STRUCTURAL, BUREAUCRATIC, ORGANIZATIONAL AND ELITE FRAMEWORKS OF EXPLAINING MILITARY TRANSFORMATION: THE CASE OF NATO

Abstract:

In this paper I use the case of NATO in order to test structural, bureaucratic and organizational, and elite explanations of military transformation. While the structuralist explanations are primarily associated with the distribution of power across the international system, the bureaucratic and organizational models attribute the transformation to the “organizational routines” and “individual leaders of government that make major governmental choices.” The elitist approach, on the other hand, studies transformation in terms of external influences from outsiders on the political elites conducting reforms.

In my previous research I conceptualized complementarities in the case of NATO as a relationship between military resources operationalized in terms of manpower, army, navy, air force and defense spending on the one hand, and specific allied capabilities that include peacekeeping and crisis management, non-proliferation and interoperability. In this paper, I intend to explore the relevance of structural, bureaucratic, organizational and elite frameworks in explaining the incorporation of new allies and the advancement of new capabilities such as peacekeeping, crisis management, non-proliferation and interoperability. By putting these three frameworks to the test of a contemporary case, I contribute toward understanding the theoretical nature of military and alliance transformation. However, it has also policy implications in terms of explaining successful implementation of military reforms for those countries that are currently applying for membership or cooperating with various security institutions including NATO.

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With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar distribution of power, the last fifteen years marked a process of major transformation of one of the core military alliances -- NATO. The major expectation of the traditional structural realist approaches was that, with the demise of the Soviet threat and the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact, NATO should eventually fade away and cease to exist. Kenneth Waltz wrote in 1993 that “NATO’s days are not numbered, but its years are. Some hope that NATO will serve as an instrument for constraining a new Germany. But once the new Germany finds its feet, it will no more want to be constrained by the United States acting through NATO than by any other state.”\(^1\) Instead, NATO has been undergoing major transformation that has three major aspects. First, since the early and mid-1990s it has been involved in a number of operations outside of NATO’s traditional territorial domain defined by Article Five of the North Atlantic Treaty.\(^2\) These are primarily operations in the former Yugoslavia and the Middle East, i.e. areas of various conflicts, where there has been a high demand of peacekeeping and crisis management capabilities. Second, NATO invited and fully incorporated ten new allies from Central and Eastern Europe, thus expanding the membership its size from sixteen two a total of twenty-six allies.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) Kenneth Waltz, “*The Emerging Structure of International Politics,*” International Security, Vol. 18, No 2 (Fall 1993), p. 76.

\(^2\) Article Five of the North Atlantic Treaty (1949) defines that the allies agree “an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all” and consequently […] “if such an armed attack occurs, each of them […] will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking […] such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.” For further reference see: NATO Official Texts: the North Atlantic Treaty, [http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm), 02/03/2008.

\(^3\) NATO’s eastward expansion took place in two rounds. In 1999 the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) joined NATO and in 2004 seven other Central and East European countries became members -- Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.
Third, in order to conduct successfully these new types of alliance operations, NATO set itself the goal to develop new specific allied capabilities. The new capabilities include but are not limited to Combined Joint Task Forces, NATO Response Force, various bilateral and multilateral non-proliferation capabilities, such as the Chemical, Nuclear, Biological and Radiological teams. In this case, should we expect that structural theories are obsolete frameworks to study the functioning, management and transformation of alliances? Are there better explanatory frameworks, such as institutionalism, organizational and bureaucratic theories or elite-related explanations?

**Research Question and Methods**

By focusing on the case of NATO, the paper aims at exploring the different theoretical frameworks that explain alliance transformation. The core question of this research is which framework or combination of frameworks is most persuasive in explaining alliance transformation. For this purpose, four possible hypothesized explanations will be tested. Each of these explanations emphasizes the relevance of structural, bureaucratic, organizational or elite explanations. The logic of the argument assumes that one or several explanations are more persuasive than others, i.e. while the different frameworks present contending explanations, the dynamic of NATO’s transformation pinpoints that some of the explanations explain alliance transformation better than others.

This research is relevant for several reasons. First, the identification of the most persuasive explanatory framework helps us understand the prevailing significance of certain variables over others and, therefore, offers a more comprehensive explanation of
the ongoing alliance dynamic in the case of NATO. Second, the identification of appropriate theoretical framework plays a crucial role in explaining and predicting patterns of foreign policy behavior of the individual states, which ultimately helps us understand various policy-related aspects of NATO’s missions in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Mediterranean.

The research design of the paper is relatively simple. In essence, it is a qualitative survey of NATO’s transformation that is based on primary and secondary data. The primary sources include: (a) NATO official documents, parliamentary minutes, military doctrines, government studies, leaders’ statements and decisions for and implementation of military reforms required under the membership criteria and; (b) in-depth elite interviews conducted in Brussels, Belgium, Washington, DC and Sofia, Bulgaria. One of the biggest advantages of elite interviewing is the semi-structured format with open-ended questions because of the flexibility and adaptability to the style of thinking of the elites, opportunity of the respondents to organize their answers within their own frameworks, as well as higher degree of receptivity of respondents such as the possibility to articulate their positions and explain their views on the issues that have been researched.\(^4\) The interviewees have been determined based on two criteria: (a) they should be representatives of the national elites of the NATO members, i.e. people in decision-making or leadership roles and; (b) the respondents should be experts about the topic at hand.\(^5\) There are two types of elites that meet these criteria: (a) representatives of


the governments, such as national delegations and permanent representations in Brussels or the foreign and defense ministries of these countries and; (b) representatives from the non-governmental organizations and think tanks, such as the Brookings Institution, the Wilson Center and the George C. Marshall Associations in Eastern Europe.

This research rests on several separate steps. In the first step I explored how alliances function in an imbalanced international system. For this purpose, I focused on the case of NATO’s transformation after the end of the Cold War and suggested the concept of complementarities as an analytical framework and suggested its incorporation into alliance theory. Based on club goods theory, I conceptualize complementarities as a relationship between military resources and transformational allied capabilities. The military resources considered include military personnel, army, navy, air force and defense spending. In my model, alliance missions of peacekeeping, crisis management and non-proliferation, as well as interoperability are key intervening variables that shape, according to my argument, the development of allied capabilities. Such an approach to alliance transformation has contributions on several different levels. First, it offers a new perspective to studying alliances and establishes an analytical link between alliance theory and major theoretical approaches of international relations such as realism and institutionalism. Second, by analyzing and explaining the behavior of the hegemon and smaller allies, it suggests theoretical and policy implications for the different allies. Third, the implications of my theory have a broader relevancy to the dynamic of international security organizations; more specifically how smaller states interact with larger and more powerful states.
The concept of complementarities, however, does not focus on the explanatory power of the different theoretical frameworks dealing with alliance transformation. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the different theoretical frameworks for explaining alliance transformation in a comparative perspective. Traditionally, the literature on alliances deals with two sets of core questions related either to the formation of the functioning and management of alliances. However, the majority of the theories explaining alliance behavior have been tied up to one of the major approaches of international relations -- realism, neo-liberalism, organizational and bureaucratic theories and constructivism. While such an approach is helpful in building bridges between the traditional IR theory and alliance theory, it may also be confusing. There are several reasons why the traditional approaches to classify IR theories are not the best frameworks to study alliances. First, although closely related to mainstream IR theories, alliance literature is, nonetheless, a relatively independent branch that deals with the conceptualization of a specific domain of international relations, namely the politics of alliance formation and management. Second, sometimes theories that share similar explanations about international politics as a whole may well diverge in their interpretation about the propelling principles that explain the functioning and management of alliances. For example, Waltz’s balance of power and Walt’ balance of threat theories embrace the argument that systemic characteristics, such as the

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6 In the “Origins of Alliances” Stephen Walt explores how statesmen choose among potential threats when seeking external support and how great powers and weaker states choose their allies. In essence, the balance of threat theory that he presents and the Randy Schweller’s balance of interest theory focus on causes for alliance formation. In the same token, Stephen David’s omnibalancing and Harknett and VanDenBerg’s omnialignment models explore the driving forces behind the origins of alliances. In his seminal work “Alliance Politics” (1997), Glenn Snyder distinguishes between research related to the origin and management of alliances. William Riker, Mancur Olson, Richard Zeckhauser and Todd Sandler are among the scholars who employ rational choice methods to develop various models explaining the logic of alliance functioning and management.
distribution of power or the presence of threats is the major driving forces behind alliance formation since “weaker states are more likely to bandwagon, rather than balance” because weak states can do little to affect the outcome.\footnote{Stephen Walt (1987), p. 29-30.} Alternatively, authors like Stephen David, Richard Harknett and Jeffrey VanDenBerg, who conceptualized omnibalancing and omnialignment, argue that state behavior with regard to the formation of international alignments is determined as a reaction of the political elites to the presence of both external and internal security challenges that reinforce each other.\footnote{Richard Harknett and Jeffrey VanDenBerg, “Alignment Theory and Interrelated Threats,” Security Studies, Vol. 6 no. 3 (Spring 1997), p. 115.}

Thus, they depart from the core structural realist assumption that the reaction to external powers or threats determines the course of international politics, including the formation of alliances.

    In the same token, the neo-liberal approaches vary in their explanations about the formation and management of alliances. For example, the core assumptions of institutionalism, one of the core neo-liberal approaches, are somewhat closer the neo-realist traditions. The institutionalists focus on absolute, rather than relative gains and argue that the importance of institutions is “conditional on factors, such as the number of major actors in the system and whether military advantages favor offense or defense.”\footnote{Lisa Martin, “The Promise of Institutionalist Theory, International Security,” Vol. 20, No.1 (Summer 1995), p. 42.}

In this framework, NATO is analyzed as a regional security regime that establishes stable norms and rules which lead to “stability in levels of conventional forces within the regime that cannot be explained by structural theories.”\footnote{Lisa Martin (1995), pp. 44-9.} Alternatively, proponents of the democratic peace theory, another neo-liberal approach, focus on the question how
democratic governance shapes international relations. For Michael Doyle “even though liberal states have become involved in numerous wars with non-liberal states, constitutionally secure liberal states have yet to engage in war with one another.”

Therefore, the functioning and management of NATO as international security alliance is seen through the framework of establishing a “pacif ic community” of nations in the North Atlantic area where democracy is the key independent variable that drives the overall process of alliance transformation. Such an argument is quite different from the institutionalist approach and is, in essence, related to the internal makeup of the states, not their overall role in the international system. Third, alliance theory needs a classification of the core approaches that is based on specific explanatory models dealing with the formation and management of alliances, not relying on the conventional classification of the theories of international politics.

For this purpose, I identify four main contending groups of explanations associated with the specifics of alliance politics -- structural, bureaucratic, organizational, and elite frameworks. While the structuralist explanations are primarily associated with the distribution of power across the international system, the bureaucratic and organizational models attribute the transformational dimension of alliance politics to the “organizational routines” and “individual leaders of government that make major governmental choices.” The elitist approach, on the other hand, studies transformation in terms of external influences from outside on the political elites conducting reforms. The core inquiry of this paper is to briefly survey and compare evidence for these four frameworks and explore which one seems to be more persuasive than the others in the case of NATO.

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STRUCTURAL EXPLANATIONS OF MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

*Structural explanations in international relations literature*

As discussed earlier, most structural explanations about alliance transformation are linked to realism, not all realist explanations are structural in their nature. Currently structural realist literature distinguishes between defensive and offensive assumptions.\(^\text{12}\) When applied to the study of alliances these distinctive sets of assumptions shape different expectations about state behavior. Defensive realists posit that states seek to balance the power of threatening states; and for this purpose they may engage in various unilateral efforts or military cooperation including, but not limited to, forming military alliances. They expect a multipolar world after the end of the Cold War in which “the United States as the strongest power will find other states edging away from it; Germany moving towards Eastern Europe and Russia, and Russia moving towards Germany and Japan.”\(^\text{13}\) As a result, “the presence of American forces at higher than token levels will become an irritant to European states, whose security is not threatened.”\(^\text{14}\) Since NATO was created to balance against the Soviet Union and the latter is already gone, Kenneth Waltz expected that the United States would withdraw from Europe and NATO would become obsolete.

From a defensive realist perspective NATO was created to balance against the communist bloc and when the latter ceased to exist, Waltz expected the demise of the alliance. This, in essence, is predetermined by the structure of the international system.

\(^{12}\) For further details on the distinction between defensive and offensive realists see Christopher Layne (2006) and John J Mearsheimer (2001).


Within this framework of the analysis, NATO can only sustain if the structure of international politics entails the presence of a threat that “can provide sufficient glue to hold the alliance together,” such as the Soviet threat during the Cold War.\textsuperscript{15}

Unlike defensive realism, offensive realists emphasize the distinction between great powers and the other actors in an anarchical international system. The criteria for defining great powers “are determined largely on the basis of their relative military capability,” such as sufficient military assets to fight successfully against the most powerful state in the world.\textsuperscript{16} Power is the key independent variable that has to be analyzed. It is composed of two components—latent and military power. Whereas the former is based on “the size of its population and the level of its wealth,” the latter “is embedded in its army and the air and naval forces that directly support it.”\textsuperscript{17} Essentially, the argument of offensive realism rests on two separate pillars. The first one is built on the assumption about the ever present potential for offensive power coupled with uncertainly, where “the international system forces great powers to maximize their relative power because that is the optimal way to maximize their security.”\textsuperscript{18} For Mearsheimer survival mandates aggressive behavior and “great powers behave aggressively not because they want or because they posses some inner drive to dominate but because they have to seek more power if they want to maximize their odds of survival.”\textsuperscript{19} Thus, the major contribution of offensive realism is the presentation of an argument that overcomes the status quo bias of defensive realism. The second pillar rest

\textsuperscript{17} John Mearsheimer (2001), p. 43.
on the logic of the stopping power of water because large bodies of water sharply curtail the power projection capabilities of armies and thus shift the balance of land power in important ways.”

That is why land power is the core variable determining power since “armies are the central ingredient of military power, because they are the principal instrument for conquering and controlling territory.”

Since the assumption of uncertainty is coupled with the primacy of land power, “the United States has historically behaved as an offshore balancer in Europe and Northeast Asia.” Furthermore, the United States continues to “dominate NATO decision making, much the way during the Cold War […] making it difficult for many of those states (especially Germany) to cause trouble with Russia.”

The logics of defensive and offensive realisms are important in explaining and understanding the structural conditions for alliance transformation. First, based on the state performance and systemic outcomes, there is a clear distinction between great powers and other states in the system. Second, it is not any international structure, but the distribution of power among the states in the international system that matters in regard to explaining alliance behavior. Third, the specific structure of the international system determines the structure and management of alliances, including their transformation and adaptation.

The majority of the theoretical literature agrees that “alliances cannot be understood apart from their context in the international system” and that the distribution of power provides “much of a motive for allying, and the nature of alliances varies with the

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characteristics of the system.” Glenn Snyder, for example, argues that “the systemic context of alliances may be described in terms of four analytical entities: structure, relationships, interaction and units.”

While the majority of IR literature that grapples with alliance politics takes into account the effect of the distribution of power, the vast majority of foundational research on alliances done by Liska, Snyder, Walt, Raymond and Kegley published between 1960s and 1990s automatically assumes defensive alliances that are formed in a multipolar or bipolar distribution of power.

The logic of structuralist approach requires a survey of NATO’s management in specific environment of the post-Cold War international system. Furthermore, since NATO is a regional organization as defined in the Washington Treaty, it seems that the United States is a part of this region and we need to study power realities in the North Atlantic Area as a whole. Given its size, spending on defense, overall military resources and actual capabilities, it seems that the United States is much more powerful than any other state in the North Atlantic Area.

In fact, there is a major debate in the literature about the evidence for unipolarity and relevancy of hegemony in contemporary international politics.

For John Mearsheimer the hegemon is “a state that is so powerful that it dominates all other states in the system.” In other words, power is concentrated in a single state or pole in the international system. Therefore, hegemony “means domination in the system

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25 If we take the global military spending for an indicator of the distribution of power across the international system, the data for 2007 indicate that the United States represents 43 per cent of total global military spending and is responsible for about 80 per cent of the increase in the last several years, where the U.S. spending has almost doubled since 2001. In 2007 the United States has spent almost six times as much as China, ten times as much as Russia and about 2.5 times as much as the rest of Europe, where most of the countries are U.S. allies. For further details see Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SPIRI)’s 2007 Yearbook and Global Issues Online, which is also available at: http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp, 03/13/2008.
which is usually interpreted to mean the entire world.”27 The fundamental distinction between a hegemon and a great power is the amount of power concentrated in the state relative to the other states in the international system. Therefore, hegemony implies the same meaning as imbalance in the international system. If a great power can accumulate power that none of the other states can match, then this state can be considered a hegemon.

Christopher Layne studies the American Grand Strategy during the Cold War and concludes that it has been designed “to subordinate an integrated Western Europe to U.S. hegemony and to prevent the emergence on the continent of an independent pole of power that could challenge Washington’s predominance in the Euro-Atlantic Affairs.”28 In his framework of analysis, the U.S. strategy in Western Europe rested on several strategic pillars. First, the United States exercised centralized control over NATO’s nuclear weapons. Second, the United States could not afford to have the Atlantic alliance weakened because it was a key component in ensuring America’s fundamental interest in the Old Continent “by maintaining peace within Western Europe.” In other words, “the preservation of the political stability and security in Western Europe” was regarded as utmost importance to the U.S. national security.”

Furthermore, Layne expands this framework by arguing that the change in the distribution of power after 1990 did not alter fundamentally the level of the U.S. involvement in Europe. NATO is still in business and the U.S. troops are still in Europe. His logic leads to the conclusion that NATO’s transformation, more specifically the alliance’s new missions of preventing power vacuums and instability, providing

“reassurance,” and promoting the spread of democracy into Eastern Europe, is a reflection of the same U.S. Grand Strategy and a reflection of America’s hegemonic role in world politics.

_Evidence for structural explanations_

The relevance of structural explanations will be studied through a survey of the involvement of the United States in setting up the agenda for NATO’s transformation and pushing for its implementation, which involves the addition of new allies and the development of new allied capabilities. In the specific dynamic of NATO expansion, the U.S. role was instrumental not only in deciding when the two rounds are going to take place, but also which particular countries would be invited in 1997 and 2002.

The first wave of NATO’s post-Cold War expansion was launched at the Madrid Summit in July 1997 with the invitation of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. In addition to these three Visegrad nations, the applications of Slovenia and Romania were also on the table. Other major allies such as France and Italy advocated a southern focus of enlargement. Slovenia was considered as one of the strongest candidates in terms of efficiency and military preparedness whose application had support in Europe, as well as in the U.S. Senate. In the case of Slovenia, Ryan Hendrickson and Thomas Erthridge noted that the country is a front runner in military reforms that “is moving forward very positively and continues to challenge nearly all criticism of NATO expansion.”

Nonetheless, the Clinton administration decided that the “core package of three nations” would be a sufficient challenge for the ratification process in the United States in terms of

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absorption by the alliance.\textsuperscript{30} Romania, on the other hand, had an important strategic position in Southeastern Europe but lagged far behind in military reforms and capacity to contribute to the specific military capabilities. In the end, the compromise among the allies excluded both nations. While Slovenia was kept as given for the next round, in the case of Romania, the allies recognized the continued need for “positive developments towards democracy and the rule of law” and encouraged the furtherance of military reforms.\textsuperscript{31} At the same time, Poland was the only of the three invitees regarded that would add significant military strength to the alliance due to its size. In the end of the day, this package was regarded the optimal pick on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. From Washington’s perspective the three countries could be sold to the United States Senate as “strategically important politically acceptable.”

In the same token, during the second wave of expansion, the first indications that the allies were willing to endorse a “big bang” approach to the forthcoming expansion came during George W. Bush’s visit to Poland in June 2001. He addressed faculty and students at Warsaw University and indicated that “all of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom -- and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe -- as Europe's old democracies have.”\textsuperscript{32} President Bush underlined that the alliance should continue to admit new members and that its doors would remain open “for all of Europe's democracies that seek [NATO membership] and are ready to share the responsibilities

\textsuperscript{32} Remarks by President George W. Bush in Address to Faculty and Students of Warsaw University, Warsaw, Poland, June 15, 2001. Also available on the Internet: http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/docs/bush150601.htm, 05/29/2007.
that NATO brings.” President Bush asserted with regard to NATO expansion that “the
question of ‘when’ may still be up for debate within NATO; the question of ‘whether’
should not be.”

The aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 further strengthened
the expansionist case. A study of the Brookings Institution released in 2001 indicated
that “the case of enlargement is stronger than ever before” and it “will contribute to the
process of integration … and promote the development of strong new allies in the war on
terrorism.” Again, the United States played a crucial role in the second round of
NATO’s post-Cold War expansion. On May 8, 2003 the Senate confirmed its support for
the seven invitees by ratifying a bill by an amazing 96-0 vote that ultimately allowed the
seven nations to join NATO in 2004. This support by the U.S. Senate was much stronger
than in 1998 when it ratified the admission of Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland by an
80-12 vote.

The three countries that were not invited in Prague (Albania, Croatia and
Macedonia) formed the Adriatic Charter and their high ranking officials continued to
meet frequently in a tri-partite format in order to review the advancement of the
“individual and cooperative efforts to intensify and hasten domestic reforms” that will
prepare these nations for NATO membership. The United States’ active involvement in
the Adriatic Charter has been instrumental in promoting dialogue and cooperation among
these nations and in implementing the needed reforms. U.S. Secretary of State Collin

33 Remarks by President George W. Bush in Address to Faculty and Students of Warsaw University,
Warsaw, Poland, June 15, 2001. Also available on the Internet:
35 US Department of State Factsheet, Office of the Spokesman, Washington, DC, May 2, 2003. Also
Powell signed the Charter together with the three foreign ministers in Tirana in May 2003 and Washington hosted a ministerial meeting in February 2006. Later, Vice-President Dick Cheney attended the May 2006 summit of the three prime ministers in Dubrovnik, Croatia.\(^{36}\) The United States’ support for the efforts of the Adriatic group was also demonstrated at the meeting of the three prime ministers with the U.S. president in Tirana, Albania on June 10, 2007 as a part of his visit to Albania. Similar to the Southeast European Brigade, the United States’ support and encouragement seems to be crucial in promoting multilateral dialogue and internal military and political reforms in Albania, Croatia and Macedonia.

In the same token, the involvement of the United States in the advancement of NATO’s capabilities can be surveyed through the advancement of NATO Response Force, the evolution of counter-proliferation initiative and the enhancement of the allied interoperability. By late 1990s it became clear that the new crisis management operations would require better capabilities. The weaknesses of the CJTFs combined with the increasing demand for more efficient and rapidly deployable crisis management capabilities within NATO in the late 1990s and early 2000s led to the initiation of NATO's Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI), which was launched during NATO’s 50\(^{th}\) Anniversary celebrated at the Washington Summit in April 1999.

Another core transformational meeting for the advancement of NATO’s new crisis management and non-proliferation capabilities was the Prague Summit in 2002. NATO approved a new initiative, the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC), which built on the DCI foundations but had more specific and quantifiable goals. The United States played

again an important role. As a part of the Prague Summit decisions, in September 2002 the U.S. Secretary for Defense Donald Rumsfeld put forward a proposal to create a NATO rapid reaction force. This U.S. initiative was officially launched several months later, at the Summit as a package of several transformational proposals known as the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC), which also included a fundamental revision of the NATO military command structure. The allies agreed in Prague that PCC should be designed to enhance NATO's forces and close the capability gap between the North American and European allies. The Prague Summit determined a timeline for NRF to become fully operational. Furthermore, PCC was designed in light of the war on terror or fight against terrorism after September 11, 2001 and focused on specific tools to fight terrorism, particularly air lift, secure communications, PGMs, and protection against weapons of mass destruction. In his speech before the Prague summit, President Bush explicitly emphasized the link between PCC and the war on terror or fight against terrorism when he declared that “NATO must develop new military capabilities,” and its forces must be “better able to fight side-by-side.” The force was expected to reach an initial training capability no later than October 2004 and was declared in full operational capability at the NATO Summit meeting in Riga, Latvia in November 29, 2006.

The advancement of new crisis-management and non-proliferation capabilities also shows how the change in the international system, specifically the presence of a rising hegemon, influences the decision-making process and stimulates new equilibria within

the Alliance. The United States took a lead in the non-proliferation efforts by launching the Defense Counter-proliferation Initiative (CPI) in the mid-1990s. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin introduced the concept to his NATO colleagues in December 1993, which rested in “a drive to develop new military capabilities to deal with these threat[s]” and had five elements. First, the emphasis was on the creation of a new mission by the President of the United States who announced new aggressive non-proliferation politics. Second, the initiative paid special attention to technological equipment to localize and destroy WMD, which included a review of all relevant programs. Third, CPI focused on the development of new strategic doctrines to cope with enemies, including the development of “a military planning process for dealing with adversaries who have WMD.” Fourth, the initiative emphasized improved counter-proliferation intelligence capabilities. The fifth point paid special attention to international cooperation, more specifically, strengthening cooperation with the allies that called for increased NATO efforts against the proliferation of WMD. Certainly DCI was an important step in several aspects – not only did it identify new sources of threats, but it also outlined a novel comprehensive strategy to deal with them. Aspin stated that “with this initiative, [the Department of Defense] is making the essential change demanded by this increased threat. We are adding the task of protection to the task of prevention. The essence of the DCI was the combination of new capabilities to deal with this threat and a strategy to

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have the allies involved in this process.” Thus, the initiative combined political and military means and was an important test by the United States on its NATO allies and the alliance as a whole to redefine non-proliferation and enhance allied capabilities to deal with it.

However, the incorporation of the CPI into a successful alliance strategy required the core NATO members, among which France, Britain and Germany, to agree on the different pillars of this strategy. While the United Kingdom and France were quite supportive of the U.S. approach, Germany was much more reluctant. Berlin was divided between the policy of non-intervention incorporated in its constitution (Grundgesetz) and the external pressure that the country must assume responsibilities in line with growing role in the international system, which is why it opposed the original U.S. proposal. That is why two separate groups were set up – a Senior Political-Military Group on Proliferation (SGP) and a Senior Defense Group on Proliferation (DGP) that had to work out a compromise. They both convened in a joint committee that came up with a common document known as “Political Framework of the Alliance to the Problem of Proliferation of the Weapons of Mass Destruction.” The Framework was officially issued at the NATO meeting in Istanbul in June 1994 and expressed strong support for the nuclear, biological and chemical non-proliferation and the unlimited extension on NPT based on the concern that “there are developments in the evolving security environment that give rise to the possibility of increased WMD proliferation.”

43 The German Grundgesetz stipulates that German military forces could not be deployed outside its borders, which means that every peacekeeping mission overseas has to be approved by the Bundestag.
Furthermore, it outlined a three-fold objective that rested on: (i) review of the alliance efforts on the prevention of WMD; (ii) finding ways to decrease the risks of proliferation and; (iii) maintaining of security in the face of ongoing WMD. The core of the document underlined that the alliance policy should be aimed at “supporting, reinforcing and complementing, not at duplicating or substituting” the already existent agreements.\footnote{Henning Riecke (2000), p. 37.}

Therefore, the original design of the U.S.-launched Counter-Proliferation Initiative was not an acceptable equilibrium for all other allies and, therefore, was not embraced the alliance. Ultimately, the agreed framework amended the CPI in three major directions: (a) it suggested a more comprehensive approach; (b) it rejected duplication and; (c) it promoted efficiency among the allies. Thus, the slow and cumbersome path of compromise among the allies actually stimulated a more optimal outcome than CPI originally proposed. Therefore, the evidence from the CPI, DCI and PCC indicate that the distribution of power within international alliances seems to be a key factor that determined the outcomes of NATO’s crisis management and non-proliferation capabilities. This was illustrated by the negotiation of the \textit{Istanbul Framework} and \textit{Prague Capabilities Commitment}. The rising hegemon proposed a framework within the club that was not completely acceptable for the other major powers. That is why the allies had to renegotiate and adjust the proposed format based in the preferences of the other members. The new format favored compromise and adjusted the outcome that ultimately resulted in advanced crisis management and non-proliferation capabilities.

The role of the hegemon to set up and implement transformational agenda can also be illustrated with the efforts to enhance interoperability among allies. In the case of post-Cold War NATO the interoperability gap among the allies, especially between the
United States and the European members became particularly noticeable after the campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999. The reliance on U.S. military power and the capabilities gap between the hegemon and the rest of the allies was illustrated with the fact that 70% of the deployed European allied forces performed largely a largely supportive role. This led General Claus Naumann, the Chairman of the North Atlantic Military Committee to confess in a testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee of the U.S. Congress that “as a European I am ashamed that we have to ask for American help to deal with something as small as Kosovo.”  

The biggest gap in terms of interoperability was between the United States and France, which has not been a part of NATO’s military structures for decades. For this purpose, based on the experience with the old NATO allies, Washington became actively involved in alliance efforts to improve interoperability also by stimulating multilateral military cooperation among current and prospective members in order to prepare the applicants to work together in joint missions in order to develop common capabilities. The Southeast European Multinational Brigade (SEE BRIG) is only one such example that illustrates the efforts to enhance the capabilities of NATO members and partners from Southeastern Europe.

The idea behind establishing the Southeast European Multinational Brigade (SEE BRIG) originated in mid-1990s and was a part of a strategy to foster regional security and stability within the framework of NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Southeastern Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM), and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). This brigade is composed of about 5,000 troops comprises of seven nations – Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania and Turkey, while the United States,

Slovenia and Croatia have observer status. The proposed format allows the development of interoperability at various levels: strategic, political, operational and tactical. The old NATO allies from the region had major impact on the successful launch of the brigade: Turkey was instrumental in the implementation of the SEEBRIG project and Greece's strong support for the brigade helped overcome most of the organizational problems concerning its initial establishment. Italy, Hungary, and Slovenia combined their resources to form a unit with similar capabilities and missions. Similar to NATO’s CJTFs and NRF, the brigade was designed as an “on-call” land force of battalion-size units, with combined training in reconnaissance, command post exercises, field maneuvers, and crisis management.  

During the first four years after its establishment, the SEE BRIG remained inactive due to lack of organizational autonomy and institutional capacity, as well as insufficient commitment from the members and inability in coordinate their interests with regard to the specific missions.  

It was not until the United States became involved that the Brigade that SEE BRIG enhanced its contributions to NATO’s missions. This example of multilateral military cooperation among some of NATO’s entrants was possible thanks to the involvement of the United States. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, SEE BRIG became quite dormant structure of international cooperation. It was reinvigorated at the SEDM ministerial meeting in Washington, DC in December 2005 hosted by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. The ministers approved and signed a document entitled Implementation Decision on the Deployment, Employment and Redeployment of SEEBRIG in the ISAF Mission, in which

under the U.S. leadership the SEDM initiative undertook the commitment that SEE BRIG will assume the command for ISAF’s Kabul Multinational Brigade for six months. The involvement of the United States assisted in overcoming the differences among the participants and in improving coordination and interoperability among the partners of this multinational defense structure.

Therefore, this brief survey of NATO’s transformation indicated that the distribution of power, more specifically role and involvement of the United States was instrumental not only in support of NATO expansion, but also in promoting the advancement of peacekeeping, crisis-management and nonproliferation capabilities as a part of the overall transformational agenda of the Alliance.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXPLANATIONS OF MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

Organizational explanations in international relations literature

In this second group of explanations, we need to distinguish between two different types of arguments – institutionalist and organizational. The first type, neoliberal institutionalism, posits that “when states can jointly benefit from cooperation … [we] expect governments to attempt to construct […] institutions. Institutions can provide information, reduce transaction costs, make commitments more credible, establish focal points for coordination, and in general facilitate the operation of reciprocity.”

Institutionalists study the interaction between the international institutions and the external environment challenge the realist assumption that relative gains dominate over absolute, and support the argument that the importance of institutions is “conditional on factors, such as the number of major actors in the system and whether military

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advantages favor offense or defense.” They study NATO as a regional security regime that establishes stable norms and rules which lead to “stability in levels of conventional forces within the regime that cannot be explained by structural theories.” Celeste Wallander researches institutional adaptation in the case of post-Cold War NATO and comes to the conclusion that “the variation in institutional adaptation is explained by variation in relative costs (such as provision of information), and by whether the rules, norms, and procedures of a given institution enable states to overcome obstacles to cooperation (such as provisions for sanctioning or bargaining).” She argues that during the Cold War NATO invested in specific assets for “achieving transparency, integration, and negotiation among its members,” such as SHAPE and the North Atlantic Council. These general assets were not specific to the Soviet threat, but instead were organizational assets developed over many years that “could be mobilized to deal with new security missions.”

Albeit somewhat distinct from institutionalism, the organizational perspective focuses on issues dealing with the inner settings of various organizations and alliances including NATO. Political scientists such as Philip Selznik developed the argument that “the internal life of an organization tends to become but never achieves a closed system. There are certain needs generated by the organization itself, which command the attention and energies of leading participants.” The core problems of each organization arise from “the need for continuity of policy and leadership.” These needs create an

“intricate system of relationships and activities, formal and informal, which have primarily an internal relevance.” 54 Since no organization subsists in a vacuum, each one of them should “pay some heed to the consequences of its own activities […] for other groups and forces in the community.” 55 In this line of arguments, NATO’s case can also be tested against the Allison’s organizational and bureaucratic theories. Graham Allison (1971) challenges the rational actor model and argues that, in addition to larger national patterns and shared images, “the organizational routines that produce information, alternatives and action,” matter in the same way as the bureaucratic politics and individual leaders of government that make major governmental choices. 56

The logic of organizational theory holds that “at any given time, a government consists of existing organizations, each with a fixed set of standard operating procedures and programs.” 57 The behavior of these organizations “is determined primarily by the routines established in these organizations prior to that instance.” Therefore, the model emphasizes that “explanation of government action starts from the base line noting incremental deviations.” 58 Allison argues that organizations, nonetheless, adapt since “learning occurs gradually over time,” while dramatic organizational change occurs only in response to major disasters, thus allowing the organizations to change influenced by the existent organizational capabilities and procedures.

In the particular case of NATO’s transformation, the organizational perspective offers explanations on two different levels. First, the alliance consists of political and

military structures headed by the North Atlantic Council and the Military Committee, whose activities are coordinated by about five hundred standing committees. Thus, NATO produces organizational output that differs substantially from that of the individual member-states. In the same token, the governmental action of the individual allies is determined by the existing organizational routines within the twenty-six governments of the member states. Therefore, the organizational process within NATO tracks organizational routines that take place on two different levels: within the alliance structures and within the individual member-states. Although based on different logical arguments, the model that explores organizational outputs on alliance level seems to be congruent with institutionalism. For the purpose of this paper, the argument will focus exclusively on the organizational sources of alliance transformation.

Evidence for organizational explanations

The Rome and Brussels declarations of 1991 and 1994 outlined the three major aspects of NATO’s transformation -- involvement in out-of-the-area operations, incorporation of new members and development of advanced allied capabilities. First, as a result of NATO’s transformational dynamic the number of NATO allies increased from sixteen in 1990 to twenty-six in 2007 with ten new members from Central and Eastern Europe, including the full incorporation of unified Germany. The expansion is, nonetheless, an ongoing process that includes the expectation that further countries will receive invitations to join the organization.\footnote{Currently Albania, Croatia and Macedonia are preparing for membership under Membership Action Plan and expect to receive invitation at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008.} Second, since mid-1990s NATO has been involved in numerous out-of-area operations, starting from the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Kosovo), in the Mediterranean and currently in Afghanistan (ISAF) and Iraq
Third, in order to meet the new mission requirements for these out-of-the-area operations, the Alliance has to develop new capabilities, which included but are not limited to, various Combined Joint Task Forces, NATO Response Force and various multilateral teams that deal with Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear non-proliferation capabilities. In addition, the allies agreed that they need to enhance their interoperability as a part of NATO’s efforts to operate effectively as a single entity.

The organizational framework argues that the distribution of power and the emergence of balancing dynamic do not matter with regard to NATO’s transformation. That is why all three dimensions of NATO’s post-Cold War transformation reinforce the importance of alliances in international security, which ultimately departs from the expectations of NATO’s decline proposed by some of the leading neo-realist scholars. Thus, within this theoretical framework, the systemic factors do not determine alliance transformation. In other words, the organizational perspective rejects explanations that are linked to the external environment as a key causal variable for NATO’s transformation. Instead, the organizational politics attributes the three aspects of NATO’s transformation to particular interests among different structures in Brussels and within the member states, who have developed “relatively stable propensities concentrating operational priorities, perceptions and issues” that had vested interests in transforming the alliance in order to keep it in business. Thus, the organizational health of these entities includes the preservation of NATO’s civilian and military personnel, increasing defense spending, which includes not only funding for new missions but also

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60 NATO’s eastward expansion took place in two rounds. In 1999 the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) joined NATO and in 2004 seven other Central and East European countries became members -- Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

61 Graham Allison (1971), p. 82.
new structures within the organization and within the member-states that guarantee the survival and expansion of NATO’s domain of activities. From an organizational point of view, September 11, 2001 was an opportunity to expand NATO’s out-of-the-area involvement, which resulted in increased military spending, higher budgets for defense and, ultimately, an increased influence of the Alliance on national and international levels. In the same token, the incorporation of the ten new allies is not only seen as a form of support for democracy in these countries, but also a source of an increased influence and ‘health’ in terms of growth in budget, manpower and territory.\(^{62}\) There are several specific instances of NATO’s transformation in the last decade that support the organizational model: the evolution of Partnership for Peace and the initiation of Membership Action Plan, and the advancement of Prague Capabilities Commitment in 2002.

The issue of admitting new members from Eastern Europe to NATO was first discussed at a special committee of the North Atlantic Assembly in January 1993, which led to the formulation of NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative at the Brussels Summit in 1994. PfP was designed as a new framework of managing relations with the countries from the former communist bloc; it was a very flexible framework that provided a “possibility for non-member military leaders and forces to accommodate cooperation for countries that had quite different military and political objectives in cooperating with NATO.”\(^{63}\) The countries that wanted to become members of the alliance pressed for a more in-depth form of cooperation with NATO, while at the same time other nations that did not indicate any interest in becoming full members now had a

\(^{63}\) Rob De Vijk “NATO on the Brink of the New Millennium: the battle for consensus,” Brassey’s Atlantic Commentaries, Herndon, VA, 1997, p. 83.
mechanism through which they could manage a relationship with the alliance. NATO policymakers did their best to accommodate all the partners. At the same time, the partnership had several inherent weaknesses. First, the cooperation was very broadly defined and did not focus explicitly on the aspects of needed transformation that the aspirant countries had to undergo in order to meet the requirements of membership. The East European nations that wanted to become members were not given precise guidelines on their path to membership. The political precautions dominated over the precision in commitments and guidelines, which is why little practical progress was achieved in the beginning. Second, PfP incorporated not only countries with different visions about their cooperation with NATO, but also different size and overall role in the international system. For example, the ten countries that subsequently joined the alliance in 1999 and 2004 were much smaller in terms of size and resources and played a lot less influential role than other partners, such as Russia and Ukraine.

Soon after its inception in 1994, PfP changed its emphasis from peacekeeping exercises to more detailed planning. As a result, in January 1995 the allies and their partners introduced the Planning and Review Process (PARP).64 It was based on a two-year cycle and had several core objectives; the primary of which was to improve interoperability between the allies and their partners. The scope of the PfP operations, however, remained relatively limited – it included primarily humanitarian aid, search and rescue, and peacekeeping. Gradually, the NATO leadership and the partner nations realized the need for diversification and specialization in the forms of cooperation among the individual partners. This need was specified in the presentation documents of the partners, as well as the various political means between the individual partners and the

64 Rob De Wijk (1997), p. 84.
NATO allies.\textsuperscript{65} The diversity among the different PfP partners was managed through different partnership “cells” in which military and civilian officials of the PfP countries worked hand in hand with officials from the NATO Headquarters and the member-states. For this purpose, a special partnership coordination cell was established in Mons, Belgium at NATO’s European command, in order to coordinate the various PfP activities directly with the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR) and his staff. These included contributions to the NATO mission in Bosnia, as well as consultations among the allies and the PfP partners.\textsuperscript{66} PfP was substantially modified in 1996-97 with the introduction of various levels of partnership among the participants that allowed deeper and improved interaction with the prospective NATO members. This change ultimately contributed toward more advanced planning, improved interoperability and a higher participation in joint operations.

Despite its substantial modification from the original framework, PfP itself was, nonetheless, unable to address the most important issue for some of the partners from Central and Eastern Europe, primarily the three Visegrad states; that was, the question of membership.\textsuperscript{67} The ministerial meeting in Brussels in December 1997 reconfirmed the commitment that the door of the alliance remained open and that Article 10 would be honored to all candidates that qualified for full membership.\textsuperscript{68} The NATO allies made it clear that the key criterion for the admission of new allies would be the capacity of the applicants to work effectively within NATO’s Integrated Command Structure.

\textsuperscript{65} Rob De Wijk (1997), pp. 84-5.
\textsuperscript{66} Sloan (2003), pp. 141-2.
\textsuperscript{67} The three Visegrad nations are the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.
\textsuperscript{68} The broad criteria for membership are incorporated in Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. These include: (a) geographic location, i.e. only European states can join NATO; (b) requirement to “further the principles of the treaty” and; (c) expectation to “contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area.” For further reference see “NATO Basic Texts: the North Atlantic Treaty,” NATO online library, \url{http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm}, 06/05/2007.
officials in Brussels were primarily concerned with the capacity of the potential members to become effective contributors to the alliance.

The first wave of NATO’s post-Cold War expansion was launched at the Madrid Summit in July 1997 with the invitation of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. After political consultations among the major allies, it was agreed at the Madrid Summit that the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland would be invited to become full members. In that sense, it was certainly a historic decision. But it also was important in that the alliance expressed a commitment that this wave of expansion would not be the last one and that the other applicant countries would be given opportunities to join the alliance.

The experience from the first wave of expansion was important in identifying the challenges of expanding NATO eastwards. First, similar to other NATO transformational projects (CJTFs, for example), PfP was overly ambitious and was not designed from the beginning to reflect the diversity of the different PfP partners. Gradually, by 1996 the NATO political and military leadership realized that Brussels should have a different approach with regard to the countries that wanted to become allies as opposed to those that were interested in PfP simply as a framework for cooperation with the alliance, which is why PfP was reorganized.

Second, in support of the organization process theory, Brussels used the PfP to promote the development of peacekeeping capabilities among its partners, but was an insufficient framework for transformation because it did not incorporate other critical aspects of enhanced cooperation among the allies such as the advancement of allied interoperability. The partnership mostly promoted political dialogue without exerting sufficient pressure for advancement of military reforms in the applicant countries.
Third, it seemed that the particular choice of countries was primarily based on political compromises within and among the NATO allies, rather than on clearly defined criteria and readiness to assume the responsibilities of membership. A careful inclusion mechanism would have evaluated Slovenia’s application positively and Ljubljana’s bid would have received a much more thorough consideration. Thus, the first wave of NATO expansion showed features of organizational parochialism discussed by Graham Allison.

As indicated earlier, NATO membership required from the aspiring nations to become “compatible” in terms of capabilities with the rest of the alliance, which also mandated substantial efforts to transform their militaries. The Washington Summit in April 1999 pledged that “NATO will continue to welcome new members in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and contribute to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic Area.” With this in mind, NATO leaders launched the Membership Action Plan (MAP), which not only outlined the perspective for membership but also established a mechanism that provided feedback on the progress of every individual applicant. The plan employed the same tools that PfP used earlier, namely consultations, reports and recommendations. However, MAP was designed on the basis of the experience with first three entrants and thus made some significant improvements from PfP. Specifically, the individual annual programs of the applicants included a vast array of allied...

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69 The application of Slovenia enjoyed substantial support in the Senate represented by Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and Senator William Roth Jr. (R-Del.) also because it would add a land bridge between Italy and Hungary. Otherwise, Hungary would be surrounded only by non-NATO neighbors. Nonetheless, the Clinton administration was worried about the opposition to the ratification process in the Senate and decided to advocate a minimalist package while leaving NATO’s doors open and keeping Slovenia as a given for the next round.

transformation -- political, economic, defense, resource, and legal aspects. NATO’s supervision was exercised through “a candid feedback mechanism” that included political and technical advising and annual review meetings in a format 19 plus one at the Council level, which meant that every MAP nation negotiates and reviews its individual Action Plan with NATO.\(^71\)

The Membership Action Plan had several major improvements compared to the PfP mechanism that preceded the admission of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. First, the plan established a clearing-house to help coordinate assistance by NATO to the aspirant countries in the needed areas of reform. Therefore, the new framework was much more conductive toward the advancement of allied capabilities. Second, implementation mechanisms were incorporated in the MAP as a part of the new standard operating procedures that included “inter-ministerial meetings at the national level, fulfilling the objectives of the Plan. Therefore, the evolution from PfP to MAP indicated organizational learning and change on the part of Brussels, which follows in large part from the deficiencies of the procedures that were initiated with the partnership. Although the organizational theory admits that “existing organizational orientations and routines are not impervious to directed change,” the specific conditions of most leadership jobs determines that “short tenure and responsiveness to hot issues make effective, directed change uncommon.”\(^72\)

The presented evidence indicates several important conclusions. First, the organizational theory does not account for major change. Certainly the NATO of twenty-six (or even twenty-nine) allies is much different that NATO of sixteen allies and the


organizational model does not account for this major transformation. Second, it seems that the organizational argument does not render sufficient explanatory power on the transformational dynamic, because it obliterates the effect of the distribution of power and the role of the United States in setting up the transformational agenda. For example the U.S. role was instrumental in the initiation of NATO's Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) in 1999, the advancement and implementation of Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) in 2002 and the reformulation of the Counter-proliferation Initiative (CPI) and its incorporation into the Istanbul Framework in 1995. Third, although sometimes it is structural and organizational explanations seem to intertwine, it is more persuasive to attribute organizational change rather to structural conditions than organizational behavior per se.

**Bureaucratic Explanations of Military Transformation**

*The Essence of Decision* presents a second alternative explanation to the rational actor, namely bureaucratic politics. Bureaucratic politics studies government action as “organizational output, partially coordinated by a unified group of leaders.”\(^{73}\) Thus, the leaders “who sit on the top of the organizations are not a monolithic group. Rather each individual is this group is, in his own right, a player in a central competitive game,” where the name of the game is “bargaining along regularized circuits among players positioned hierarchically within the government.”\(^{74}\) Therefore, each player’s stand is determined by parochial priorities and perceptions, as well as “goals and interests that

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affect payers’ desired outcomes,” such as “national security interests, organizational interests, domestic interests and personal interests.”\textsuperscript{75}

One of the major problems vis-à-vis the explanatory power of bureaucratic politics is that it is hard to determine the influence of bureaucratic players in cases when presidential (or any other top government leaders’) preferences significantly constrain these players. Therefore, it seems that bureaucratic politics model can explain decisions of lower level importance, but is not always persuasive for top-level decisions. This proposition can be explored in the context of NATO vis-à-vis various aspects of military transformation in Central and Eastern Europe.

Donna Winslow and Jeffrey Schwerzel correctly indicate that, in general, military culture is a specific organizational culture, where “different units have their own customs, ceremonies and even uniforms” and where “navies, air forces, land forces and marines have distinctly different organizational cultures.”\textsuperscript{76} Furthermore, Winslow and Schwerzel’s analysis confirms Allison’s findings that the military is a “large bureaucracy” with “routine, repetitive, orderly action” that is not likely to “innovate or change by [its] nature.”\textsuperscript{77} These observations are particularly valid for the military structures in Central and Eastern Europe. That is why most of the countries that were seeking NATO membership faced tremendous organizational and bureaucratic resistance from inside to transform their militaries. Therefore, the specificity of the military culture can provide major insight about the transformational dynamics among NATO allies, namely why transformation is or is not happening, what sources of bureaucratic

\textsuperscript{77} Donna Winslow and Jeffrey Schwerzel, (2004), p. 57.
resistance these countries face over time and the extent to which the transformational goals are met within expected timelines.

This survey of NATO expansion indicates that the military transformation produces similar outcome among the old and the new allies. The scope and the pace of actual reforms, however, differ substantially on a case-by-case basis. The trend of transformation depends substantially on various external and internal factors. Therefore, at least two different groups of countries could be identified among the new NATO allies. First of them consists of those nations that had heavy Cold War armies and were once members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) – Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The second group includes countries such as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia that had no experience with independent statehood prior to 1990. These two sets of countries differed in the nature of their transformation. For the first group of six countries the transformation was a multi-dimensional, continuous process that included a substantial reduction of various resources and their more effective re-allocation, whereas for the other four nations the military transformation in the early and mid-1990s was first and foremost a process state- and institution-building. The former Warsaw Pact countries had to significantly reduce personnel and some types of inefficient or outdated equipment, while at the same time re-directing funding for various needed capabilities including contributions to operations overseas. Although a large part of the military resources of the former WTO members have been used by or continue to

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78 Although Czech Republic and Slovakia are new states that emerged with the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, they not only shared common statehood for about seventy-five years but also unlike the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia the Czechs and the Slovaks split the resources of Czechoslovakia, including the military ones, in a ratio that corresponded to the contribution of each of the two nations, usually in a ratio of two to one.

79 As a matter of fact, the Baltic nations gained independence after World War I and experienced statehood in the interwar period but by were occupied by the Soviet Union after 1945 and restored their independence in 1991.
serve in their transforming militaries, the reality is that in many occasions the old military structures and the overall distribution of resources were based on strategies prior to 1990 and thus made them ineffective for the new NATO doctrine. Military transformation has often been compared to the construction business, where sometimes it is more cost-efficient to demolish an existing building and build a new one from scratch than trying to refurbish an old one. That is why in most of these cases the efficient allocation of funding meant substantial cuts in manpower and outdated equipment, which necessitated layoffs and resulted in job losses and increasing unemployment. That is why certain segments of the political elites and bureaucratic entities in the militaries opposed and attempted to delay the pace of transformation. As a result, the experience of countries like Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria indicated that it was more difficult to change the existing structure also because “the reforms had direct effect on the lives of people.”

Alternatively, nations that had to establish for the first time after 1990 their own structures and institutions of independent statehood, such as the Baltic countries and Slovenia, had much less trouble in transforming their military and developing the needed capabilities for peacekeeping, crisis management and non-proliferation that became interoperable with the other allies. Also, political elites in these cases had fewer troubles to persuade their societies that conducting military reforms was not only for the sake of the requirements to become NATO or EU members, but also to develop their own modern national army and economy. Therefore, the accumulation of military resources

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80 Author’s Personal Interview with a representative from the Slovak Delegation to NATO, January 16, 2006, Brussels, Belgium and Dr. Nikolay Slatinski, advisor of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Sofia, February 2, 2006.
81 Author’s Personal Interview with a representative from the Estonian Mission to NATO, January 12, 2006.
is positively related to the development of needed allied capabilities including growing contribution to various out-of-the-area operations.

The sheer fact of NATO membership required from the aspiring nations to become “compatible” in terms of capabilities with the rest of the alliance, which also mandated substantial efforts in transforming their militaries. At the same time, the nature of the military culture and its resilience to change posed major challenges to the transformation and military reforms in the new allies and aspirant countries. Therefore, NATO leadership had to promptly address these sources of transformational resistance and based on their experience with MAP, the applicants coordinated their efforts, which resulted in practical cooperation, exchange of information and lobbying for their candidacy in the NATO capitals. This cooperation led to the establishment of the Vilnius group (2000-2002) and the Adriatic Charter (2003-present) that should be approached not solely as mechanisms of improved coordination, but also as a form of exercising pressure against the domestic bureaucratic resiliency and reluctance to conduct reforms. The problem with the bureaucratic theory is that it explains why transformation does not happen and what the sources of resistance are, but does not elaborate why transformation actually succeeds. Therefore, this brief survey confirmed that bureaucratic politics deals with decisions of very low importance, but on major issues when on most issues there is central control from the top, such as the path and pace of military reforms, the bureaucratic players explanation is overridden by outside or structural factors that provide a better insight about the specifics in the path of NATO’s transformation.
ELITE EXPLANATIONS OF MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

The last of the proposed analytical frameworks suggests that various elite theories can also account for alliance transformation. Wade Jacoby developed an explanatory framework that linked elite behavior to the specific dynamics of transformation in Central and East Europe (CEE); thus touching upon the different aspects of NATO’s transformation. He argues that there are several stable modes of elite behavior can be observed. First, “when post communist reformers start a policy reform from scratch, inspiration is the mode they most often use.” Second, the specific dynamics of institutional transfer and policy learning indicates political elites undergo a kind of “conversion experience” that “leads them to emulate—though often with significant modifications — institutions that exist elsewhere.” Jacoby defines emulation as “a variety of related processes that have in common the fact that political elites in one country use formal institutions and practices from abroad to refashion their own rules of organization.” The elite representatives for Jacoby are those “members of the CEE governments, along with parliamentarians and civil servants, all of whom play key roles in such emulation as they draft the reform plans and its individual ministries.”

The proposed framework explains why alliance transformation happens based on two major pillars: (a) the process of transformation is crafted and managed by political elites, therefore other internal and external factors such as public opinion and distribution

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of power across the international system do not matter and; (b) the mode of emulation follows a unidirectional mode of transformation, i.e. toward westernization, whereby there has been “a limited external coercion” by international organizations in promoting reform.” Therefore, the emulation mode underscores that, in some cases, external influences can come without much external effort because while external actors may self-consciously attempt to promote their own ideas to post-communist reformers, they may simply be passive exemplars whom these reformers choose to emulate.

The evidence in support of the elite factors can be traced throughout the entire process of military transformation. Albeit MAP was designed by Brussels, the burden of its implementation rested exclusively on the political elites of the aspirant countries. At the same time, however, the evidence from the process of military transformation in Eastern Europe indicates that it is incorrect to assume a uniform mode of behavior among the political elites in all the aspirant countries, i.e. that all of them unquestionably embrace the emulation approach.

Immediately after the admission of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland into NATO, it became clear that most of the countries from Central and Eastern Europe which submitted their applications for NATO membership before or around 1997 were, in fact, not prepared to join the Alliance. There were various sources that contributed to their lack of preparedness such as the slow path of reforms that was combined with internal resistance to transformation and lack of a consistent monitoring and implementation system on the part of NATO in the early years of PfP. This trend was particularly noticeable in the cases of Slovakia and Bulgaria. Prior to 1996 and 1997, the political elites in these countries were not involved in an emulation process, which had a very
negative impact on their overall prospect for NATO membership. It was not until new political elites in Sofia and Bratislava took over power in the second half of the 1990s that these two countries embarked on a process of military transformation. In the next section, I will briefly discuss how these countries advanced their military reforms and how this is related to the overall path of emulation discussed by Wade Jacoby.

After the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the Czech and Slovak officials agreed to divide military assets in a two to one ratio. Since most of the military facilities remained in the territory of the Czech Republic, the Slovaks experienced insufficient military infrastructure and some of the resources that they inherited from Czechoslovakia (tanks and artillery, for example) were left directly on the field. Despite marginal efforts to restructure their inefficient armed forces by establishing corpsuses and brigades, the actual reforms in Slovakia between 1993 and 1999 were very limited. The pace of military transformation accelerated after 1999 when Slovakia laid the institutional groundwork for implementation of the national MAP.\textsuperscript{86} More specifically these military reforms included reduction by half of the army’s personnel and training for officers. Furthermore, in 2001 the Slovak MOD underwent major reorganization and the country adopted important defense documents such as a National Security Strategy and a Military Strategy, as well as embarked on planning a complete abolition of the draft by 2006.\textsuperscript{87} Although actual accomplishments fell short of targets, the country proved it was committed to the MAP criteria and to joining NATO during the second post-Cold War wave of its expansion.

The Slovak political elite realized that in spite of the institutional resistance to transformation, the country “needed to conduct those reforms” and as the Slovak Deputy

\textsuperscript{86} Barany (2003), p. 77.  
\textsuperscript{87} Barany (2003), p. 77-9.
Head Mission to NATO in Brussels indicated “we always think that we did it because we had to do it anyway; not because we were required to do so.”\textsuperscript{88} While Slovakia was spending much less than 2 percent of its GDP on defense in the late 1990s, the country’s bid of membership and participation in MAP in the early 2000s increased its defense spending to around 1.7 – 1.9 percent; close to the 2 percent benchmark set by NATO. Furthermore, the Slovak political elite evolved in its perception of national security. Whereas in the early and mid-1990s Slovakia emphasized the significance of geography, after 1999 the focus became on strengthening the Slovak case for admission to NATO by improving the efficiency in the use of its military resources to develop as required by MAP allied capabilities. In 2006, Slovakia participated actively in Afghanistan and Iraq because the country “did not want to be perceived as a free-rider in the Transatlantic Community.”\textsuperscript{89}

Similar to Slovakia, prior to the inception of MAP, Bulgaria noticeably lagged behind the other CEE countries in terms of military reforms. Although the country joined PfP in 1994, by 1996 its political elite was deeply divided on the issue of NATO membership and after several rounds of discussions Sofia concluded that it did not want to pursue membership.\textsuperscript{90} Only after the change in government of February 1997 did Bulgaria formally announce aspirations toward NATO membership. Because of the reluctance to conduct substantial military reforms before 1997, Bulgaria’s political institutions and military were “largely unprepared for integration with the Alliance” and

\textsuperscript{88} Author’s personal interview with Deputy Head of the Slovak Permanent Delegation to NATO, NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium, January 16, 2006.
\textsuperscript{89} Author’s personal interview with Deputy Head of the Slovak Permanent Delegation to NATO, NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium, January 16, 2006.
the Bulgarian government and military officials ended up in a situation of “self-imposed isolation lacking an understanding of how far behind they are, as well as what they need to do.” The change of guard in Sofia in February 1997 caused by the social and economic crisis led to Bulgaria’s formal application for NATO membership. Due to its unreformed military and the late application submission, the country was not even mentioned in the final communiqué of the Madrid Summit as a potential invitee.

The actual military reform began in 1998 when Bulgaria conducted its first Strategic Defense Review together with the United States and Britain. Soon after that, the parliament adopted a new National Security Concept, a new Military Doctrine and the 2004 Plan designed for the implementation of these reforms. The 2004 Plan envisaged the reduction of the army from 100 thousand people to slightly more than 40 thousand to consist of Rapid Reaction Corps and two additional Corps. Upon the completion of the 2004 Plan, the government introduced a long-range strategy for the modernization of the armed forces until 2015. Since 1997 Bulgaria has been spending on average about 2.4 percent of its GDP for defense as a part of the commitment to modernization, which was one of the highest percentages among the applicant countries. Similar to Slovakia and Romania, Bulgaria has been lagging behind in its military transformation and modernization timeline with on average two to four years compared to the Visegrad

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92 While by 1997 most Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic reduced their armed forces by half Bulgaria had not even started the optimization of its armed forces. Furthermore, the country did not made effective use of U.S. programs aimed at improving interoperability, remained relatively inactive in international peacekeeping and its defense budget remained very limited. For further details see Jeffrey Simon (1998) and Zoltan Barany (2003).
93 Author’s Personal Interview with Dr. Velizar Shalamanov, former Deputy Minister of Defense, the George Marshall Center – Bulgaria, Sofia, Bulgaria, February 3, 2006.
nations. For example, while the Czech Republic fully professionalized its armed forces by 2006, Bulgaria plans to complete this process by 2008.\footnote{Author’s Personal Interviews with Jan Michal, Head of the Czech Permanent Delegation to NATO, NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Jan 24, 2006 and Dr. Velizar Shalamanov, former Deputy Minister of Defense, the George Marshall Center – Bulgaria, Sofia, Bulgaria, February 3, 2006.}

The evidence from the pace of Bulgaria and Slovakia’s path of military transformation confirmed that reformist political elites in this countries emulated military transformation, where in most of the cases they copied external modes of military transformation. Nonetheless, elite explanation does not seem to be inconsistent with other frameworks, such as structuralism. That is why it is hard to say whether the path of elite-driven military transformation in the new NATO allies in terms of voluntary and involuntary emulation can be attributed to systemic influence. In the case of Bulgaria, the reformist political elites emulated 2004 Plan based on external influence mostly from the United States but also by Britain. As a result, it seems hard to draw strict dividing lines between these two explanations.

**EVALUATION OF THE FOUR FRAMEWORKS**

Based on the presentation of the four theoretical frameworks and the empirical evidence, several major conclusions can be drawn about the conceptualization of alliance politics. First, sometimes it is hard to draw a strict line between the four groups of explanations. The case of elite and structural explanations illustrates this trend. In other occasions, however, certain approaches explain major processes, while others deal only with tangential aspects of NATO’s transformation. In the cases of organizational and bureaucratic politics, these frameworks render explanatory power only for secondary
phenomena or source of resistance or resilience to transformation, but do not address the 
core driving forces behind military transformation.

Second, a major problem with the elite theory of emulation is that it does not 
address the problem why reformist political are willing to emulate or copy modes of 
transformational behavior: do they do that purely voluntary, because they have no better 
idea how to conduct military transformation because they face external (i.e. systemic) 
pressure from the major actors in the system to follow a certain predetermined path of 
military reforms? While this paper does aim at analyzing these problems, it seems that 
often times elites are only agents that adjust their emulative behavior as a reaction to 
external pressure, whether from international organizations, individual states or whole 
entities of states. Rather than being primary driving forces or agents of organizational 
transformation, elites may often be used as tools for advancing a certain transformational 
agenda.

Third, as discussed earlier, the major problem with the bureaucratic theories is that 
they do not render persuasive explanation about the outcomes of alliance transformation. 
They can only explain resistance to certain trend lines. Therefore, the findings of this 
research are somewhat consistent with the conclusions of earlier criticisms of 
bureaucratic politics theories – namely that they can explain only tangential processes 
and marginal change.

Fourth, it seems that the structural explanation, especially the presence of the 
hegemon within NATO, can be a persuasive framework for studying alliance 
transformation. The pace of alliance transformation, nonetheless, indicates a very 
different logic from what the traditional strctrualist scholars like Waltz and
Mearsheimer would expect. The study implicitly indicated that the presence of a hegemon within NATO makes a difference in the path of military transformation because the hegemon promotes a more efficient use of the available military resources by the allies, which results in advancement of allied capabilities.

Fifth, this paper does not grapple explicitly with the club goods and concept of complementarities that I used in my previous research. Nonetheless, club goods framework indicates that alliances are important components of international politics and they can be valuable mechanisms to manage the distribution of power, especially in aberrant conditions of imbalance. While I do not embrace either neo-realist (defensive and offensive) or institutionalist approaches, it seems that the structure of international system plays an instrumental role in the management of international alliances. Such a proposition, however, does not suppose that smaller states are simply used as tools in the hands of the hegemon to push forward their transformational agenda and orchestrate IR. Instead, it means that the successful management of imbalance over an extended period of time requires the hegemon to use its power and influence in order to stimulate optimal outcomes. Such an optimization can only be managed through a careful cost-benefit analysis that involves the use of formal and informal diplomatic mechanisms. There is no doubt that the path of diplomacy takes a lot of time and efforts. The benefits, nonetheless, are immeasurably higher compared to other forms of unilateral diplomacy.