THE CONDITIONS SHAPING NATO’S FIFTH WAVE OF EXPANSION

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On March 29, 2004, seven new countries became a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which was the fifth, and the largest, round of enlargement in the history of the alliance.¹ With this step, the number of allies increased from nineteen to twenty six, including virtually all of the former Soviet allies in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. And it seems that this is not going to be the last round of enlargement, since “the Alliance will continue to display that openness and engagement, also after the next round of NATO enlargement.”² Currently, three more countries from the Western Balkans are waiting for an invitation from the allies to join the Pact.³ Actually, the opening of the alliance to the East began in 1991 with the Rome declaration, and continued in 1994 with the Partnership for Peace Program (PfP), which included practically all of the countries from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the former Soviet Union.⁴ Furthermore, in 1997 NATO-Russia Permanent Council and NATO-Ukraine Special Commission were established to regulate the relations between those countries and the organization. The same year, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic were the first countries from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) that were invited to become NATO members. In order to assist and prepare all the candidates that wish to join the Alliance on the different aspects of membership, Membership Action Plan (MAP) was launched in April 1999.⁵

¹ These countries are: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.
³ Currently Albania, Macedonia and Croatia are waiting for an invitation to become members.
⁴ Partnership for Peace focuses on defense related cooperation but goes beyond dialog and cooperation to forge a real partnership between each Partner country and NATO.
⁵ The nine NATO aspirants that have participated from the beginning in the MAP are Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Macedonia.
As an aftermath of these processes, an ongoing debate has focused on the future of the alliance and the efficiency of the last two rounds of enlargement. The main theoretical frameworks of international relations seem unable to offer a comprehensive and plausible model on the driving forces behind the alliance’s enlargement. Quite often, the fifth wave of big bang expansion with seven new members has been linked to the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. It was actually during President Bush’s first tour of Europe in mid-June 2001 when the idea for a broad eastern enlargement of NATO, namely "from the Baltic to the Black Sea" was launched.\footnote{See: Hendrickson, Ryan and Kristina Spohr Readman. “From the Baltic to the Black Sea: Bush's NATO enlargement,” White House Studies, Summer 2004.} A study of the Brookings Institute released in late 2001 indicated that “the case of enlargement is stronger than before” and it “will contribute to the process of integration … and promote the development of strong new allies in the war on terrorism” (Sloan, 2003: 199).

The current literature that analyzes the formation and management of alliances assumes a bipolar or multipolar international system with “only … great powers in such a system and predominantly defensive alliances” being the unit of analysis (Snyder, 1997: 5). However, IR literature lacks persuasive explanatory model for the expansion of alliances in an imbalanced system. The significance of some realist and liberal variables indicate that none of the major current theories is able to fully explain the dynamics under which NATO expands. Therefore, this project combines variables from offensive realism and democratic peace theory that indicated significance. However, democracy at a state-level is analyzed as an intervening variable that reflects at systemic level the replication of the political system of the hegemon by the new countries that join the
expanding alliance. The interaction of the three independent variables –
complementarities of military and latent power, as well as the replication of the political
system of the hegemon – has been influenced by the difference in the time period. That
is why under the same causal relationship, I expect a different outcome in Eastern and
Western Europe due to the effect of the intervening variable of time. Whereas in Western
Europe these conditions have been present for more than five decades, in Eastern Europe
the countries are trying to “buy into” the imbalanced system only since collapse of
communism in 1989.

CONTENDING THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS ON NATO ENLARGEMENT

The models used so far to explain the enlargement dynamics seem to underestimate
the effect of one or more variables stated above. Todd Sandler, for example, develops a
formal model of mutual defense game in order to explain this process. He analyzes
border lengths, the interior ally, the directional threat and strategic weapons and
deterrence. According to the model, the Baltic nations include “only a small inner border
with Poland and […] given the strong political opposition to their inclusion by Russia
[…] there is little or no gain for the current members from including them” (Sandler,
1999: 742). The model predicts that Slovakia, Slovenia and Austria are attractive
candidates, while Romania is an unlikely entrant since it does not offer cost-savings from
mutual defense.

Glenn Snyder studies different historical cases of alliances’ politics and proposes a
game theory model, which explains the formation and management of the alliances. He
assumes a multipolar structure of international politics in which imbalance is only short-
lived. This is the main reason why his model is not applicable to current dynamic since
America is the “lonely superpower” in the last fifteen years. Despite the fact that they largely apply formal and quantitative methods, these two models fail to explain and predict successfully the driving forces behind NATO expansion. Alternatively, I would like to explore the arguments and test the explanations that the core theories of international relations, such as defensive and offensive realism and liberalism, propose with regard the ongoing processes in the North Atlantic Area.

**Defensive Realism**

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 alliance.\(^7\) This framework expects 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” (Waltz, 1993: 75). 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” (75). Since NATO was created to balance against the Soviet Union and the latter is already gone, Kenneth Waltz expects that the US will withdraw from Europe and NATO will become obsolete. He concludes:

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” (76).

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\(^7\) Some of the defensive realists (Jervis, 2003) change the unit of analysis, thus focusing on threat rather than power as a unit of analysis. Threat is operationalized as the combination of: intent, offensive military capability, general power, and geographical proximity.
His skepticism about NATO is predetermined by the structure of the international system. An alliance can only sustain if the structure of international politics entails the presence of threat that “can provide sufficient glue to hold the alliance together”, similar to the Soviet Union to balance against (Duffield, 2001: 97).

**Offensive Realism**

Unlike defensive realism, offensive realists emphasize the distinction between the great powers and the other actors in an anarchical international system. The criteria for defining a 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 (Mearsheimer 2001: 30). Power is the key independent variable that has been analyzed. It is composed of two components -- potential and actual 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” (Mearsheimer, 2001: p. 43). 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” (43).

Thus, offensive realists overcome the status quo bias of defensive realism and argue that the post-Cold War world NATO “was essentially an American tool for managing power in the face of the Soviet threat” (Mearsheimer, 1994: 14). With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the expectation is that NATO must reconstitute itself on the basis of the new distribution of power (14). Therefore, the enlargement of NATO is seen as an aspiration of the US as a great power to increase its relative power as a regional hegemon in the North Atlantic area. As a result, Mearsheimer expects that NATO should continue
to enlarge because America will persist to maximize its power by taking new countries in the alliance.\(^8\)

**Wilsonian Idealism and Neoliberal Institutionalism**

Liberal theory assumes that (a) states are rational egoists that operate in a world of anarchy and (b) cooperation is possible if states have significant common interests. Therefore, “when states can jointly benefit from cooperation … [we] expect governments to attempt to construct such institutions.

The idea of the institutions as guarantee for peace and security is not novel. It dates back to Wilsonian idealism, although mainstream institutionalists deny this intellectual connection (Martin, 1995: 39). Institutions can provide information, reduce transaction costs, make commitments more credible, establish focal points for coordination, and in general facilitate the operation of reciprocity” (Marin, 1995: 42). Institutionalists challenge the realist assumption that relative gains dominate over absolute, and support the argument that “their importance is conditional on factors, such as the number of major actors in the system and whether military advantages favor offense or defense.” In this framework, NATO is analyzed as a regional security regime which establishes stable norms and rules that lead to “stability in levels of conventional forces within the regime that cannot be explained by structural theories” (44-9).

Both Wilsonian idealism and neoliberal institutionalism approach international structures like UN or an enlarged NATO are seen as instruments taking action against any aggressor on the part of the whole international community. In this respect,

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\(^8\) The analysis of offensive realism focuses on John Mearsheimer’s 2001 book “The Tragedy of the Great Power Politics” and does not take into account his earlier writings where he expresses pessimistic views on NATO expansion.
liberalism and Wilsonian idealism share similar expectations that transatlantic partners come together and cooperate in expanding NATO in order to guarantee collective security.

Celeste Wallander’s analysis on NATO assumes an institutionalist approach where “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)” (Wallander, 2000: 707).

**Democratic Peace Theory**

Another group of political scientists research democratic governance as an independent variable that shapes international relations. The foundation of the democratic peace theory (DPT) is based on the available empirical data that no two liberal democracies have ever gone to war with each other. For Michael Doyle “even though liberal states have become involved in numerous wars with nonliberal states, constitutionally secure liberal states have yet to engage in war with one another” (Doyle; 1986: 97). It is not that such a war is impossible, but rather “preliminary evidence does appear to indicate that there exists a significant predisposition against warfare between liberal states” (97). Thus, realism, which provides a plausible explanation of general insecurity of states, offers little guidance in explaining the pacification of the liberal world. In order to explain this theorem, DPT focuses on domestic variables such as constitutional law, republican representation and separation of powers. Therefore, the distribution of foreign policy decision-making authority among multiple bodies and officials indicates that any step toward armed conflict among those countries would be
much slower and cumbersome. As a result, “liberal states do exercise peaceful restraints and a separate peace exists among them. And this peace provides a solid foundation for the United States’ crucial alliances with the liberal powers, e.g. North Atlantic Treaty Organization…” (Doyle, 1986: 1156).

**THE EXPECTATIONS ON THE ENLARGEMENT: FROM SKEPTICISM TO ARDENT SUPPORT**

NATO researchers like Sloan (2003), de Wijk (1997), Gordon (1997), Barry (1996) discuss the enlargement and transformational dimensions as interconnected processes. Most of the arguments could be associated with one of the two major debates in international relations: (a) realist versus Wilsonian or liberal understanding of international politics or (b) structural (defensive) positionalist view of international relation as opposed to offensive power-maximization.

*Collective Security or Collective Defense*

The debate on collective defense and collective security has been translated to the enlargement dynamics. Both of these concepts assume that “security is indivisible.” Collective security, as exemplified by Kant and Wilson, involves a cooperative pact against war in which all states would be obliged to act against an aggressor. Collective defense pact, on the other hand, binds together an alliance of states to deter, and if necessary defend, against one or more external threats (Yost, 1996:5-9). Therefore, collective security “is directed towards no predetermined (or clearly defined enemy), nor can it operate on the basis of predetermined coalition” (Williams and Jones, 2001: 88). Its universality is opposed to the traditional realist concept of the balance of power, 

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9 Sloan, for example, distinguishes between “old NATO” in terms of sixteen members focused primarily on Article 5 commitments to assist the fellow members under attack, and the “new NATO” that includes new members and has to deal with “new security challenges, including peace operations.”
where collective defense through alliances have always played a crucial role. But collective defense is “somewhat easier to achieve” than collective security, since the former is nearer to being an absolute quantity that the latter. Also, attempts to achieve collective security can easily fragment an alliance (91). In fact, the ideas of collective security have been developed by the post-World War I “idealists” as an alternative to the dominating realist concepts of world politics.

Historically, the emergence of the alliance on the world stage in 1949 was a reflection of the balance-of-power politics as a response to the Soviet threat. Therefore, collective defense was NATO’s core purpose at its inception. Although the transformation of the alliance has not attempted “to establish full-fledged collective security system of the Kantian or Wilsonian type;” in the post-Cold War years it “has championed ideas from collective security tradition” (Yost, 1996: 21). An example of it is the transparency regarding the military capability, the PfP and the IFOR and SFOR missions in Bosnia, and the missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan (26).

**Liberalist View**

Other authors see the enlargement of the North Atlantic Pact as an institutionally driven westernization of CEE countries whose “political elites … have staked their legitimacy on their countries’ gradual but steady adherence to the West” (Allin, 1997: 151). Therefore, for Allin the costs of not expanding the alliance would exceed the costs of doing so. Zoltan Barany tests the hypothesis that NATO enlargement will “strengthen democracy about future threats” as opposed to the assertion that the organization is “in the security business, not in the democratization business” and the consolidation of democracy in these countries has nothing to do with the enlargement (Barany, 2003).
In the analysis of NATO’s post-Cold War transformation, Bob de Wijk introduces two causal variables: (a) mutual interests, defined in terms of internal and external security and including peaceful and stable relations inside and outside the treaty area; and (b) the conditions for cooperative security that deal with anticipation of potential conflicts and their prevention. His model considers the expanded and transformed alliance as a military organization of OSCE that “can expressly link its new mission of conflict prevention and conflict control to an initiative to give greater subsistence to the concept of cooperative security within the OSCE” (De Wijk, 1997: 142-4)

A Preponderant View: Costs, Commitments and the Russia Factor

A massive part of literature on the rationale behind enlarging NATO focuses on the cost and consequences for the security commitments after the enlargement as well as its effect on the major international actors, such as the United States, Russia, the European Union and the rest of the region (Barany, 2003; Brown 1997). The estimation of enlargement varies among different scholars: whereas some argue that expansion reduces the cost of security; others like Carpenter and Conory are skeptical and conclude that “the enlargement process is certain to be expensive” (Carpenter and Conory, 1998). Another concern is the readiness to undertake security commitments because the alliance “could discover by extending its realm eastward it had accepted security obligations that its members could not or would not honor, much as France and Britain when faced in 1938 with possibly having to honor their pledges to Czechoslovakia (Rearden, 1995: 87).

In the same way, NATO’s trip eastward produced a heated debate with regard to the capacity to halt Russia’s imperial ambitions in Eastern Europe and to antagonize it, thus encouraging anti-Western political forces there. The involvement of the Pact into a
region of unsettled ethnic disputes, and higher priority of expanding EU to NATO, are seen as other setbacks (Barany, 2003: 10-22). In this case NATO would have to face a horrific dilemma: either “to renege to its new allies on treaty obligations or to risk war with a nuclear armed great power,” such as Russia (Carpenter and Conory, 1998: 3).

Ultimately, authors like Sean Kay who studied the fourth wave of the alliance’s eastern enlargement, conclude that NATO enlargement originated from a diverse group of policy objectives – “grand strategy, the spread of stability, building of democracy and a western-oriented community of states in Europe, and collective security” (Kay, 1999: 149-50).

**Testing Different Propositions**

*The Complementarities*

A brief snapshot of the conditions for the enlargement outlined in 1995 indicates that two of the five criteria require that the applicant countries resolve the disputes with neighboring countries and commit to solving international disputes peacefully. They also need to contribute militarily to the alliance and be willing to take steps to achieve interoperability with other alliance members (Szayna, 2001).\(^\text{10}\) Therefore, there should be complementarities between the accession of the new members and the enhancement of the security within the alliance area.

The concept of complementarities is developed in economic literature where two goods are considered to be complementary if “the presence (or efficiency) of one increases the returns from (or efficiency) of the other” (Hall and Soskice, 2001). Political

\(^{10}\) It should be noted that these conditions were not mandatory to the extent of the Copenhagen criteria for the European Union membership were because the final assessment was based to a considerable degree on a political decision.
scientists apply complementarities to the institutions of the political economy in order to reinforce the differences between the liberal and coordinated market economies. Also, from multigood monopoly theory we know if two goods are complementary then lowering the price of one good stimulates the demand for the other, such as the example of cameras and films (Kreps, 1990: 305). When this concept is applied to NATO enlargement dynamics, I assume that the Pact establishes a regional monopoly over security in the Atlantic area. For the purposes of this study, security is regarded as “preserving, against external military attack.” and understood in political and physical dimension, rather than economic and environmental ones (Snyder, 1997: 5). Translated to international security, the complementarities should indicate relationship between the price of security in the enlarged alliance and the attractiveness of each specific country that reflects the demand for enlargement. Therefore, the demand for each new member is driven by the decrease of the price of security in the North Atlantic Area. Offensive realism defines survival as the main security goal which is determined by power maximization. In this framework, the decrease of the price of security (and therefore, the increase of security and survival) is defined by the aggregation of power as a result of enlargement. For John J. Mearsheimer, the constituent elements of power are latent power (determined by socio-economic ingredients) and military power (determined by the size and strength of the a state’s army and its supporting air and naval forces) (Mearsheimer, 2001:55-6).

The relationship between power and attractiveness has been tested through correlation for the nine countries that participated in MAP from its inception in 1999. I focus only on those nine cases because they underwent significant military
transformation under the plan in order to be compatible with the alliance’s military and political structures. If other cases are included, however, it would be very hard to operationalize their assessment under the same membership and transformational criteria and that could ultimately lead to flawed conclusions.

In this case, latent power is operationalized as a coefficient of the economic preparedness of the MAP states to meet the established by the alliance membership criteria. Military power on the other hand, is quantified as a sum of the coefficients for armed forces and military preparedness to meet these criteria. The attractiveness of the individual candidates is quantified by a coefficient, assessing the strategic position and the armed forces.\textsuperscript{11} Therefore, if these two variables interact on the principle of complementarities, we should expect a positive correlation between the coefficients of power and strategic attractiveness. The test confirms this expectation. A careful analysis of the data indicates that Estonia is the only outlier whose attractiveness is lower than its power due to much higher economic potential in the country. However, the analysis of individual cases indicates that if the decision for the enlargement with seven new members was taken only on the grounds of this model, the countries with the lowest strategic attractiveness that should have remained outside the enlargement process are Latvia and Lithuania. The specificity of the “complementarities” model is applied to the particular dynamics of imbalanced system, where the hegemon has unmatched military power and the quest for new allies cannot contribute for the aggregation of new military power, but rather for specific components of the application of this power such as key

geographic location and access to resources that the hegemon would otherwise will not be able to acquire. Therefore, the concept of complementarities seems insufficient explanatory model on NATO expansion and it is necessary to test alternative causal relationships.

[Figure 1 and Table 1 about here]

The Democratic Governance Explanation

In addition, the conditions for alliance’s enlargement require: (a) functioning democratic political system (including free and fair elections and respect for individual liberty and the rule of law) and a market economy; (b) democratic-style civil-military relations; and (c) treatment of minority populations in accordance with OSCE guidelines. The first condition corresponds with the “negative freedoms” and democratic participation, and the second reflects “positive freedoms,” such as economic and social rights. The third, however, reinforces a specific element of political freedoms, referring to minority rights that could entail a long-term conflict potential (Doyle, 2003: 96). Operationally, this threefold set of rights is measured by the Freedom in the World survey which provides an annual evaluation of the state of global freedom. Freedom is assessed by two broad categories: political rights and civil liberties. Political rights enable people to participate freely in the political process. They include the right to vote and compete for public office, and to elect representatives who have a decisive vote on public policies. Civil liberties refer to the freedom to develop opinions, institutions, and

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12 Currently the US military spending surged during 2003, reaching $400 billion paid for missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and the war on terror which is nearly half of the $ 956 billion world military spending (Source: AP and SIPRI).

personal autonomy without interference from the state. The methodology of the survey established basic standards drawn from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.\(^{14}\) Although it may under-represent some of the “positive freedoms,” this survey relatively accurately operationalizes the concept of liberal and democratic governance.

In order to understand whether democratic governance is one of the conditions to admit new members, the OSCE countries were designated into four groups according to the relationships they maintain with the Pact (1) the nineteen NATO members; (2) the seven newly admitted countries; (3) the four EU countries that are not a part of NATO (Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden)\(^{15}\); and (4) a group of current MAP and selected PfP participants that are or maybe may be aspiring NATO membership (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Moldova, Georgia).\(^{16}\) The differences of means test indicates that the means for the freedom coefficients do not differ significantly among the first three groups of countries, but differ between them and the fourth group (PfP and the three current MAP countries). Therefore, the enlargement can be explained with a presence of democratic sufficiency.\(^{17}\)

[Table 2 about here]

The data available indicate that, similarly to the grading in college, there is a benchmark of at least sixty percent minimum score on “Democracy 101” that a country

\(^{14}\) For further information on the methodology of the survey see: [http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/methodology.htm](http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/methodology.htm), (accessed on 10/06/04).

\(^{15}\) The only other non-NATO Western European country is Switzerland. Unlike the other four countries, the Swiss neutrality is formally agreed upon at the Congress of Vienna (1815) and duly recognized by all European nations ever since.

\(^{16}\) The three current MAP countries are also included in this group: Albania, Croatia and Macedonia.

\(^{17}\) The total raw points of the Freedom Ratings in each checklist correspond to a rating of 1 to 7, where 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free. The individual cases for each of the countries in the four groups are taken from the ratings for the last seven years (1997 through 2003).
can pass the test and be invited to join the alliance, which rule, however, does not apply to the overall assessment ratings.\textsuperscript{18} There are only two of the former MAP countries that persistently performed bad over the last decade and ultimately failed on this exam: Albania and Macedonia.\textsuperscript{19} This explains why despite of their attractiveness and power, they remained outside the second wave of NATO’s enlargement

[Figures 2 and 3 about here]

The insufficiency of democratic governance is clearly indicative in the case of Macedonia which is the only country whose freedom ratings for 2002 deteriorated below the average for its entire transition period. The poor records can be explained with the tense ethnic relations between the Slavic majority and the large Albanian minority with regard to the use of minority languages and participation of minority representatives at the different levels of local and administrative governance. By 2000, Albanian guerrillas who had participated in the Kosovo conflict were operating in areas with a high concentration of Albanian population. Their activity involved attacks against Macedonian-government police and military units which led the country to the verge of civil war in the spring and summer of 2001. Among the guerrillas' political demands were changes to the Macedonian constitution, greater use of the Albanian language in official institutions, and an increase in the number of Albanians in the civil services. Later the same year, a political compromise was achieved with the signature of the

\textsuperscript{18} The Freedom House rankings have been adjusted to a scale 0 to 10, where the 0 is the lowest and 10 is the highest possible score. In this way, it is possible to compare these coefficients with the assessment ratings of the individual countries.

\textsuperscript{19} The Freedom House ratings are adjusted to a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 represents the least free and 10 the most. In this way, they are comparable to the power and attractiveness variables because are measured in the same scale.
“Ohrid Agreement.” The purpose was to implement the model of a genuine consensual democracy in the country. The minorities were guaranteed proportional representation and a quasi-veto over sensitive issues, such as the choice of judges, laws on local government, culture and the use of languages. Nonetheless, despite the efforts of the international community (including NATO) the tense ethnic relations continued to persist.

Similarly, Albania experienced serious domestic disturbances during 1997. Continuing poverty, corruption and the collapse of several pyramid investment schemes weakened the government and resulted in serious civil unrest. In the years after 1997, government has been unable to reimpose effective control over parts of the country’s territory which remained under the control of the opposition or criminal organizations. The parliamentary elections since 1997 have been highly contested, and international monitoring groups admitted that there were "serious flaws" in the election process. But in the last two years the situation in the country has gradually, but notably, improved and its rating now is above the sufficient value.

Clearly, the insufficiency of liberal government in these countries is the explanation why they were not invited in the first wave of enlargement, whereas in the cases of Latvia and Lithuania, there was sufficient liberal democracy which overrode their low attractiveness.

Liberal democratic explanation, however, does not help us understand why in countries, such as Austria, Sweden and Finland, which are much more prepared and meet power and DPT criteria, the NATO enlargement is not an issue. Neoliberal institutionalism would argue that it is due to the role of the numerous interlocking
international institutions in Europe in the last five decades that these countries do not feel insecure. Actually, Austria, Sweden and Finland joined the EU during the first post-Cold war enlargement in 1995. The only common regional institution that these three countries shared with the rest of Western Europe during the Cold War was the Council of Europe. Since 1976 they also have participated in the pan-European CSCE/OSCE which also included the former socialist countries, the US and Canada.

[Table 3 about here]

An Enabling View – the US hegemony in Europe

Democratic governance explanation seems consistent with scholars, such as John Ikenberry who developed a model for the stability and expansiveness of the post-Cold War hegemonic order based on the America’s “unmatched economic and military power today” (Ikenberry, 1999: 125). In addition, he emphasizes the unique capability of the United States to engage in “strategic restraint, reassuring partners and facilitating cooperation.” In his view, the American hegemony is liberal, because it is built on the “constitution-like character of the institutions;” and institutions exhibit “increasing returns” character, which makes extremely difficult for the contenders to “compete against and replace the existing order and leader (125). Therefore, American power is embedded in American particularism that has given international organizations and law a system-wide legitimacy and sustainability. The major point of departure for this analytical framework is that, instead of focusing on a coherent single-level explanatory

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20 Before the EU accession these countries were members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The latter included the Western European non-EC/EU members during the Cold War, but now the organization seems to become obsolete with only Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Norway being members.
model, it offers a “mosaic” shifting between domestic and systemic variables. Therefore, for the purposes of the analysis of NATO expansion, I link the argument on the internal make up of the hegemon in an imbalanced system to the requirement for democratic governance.

*The Security Communities Explanation*

An alternative explanation is the concept of security communities that was introduced some forty years ago by Karl Deutsch. Thus, by combining security and community, states are revising the conventional meanings of security and power. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett argue:

> [S]ome states are revising the concept of power to include the ability of community to defend its values and expectations of proper behavior against an external threat… Thus, as the meaning and purpose of power begins to shift, so too, does the meaning and purpose of security. Whereas once security meant military security, now states are identifying “new” security issues that revolve around economic, environmental, and social welfare concerns and have ceased to concern themselves with military threats from others within the community (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 4).

Therefore, the conditions for cooperation change significantly if a country is a part of such a community. Powel suggests a valuable explanation. He directs the debate between realists and neoliberals over absolute versus relative gains, and concludes that Waltz’s characterization of the system’s political structure “does not account for the variation in the feasibility of cooperation” (Powell, 1993: 229). According to his model, similarly to the expectations of realists, “cooperation collapses when the use of force is at issue.” However, “if the cost of war is sufficiently high that the use of force is no longer at issue, then cooperation becomes possible,” i.e. the neoliberalist expectation. The explanation for the absence of cooperation “lies in the different set of constraints that
define what the states can do in the absence of anarchy” (226-7). Because of anarchy, the systemic constraints allow the state to exploit its relative gains “to the disadvantage of other states” without having an overarching authority to ensure that this would not happen. (227).

Among other variables, the community where the use of force is not an issue has intensive interaction and reciprocity among its members, which expresses their long-term interest. But this community is not an extension of an international institution since it can exist without being institutionalized or in the absence of well-developed strategic ties and formal alliances. As a result of which, the different communities establish different mechanisms to handle and regulate the conflict within the group. In addition, the conditions under which the state is viewed as a part of the community depend on its ability to abide by the normative structure of the region. That is why states like Austria, Sweden and Finland have well developed formal and informal ties with the rest of Western Europe, including but not exclusively to the seamless web of institutions (the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE) and do not need to join the North Atlantic alliance.

Adler and Barnett indicate that the establishment and development of such a community is dependent upon two conditions: (a) structural variables or precipitating conditions; and (b) process variables. Undoubtedly, the political and military criteria on the enlargement, of which DPT is an integral part, underlie the structural variables that need to develop over a certain period of time until the phase of establishing such a community is reached.
Similar to Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, I assume “by marrying security and community, moreover, states are revising the conventional meanings of … power” (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 4). However, I do not accept their anti-foundationalist ontology that rejects objective reality and focuses on “values, norms and symbols that provide a social identity” (3). Instead, I argue that it is necessary to revise the base assumption that preponderance is the only dynamics of international system and assume the existence of alternative, “buying-in” dynamics that has not been researched by realism so far.

**PROSPECTS FOR NATO ENLARGEMENT AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ALLIANCE**

The perspective for continuing to enlarge the alliance is directed toward areas with higher level of conflict intensity, such as CEE and the Former Soviet Union where the force becomes obsolete over time. Geographically, the next rounds of enlargement are expected to follow the territorial boundaries of the OSCE, without, however, being driven by the presence of this particular institution. In the short run, we should expect that the three current MAP countries would join NATO, since with their geographical location and attractiveness they seem to be important partners in a Southeastern Europe.

Croatia seems to be the most promising of the three candidates, since “membership in NATO remains one of the [country's] top two priorities and [it] will work closely with all aspirants, as … Croatia share[s] a common vision of NATO membership.” However, the country’s largest problem is that its political elite remains seriously divided over disagreements as to how to cooperate with the tribunal in The Hague. The refusal to turn over former state officials indicted for war crimes and former Croatian state officials convicted for a massacre of Serbian civilians during the war of independence,

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significantly undercut the credibility for Croatia’s democracy. In the last two years, nonetheless, the freedom rating recorded a significant improvement. Since Albania, Macedonia and Croatia share similar characteristics, and are a part of the part of the “new community” architecture, it is most likely the three MAP countries will join the pact together.\textsuperscript{22}

Among the other PfP participants, it seems that Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia have some prospects to become a part of the alliance. Whereas Moldova is able to meet the democratic sufficiency requirement is Moldova, the country faces serious economic and identity problems.\textsuperscript{23} Of the four PfP participants, Azerbaijan has the highest democratic deficit also due to its unresolved conflict with neighboring Armenia, which eliminates any possibility for these two countries to join NATO because of the explicit enlargement conditions. Georgia has no better chances because of its domestic instability, tense relations with Russia and unsettled status of the break away republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.\textsuperscript{24} Bosnia and Serbia seem to be important potential allies in Southeastern Europe, but face similar problems of failed statehood, maintained through complicated provisions that balance between the interests of the different constituent units of these countries. Russia and Ukraine have a different level of relations with the pact under the 1997 founding documents. Also, as major actors they are a part of the great power politics, where “great powers obviously balance against states with

\textsuperscript{22} For further information see Freedom in the World, information on Croatia: http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/countryratings/croatia.htm, (accessed on 10/13/04).
\textsuperscript{23} Currently, Moldova’s national territory is divided and partly occupied by Russian troops and Soviet-era infrastructure continues to decay, http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/countryratings/moldova.htm, (accessed on 10/13/04).
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, See: Country and Related Territory Reports Information on Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia.
formidable military forces, because that offensive military capabilities is the tangible threat to their survival” (Mearshiemer, 2001: 45).

It would be incomplete to discuss NATO enlargement without taking into account the institutional transformation that it underwent during the last fifteen years of imbalanced international structure. Contrary to numerous expectations and predictions, the alliance continues to be a key player in international politics. Some researchers expect that the inception of the CFSP and CESDP will earmark the beginning of a new dynamics in which the European Union should begin to balance against the US regional hegemony. This hypothesis was in part confirmed with the latest transatlantic tensions over the second war in Iraq (2003), when France and Germany vehemently opposed the US policy. The model has several implications on the issue. First, NATO is still necessary because there is a huge democratic deficit close to its borders. The involvement of the organization in Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, and the low level of freedom in many of the PfP countries, indicate necessity of the Pact to guarantee security of its members. For this purpose, the allies “will have to ensure that there is a seamless continuum between all political and military aspects of NATO’s inner- and outer-core missions and capabilities” (Sloan, 2003: 113).

Second, it was immediately after the terrorist attacks on the US on September, the 11-th, 2001 that the alliance evoked, for the first time of its history, the Article Five of the North Atlantic Treaty that each country “will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually or in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems
necessary, including the use of force to restore and maintain the security in the North Atlantic Area."^25

Third, in order to act as a single great power which is able to balance against the regional hegemon (i.e. the United States), the European Union needs to have an integrated decision making structure, command and substantial resources allocated for this transformation. Despite some progress over the last years such as the Rapid Reaction Forces, the CFSP High Representative and reforms on the decision-making mechanisms, there is little evidence that the EU will be able to act as a single great power in the near future, which was also verified by the split among the major European countries on the issue of Iraq.

Fourth, if a community where force is not at stake matters, then the US should be a part of the community. This model assumes that it is because of the US hegemony that this community has capacity to persist. The dynamics in Western Europe after the end of World War II and indicates evidence for a specific type of hegemony, where not preponderance, but enabling power dominates international politics and states aspire to buy into the system created by the hegemon. As a result, international relations operate in a completely different dynamics than the one that has already been investigated in the literature.^26

Last, but not least, there is a lag between the admission of new members and appearance of pacific conditions and a certain time period is required during which the interaction of process variables will lead to a formation of such a community. As a

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^26 The distinction of two types of hegemons – preponderant and pervasive – should be credited to Professor Richard J Harknett, Research Seminar in International Relations, University of Cincinnati, Spring 2004.
result, Europe needs time to “digest” the new members before attempting to balance solely against any other great power.

**Caveats of the Model and Prospects for Further Research**

This research does not take into account the effect of the diplomatic lobbying as a collective effort from the countries aspiring membership through the so-called “Vilnius group” that may be a key causal variables driving the expansion of the North Atlantic alliance. Further research on the effect of diplomatic lobbying may also contribute toward better understanding of the asymmetric distribution of diplomatic capacity in an imbalanced international system and its role in transforming alliances.

Among the biggest caveats of the quantitative part is the insufficient number of cases to test the relationship between demand for individual countries and decreasing price of security. The research is further complicated by the inability to quantify other cases from previous enlargements or countries outside the North Atlantic community to test the validity of this relationship. Another problem is that the complementarities explanation relies heavily on indicators that have been introduced by the RAND corporation study and limited only to the nine cases. This could be overcome by collecting data for the countries that have not been covered by the study in order and testing again the hypothesis.

One of the methodological approaches through which I plan to further test my model on the dynamics of NATO expansion is through an elite survey in the United States, as well as in Western and Eastern Europe. The rationale behind is to capture how the conditions for sustainability of the unipolar system have developed differently in Eastern and Western Europe, more specifically how the effect of time has shaped
different dynamics in different parts of Europe. In addition, this survey should also indicate evidence for complementarities of economic and military power and the significance of democratic governance as a replication of the political system of the hegemon. Surveying the elites in the United States should reflect the hegemon’s perceptions of pervasiveness, the elites in Western Europe – the structural conditions for enabling dynamics that have existed there after World War II and the those in Eastern Europe -- the perceptions of these countries that are striving to buy into the enabling power of the US hegemony.

CONCLUSION

The initial data confirmed the hypothesis that the dynamics of NATO expansion is based on three pillars. First of all, there is a necessity for democratic governance, which includes political freedom, as well as overall political criteria for membership. Once the countries are able to successfully pass this test, there should be complementarities between their attractiveness and their contributions to the overall power aggregation, specifically geographic location and capacity to project hegemon’s power. Ultimately, the logic of the enlargement expects that these members will form a community where conflict is no longer an issue. Nonetheless, further data need to be collected in order to study the effect complementarities and the conditions for security community in Europe. For the purposes of a broader theoretical analysis, it is also necessary to research democracy as a domestic variable in relationship to the political system of the hegemon in an imbalanced distribution of power.
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Table 1. Influence on Attractiveness for the Nine MAP countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power defined by J. Mearsheimer for the nine MAP countries</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.43</td>
<td>1.895</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
<td>.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-statistic</td>
<td>14.717*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .01 level.
Table 2. Difference among Means of the Freedom Ratings of the Four Groups: the 19 NATO countries, the seven new members, the non-NATO western countries and selected participants in the PfP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeric Groups of Countries</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Standard error (+)</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NATO (19) and Non-NATO Western Countries</td>
<td>.2233</td>
<td>.161</td>
<td>.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO (19) and The 7 New Members</td>
<td>-.2175</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATO (19) and Current MAP plus Selected PfP countries</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.88</strong>*</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td><strong>.000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-NATO Western Countries and The 7 New Members</td>
<td>-.4408</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-NATO Western Countries and Current MAP plus Selected PfP countries</strong></td>
<td><strong>-3.106</strong>*</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td><strong>.000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 7 New Members and Current MAP plus Selected PfP countries</td>
<td><strong>-2.665</strong>*</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td><strong>.000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at the .01 level.
### Table 3. Average Freedom Ratings (1992-2002) and Overall Attractiveness for the Four Non-NATO Western Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-NATO Western Country</th>
<th>Average Freedom Ratings (1992-2002)</th>
<th>Overall Attractiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>High (10.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>Medium-high (7.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>High (8.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Correlation between Power and Attractiveness for the Seven New NATO Members

The numeric values are: 1-Albania, 2-Bulgaria, 3-Estonia, 4-Latvia, 5-Lithuania, 6-Macedonia, 7-Romania, 8-Slovakia, 9-Slovenia.
Figure 2. Average Freedom Rating and Overall Assessment Ratings for the Nine MAP Countries Preceding the Enlargement
Figure 3. Freedom Ratings (1992-2002) for the Nine MAP Countries
Figure 4. Average Freedom Rating (1992-2002) and Freedom Ratings for 2002 for Current MAP and Selected PfP countries, Serbia and Bosnia.