry Eckstein beginning in the 1960s and developed further by later scholars. At its core, the method has two hypotheses: one looking at the performance of governments regardless of system and another specifically, within democratic systems.<sup>31</sup> He looks to “patterns of authority” to explain governance and states, “Patterns of authority are the structures and processes by which social units are directed, or, put otherwise, their structures and processes of governance. Authority relations are the interactions that constitute the patterns.”<sup>32</sup> Eckstein used Norway as his democratic example and found that “Liberal-democratic traits at the level of government were modified by a pervasive non-democratic trait: deference to technical experts...”<sup>33</sup> He argues that when these patterns of authority and governance are congruent there is a high degree of decisional efficacy, durability and legitimacy. Eckstein argues, “Congruence theory implies that new institutions must be designed at least in a way that does not dramatically violate the congruence condition...”<sup>34</sup> In recent years, this theory has been applied, with varying degrees of success, to post-Soviet democratization efforts.

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<sup>31</sup> Eckstein, Harry. "Congruence theory explained." Center for the Study of Democracy (1997). 1-2.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 18.

Any analysis of the motivations behind enlargement from US government perspectives requires a comprehensive understanding of the historical situation surrounding enlargements and the reasoning employed by administrations in power. Given that the creation and enlargements of NATO were spread across six administrations, it cannot be expected that any one grand strategy guided the entire process. However, from each of these grand theories, I have derived distinct and contrasting hypotheses regarding the motivations driving NATO expansions both during and after the Cold War period. These hypotheses will be tested for consistency against the historical record.

### ***0.3 Further Literature Review***

Prominent realists, such as Mearsheimer and Waltz have written passionately about the endurance of NATO as a natural extension of traditional realist, hegemonic, balance of power theory. Conversely, institutionalists, such as Keohane and Wallander have noted the importance of the institution in the transformation of NATO. Both camps find themselves largely in agreement over the hegemonic role of the US within Alliance structures, but they have different interpretations of the motives behind American involvement. For realists, the role of institutional cooperation emphasized by liberal theorists is seen as unnatural behavior, even amongst close allies and cooperation between the US and other members of NATO was limited to the minimum necessary to not constrain policy options.<sup>35</sup> To that end, realists have developed new theories regarding why the US maintains an antiquated alliance.

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<sup>35</sup> Smith, Martin A. *NATO in the First Decade after the Cold War*. 18.

In describing what he calls the three realist assumptions of political life, Gilpin makes the case that “Anarchy is the rule: order justice and morality are the exceptions”.<sup>36</sup> This runs directly counter to claims made by liberal institutionalists regarding the nature of alliances and institutional theory. He argues that the three assumptions shared by all bents of realist thinking are the centrality of conflict in international relations, the significance of the social reality of the group over the individual and the preeminence of security and power in political interactions.<sup>37</sup> As such, the current international system, organized around states, cannot accept the importance of the institution over that of fundamental national interests. Short of an overriding threat that causes states to bargain and reach consensus, realists contend that institutionalist frameworks cannot explain how “the perennial forces that have shaped the past and will shape the future” can be effectively applied to their understanding and the transformation of the international system.<sup>38</sup>

One realist theory regarding the endurance of NATO revolves around the bipolar power structure that predominated during the Cold War and the desire of the US to forestall the rise of an independent European security apparatus emerging from the vacuum left by the collapse of NATO. For example, in the 1990s Waltz posited that three potential rivals to US hegemony are a Europe independent of US dominated security structures, Japan or China.<sup>39</sup> From that perspective, it makes sense for the US to maintain, in reduced fashion, NATO as a means to prevent the rise of future opponents from amongst its current allies. At one time, realists would have predicted Soviet collapse to

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<sup>36</sup> Gilpin, *The Richness of the Tradition” of Political Realism*. 290.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 290-291.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 299.

<sup>39</sup> Haglund, David G. *Will NATO Go East: The Debate Over Enlarging the Atlantic Alliance*. NATO Expansion: Origins and Evolution of an Idea. 19-20.

lead to NATO's demise and the emergence of a great power war, as espoused by hegemony theory. The failure of such an occurrence has led realists to look to the phenomenon of bandwagoning to explain why the Alliance has persisted with former adversaries and subordinate allies seeking to reap the benefits of the winning side through alignment.<sup>40</sup>

Layne offers additional realist analysis as to why NATO has persisted by turning to the theory of offensive realism. He suggests that American policy during the Cold War was based on concepts of Type I offensive realism. This form of offensive realism operates under the proposition that the growing power of a state within the international system leads it to seek a larger role and that as its power and influence grow it seeks ever greater influence.<sup>41</sup> Layne offers this as an explanation of American policy during the Cold War, but looks to Type II offensive realism to explain the perpetuation of NATO post-Cold War. He argues that after attaining hegemony, a state will continue to pursue policies that amplify their relative power in an attempt to maintain security because of the anarchic and uncertain nature of the international system.<sup>42</sup>

In order to support these claims, Layne points to the way in which events unfolded in the period immediately following Soviet collapse. He argues that US policy-makers realized the disappearance of Soviet threat made the hegemonic American position within the European security apparatus vulnerable and that turning to a pan-European security organization was a threat to American hegemony and security.<sup>43</sup> Offensive realism Type II explains American demands that a reunified Germany remain

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 20-21

<sup>41</sup> Layne. *US Hegemony and the Perpetuation of NATO*. 64.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 65

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 67-68.

tied to NATO, and consequently American dominance, and that America seek to expand its relative power by expanding its influence.

Appropriate to institutionalist theory, Keohane argues that within the structure of institutions, smaller states can extract concessions from more powerful Alliance partners outweighing their relative power or utility.<sup>44</sup> This theory finds support within the first two decades of American hegemony within NATO. American desire to maintain its international influence forces it to make compromises with its allies due to the structures of organizations. Keohane argues that the contemporary utility of alliances lies in the ability of partners to increase cooperation, military power and control over strategic military regions.<sup>45</sup> He further argues that alliance structures force American policy-makers to respond less to domestic politics and more to the requirements of allies; a process he argues strengthens institutional cohesion, but lessens the influence of dominant powers as a natural result of globally vigorous foreign policy orientation.<sup>46</sup> As a natural extension of this, he argues that institutions operate in response to state interests and that the character of such interactions is effected by the distribution of capabilities.<sup>47</sup> In a NATO context, this supports the institutionalist claim that smaller states can leverage their relative power into undue influence.

In challenging realist theories regarding institutionalism, Keohane and Wallander have argued that NATO is no longer an alliance in the sense understood by that paradigm. Rather, they make the case that NATO is, in fact, transforming itself in the post-Cold War era into a security management organization. The downsizing of NATO

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<sup>44</sup> Keohane. *The Big Influence of Small Allies*. 162.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 182.

<sup>47</sup> Keohane, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*, 47.

forces and the shift toward “out of area” operations, particularly in the Balkans, has led to a fundamental transformation away from alliance. This clashes heavily with the aforementioned theory of offensive realism by its potential inclusion of a democratic Russia in a broader European security management organization. Institutional theory rests heavily on the idea that the value of institutions lies in their ability to provide information to counteract the uncertainty prevalent within the international system. Prominent institutionalists thus claim that if it is valuable for states to invest in the acquisition of credible information, it is clearly valuable for them to invest in creating institutions that can provide that type of information.<sup>48</sup> This is clearly at odds with hegemonic driven realist theories regarding the utility and function of organizations like NATO. As such, the existing literature clearly places the motivations behind American policy toward NATO at odds within the paradigms of institutional and realist theory, particularly in the post-Cold War era.

#### ***0.4 Historical Background***

Six years of total war in Europe left the continent in ruins in 1945. The Western democracies and the Soviet Union had successfully defeated the forces of fascism, but the wartime alliance of convenience began to unravel and balance of power issues came to the fore.<sup>49</sup> Winston Churchill highlighted this growing divide during a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri on March 5, 1946 in which he described the

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<sup>48</sup> Keohane. *Power and Governance in a Partially Globalized World*. 95.

<sup>49</sup> Rupp, Richard. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO 1949 and NATO 2000: From Collective Defense Toward Collective Security*. 158.

“iron curtain”, which had descended upon the continent.<sup>50</sup> In response to this growing divide, the Western European democracies of Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom signed the Treaty of Brussels on March 17, 1948.<sup>51</sup> Although the Treaty of Brussels initially united only a few Western European states, the framework it provided for a common defense would later be expanded to include additional European and North American countries. Shortly after the Treaty of Brussels had been negotiated, the Soviets blockaded West Berlin and the Western powers, on both sides of the Atlantic, recognized the need for a collective security organization to curb Soviet aggressions.<sup>52</sup> This proved to be the primary catalyst for the foundation of NATO.

After negotiations between representatives of the Brussels Treaty powers, Canada and the US, which ended on September 9, 1948, it was decided that a treaty for common defense should be within the framework of the United Nations’ charter.<sup>53</sup> Initially, this group hoped to include Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Portugal, Sweden and the Irish Republic, but the latter two countries were not interested in membership.<sup>54</sup> The other five countries were formally invited to join the Treaty on March 15, 1949 and the foreign ministers of all founding states gathered in Washington, DC on April 4, 1949 and formally signed the Treaty through which NATO was born.<sup>55</sup>

The Alliance witnessed several important enlargements during the Cold War as the collective security apparatus was expanded. The first such enlargement occurred with the addition of Greece and Turkey. This was followed by the reintegration of West

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<sup>50</sup> Churchill, Winston. *Iron Curtain Speech, 1946*. <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/MOD/churchill-iron.asp> Accessed: April 30, 2017

<sup>51</sup> “NATO Archives”. <http://www.nato.int/archives/1st5years/chapters/1.htm#f> Accessed: April 30, 2017

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

Germany<sup>56</sup> and the addition of Spain after the fall of the Franco regime.<sup>57</sup> Each of these enlargements had their own unique set of circumstances, but each served to strengthen the alliance by expanding its borders and stabilizing the security situation in Europe. In each of these instances, NATO was acting in a period of heightened securitization and reacting to perceived threats to its own existence.<sup>58</sup> In the post-Cold War era, the Alliance underwent a further three expansions into Central and Eastern Europe which led to increasing tensions with Russia. The motivation and wisdom behind these expansions is fiercely debated, even as the Alliance considers further expansions.

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<sup>56</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 100.

<sup>57</sup> Carpenter, Ted Galen. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO's New Strategic Concept: Coherent Blueprint or Conceptual Muddle?* 9.

<sup>58</sup> Layne, Christopher. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. US Hegemony and the Perpetuation of NATO*. 78-79.



## Chapter 1: NATO Enlargements During the Cold War

### *1.1 Greece and Turkey*

Although the original framework of NATO offered the basis for collective security and deterrence, the initial membership left out strategically important countries. Despite being historic foes, Greece and Turkey were both important to maintaining the Western security balance. At the time, Greece was facing a communist insurgency<sup>59</sup> and Turkey was under increasing pressure from the Soviet Union to permit the use of its strategically important waterways and ports.<sup>60</sup> For NATO, this presented a grave security risk on its southern flank. In 1947, the US provided both Greece and Turkey with substantial amounts of aid via the implementation of the Truman Doctrine.<sup>61</sup>

The generous financial contributions provided to Greece by the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine facilitated the defeat of the homegrown communists who were backed, to a degree, by Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria.<sup>62</sup> As Greece and Turkey were historic enemies, the Western powers noted the importance of patronizing the two nations equally in order to not lose the support of one or both.<sup>63</sup> Greek accession to NATO gave the alliance a foothold in an otherwise Communist dominated region and protected important routes to the Suez Canal and the Middle East. Turkey, unlike Greece, was not burdened with a large-scale insurrection or even a direct military threat from the Soviets. However, in an attempt to implement a policy of containment, the US extended its support to

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<sup>59</sup> Gheciu, Alexandra. *NATO in the "New Europe"*. 41.

<sup>60</sup> Boyle, Peter G. *The Origins of NATO. America's Hesitant Road to NATO 1945-1949*. 67.

<sup>61</sup> Foot, Peter. *The Origins of NATO. America and the Origins of the Atlantic Alliance: a Reappraisal*. 83.

<sup>62</sup> Boyle, *The Origins of NATO. America's Hesitant Road to NATO 1945-1949*, 67.

<sup>63</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 63.

Turkey as well. Turkish control of the entrance to the Black Sea and its role as one of the major regional powers in the Eastern Mediterranean made its inclusion strategic.

NATO's first enlargement proved to be one that would, to a degree, set a precedent for future such moves during the Cold War period. From a military standpoint, the accession of Greece and Turkey on February 18, 1952,<sup>64</sup> was prudent. The securitization of the threat posed by the spread of Soviet communism made containing that threat a vital interest of NATO. In that regard, the enlargement was in line with the founding principals of the organization and in light of the increasingly tense situation between the ideological blocs, it served as an important step toward securing the democracies of Western Europe. Although neither Greece nor Turkey could accurately be labeled democracies, they were important to the security regime that had been established in 1949 with the founding of NATO as a collective security organization<sup>65</sup> and a bulwark against the expansion of communism.<sup>66</sup>

### *1.2 West Germany*

After the first enlargement of NATO, there was disagreement amongst the membership over what should be done regarding the Western portions of occupied Germany.<sup>67</sup> One of the stated goals of the Brussels Treaty had been limiting the potential of Germany to pose a security threat to its neighbors. As such, there were members of NATO, France in particular, who were wary of allowing Germany to rejoin the

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<sup>64</sup> Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe"*, 43.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 67-69.

<sup>67</sup> Wiggershaus, Norbert. *The Origins of NATO. The German Question and the Foundation of the Atlantic Pact*. 114-115.

community of nations and rearm.<sup>68</sup> Even amongst Germans there was a reluctance to remilitarize. However, it was ultimately determined by the collective members that a Western-aligned and rearmed Germany would be an asset to NATO, as a potential military showdown between the West and East would inevitably feature Germany as a primary theater of operations. The first step toward the full integration of West Germany into the Western orbit was its admittance into the Western European Union.<sup>69</sup> Much like NATO itself, the Western European Union had its origins in the Brussels Treaty.<sup>70</sup>

Germany acceded to NATO on May 9, 1955 and became a central component of Western efforts to contain the threat of Soviet expansion.<sup>71</sup> The decision to bring West Germany under the umbrella of the NATO alliance proved to be a crucial step toward building a more effective military alliance. However, the Soviets viewed the developments as a threat and organized their own alliance, the Warsaw Pact, later in 1955 to counter NATO.<sup>72</sup> As such, although the inclusion of West Germany did improve the capabilities of the Alliance, it also raised the stakes of the confrontation between East and West.

### *1.3 Spain*

Beginning in the 1950s, Spain joining NATO had been raised on multiple occasions, particularly by the US. However, the move was consistently opposed by several European members of NATO and never advanced beyond the hypothetical.<sup>73</sup> The

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 116-119.

<sup>69</sup> Cahen, Alfred. *The Western European Union and NATO*. 2-3.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>71</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 123-124.

<sup>72</sup> Herd, Graeme P, et al. *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO's Genesis and Adaptation: from Washington to Chicago*. 17.

<sup>73</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 130-131.

fall of the Franco regime in 1975 and the return to democracy in 1978 opened the door for Spanish membership in NATO.<sup>74</sup> Unlike the first two enlargements of NATO, the inclusion of Spain was not merely about countering Soviet influence or about significantly upgrading the capabilities of the organization itself. For the first time, it was primarily about cementing Spain into the Atlantic community and strengthening its democratic institutions. In fact, there was a great degree of disagreement and deliberation within Spain about whether membership in NATO was desirable.<sup>75</sup> The ruling Center Democratic Union Party had been in favor of NATO membership from the outset, but the Socialist Workers Party was strongly opposed to membership.<sup>76</sup> The ruling party pointed to all the aforementioned benefits of NATO membership, such as increasing integration with Western Europe, strengthening democratic institutions, etc. In contrast, the Socialists emphasized the potential of NATO membership reducing the security of Spain by involving the country in a potentially entangling alliance and conflicts. Additionally, they countered the claim that NATO membership reinforced Democratic institutions by pointing to Portugal, Greece and Turkey, which had all been ruled by decidedly undemocratic regimes for periods of their NATO membership.<sup>77</sup>

NATO members, the US in particular, pushed for Spain to enter NATO, citing three primary motivations: the strengthening of the military alliance, the political stability membership would provide for Spain, and the increased pressure it would exert on the Soviet Union to have another European nation join NATO.<sup>78</sup> Spain joined NATO on May 30, 1982, but with a number of conditions regarding the deployment of Spanish military

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<sup>74</sup> Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe"*, 236.

<sup>75</sup> Carothers, Thomas. *Spain, NATO and Democracy*. *The World Today* 37, no. 7/8 (1981): 299.

<sup>76</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 149-150.

<sup>77</sup> Carothers, *Spain, NATO and Democracy*, 301.

<sup>78</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 141-142.

assets and of NATO assets on Spanish territory.<sup>79</sup> The prime condition being that Spain did not want NATO's nuclear assets to be based or launched from their territory for fear of making themselves a target for possible retaliation.

### ***1.4 German Reunification***

Although not an enlargement of NATO in the traditional sense, the reunification of Germany on October 3, 1990 was a de facto enlargement. Given the circumstances, there was no formal membership offer or negotiations between NATO and the government of East Germany. Rather, the discussions had revolved around the reunification process with NATO membership being an outcome of those negotiations. Negotiation on German reunification encompassed the German governments, France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the US.<sup>80</sup> There were concerns amongst NATO Allies about the repercussions of a unified Germany in the heart of Europe. The role of a united Germany in NATO was one of the central matters discussed in the "2+4 Talks".<sup>81</sup> Coming at a time of such sweeping change, the Soviets indicated a willingness to negotiate over the status of Germany. However, significant disagreements remained to be worked out.

In exchange for sanctioning the unification of Germany, the Soviets wanted unified Germany to follow the Austrian model of neutrality and withdraw from NATO. The US was opposed to any attempts to withdraw Germany from NATO<sup>82</sup> and wanted the country to remain a member in order to maintain its presence in the region and to

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>80</sup> Layne, Christopher. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. US Hegemony and the Perpetuation of NATO.* 68-69.

<sup>81</sup> Simon, Jeffrey. *NATO After 50 Years. NATO Enlargement: Crossing the Rubicon.* 121.

<sup>82</sup> Smith, Martin A. *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War.* 100-101.

ensure that Germany did not harbor expansionist goals in the chaotic political environment in Europe.<sup>83</sup> Eventually, the Soviets agreed to reunification in exchange for German assurances to downsize their military, refrain from producing weapons of mass destruction, acknowledgment of the Oder-Neisse border, and limiting military activity on former East German territory.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the newly unified German state remained a member of NATO anchored to NATO and the project of European unity, albeit with agreements to reduce its capabilities.

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<sup>83</sup> Bozo, Frederic. *NATO After 50 Years. Continuity or Change? The View from Europe*. 60.

<sup>84</sup> Perlmutter, Amos. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Corruption of NATO: NATO Moves East*. 132-133.

## Chapter 2: NATO Enlargements Post-Cold War

### *2.1 Visegrád Group*

Post-Cold War, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact were dissolved and Eastern Europe experienced a democratic renaissance with free multi-party elections. During this time, Europe experienced a rapid de-escalation of the ideological conflict as Soviet troops were removed and autocratic governments collapsed. These new democracies harbored hopes of joining the European project and integrating themselves with the states of the West. As part of that process, many of these states sought membership in the European Union and NATO to cement their new status. To that end, NATO established the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in December of 1991.<sup>85</sup> The NACC served as the first important bridge between NATO and the states of Central and Eastern Europe. In 1994, NATO went a step further in its attempts to interact with these countries by establishing the Partnership for Peace (PfP).<sup>86</sup> The aim of the PfP was to engage with non-Alliance members and expand NATO influence into other regions of Europe. The establishment of the PfP was one of the first NATO attempts to redefine its post-Cold War role. Although it was primarily intended to promote a dialogue with the countries of the former Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, it also incorporated the traditionally neutral states of Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland and the Republic of Ireland. As a first step toward reconciliation between former enemies, the PfP served an important transitional role while NATO's North Atlantic Council, which serves as the

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<sup>85</sup> Simon, *NATO After 50 Years. NATO Enlargement: Crossing the Rubicon*, 121.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

primary political decision making body of the Alliance, debated formal expansions.<sup>87</sup> In conjunction with the creation of the PfP, the North Atlantic Council also established the Mediterranean Dialogue in 1994,<sup>88</sup> which sought to improve relationships with key countries of the Middle East and North Africa region.<sup>89</sup> These two organizations were part of the broader strategy of NATO in the new security environment. They provided a broader network through which NATO could assess and manage crises and risks on a global scale.

Unlike previous enlargements, the Visegrád group (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) represented an entirely new era of NATO enlargement. The primary reason for the existence of NATO had always been to secure NATO against Soviet influence and aggression. Now that the Soviet Union was no more, NATO's *raison d'être* was somewhat unclear. Having accomplished its goal of containing the spread of communism and protecting its members from aggression, it was an organization at a crossroads. No longer having legitimate state actors threatening its territorial integrity, NATO was searching for new objectives.

The allure of membership in NATO was very enticing to nations seeking further integration into the Western political, economic and military regime.<sup>90</sup> For the nations of the Visegrád group, the barriers to membership in NATO were great. Unlike previous enlargements, the Visegrád nations had been fully integrated into the Warsaw Pact. In addition to problems relating to their lack of firmly established democratic institutions,

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<sup>87</sup> Perlmutter, Amos. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Corruption of NATO: NATO Moves East*. NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. 139.

<sup>88</sup> NATO – Topic: NATO Mediterranean Dialogue. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_60021.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_60021.htm)  
Accessed: May 27, 2017

<sup>89</sup> Herd, Graeme P. *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO Partnerships: for Peace, Combat and Soft Balancing?* 71-72.

<sup>90</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 176-177.



these nations had to deal with the fact that their military hardware was not compatible with NATO standards and required replacement or major overhauling to meet the standards.<sup>91</sup> Regardless, NATO decided to extend formal invitations of membership to these countries in 1997.<sup>92</sup> Notably, Slovakia was not offered membership due to concerns over its failure to meet the necessary reforms, both politically and militarily.<sup>93</sup> Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, however, had achieved a great enough level of reform and were formally admitted to NATO on March 12, 1999.<sup>94</sup> Original concerns aside, this expansion set a precedent that NATO membership in the twenty-first century was achievable for any country within Europe, given that they met the political and military reform requirements.

In the post-Cold War Era, NATO established a series of frameworks through which aspirant countries could ready themselves for eventual member in NATO. The concept of Membership Action Plans (MAP) was introduced at the 1999 Washington Summit.<sup>95</sup> The introduction of MAPs for aspiring countries to stay on track and prepare for eventual membership was a clear indication from NATO leadership that expansion could continue beyond the Visegrád group.<sup>96</sup> MAPs were designed to meet the specific needs of the country seeking membership and helped guide them through the process of meeting the functional requirements necessary to be offered membership.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Michta, Andrew A. *NATO After 50 Years. Civil-Military Relations in the New NATO: The Standard and the Boundaries of Professionalism*, 111.

<sup>92</sup> Smith, *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War*, 124.

<sup>93</sup> Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe"*, 72.

<sup>94</sup> Rupp, Richard. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO 1949 and NATO 2000: From Collective Defense Toward Collective Security*. 167.

<sup>95</sup> Dunay, Pal. *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO Enlargement: Close to the End?* 58.

<sup>96</sup> Frye, Alton. *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The New NATO and Relations with Russia*. 96.

<sup>97</sup> Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe"*, 159.

## 2.2 Vilnius Group

After the inclusion of the Visegrád group, NATO expanded again. This round of expansion saw NATO add an additional seven members to its ranks. The Vilnius Group included Slovakia as well as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia. This expansion had three symbolically important aspects. Firstly, the accession of the Baltic States marked the first time former Soviet republics were admitted to NATO.<sup>98</sup> Secondly, the additions of Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia meant that every former member of the Warsaw Pact alliance, with the exception of Albania, which had withdrawn in 1968,<sup>99</sup> was now incorporated into the military and security structures of NATO. Finally, the admission of Slovenia marked the first time that a former Yugoslav republic entered NATO. NATO expansion into Slovenia was the first step toward addressing the security quagmire that was the Western Balkans throughout the 1990s. All of these milestones were indicative of the new direction that NATO had chosen to go in, fully embracing the idea that all European nations were eligible to join the alliance once the prerequisites were met.

In spite of Russian protests, the Vilnius group formally joined NATO on March 29, 2004.<sup>100</sup> The economic and security situation in Russia had improved substantially by 2004, giving Russian more of an ability to vocalize its concern over further NATO encroachment into the Russian “Near Abroad”. Particularly concerning to Russia at this stage was the inclusion of the Baltic States. The ability of NATO to station military assets so close to Russian population centers and the fact that Kaliningrad was now entirely

<sup>98</sup> Larrabee, F. Stephen. *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era*. 56.

<sup>99</sup> NATO Declassified. What was the Warsaw Pact?

[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified\\_138294.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_138294.htm?selectedLocale=en) Accessed: May 6, 2017

<sup>100</sup> “NATO Update – Seven New Members Join NATO”. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/03-march/e0329a.htm> Accessed: May 10, 2017

surrounded by NATO states was problematic from a Russian security perspective.<sup>101</sup> Additionally, the Baltic States contained large ethnic Russian minority populations.<sup>102</sup> For the Baltics, NATO membership offered a measure of security against the possibility of Russian irredentism. For the existing members of NATO, this expansion secured the Eastern borders of the Alliance and served to reduce corruption, provide institutional support for democracy and increase Western influence.

### ***2.3 Croatia and Albania***

The precedent set by NATO expansion into Slovenia in the second post-Cold War enlargement was followed up on April 1, 2009 with membership for Croatia and Albania.<sup>103</sup> Croatia had joined the PfP in 2000 and advanced to the stage of MAP in 2002.<sup>104</sup> Albania had joined the PfP in 1994 and been granted a MAP in 1999.<sup>105</sup> Like Slovenia, neither member had been particularly closely allied with the Soviet Union or Warsaw Pact, Yugoslavia having been part of the Non-Aligned Movement and Albania having withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact in 1968. In the period proceeding NATO membership, Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and the US had signed the Adriatic Charter in order to strengthen their membership bids.<sup>106</sup> The Charter highlighted the efforts being made in domestic reform and the commitment of the member states to enhancing security and stability within the region. American support for the aspirant nations underscored the

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<sup>101</sup> Larrabee, *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era*, 5.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>103</sup> NATO – Topic: Enlargement. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49212.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49212.htm) Accessed: May 5, 2017

<sup>104</sup> NATO – Topic: NATO's Relations with Croatia. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_31803.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_31803.htm) Accessed: May 15, 2017

<sup>105</sup> NATO – Topic: NATO's Relations with Albania. [http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics\\_48891.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics_48891.htm) Accessed: May 15, 2017

<sup>106</sup> Adriatic Charter. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/51348.htm> Accessed: May 22, 2017

continuing open door policy of NATO, the desire to find peaceful solutions to Balkan conflict and fulfill the vision of a unified and free Europe. Continued expansion into the Balkans reinforced the message that NATO remained open to states committed to improving domestic issues and seeking enhanced security without overly provoking Russia by expanding into areas that it viewed as vital to its geostrategic security, such as Ukraine or Georgia.

### ***2.4 Further Potential NATO Enlargements***

In 2005, an intermediate step was created for those countries not yet given a MAP. The so called, “Intensified Dialogue” was designed as a way for countries to engage in continuing discussions with NATO over political, military, security and financial matter pertaining to potential membership in the Alliance.<sup>107</sup>

#### **2.4.1 Macedonia**

Of all the states currently seeking membership in NATO, Macedonia has been working toward membership for the longest time. Having initially been given an MAP in 1999, the country was originally on track to accede to NATO with Albania and Croatia in 2009. Greece has consistently blocked attempts to consider NATO membership for a state employing the name “Macedonia”, which it views as a threat to its own border region of the same name.<sup>108</sup> For the Republic of Macedonia, this has meant that their membership has been effectively blocked by the veto of one member state, even as NATO as a whole has been ready to offer membership for some time.

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<sup>107</sup> NATO – Update: NATO launches “Intensified Dialogue” with Ukraine.  
<http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/04-april/e0421b.htm> Accessed: May 5, 2017

<sup>108</sup> Dunay, *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 54-55.

As with other enlargements within the Western Balkans, the decision to offer NATO membership to Macedonia did little to improve NATO's military capability, but it did a great deal to increase security within the region. Ethnic tensions in Macedonia came to a head in 2001 when Albanian separatists initiated a campaign of violence in areas of the north and west of the country. This situation required the active intervention of a NATO military force to broker the Ohrid Agreement and help disarm the ethnic Albanian rebels.<sup>109</sup> As of May 2017, the status of Macedonian accession to NATO remains unchanged, but tensions between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians have resurged yet again and regional stability is uncertain.<sup>110</sup>

### 2.4.2 Montenegro

In the aftermath of the Yugoslav Wars of the early 1990s, the Socialist republics of Serbia and Montenegro joined to form the Republic of Yugoslavia and adopted democracy. This entity existed from 1992 until its partition on June 3, 2006, when Montenegro gained independence.<sup>111</sup> Montenegro joined the PfP at the 2006 Riga Summit and began to reform and modernize its armed forces.<sup>112</sup> In 2007, Montenegro agreed to allow NATO forces the right to transit through its territory and Montenegro joined the Adriatic Charter in 2008.<sup>113</sup> After showing significant improvements in domestic and military issues, NATO granted Montenegro a MAP. Continued progression

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<sup>109</sup> NATO Topic – Peace Support Operations in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

[http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics\\_52121.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics_52121.htm) Accessed: May 15, 2017

<sup>110</sup> *A Macedonian Breakdown Gets Europe's Attention*. The Economist. March 9, 2017.

<http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21718549-tensions-countrys-albanian-politicians-could-deteriorate-conflict-macedonian> Accessed: May 20, 2017

<sup>111</sup> NATO – Topic: Relations with Montenegro. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49736.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49736.htm) Accessed: May 6, 2017

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Adriatic Charter. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/51348.htm> Accessed: May 22, 2017

led to Montenegro being offered NATO membership on December 2, 2015, with accession expected in 2017.<sup>114</sup> Amongst the Montenegrin population, support for NATO membership was split, partially due to ethnic divisions and the history of conflict between NATO and the Republic of Yugoslavia, of which Montenegro was then a part.

### 2.4.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina, of all the former Yugoslav republics, is by far the most divided. As the center of conflict during the Yugoslav Wars, it is a country with deep ethno religious divisions. To this day, jurisdiction within the country is split between the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, the former being home largely to Bosniaks with the latter being majority Serbian, although both entities contain sizeable Croatian minorities.<sup>115</sup> In many respects, the stability of the region revolves around the success or failure of the reconciliation process and the domestic reforms within the country.

In light of these facts, Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the PfP in 2006, advanced to the intensified dialogue stage by 2008 and in the same year, joined the Adriatic Charter.<sup>116</sup> In 2010, NATO granted Bosnia and Herzegovina a MAP, which would allow the country to finalize the reforms necessary for membership in NATO.<sup>117</sup> An issue unique to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of NATO membership is the political division of the country. The vast majority of the population in the Federation support

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<sup>114</sup> NATO Topic – Relations with Montenegro. [http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics\\_49736.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics_49736.htm)  
Accessed: May 6, 2017

<sup>115</sup> Lundestad, Geir. *The United States and Western Europe Since 1945*. 252.

<sup>116</sup> NATO Topic – Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina.  
[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49127.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49127.htm) Accessed: May 6, 2017

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

NATO membership, but a slight majority in Republika Srpska oppose NATO accession. The major remaining hurdle to NATO membership is the issue of immovable military assets being placed under the control of the central government.<sup>118</sup> Although the Federation has complied with this requirement, the Republika Srpska has refused to take the necessary steps. Until this issue is resolved the status of NATO membership will be deferred.

#### 2.4.4 Ukraine

As the second most populous of the former constituent republics of the Soviet Union, the orientation of Ukraine is of vital importance to Russia. When the Soviet Union collapsed, Ukraine found itself in possession of a large portion of Soviet military assets, including the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world.<sup>119</sup> The Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, signed on December 5, 1994 in Budapest, offered the post-Soviet states of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine guarantees of their territorial integrity in exchange for giving up their inherited nuclear arsenals.<sup>120</sup> In its post-Soviet history, Ukraine has experienced a number of varying political orientations. These have fluctuated between a desire to establish better relations with the West and continuing its close ties to Russia.

Ukraine, like all the former states of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, has been a member of the PfP since 1994.<sup>121</sup> Given its fluctuating orientation, Ukraine applied for

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<sup>118</sup> NATO – Topic: Membership Action Plan (MAP). [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_37356.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_37356.htm)  
Accessed: May 5, 2017

<sup>119</sup> Pifer, Steven. "The Budapest Memorandum and US Obligations." *The Brookings Institution* (2014).

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> NATO Topic – Relations with Ukraine. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_37750.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_37750.htm)  
Accessed: May 15, 2017

a MAP in 2008, however, this was rescinded with the 2010 election of President Viktor Yanukovych who had a decidedly pro Russian orientation.<sup>122</sup> Prior to the Russian military intervention in Ukraine, public opinion in the country was firmly against NATO membership. Eastern Ukraine has a large Russian-speaking population, which has traditionally looked to Moscow rather than the West for guidance and protection. The divisions within Ukraine are stark with Western Ukraine being decidedly more pro-NATO than the East.<sup>123</sup> However, the violation of Ukrainian territorial integrity and the annexation of Crimea have led to a vastly increased desire for NATO membership amongst citizens. In the aftermath of these actions, the Ukrainian parliament has renounced non-aligned status and restarted talks on NATO membership.<sup>124</sup> For NATO, Ukrainian accession is seen as a distinct possibility. NATO sees Russian actions in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine as a direct Russian violation of the Budapest Memorandum.<sup>125</sup>

### 2.4.5 Georgia

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in independence for Georgia in 1991. However, like much of the former Soviet Union, Georgia was not ethnically homogenous. As such, Georgia was faced with separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These tensions resulted in de facto, but unrecognized, independence of these regions by 1993. Russian support for South Ossetia and the presence of a

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<sup>122</sup> Dunay, *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 59.

<sup>123</sup> Larrabee, *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era*, 88.

<sup>124</sup> NATO Topic – Relations with Ukraine. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_37750.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_37750.htm)  
Accessed: May 15, 2017

<sup>125</sup> NATO Opinion – Remarks by NATO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Alexander Vershbow at the OSCE Security Days. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_135530.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_135530.htm) Accessed: May 24, 2017



peacekeeping force of Russian, Georgian and South Ossetian troops in the territory was not enough to stabilize the region. Worsening relations between Georgia and Russia were exacerbated by the election of a pro-western Georgian government in 2003 after the Rose Revolution. This new government pushed for reforms and closer integration with Western institutions. Tensions between South Ossetia and Georgia resulted in Georgian military action against South Ossetia in the summer of 2008.<sup>126</sup>

The Russo-Georgian war was a turning point and the conflict is considered the first European war of the twenty-first century. Russian willingness to intervene militarily in the affairs of a neighbor illustrates the changing nature of security dynamics in the region. Georgia has been a member of the PfP since 1994 and has seen dialogue with NATO increase since the 2008 war.<sup>127</sup> As part of its open door policy, NATO has maintained that Georgia may become a member of the Alliance once it completes all of the reforms necessary, having made this statement was at a NATO Summit in 2008 and reiterating it at summits in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2014.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Kriendler, John. *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. NATO-Russia Relations: Reset is Not a Four-Letter Word*. 93.

<sup>127</sup> NATO – Topic: Relations with Georgia. [http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics_38988.htm) Accessed: May 15, 2017

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 3: Cold War Analysis

In this chapter, I will employ the theories of realism and institutional liberalism in examining statements and declassified primary documents to analyze US motivations behind NATO expansions. I will examine the actions and statements of the relevant periods to see which of these theories best explains the motivations behind these actions. Although the literature on Cold War expansions often illustrates that these two theories are incompatible, I will show the linkages between the two, which have been developed by scholars such as Keohane and Ikenberry. In chapters three and four, I will demonstrate how both realist and liberal motivations have been fundamental to shaping US national security policies, vis-à-vis NATO.

### *3.1 Realists*

Under President Truman, the US oversaw the creation of NATO, as well as its first expansion into Greece and Turkey. This phase of NATO can be explained within the realist paradigm in a straightforward manner. The power vacuum in Europe after World War II, in conjunction with the rise of the US and Soviet Union as hegemons in a bipolar world forced the two to engage in typical balance of power competition for positioning, including the creation of competing coalitions to maximize relative power. In a memorandum sent by George Kennan to the Secretary of State on January 20, 1948, he recommended that the US support the creation of a Western European Union under French and British leadership as a means of restoring the balance of power and preventing a German resurgence, but, critically, notes that it should not be military in

nature, at least initially.<sup>129</sup> This is a clear indication that the thinking of behind American policy in the period prior to NATO foundation was heavily in favor of restoring the balance of power vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, but not in a way that reduced the fundamental hegemonic position the US occupied in Western Europe through the emergence of an independent European defense community. This line of thinking is further supported by a declassified report to the National Security Council in 1953 from the Executive Secretary, which states that the strength of the coalition depended upon the “strength and will of the US as its leader”.<sup>130</sup> This same document highlighted the necessity of the US to improve its power position through the employment of Alliance ground forces and its own nuclear deterrence in such a way that a potential attack by Soviet forces became strategically infeasible.<sup>131</sup> All of the declassified documents from the early to mid 1950s put heavy emphasis on how the US should build up and exploit European capabilities in a way to complement American power within Europe and reduce the financial and material costs to the US in deterring Soviet expansion.

American policy in these early years was informed by the overwhelming military and economic superiority of the US in relation to its allies and, initially, the Soviet Union. As such, policymakers in Washington were keen to bind Western Europe together in a way that would maintain the position of American hegemony, and ensure that the Soviet Union could not expand its influence into this important region. In the early years, the US embarked upon a deliberate policy of economic support in the hope of stabilizing these countries, reducing interstate conflicts between them and binding them to America. The

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<sup>129</sup> Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary of State. January 20, 1948. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v03/d5> Accessed: May 21, 2017

<sup>130</sup> Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary. October 30, 1953. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v02p1/d101> Accessed: May 21, 2017

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

major emphasis on supporting Western European allies and ensuring the peace between them changed by the early 1950s as the Soviet nuclear program developed and they began to reach parity with the US in that sphere. During the Eisenhower years, the US determined that its military assets were stretched too thin to meet all of its global obligations, particularly in the wake of Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War and the stalemate of the Korean War. As such, efforts were made to rearm NATO allies and transfer much of the implementation of the security framework to them. European states, including West Germany, were expected to provide manpower in exchange for the protection offered by the American nuclear umbrella and the promise of American support and retaliation in the event of war.

In these early years of NATO, there was significant disagreement amongst the American policymakers regarding which countries should be included in NATO and which should not. George Kennan was outspoken in his opposition to membership for states that did not physically have access to the North Atlantic Ocean.<sup>132</sup> He argued that opening up membership beyond this geographically defined area was a dangerous proposition for two reasons. Firstly, it would weaken the claim that NATO was a defensive Alliance, which might provoke the Soviets into a rivalry for allies. Secondly, opening NATO to all European states could raise the possibility that states might be rejected by the Alliance or reject membership offers themselves, which could be a blow to American prestige and could be exploited by the Soviets for propaganda purposes. In spite of these warnings, NATO came to include several states outside of the geographically specific vision of people like Kennan. For realists, this makes sense. Extending NATO membership to countries like Italy, Greece and Turkey increased

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<sup>132</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 23.

competition with the Soviets, but it also increased relative American power and brought more countries into its hegemonic security framework. Potential reconciliatory efforts were discarded in favor of an aggressive policy of containment, which predominated for most of the Cold War period. Realist theoretical paradigms would predict this course of action as they argue that competition and the struggle for increased power are the natural order of the international system.

The inclusion of West Germany into the security framework of NATO proved to be the catalyst for the creation of a parallel Alliance (The Warsaw Pact) under Soviet hegemony. Realist theorists could make the argument that American policy was informed by the uncertainty of the international system. The way realism views the world and the interaction of state actors predicts that states will follow the course of action which increases power and confrontation simultaneously because failing to do so may result in the loss of prestige, relative power or the alteration of balance of power politics. A memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense in 1954 supports this vision in no uncertain terms. The document states that the US must

“create, prior to the achievement of mutual atomic plenty, conditions under which the US and the free world coalition are prepared to meet the Soviet-Communist threat with resolution and to negotiate for its alleviation under proper safeguards.”<sup>133</sup>

This document supports a realist interpretation that the US must seek to maximize its influence in the period in which it possessed atomic superiority, so that it could later maintain a balance of power during times of atomic parity.

Following these early enlargements, NATO membership remained unchanged until the Reagan administration and the issue of Spanish membership was discussed. By

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<sup>133</sup> Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson). December 17, 1954. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v02p1/d142> Accessed: May 21, 2017

the 1970s, the Cold War had entered a new phase and the US experienced disunity from the ranks of its NATO allies. France, having left the military frameworks in the 1950s, the Germans pursuing a policy of Ostpolitik since the late 1960s and the troubling autocratic situations in Greece and Portugal in 1974, was compounded by American anxieties that their inferiority in conventional capabilities in Europe were now being mirrored in regard to nuclear capabilities.<sup>134</sup> With traditional American hegemonic power within NATO and Western security frameworks threatened by these moves, the new administration pursued a policy of rollback. Officials within the administration recognized the inherent weaknesses of Soviet society in the 1980s and sought to force its collapse. Abandoning the containment and détente policies, which had characterized the previous enlargements, was achieved through the admission of Spain in an attempt to bolster the legitimacy of NATO and strengthen the coalition of anti-Soviet countries. In this period, Reagan era power-maximization strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Bloc served an important realist purpose by demonstrating to the Soviets that NATO unity could not be threatened. The Soviet Bloc saw disagreement and protest within Europe over Reagan's aggressive anti-Soviet policy, often referred to as Cold War II, as an opportunity to drive a wedge between NATO members.<sup>135</sup> Realist theory can point to this period as a time when American policy-makers recognized its declining relative power and took steps to reassert itself, revitalize its primary European security framework by exploiting the weaknesses of the Soviet Union and, importantly, by demonstrating that collective NATO resolve was unaffected.

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<sup>134</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 137.

<sup>135</sup> Carpenter, *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 34-35.

The effects of the disastrous Soviet invasion of Afghanistan combined with the aggressive Reagan/Bush policies culminated in the collapse of Soviet satellite regimes throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The US used its power in this period to ensure that a reunified Germany remained within NATO security frameworks and that the US retained its position within them. All of these moves corresponded with the theory of offensive realism Type I. The US seized the historical moment and simultaneously dealt its primary foe a deathblow and reasserted its hegemonic position within NATO and the Western security apparatus.

### ***3.2 Liberal Institutionalists***

Liberal institutionalist thinking was not developed during the early stages of the Cold War, but the powers of hindsight can show us that their ideas have validity during this period of NATO development. As Keohane has stated, the institutionalists can make a claim to the ability of their theory to subsume realist thinking in many ways. American policy in the Cold War was certainly aimed at containing the Soviet threat, primarily through the creation of American directed security frameworks, but the motivations behind their creation can be debated. In examining declassified American documents from this period, we can see that there are distinct camps within leadership. This is evident both within departments and more saliently, between departments. On the whole, the State Department expressed much more interest in building up European capabilities and increasing cooperation between states in order to forestall a return to the classical balance of power system in Europe, than did the Defense Department, who primarily concerned themselves with hegemony and balance of power from a military perspective.

Within the liberal institutionalist framework, the Cold War era enlargements of NATO can find amongst their motivations the desire to create an environment conducive to the effective sharing of information between allies as they organized the security framework through which to resist Soviet political domination of Europe. During the Truman administration, prominent members of the government emphasized the building and support of strong institutions of democracy in Europe in order to enhance stability and cooperation. In fact, we can see that NATO's formative years were marked by financial support for the rebuilding of infrastructure and the creation of binding institutions through which the US could exert its influence without having to contend with historical interstate rivalries in the region and focus on the communist threat.<sup>136</sup> Although realists might view these as byproducts of the American desire for power balancing and the pursuit of a hegemonic position within Euro-Atlantic security frameworks, the consequences of such institution building are undeniable.

The frameworks established by NATO forced historic rivals to cooperate in the face of military threats from the Soviets. The preponderance of Soviet conventional strength was great enough that nations with divergent interests coalesced into a functional Alliance based around shared ideals and the realization that historical patterns of power balancing were no longer relevant in the new strategic era. The role of NATO in integrating the decision-making of such traditional enemies as Greece and Turkey or France and Germany led to the birth of institutional cooperation and intelligence sharing that has now been expanded to include much of the European continent. As a historically isolationist power, the role of the US in this process was remarkable.<sup>137</sup> The creation of

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

<sup>137</sup> Rhodes, Matthew. *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. U.S. Perspectives on NATO*. 34.



NATO as an undeniably entangling foreign alliance ran counter to the historical credo of the nation. However, the emergence of the US from World War II comparatively unscathed and with its economic and industrial base intact forced the country to assume an international leadership role that it had always been reluctant to assume. American motivations behind this dramatic foreign policy realignment can be explained in several ways. Liberal institutionalist theory, however, offers a different explanation for this turn of events.

In a speech in the US Senate in 1943, then Senator Truman announced in no uncertain terms that American isolationism had been the primary cause of the Second World War, and he further stated that another, more destructive war would follow “unless the United Nations and their allies and all other sovereign nations decide to work together for peace as they are working together for victory”.<sup>138</sup> This declaration served as a harbinger for the policies that Truman would adopt after assuming the presidency. Soviet actions in the areas of Europe that they came to occupy were decidedly undemocratic, which forced Truman to back his statements with concrete actions in the form of the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine in order to stabilize the situation. A vital part of this process, beyond simply furnishing aid was to establish a cooperative framework in which burden sharing could be established. Supporting this position is a statement on the North Atlantic Pact by the Department of State on March 20, 1949. This statement highlights that the North Atlantic Pact was to be a complement to the economic aspects

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<sup>138</sup> Clifford, Clark M. *NATO's Anxious Birth. A Landmark in the Truman Presidency*. 2.

of the European recovery program and that the benefits of the economic assistance would beget security, not the other way around.<sup>139</sup>

The same document conveys the vital role of economic, military and political cooperation amongst the states of Europe, with the assistance of the US, which was but one of the contributors to this effort.<sup>140</sup>

“The North Atlantic Pact is made possible by the strides the Western nations of Europe have taken toward economic recovery and toward economic, political, and military cooperation.”<sup>141</sup>

Statements like this from the highest levels of the US government support liberal institutionalist theory with its heavy emphasis on cooperation, democracy and burden sharing, and importantly, make no mention of American motivation being hegemonic in nature or based on any doctrine of domination. However, this did not preclude the idea of the US exercising a leading role within the frameworks that were established by NATO. Rather, it opened the door to a reexamination of the role of institution building in the context of Cold War NATO policies. In the early 1950s, the end of the Truman era and the emergence of Eisenhower, with his military background, as President might lead one to assume that the role of American motivations in the subsequent enlargements of NATO had shifted toward power and hegemony. In a top-secret memorandum detailing the 245th meeting of the National Security Council on April 21, 1955, Eisenhower noted his displeasure with the idea that the US should supply and maintain the bulk of military hardware used by NATO allies. After being briefed by General Lodoen on the situation

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<sup>139</sup> Statement on the North Atlantic Pact by the Department of State. March 20, 1949.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v04/d125> Accessed: May 21, 2017

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

in Europe, he commented, “the US would in practice be in the position of a dictator.”<sup>142</sup> This again illustrates an enduring American commitment to helping safeguard fellow members of NATO, but stops far short of exhibiting a motivation of total hegemony within the organization.

Eisenhower, like his predecessors, illustrates a clear commitment to the integration of capabilities and toward burden sharing in the common pursuit of Western security. All of this would seem to fit quite well into the institutionalist paradigm in which integration, cooperation and consensus building are vital motivations. Further evidence supporting such positions of cooperation, rather than hegemony, can be found in a memorandum of conference with President Eisenhower on October 2, 1954 in which proposals to cut American troop levels in Europe and the formulation of an atomic weapon based retaliation policy were discussed. In this meeting, Eisenhower and his advisors made note that any reductions or changes in strategy must be discussed with NATO allies before any changes could be made to existing policy or practice.<sup>143</sup> In light of such statements between top level American policy-makers, the case can be made that liberal institutionalist theory is vindicated in its analysis and that hegemonic, balance of power politics were not central to American motivations in this period in regards to NATO intra-alliance cooperation. However, there remained an emphasis on maintaining the balance of power vis-à-vis the Soviet Bloc.

The final enlargements of NATO in the Cold War period occurred primarily under President Reagan. The decision to bring Spain into the Alliance framework served

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<sup>142</sup> Memorandum of Discussion at the 245th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, April 21, 1955. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v04/d1> Accessed: May 21, 2017

<sup>143</sup> Memorandum of Conference With the President, Washington, October 2, 1956. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v04/d38> Accessed: May 21, 2017

the dual purposes of helping to integrate that country further into the existing Western community and also to send a message of organizational unity to the Soviet Union. As a fledgling democracy coming out of a traumatic authoritarian past, the institutions of democracy in Spain were not firmly established. Although it had always been primarily a military alliance, NATO did offer a certain level of support for democratic institutions and membership in NATO offered a level of legitimacy to its members. The Reagan administration was heavily biased against the declared neutrality of nations and placed a great deal of emphasis on countries stating their allegiance openly. Within the Spanish context, the realist idea that Spain's accession would somehow increase American relative power or the overall balance of power was not relevant given that Spain already allowed the US access to its military bases before accession to NATO.<sup>144</sup> Rather it was the political effects on the Alliance and the message of unity,<sup>145</sup> which are more in line with institutionalist theory.

During the Cold War, NATO expansion was overseen by American administrations, which were primarily concerned with the security situation in post-war Europe. These governments were acutely aware of the importance of maintaining the balance of power in this period and sought to expand NATO in order to increase the capabilities and strategic depth of the Alliance. Congruence theory can help us understand compromises made within the democratic structures of NATO, particularly in regards to the inclusion of autocratic states into what was outwardly proclaimed as a coalition of democracies. The major exception to this strategy was Spain, for which formal inclusion had much more to do with supporting institutions of democracy in that

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<sup>144</sup> Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War*, 131-132.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 157.

country and adding weight to the Western coalition. As demonstrated, these objectives were pursued through a hybridization of realist and liberal policy motivations.

## Chapter 4: Post-Cold War Analysis

Similarly to the previous chapter, I will look to the theories of realism and liberal institutionalism to understand the motivations behind NATO enlargement after the Cold War. This chapter will rely on public statements and discussions between high-ranking government officials to determine which paradigms offer the most salient explanations for NATO enlargements in this period. As in the previous chapter, I will again demonstrate the importance of combined realist and liberal motivations in the pursuit of US grand strategy in this period.

### 4.1 Realists

Post-Cold War NATO enlargement presented traditional realists with a fundamental problem. The main tenets of the theory do not lend themselves well to explanations of the existence of NATO in this period. However, theorists, such as Layne have turned to the ideas of offensive realism Type II to explain why the US, as the hegemonic power within NATO structures would continue to support enlargement. During the latter half of the Clinton years, the President made very clear that he favored the inclusion of the Visegrád group by 1999 at the latest. In fact, his Republican Presidential challenger, Bob Dole, criticized Clinton for not moving fast enough to make this a reality.<sup>146</sup> For offensive realists, the motivations behind the push for enlargement were clear, the US needed to increase its hegemonic position and influence within Europe and ensure that NATO remain relevant in the new strategic era. Regardless of which theoretical paradigm we examine NATO through in this era, it is clear that the Alliance

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<sup>146</sup> Mitchell, Alison. *Clinton Urges NATO Expansion in 1999*. New York Times. <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/23/us/clinton-urges-nato-expansion-in-1999.html> Accessed: May 24, 2017

has entered a new era. Although he comes from the liberal understanding of institutional change, the theories of Oran Young can inform us about the nature of institutions themselves through regime theory. He argues that such institutions are always evolving and that even well developed regimes react to changes in political, economic and social situations.<sup>147</sup> Members of the realist school do not fundamentally disagree with this. In fact, they have developed hybrid theories to explain the phenomenon. Their interpretation is based more on hegemonic stability theory, but they have been forced to accept, in the post-Cold War period, that institutions can evolve.

For the Clinton administration, the enlargement of NATO became a serious topic of discussion early in the first term. Realists can point to the adoption of this position as a way of reasserting American leadership within the European security framework at a time when many were questioning the need for continued American involvement in the defense of the continent. This view fits well within the concept of offensive realism, with its emphasis on hegemons seeking to increase influence, even without legitimate state actors threatening the structures that the US had dominated since the end of the Second World War. Within the US government, there was significant debate over the expansion of NATO. The State Department emphasized the importance of cementing these countries into NATO, a position which was fundamentally at odds with the Department of Defense, which was skeptical of extending security guarantees to this region.<sup>148</sup>

For the US in this period, the collapse of the bipolar world was both an opportunity and a problem. Offensive realism, being the most salient explanatory mechanism within realism, would tell us that the potential of a multipolar international

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<sup>147</sup> Smith, *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War*, 23.

<sup>148</sup> Mattox, Gale A. *Enlarging NATO: the National Debates. The United States: Stability Through Engagement and Enlargement*. 29.

system presented a greater security risk than the one that had just been defeated. The economic forces of Europe, decoupled from American hegemony could prove to be more threatening than the static situation that had prevailed for most of the Cold War period. This follows the ideas of Layne closely in explaining why hegemony is so important to offensive realism Type II as a grand strategy. As such, the US was forced to act and recommit itself to European security and find new missions for NATO. The early Clinton years were marked by a timid approach to NATO enlargement. Clinton had run on a campaign focusing on domestic issues, rather than foreign policy issues and it was not until domestic pressure, largely from the Republican Party, that he committed fully to the idea of expansion. Prior to his adoption of this policy, Clinton had intended to move more cautiously to see what developments might unfold organically in the former Eastern bloc, including Yelstin's Russia. As such, the Clinton administration made extensive efforts to try and reassure Russia that NATO expansion was not directed at the country.<sup>149</sup>

Under both the Clinton and Bush administrations, the US pursued a policy of "double enlargement" in the context of NATO, which involved geographical expansion, and the simultaneous broadening of NATO's mission.<sup>150</sup> This new movement fits offensive realist theory and favors the use of NATO assets in out of area operations, primarily in the Balkans. Welcoming new members into Alliance structures helped to breathe new life into an organization that may otherwise have entered a period of institutional decline followed by American withdrawal from European security affairs. Interestingly, offensive realism argues that the increased relative power of the US was crucial to the shift in rhetoric from protection of its "national interests" to the protection

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<sup>149</sup> Layne, *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 70.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-71.



of its “core values” on a global scale.<sup>151</sup> To that end, Layne argues, “NATO is the instrument through which the US perpetuates its hegemonic role in Europe”.<sup>152</sup> President Clinton addressed this role indirectly when he stated:

“I came to office convinced that NATO can do for Europe’s East what it did for Europe’s West: prevent a return to local rivalries, strengthen democracy against future threats, and create the conditions for prosperity to flourish. That’s why the United States has taken the lead in an...effort to build a new NATO for a new era.”<sup>153</sup>

Although many would point to the lofty discussion of prosperity and democracy within this statement, for offensive realists, the key idea lies in preventing the return to local rivalries and doing for the East, what NATO did in the West. Which is to say, ensure that the US maintain a hegemonic position over the region through a combination of economic, military, ideological and political frameworks which ensure that no potential rival arises in the post-Cold War era, be it a former ally, like Germany, a resurgent Russia, or some form of integrated Europe with actual capabilities to challenge American hegemony in the area. Hegemonic stability theorists argue that the US was undertaking a natural course of action by promoting its interests in the Eastern European vacuum, and that international stability was merely a side effect of that process.<sup>154</sup> During Senate debates on the expansion of NATO in the post-Cold War era, Senator Richard Lugar even remarked that the US was also a European power, via its role within NATO.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>154</sup> Gheciu, *NATO in the “New Europe”*, 212-213.

<sup>155</sup> “The Debate on NATO Enlargement”. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, 105th Congress, First Session. S. Hsg 105-285. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998. 58.

The policies of the Clinton administration regarding the Eastern expansion of NATO were largely carried over by the Bush administration, although in the wake of the September 11 attacks, the Global War on Terrorism had an effect. Under Bush, the largest expansion to date was carried out. Realist thinking can view this as a natural step forward. The US being focused heavily on out of area operations by the 2000s made unifying Europe under American leadership an emphasis for the Bush administration. The invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were carried out with support from NATO forces and proved to be important for American prestige. Despite their small size and limited capabilities, the Eastern European allies of NATO made contributions, particularly in Afghanistan, but also in Iraq. Traditional NATO allies like France and Germany openly opposed the invasion while newer members supported the invasion.<sup>156</sup>

Under the Obama administration, NATO enlarged yet again. This expansion was much smaller than previous ones, but the additions of Albania and Croatia illustrated that the door for membership remained open. The inclusion of these additional West Balkan states helped to further stabilize the region and support institution building. The situation in the Western Balkans in the mid to late 2000s was still one of conflict, albeit not open warfare as had been the case a decade earlier. For realists, these enlargements didn't offer much in the way of supporting American power, but they did continue the spread of American power in Eastern Europe. It is hard to justify recent American actions through the theory of offensive realism outside the realm of influence spreading and attempts to maintain legitimacy and prestige in the new era.

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<sup>156</sup> Rhodes, Matthew. *Understanding NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. U.S. Perspectives on NATO. 36.

## 4.2 Liberal Institutionalists

The post-Cold War period of NATO expansion lends liberal institutionalists a great deal of support for their hypotheses. The US in this period was faced with no major rival, which casts a shadow on many aspects of realist interpretations for the continuation of NATO. The Clinton administration, although reluctant to initially emphasize foreign policy strategies during the 1992 election, emerged as a champion of NATO expansion. At the Brussels summit in 1994, the US pushed for discussions on the potential inclusion of new members in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>157</sup> This was partially a response to the 1993 Copenhagen summit of the European Union, which had opened the door to EU enlargement to the area. In an effort to ensure that NATO maintained its privileged position as an institution of European integration, the NACC and the PfP quickly became some of the more important aspects of institutional adaptation for NATO and were emphasized by the American government as forums for continued cooperation with both allies and other countries in the region.<sup>158</sup> Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs, Richard Holbrooke made the case that failure to enlarge the Alliance would result in it becoming irrelevant. Secretary of State Albright went further by arguing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that NATO had always served a political role in addition to its military one and that enlargement would increase cooperation, make NATO stronger, and ensure a continued strong American leadership

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<sup>157</sup> Smith, *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War*, 120.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

role within Europe.<sup>159</sup> In addition to this, Albright argued that strengthening NATO served the purpose of making America safer.<sup>160</sup>

These positions were widely held inside the Clinton era State Department, which emphasized the importance of NATO membership for helping emerging democracies in the East achieve important reforms that would help them adopt Western values.<sup>161</sup> The emphasis on democratization and increasing cooperation between states through the frameworks of NATO are in line with the liberal institutionalist ideas about the importance of institutions. The experiences of the Bosnian conflict and the Kosovo crisis are indicative of American motivations in this period, as these conflicts marked a turning point in the use of military power. NATO interventions were undertaken with the express purpose of stabilizing areas outside of NATO membership with the goal of building and strengthening Western institutions in the Balkan region to foster good governance.<sup>162</sup> Liberal institutionalists can point to the conditions of the Visegrád enlargement as support for their hypothesis. The process was marked by serious consultations between Alliance members and the enlargement excluded states, which, although strategically significant, such as Romania and Slovakia, were not making enough progress on domestic issues to qualify as full democratic societies.<sup>163</sup> Keohane and Wallander have forcefully made the case that NATO is more than a military Alliance and that key features of the organization, such as the NACC, were concerned largely with building trust, cooperation and consultation within Alliance frameworks. The emphasis on

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>160</sup> “North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Enlargement Costs”. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, 105th Congress, First Session. S. Hsg 105-451. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998. 9

<sup>161</sup> Mattox, *Enlarging NATO the National Debates*, 19-20.

<sup>162</sup> Gheciu, *NATO in the “New Europe”*, 212.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 215.

transparency, trust and the spreading of Western ideals are all important to any kind of institutional analysis of NATO expanding and the power of institutional engagement to socialize the new members.

The heavy emphasis placed on engagement, as a means of increasing stability and helping to increase trust, cooperation and spreading Western values is of key importance to NATO enlargements in the post-Cold War period. American policymakers in the Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations embraced the role that NATO can play in the pursuit of these goals, if not immediately or in a direct manner. During the Bush era, the return of unilateralist policies, particularly in regards to the Iraq War, caused a great deal of unrest within NATO. The lack of consultation and agreement between the primary members of the Alliance was significant in that it challenged the unity of purpose within the organization. The Bush administration openly questioned the loyalty of certain Alliance members, namely France and Germany, while praising Eastern European states which had supported American actions.<sup>164</sup>

Realist theories can point to this period as a failure of liberal institutionalism, as the main tenets of the theory had failed to overcome strong tendencies within the US to disregard the opinions of its allies. Realists like Mearsheimer would argue that this is just the type of situation that liberal institutionalism is not prepared to deal with. Liberal institutionalist theory, with its focus on cooperation, comes with the understanding that states cooperate when their interests are not fundamentally at odds. The Bush years marked the first period in which NATO was truly split and there were, fundamental disagreements which proved irreconcilable. Mearsheimer points to this as an example of

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<sup>164</sup> Koppel, Andrea. "War in Iraq has affected U.S. alliances." CNN. May 9, 2003.  
<http://edition.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/05/09/us.allies/> Accessed: May 24, 2017

how institutions do not function when the parties involved cannot see any benefit from cooperation, which causes them to return traditional realist propositions.<sup>165</sup> However, liberal institutionalism can rebut this claim by highlighting that institutional cooperation for the purposes of political economy and security are governed by different sets of rules. In the context of NATO, agreements regarding security are much easier to negotiate when the parties involved place similar importance on the threat, which was not the case in 2003.

This period of disagreement was reversed in the second term of the Bush administration when it became increasingly clear to Washington that the Alliance served an important role in intelligence gathering and cooperation in fighting terrorism. Conciliatory measures were undertaken by members of the Bush administration who highlighted the important role the Alliance had played in defending Western values and norms and sought to put the disagreements of Iraq behind them. The fact that NATO was able to endure major disagreement and expand again can be seen as a victory for the strength the institution. The Iraq War notwithstanding, the durability of the Alliance has been proven in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, both operations in which member states held a shared concern and were thus able to coalesce and reach a consensus on action. The US, occupying the position of hegemon is sure to have security concerns that go beyond the scope of NATO. This can explain why the institutional frameworks of NATO failed to carry over to out of area campaigns based on dubious evidence. After all, one of the key underpinnings of institutionalism is the importance of shared intelligence and shared interests, which cause states to cooperate.

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<sup>165</sup> Mearsheimer, John. *The False Promise of Liberal Institutionalism*. 15.

In the last decade, NATO has continued its cooperation with key partners in Europe and its expansion into the Balkans. The Obama administration placed significantly more emphasis on cooperation than the Bush administration. The rejection of unilateralism by the Obama administration allowed for more effective implementation of coherent policies regarding NATO goals, missions and strategies. In speaking on the importance of NATO, Obama remarked:

“Our alliances require constant cooperation and revision if they are to remain effective and relevant. NATO has made tremendous strides over the last 15 years, transforming itself from a Cold War security structure into a partnership for peace.”<sup>166</sup>

The motivations of the Obama administration in expanding the role of NATO are clearly in line with those ideas proposed by liberal institutionalist theory. He sought to repair trust, increase cooperation, and share intelligence. He advocated a leadership role for the US within those structures, but not one which ignored the shared concerns of American allies. At a summit marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO, Obama remarked that “the basic premise of NATO was that Europe’s security was the United States’ security and vice versa”.<sup>167</sup> He pushed for the increased use of NATO as a force for stability and a primary engine through which Western ideals of democracy could and should be spread to those nations, which showed a commitment to domestic reform and human rights. His policies in regard to post-Soviet states like Georgia and Ukraine were consistent and his support for their right to decide their own futures, even in the face of foreign aggression, and their eventual integration into NATO and other international institutions highlight that conviction.

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<sup>166</sup> Obama, Barack. *Renewing American Leadership*. *Foreign Affairs* (2007): 12.

<sup>167</sup> Obama, Barack. *Europe Faces Greater Terror Threat than U.S.* CNN.  
<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/europe/04/03/nato.summit/>

In the post-war period, we have seen a number of substantial expansions undertaken, which marked a clear turning point for the Alliance. The lack of a clear enemy called for new strategies and the way that the US chose to engage with that new dynamic was important to the evolution of the Alliance. The enlargement of NATO in this period again saw the institution make compromises in order to accommodate states in the East that were not fully compatible with the spirit of NATO, as per congruence theory, as it relates to institutional adaptations. The Clinton administration embraced the utility of NATO to extend stability via out of area interventions and outwardly embraced the idea that NATO could be used to support institution building in aspiring democracies in Central Europe. The Bush administration turned away from this emphasis and pursued goals related to the Global War on Terror and the 2003 Iraq War. The Obama administration returned to the kind of cooperative policies pursued under Clinton and worked to rebuild trust between members of NATO, which had been damaged in the Bush era. The overall strategies during this period demonstrate a shift, not in motivations, which remain firmly rooted in neoliberal institutionalism, but in objectives, which show a clear turn away from realism toward neoliberal institutionalism.



## **Opportunities for Further Research**

In light of all of this, there are several areas that would benefit from more in-depth research. The role of American motivations in the expansions of NATO, particularly in the current era, is an ever-evolving topic, given that administrations change at most every 8 years, that should receive further attention in order to discern whether the US is pursuing a hegemonic strategy in order to maintain its position or actively working toward institution building and stability in Europe. The positions expressed by the recently inaugurated Trump administration only serve to confuse this position further.

## Conclusions

The history of NATO is fundamentally one of cooperation. As the dominant force behind NATO, the US and the policies it chooses to implement have always had a significant effect on the development of the Alliance. The strategies employed by specific administrations compound the effect of American leadership decisions and policies on NATO. Examining the motivations behind the enlargements of NATO offers an interesting insight into how American motivations have changed over time. In this thesis, I have offered two competing frameworks through which to view NATO's evolution, liberal institutionalism and realism. In so doing, I have offered a brief history of those paradigms and of NATO's inception and the phases of its enlargement. I then analyzed key documents, statements, and policies from the six administrations that oversaw the major enlargements of NATO.

In the Cold War, the US pursued an innovative hybrid national security policy combining ideas of neoliberalism and institutionalism seeking to foster cooperation and build institutions through NATO frameworks. Interestingly, this policy employed these methods in the pursuit of traditionally realist balance of power goals. Ikenberry informs us that states that find themselves in positions of power during historical moments, such as the US in 1945, are confronted with three options to respond: domination, abandonment, or transformation.<sup>168</sup> In 1945, the US opted to transform its position of power into a credible post-war order through institution building. As Ikenberry states:

“These postwar institutions did not simply solve functional problems or facilitate cooperation; they have also served as mechanisms of political control that allowed the leading state (at least to some extent) to lock other

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<sup>168</sup> Ikenberry, G. John. *After victory: Institutions, strategic restraint, and the rebuilding of order after major wars*. Princeton University Press, 2009. 4.

states into a favorable set of postwar relations and establish some measure of restraint on its own exercise of power, thereby mitigating the fears of domination and abandonment.”<sup>169</sup>

This, along with the theories of Keohane, support the findings that the US was motivated by a desire to establish stability through a realist balance of power, but the creation of institutions, in this case NATO, was the end result and served to constrain US domination.

Post-Cold War, Clinton pushed for NATO expansion, regional stabilization, and institutional support for emerging capitalist democracies. Bush turned away from these strategies and focused on aggressive interventionist policies in pursuit of the Global War on Terror, particularly in regards to Iraq. This period placed strains on NATO and saw the US pursue a policy of unilateralism, initially ignoring the spirit of cooperation, intelligence sharing, and trust, which Wallander stresses as hallmarks of NATO for half a century. However, the latter half of the Bush administration saw a returned emphasis to this kind of cooperation as NATO continued its evolution for the modern era. Conventional force reductions in Europe, further out of area operations, and the continued expansion of NATO was emphasized in this period. The Obama administration, in an attempt to rebuild trust, continued these policies while placing a greater emphasis on reinforcing NATO, reassuring allies and ensuring that the US maintained its position within Alliance frameworks.

Consequently, we can see that the US again employed a hybrid strategy combining neoliberalism and liberal institutionalism. However, in the post-Cold War era expansions of NATO we no longer see the pursuit of realist balance of power objectives.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

Rather, we see, particularly with Clinton and Obama, the pursuit of liberal institutionalist objectives. Strong support for stabilizing the post-Soviet space through cooperation and dialogue was enhanced through the prevention of ethnic conflict and institutional support for the development of capitalist democracy are all indicative of these changed objectives and shifting emphasis, but this does not entirely preclude realist motivations for containing Russia in the pursuit of stability for Europe. In all the cases of NATO enlargement examined here, we can see neoliberal and institutionalist underpinnings, although they have at times been employed in pursuit of realist objectives.

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