NATO, RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINE CRISIS

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Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree

Master of Arts

in the Department of Political Science,

Indiana University

October 2016

Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, Indiana University, in partial

fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Scott Pegg, Dr. Tijen Demirel-Pegg and Professor Jasper Sumner, for their support, advice and dedication. Special thanks to Dr. Scott Pegg for his guidance and constant support throughout both my undergraduate and graduate studies. I would also like to thank my parents for supporting me in my academic pursuits.

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This paper seeks to answer the theoretical question: Do international organizations (IOs) bring peace and stability to international relations? The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) serves as a case study which can help answer this query. Initially, it is important to explore what realist and liberal scholars broadly argue on the matter of IOs, peace and stability. NATO as an organization is then examined, followed by the case study of the role it played in the Ukraine crisis.

Many international organizations (IOs) exist today which deal with a wide variety of issues. The League of Nations, though it failed to fulfill its mandate of maintaining worldwide peace, can be considered the first modern international organization and served as the model for its successor, the United Nations. Realists—who argue that states are the principal actor in international relations (IR) and that they are self-interested and mainly concerned with security and power—look upon IOs skeptically. Liberals, though, believe in cooperation among states and promote the proliferation of international organizations, extolling their virtues.

The heated debate between these two ideologies is evident in the case of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) eastward expansion. NATO was originally designed to curb the Soviet threat and protect Western Europe from communist expansion. When the Cold War ended and NATO's original mandate had therefore expired, liberals championed the continued existence and expansion of the organization. Realists, on the other hand, warned of negative repercussions, as they foresaw that eastward expansion of the alliance would be perceived as a threat by Russia.

The 2014 Ukraine crisis provides a good case study which can help determine whether liberals or realists were right. Liberals have claimed that Russian aggression in the region justifies NATO expansion. Realists, however, have argued that it is the very fact of actual and prospective NATO expansion which has caused this aggression in the first place.

Scott Pegg, Ph. D., Chair

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Chapter I - Realists and Liberals on International Organizations

Introduction

Although globalization is a historical trend that is centuries old, the proliferation of international organizations (IOs) across the globe is rather recent. The horror wreaked upon the globe by the Second World War led to a strong and prevalent desire for peace among nations, which led, among other things, to the creation of the United Nations (UN), the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), World Bank, and many other such organizations. The numerous international organizations today focus on matters as diverse as trade, human rights, defense, energy, health, aviation, agriculture and pretty much any topic one could think of. IOs have been at the center of heated debate between two major currents of thought in international relations: realism and liberalism.

Realists argue that states, which are the principal actors in international relations, are self-interested and concerned mainly with power and security, as they operate in an anarchic world, which is to say there is no world government, no international '9-1-1'. They therefore advocate states use prudence and restraint. Liberals, on the other hand, have a generally more optimistic view of human nature, which they argue is fundamentally good. They believe that, through international cooperation, global progress, peace and stability are possible. While liberals have championed the proliferation of IOs, realists have been far more skeptical of the benefits they might bring about.

This debate is significant in the realm of policymaking, as those Western leaders in power often follow liberal doctrine and support the proliferation and expansion of IOs.

The stabilizing function of these institutions should not be taken for granted, however. The case of NATO expansion can help indicate whether or not IOs bring peace, democratization and stability to world politics and inter-state relations. More specifically, the recent Ukraine crisis of 2014 is a telling case study of the risks expansion sometimes entails, which ought to encourage policymakers to think carefully before opting for liberal policies.

A Brief History of International Organizations

First and foremost, it is important to note there are several types of international organizations. Some, such as Doctors Without Borders, are nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which can either be for profit or non-for-profit. This paper, however, concerns itself with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). According to José Alvarez these intergovernmental entities are "established by treaty, usually composed of permanent secretariats, plenary assemblies involving all member states, and executive organs with more limited participation" (Alvarez 2006, 324). The IGOs examined here are "a twentieth-century phenomenon having little in common with earlier forms of institutionalized cooperation" (Alvarez 2006, 324). The model for today's international organizations can be found in the infamous post-World War I League of Nations. Although IOs like the International Telegraphic Union (1865) and the Universal Postal Union (1874) had been tried earlier, "The decisive move to institutionalize what heretofore had been only fitful attempts to codify discrete areas of international law, jointly administer the global commons (such as with respect to certain rivers and postal services), and peacefully settle interstate disputes, came, of course, in 1919, when the Covenant establishing the League of Nations was concluded" (Alvarez 2006, 324). The

League of Nations was "the world's first multipurpose intergovernmental organization" and it engaged in "a wider definition of security that had emerged in state policy during and immediately after the First World War" (Clavin 2014, 265-66). During the First World War, certain "developments brought into being an incipient international bureaucracy that would be invoked by the League of Nations as part of efforts to safeguard a liberal, capitalist world order" (Clavin 2014, 266). Economics were even crucial to the formation of liberalism as an ideology that justified the creation of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs). The task, in the immediate aftermath of the Great War "was to moralise the liberal economy (and indeed international relations) by fostering, in the words of Jeanne Morefield, 'a deeper appreciation among citizens of the spiritual bonds that connected them to the social whole'" (Wilson 2011, 894). From the very start, then, economic interdependency was deemed central to successful intergovernmental cooperation.

The League of Nations' efforts to confront the Austrian famine and economic crisis reflect the importance of also having common backgrounds, cultures, histories or governments for successful intergovernmental cooperation. Indeed, Western concerns regarding the Austrian hunger crisis were "not expressed primarily in terms of the risks to political stability or human health…Instead, the anxiety about the fate of Vienna felt in the West reflected a set of assumptions that gave this capital city a prominent place in western values" (Clavin 2014, 269). This demonstrates an important, and some might argue persistent, problem with international cooperation efforts: states are more willing to help those whom they associate with and view as akin to themselves. The League,

contrary to what its mandate would have required, was very ethnocentric and racist. The organization's

> Intervention in Austria between 1919 and 1923 also reflected what were to become pronounced features of the approach of international organizations to intervention in the twentieth century. First, it demonstrated the importance of economic ideas and policy tools, as well as the power of economists and financiers, in shaping the work of international organizations…Second, the need for relief became associated with a malfunctioning national economy that could be restored to health by developing initiatives to support its productive capacity, its communication links and its financial stability (Clavin 2014, 278).

In fact, economic concerns still guide many political moves and some international organizations are solely dedicated to economics and finance. This is not surprising, given the important place economics hold in international relations and could further be considered necessary. The occasional problem, however, is that some organizations sometimes end up putting profit ahead of people, or large economies ahead of poor ones.

Part of the League's shortcomings came from the absence of the United States. Nonetheless, "although the United States did not join the League, its capital and its ideas were as important as those of the institution's predominant European powers in shaping the organization in its early years" (Clavin 2014, 278). American internationalists did try to "stay in touch with the League of Nations [and] to exploit the agency of the League of Nations" (Clavin 2014, 278). In the end, however, no matter their successes and efforts, the League was unable to prevent the rise of men like Mussolini and Hitler, allowing, in part through inaction, World War II to break out. Though a failure, as "the League of Nations' founding claim which promised to make the world anew and to guarantee peace" did not achieve success (Clavin 2014, 265), the League was at least an attempt to secure peace, and it highlighted the desire for cooperation among nations. It also yielded

a bleak record of its weaknesses and mistakes. The League would serve as a template for the future of international organizations.

Intergovernmental Organizations and Their Functions

Most individuals have only a vague idea of what intergovernmental organizations are and of what they do. Yet they are critical actors in international relations. Satoshi Machida establishes the importance of IGOs, stating that international institutions

> have exerted a significant degree of influence on international political processes. Having implemented many programmes, the United Nations is one of the most important IGOs in the post-World War II era (Mingst and Karns 2007; Ziring et al. 2005). Similarly, the Bretton Woods institutions—the IMF and the World Bank—as well as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)/[World Trade Organization] WTO, have contributed to creating a liberal economic order at the global level (Cohn 2008: 22–28; Cox 1986). The presence of these IGOs has been indispensable for creating international cooperation (Machida 2009, 373).

It is therefore important to establish how scholars define and conceptualize IGOs and related attributes. An IGO is "a formal, continuous structure established between [governmental] members from two or more sovereign states with the aim of pursuing the common interest of the membership" (Archer 2001: 33 quoted in Johnson 2011, 58). Intergovernmental "institutions can change a state's calculations about how to maximize gains" through the rules they institutionalize, which "can increase the number of transactions between particular states over time," lengthening the shadow of the future (Mearsheimer 1995, 18). These institutions can serve or fulfill several roles, including (1) enhancing cooperation by providing information—thereby reducing transaction costs and improving ease of monitoring—and facilitating reciprocity, both of which can serve states' self-interests by either reducing costs, improving benefits, or both; (2) constraining great powers, which explains why less powerful, developing countries might

wish to join certain organizations, like the International Monetary Fund; (3) tying states together around different issues through issue-linkage, creating greater interdependence; (4) making commitments more credible; and (5) sometimes promoting domestic reforms (Keohane and Martin 1995, 42; Mearsheimer 1995, 18; Milner 2005, 838). These are not true of all international organizations and IGOs may only serve some, all, or none of these purposes, but at least one of these traits can generally be found in IGOs.

<p align="center">*International Regimes According to Krasner*</p>

International regimes are an integral part of international relations, and in order to fully grasp the critiques of IOs, it is important to establish what these are as well. In Stephen D. Krasner's words, "Regimes can be defined as sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (Krasner 1983, 2). To take the global climate change regime as an example, the regime's norms include cutting global greenhouse gas emissions, developing new 'green' technology, slowing deforestation, utilizing and improving drought-tolerant farming, and other such initiatives. The Kyoto Protocol is perhaps the most well-known global climate change regime, which is an internationally binding agreement that commits its signatories to reduce their carbon emissions. Krasner also specifies that "Regimes must be understood as something more than temporary arrangements that change with every shift in power or interests…Similarly, regime-governed behavior must not be based solely on short-term calculations of interest" (Krasner 1982, 2-3). Although some will argue that "the regime concept [is] useless, if not misleading" (Krasner 1982, 6), it can be argued the more important queries are: To what extent and how do regimes matter? "In a world of

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sovereign states," writes Krasner, "the basic function of regimes is to coordinate state behavior to achieve desired outcomes in particular issue-areas" (Krasner 1982, 7). There is no clear-cut answer whether or not they are successful in doing so.

A More Detailed Look—What Constitutes a Formal IGO?

Thomas J. Volgy, Elizabeth Fausett, Keith A. Grant and Stuart Rodgers, in "Identifying Formal Intergovernmental Organizations," argue it is important to recognize formal intergovernmental organizations. These authors "develop a new database on IGOs, based on a definition focusing on three dimensions: formal organizations that demonstrate ongoing decisionmaking and oversight by states; evidence [of] bureaucratic organization; and demonstrate organizational autonomy" (Volgy, Fausett, Grand and Rodgers 2008, 837). Working under the assumption "that joining organizations is based both on opportunity and willingness," the authors examine both the number of IGOs which states are qualified to join and how many they are a part of (Volgy et al. 2008, 838). After examining existing definitions and empirical methods of distinguishing IGOs, the authors provide their own definition of "intergovernmental organizations as *entities created with sufficient organizational structure and autonomy to provide formal, ongoing, multilateral processes of decision-making between states, along with the capacity to execute the collective will of their members*" (Volgy et al. 2008, 839, italics in original). So how did they measure IGOs, how did they quantify their operationalized variables (decision-making and oversight, bureaucratic organization, autonomy)?

Volgy et al. establish several thresholds for organizations to qualify as formal IGOs. First and foremost, they "concur that the threshold for membership is one that consists of an IGO that contains three or more member states," second, they "require that

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the membership be composed overwhelmingly of states and governed by them without a veto by nonstate members," and their third threshold mandates that "state membership entail representation by individuals or groups acting on behalf of the state, as individuals who are either directly part of the central governmental machinery of a state, or are temporarily (albeit primarily) acting in that capacity" (Volgy et al. 2008, 840). Furthermore, the authors "require that collective decision-making and oversight be routinized: there are clear procedures governing the timing of meetings and decision-making, and members meet routinely to make decisions and to exercise oversight over organizational operations;" though "Ideally, meetings would occur on an annual basis…[Volgy et al.] reluctantly accept the four year threshold for regular meetings, although most viable organizations appear to hold annual meetings of their members" (Volgy et al. 2008, 840-41). They then turn to the thresholds set for IGOs' bureaucratic organization and autonomy.

Volgy et al. note "the empirical correlates of collective decision-making, bureaucratic organization, and autonomy within an IGO may be difficult to separate" (Volgy et al. 2008, 841). For an IGO to be considered autonomous, "both staffing and funding [must] be relatively immune from control by either a single member state or outside forces [and] if the primary funding for administration is provided by another IGO or overwhelmingly by one state…then it fails to meet the autonomous resources threshold" (Volgy et al. 2008, 841). More specifically, "an IGO must demonstrate the existence of a *permanent headquarters and nonsymbolic, professional staffing, independent* of other IGOs and/or one single state [and] that a majority of the funding for the ongoing operations of the IGO be *non-symbolic, systematically available, and*

independent of any one state or another IGO" (Volgy et al. 2008, 841-42). After

establishing their measures and variables, the authors constructed their database.

The Formal IGOs database has data for three different points in time, 1975, 1989,

and 2004. According to Volgy et al. their "database yields 265 IGOs that are alive in

2004…the number of [Formal] IGOs created during the 1970s alone accounts for

approximately one-quarter of all [Formal] IGOs still alive in 2004, a number larger than

all the [Formal] IGOs created since the end of the Cold War" (Volgy et al. 2008, 844-45).

The prevalence of IGOs seems to indicate their importance. The timing of the creation of

the majority of these organizations demonstrates faith in intergovernmental organizations

and their ability to maintain peace and stability in the world.

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Support and Legitimacy of IGOs

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Support for international organizations is not uniform across the world—far from

it. In "Globalization and the Legitimacy of Intergovernmental Organizations," Machida

explores how democracy and inequality across the globe affect the legitimacy of IGOs

and the support for globalization across states. Throughout the years, there have been

protests against the proliferation of IGOs. IGOs' lack of democratic accountability,

referred to as the 'democratic deficit' issue, is one of the most notable and contentious

problems (Machida 2009, 371). To have support, IGOs require a fair degree of

legitimacy, which can affect "the effectiveness of IGOs in globalization processes"

(Machida 2009, 373) and which some institutions do not seem to possess in sufficient

amounts, at least according to their opponents. According to Suchman, the concept of

legitimacy entails "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity

are desirable, proper, or appropriate" (Suchman 1995: 574 quoted in Johnson 2011, 58).

Legitimacy can also refer to "the normative belief by an actor that a rule or institution ought to be obeyed" (Hurd 1999 quoted in Machida 2009, 373). In sum, "if citizens perceive that IGOs effectively deliver benefits in an appropriate manner, they tend to demonstrate greater support for IGOs" (Machida 2009, 374). Trust by not only great powers themselves, but their citizens as well, is therefore of the utmost importance as it relates to IGOs' effectiveness. If great powers do not trust that IGOs can achieve what they set out to, it is unlikely they will invest the time and resources into them. Likewise, if citizens of participating states do not trust that IGOs work for their benefit, they are unlikely to support that organization, perhaps pressuring their governments to leave or scale back participation in said-organization.

It is not easy for IGOs to garner legitimacy, especially in a world with no international government, where some argue individual states' selfish aims are likely to be deemed more important than international cooperation. Part of the difficulty in being regarded as legitimate comes from the issue of democratic deficit. Machida writes,

> Gabel (1998: 7–8) defines democratic deficit as: 'the reduced public participation in and control over policy that resulted from moving political authority from the national to the supranational level.'…As IGOs gain more power in the global arena to cope with various issues, citizens tend to feel alienated from the decision-making processes involving IGOs (Machida 2009, 374).

This means that as IGOs gain authority, the impression among citizens that they have less opportunity to influence policy and to participate in their government can alienate them from these international institutions and inhibit the latter's perceived legitimacy. According to Bhavna Thakur "attaining a democratic structure which would involve various actors who will represent the interests and wants of the local communities at the global level" could help improve legitimacy (Thakur 2010, 207). Although they might be

intended to provide stability, humanitarian aid or health care services, or to try maintaining peace, some IGOs may lack legitimacy and effectiveness because of the democratic deficit.

States with different levels of democracy perceive IGOs differently. Machida finds that while "economic and socio-technical dimensions of globalization erode the legitimacy of IGOs in weak democratic states, that effect is absent in strong democracies" (Machida 2009, 390). He argues that, because "the nature of a democratic political system…allows citizens to effectively delegate authority to a higher authority," and since "the openness of a democratic political system provides citizens with various kinds of opportunities to influence the decision-making processes of IGOs…citizens in democratic states do not associate globalization with negative perceptions of IGOs" (Machida 2009, 390).

Democratic deficit is not the only factor which stands in the way of legitimacy. Tana Johnson also studies "threats to IGO legitimacy" (Johnson 2011, 57). Johnson, like many authors, starts by emphasizing the prevalence of IGOs and how they pervade world politics. She writes, "Even the world's most powerful states work through intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)" (Johnson 2011, 58). Since IGOs do not have militaries to rely upon, "to elicit compliance and enforcement, they [instead] cultivate perceptions of legitimacy and impel others through moral suasion" (Johnson 2011, 58). Although IGOs try to "distinguish themselves from individual self-serving member-states, instead professing their impartial pursuit of the greater good for their collective membership… states [do] exert institutionalized and/or ideational influence within IGOs" (Johnson 2011, 58). Where legitimacy is concerned, she argues that "unfavorable views

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toward a particular state will result in skepticism about the legitimacy of IGOs in which that state possesses influence" (Johnson 2011, 58).

There is no denying the importance and impact of IGOs on the world has been and continues to be significant. However, the extent of that influence and whether it has had positive outcomes and is desirable is up to debate.

Realism and the Limits of Cooperation

Generally speaking, realists across the board hold some common assumptions about international organizations. Notably, states are selfish and will act in their own interests. In Krasner's words, "outcomes related to either regimes or behavior ultimately remain a function of the distribution of power among states" (Krasner 1982, 356-57). According to Robert O. Keohane, "A simple explanation for the failure of a given attempt at cooperation in world politics is always available: that the interests of the states involved were incompatible with one another" (Keohane 1984, 65). Realists argue states do cooperate based on shared interests, but they do so only to the extent they can benefit from cooperation. There is no certainty that states which successfully cooperate today will continue to do so tomorrow, if their situations were to change. Indeed, IGOs are institutions, which Mearsheimer defines as "a set of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other," and one significant shortcoming of IGOs, in the realist view, is that "although rules are usually incorporated into a formal international organization, it is not the organization *per se* that compels states to obey the rules. Institutions are not a form of world government. States themselves must choose to obey the rules they created" (Mearsheimer 1995, 8-9).

Even though discord is prevalent and, according to realism, the norm in international relations, "If the egoists monitor each other's behavior and if enough of them are willing to cooperate on condition that others cooperate as well, they may be able to adjust their behavior to reduce discord. They may even create and maintain principles, norms, rules, and procedures," in other words, regimes (Keohane 1984, 84). Realists therefore account for the continued existence of IGOs and international regimes by contending that "Properly designed institutions can help egoists to cooperate even in the absence of a hegemonic power" (Keohane 1984, 84).

Susan Strange criticizes regime analysis and international organizations on five counts. First and foremost, she sets forth her concern that the concept of regimes "may be a passing fad," of a particularly American nature (Strange 1982, 338). She proposes the "fashion for regimes" arose from the "somewhat subjective perceptions in many American minds" that American power was on the decline, which "liberal, internationalist academics" reacted to by asking "how the damage could be minimized by restoring or repairing or reforming the mechanisms of multilateral management— 'regimes'" (Strange 1982, 339). Although in the 1970s the balance of power between the two superpowers, the U.S. and U.S.S.R., was still very much in place, the power of the U.S. was, and is, in no way, shape, or form infallible. Reality does not show nearly as dramatic a decline as some Americans perceived. In fact, "Where decline exists, it is a falling-off in the country's power and will to intervene with world market mechanisms…rather than significant change in the distribution of military or economic power to the favor of other states" (Strange 1982, 341).

Strange also examines the "perception on the part of Americans…that there is some mystery about the rather uneven performance in recent times of many international arrangements and organizations…The mixed record of international organizations," the author insists, "really does not need explaining" (Strange 1982, 341). She believes Americans struggle to "distinguish between the three somewhat different purposes served by international organizations" (Strange 1982, 342). She identifies these as strategic, adoptive and symbolic. IGOs used to incorporate and balance all three functions. In recent times, however, an imbalance has seemingly arisen, in part because "where once the United States was able to dominate organizations like the United Nations, it can no longer do so because of the inflation of membership and the increasing divergence between rich and poor over fundamentals" (Strange 1982, 342). Strange sounds a bit sarcastic as she describes the symbolic functions of IGOs, which she claims allows

> everybody to declare themselves in favor of truth, beauty, goodness, and world community, while leaving governments free to pursue national self-interests and to do exactly as they wish…many organizations [express] and partially [satisfy] the universal yearning for a 'better world' without doing anything substantial to bring it about…the tendency toward symbolism, expressed in a proliferation of Declarations, Charters, Codes of Conduct, and other rather empty texts, has strengthened as the ability to reach agreement on positive action to solve real global problems has weakened (Strange 1982, 342).

This realist critique, though harsh, holds some unfortunate truth to it. Take the case of the United Nations, for instance. It did not authorize the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, however the country still went ahead, ignoring the UN and international community's wishes. This undermines the (some would argue already weak or inexistent) authority of IGOs, especially since the U.S. suffered no real consequences.[1] Article 2(4) of the UN Charter

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[1] Except unwarranted loss of lives, time and resources.

"prohibits states' unilateral recourse to force except (per Article 51) in response to an armed attack," but "noncompliance with that law is undermining respect for it, and for international law in general" (Franck 2006, 93). Therein is born the legitimate fear that "what NATO did with respect to Kosovo and what the U.S.-led states did in invading Iraq have generated a wide-spread perception that violations of the international law restraining states from recourse to force have dissolved the rule's element of determinacy, so that it no longer actually 'binds' states" (Franck 2006, 93-94). Perhaps this represents the greatest challenge to IGOs yet, as "a rule that is riddled with exceptions no longer makes a clear statement and cannot be taken as a serious predictor of state conduct. As such, it invites further violations of that and other rules. Or it generates momentum for a different norm, one that accommodates the violations and makes them the basis of a new rule" (Franck 2006, 94). Certainly this reinforces realist claims that IGOs have little to no true power and are instead at the mercy of great powers' actions and decisions.

Susan Strange then proceeds to her second issue, the imprecision associated with the term 'regime.' Such "wooly words" lend themselves to confusion. The word regime, even within Krasner's *International Regimes* is "used to mean different things" which is more than just slightly problematic in her eyes; if "there is no fundamental consensus about the answer to Krasner's first questions, 'What is a regime?', obviously there is not going to be much useful or substantial convergence of conclusions about the answer to other questions concerning their making and unmaking" (Strange 1982, 343). Not only is it wooly, but the term regime is also value-loaded, the third problem Strange warns against. By this she means "it implies certain things that ought not to be taken for

granted" (Strange 1982, 344*).* As the author points out, regime is a French word with two main meanings.

First and most commonly, it is used to mean a diet. Its second meaning*,* which is the one familiar to English-speakers, is political and often has a negative connotation:

> the government of a society by an individual, a dynasty, party or group that wields effective power over the rest of society…The word is more often used of forms of government that are inherently authoritarian, capricious, and even unjust…In short, government, rulership, and authority are the essence of the word, not consensus, nor justice, nor efficiency in administration (Strange 1982, 344).

There is something misguiding about the term, then. There is no world government, no single international regime, in that sense of the term. Indeed, "Above all, a single, recognized locus of power over time is the one attribute that the international system so conspicuously lacks. Anytime the slightest hint of any" world army, world court, world central bank, or world tax system "is breathed in diplomatic circles, state governments have all their defenses at the ready to reject even the most modest encroachment on what they regard as their national prerogatives" (Strange 1982, 345). This represents a good instance of the erroneous value-loaded side of the term, since the "analogy with national governments implied by the use of the word regime…is inherently false" (Strange 1982, 345)*.*

Her fourth point of contention lies in the notion, in part stemming from the nature of the word, that a regime has a "static quality of arrangements for managing the international system and introducing some confidence in the future of anarchy, some order out of uncertainty" (Strange 1982, 346). But international relations are not static. During the Cold War, "security matters were not predictable or stable" (Strange 1982, 347). And despite the Bretton Woods system, economic and monetary matters were also

subject to instability and change, often guided by national interests. To Strange, "The changeable nature of all these international arrangements behind the blank institutional façade" means "The search for common factors and for general rules (or even axioms), which is of the essence of regime analysis, is therefore bound to be long, exhausting, and probably disappointing" (Strange 1982, 348). The assumption that regimes are fairly stable and static is simply unwarranted, says Strange.

Her last warning deals with state-centeredness. Regime analysis narrows international relations studies' focus. By this Strange means that "attention to these regime questions leaves the study of international political economy far too constrained by the self-imposed limits of the state-centered paradigm" (Strange 1982, 349). The issues which governments must address domestically and which they care most about are not necessarily those they deal with in international organizations, and these matters are often not those the public regards as important either. As such, "Attention to regimes…accords to governments far too much of the right to define the agenda of academic study and directs the attention of scholars mainly to those issues that government officials find significant and important," potentially leading academics to "abdicate responsibility for the one task [of developing] a philosophy of international relations or international political economy that will not only explain and illuminate but will point a road ahead and inspire action to follow it. Thus," she concludes, "regime analysis risks overvaluing the positive and undervaluing the negative aspects of international cooperation" (Strange 1982, 349). Regime analysis leads scholars to ignore important aspects of international relations.

Perhaps the most crucial point Strange makes is that great powers act through regimes and are the actual source of power themselves, not the regimes they operate through. Hence regimes have no stand-alone power and are merely tools at the service of great powers. Without great power backers, international regimes or institutions are impotent. For instance, unless the 5 permanent members of the Security Council agree on something, the UN is powerless. Only when they do agree can the UN act; when they fail to do so, it is foolish to blame the UN, given it is great powers who are unwilling to cooperate, not the IGO itself.

Mearsheimer is one of the most well-known realists in the field of international relations. According to him, "states cannot depend on others for their own security," and survival is a state's ultimate goal, which is best served by selfishness (Mearsheimer 2014, 33). Although "self-help does not preclude states from forming alliances," these "are only temporary marriages of convenience" (Mearsheimer 2014, 33). Obviously, with a mentality such as this, Mearsheimer is bound to be skeptical of international organizations. He writes, the "claim is sometimes made that great powers can transcend realist logic by working together to build an international order that fosters peace and justice," but that is mostly rubbish, because "great powers do not," in fact, "work together to promote world order for its own sake," even though they do "work hard to deter wars in which they would be the likely victim" (Mearsheimer 2014, 48-49). He sets forth two main reasons why "Great powers cannot commit themselves to the pursuit of a peaceful world order…First, states are unlikely to agree on a general formula for bolstering peace," and second, since states can never be certain of others' intentions, "great powers cannot put aside power considerations and work to promote international peace, because

they cannot be sure that their efforts will succeed," and hence, "prudence dictates that they behave according to realist logic" (Mearsheimer 2014, 50-51). Mearsheimer allows for the possibility of cooperation, he is simply, as all realists are, dubious as to how successful it can be.

Cooperation between states is "sometimes difficult to achieve and always difficult to sustain," mainly due to "considerations about relative gains and concern about cheating" (Mearsheimer 2014, 51-52). This means that "States contemplating cooperation must consider how the profits or gains will be distributed among them," thinking in terms of relative gains

> means each side not only considers its individual gain, but also how well it does compared to the other side. Because states in a realist world are concerned about the balance of power, they must be motivated primarily by relative gains concerns when considering cooperation. While each state wants to maximize its absolute gains, it is more important to make sure that it does better, or at least no worse, than the other state in any agreement (Mearsheimer 1995, 12).

And although "great powers do cooperate in a realist world…cooperation takes place in a world that is competitive at its core," ergo, "No amount of cooperation can eliminate the dominating logic of security competition" (Mearsheimer 2014, 52-53). He writes, "Since the Cold War ended, Western policymakers have sought to create security arrangements in Europe, as well as in other regions of the globe, that are based on international institutions" (Mearsheimer 1995, 5). But as opposed to institutionalists, realists do not believe IGOs "markedly affect the prospects for international stability" (Mearsheimer 1995, 7). He summarizes the realist mentality in just a few words, "Realists maintain that institutions are basically a reflection of the distribution of power in the world. They are based on the self-interested calculations of the great powers, and they have no

independent effect on state behavior. Realists therefore believe that institutions are not an important cause of peace" (Mearsheimer 1995, 7).

Grieco states that, "For realists, international anarchy fosters competition and conflict among states and inhibits their willingness to cooperate even when they share common interests…international institutions are unable to mitigate anarchy's constraining effects on inter-state cooperation" (Grieco 1988, 485). Mearsheimer's research, which in his article "The False Promise of International Institutions" focuses on critiquing leading institutionalist theories, corroborates Grieco's claim, leading him to conclude that "institutions have minimal influence on state behavior, and thus hold little promise for promoting stability in the post-Cold War world" (Mearsheimer 1995, 7). One of the main issues, according to Grieco, is that of relative gains versus absolute gains. While liberals seem to suppose states care only about absolute gains, Grieco argues this is a faulty assumption. He instead believes "a state will decline to join, will leave, or will sharply limit its commitment to a cooperative arrangement if it believes that partners are achieving, or are likely to achieve, relatively greater gains;" in other words, although a state could come away from a cooperative arrangement with absolute gains, if its relative gains are minimal or negative, it "will eschew cooperation" (Grieco 1988, 499).

'Do not place too much faith and trust in international organizations and regimes' could be the one-sentence message to take away from realists. Indeed, Susan Strange provides an eerie warning which resonates historically, "Let us never forget the folly of League of Nations reformers, busily drafting new blueprints while Hitler and Mussolini lit fires under the whole system" (Strange 1982, 346). In classic pessimistic realist tones, Mearsheimer similarly concludes that "The failure of the League of Nations to address

German and Japanese aggression in the 1930s is a case in point" of the "damage that false faith in institutional theories can cause…The failure of institutions to prevent or stop the war in Bosnia offers a more recent example" (Mearsheimer 1995, 49). Notably, "These cases illustrate that institutions have mattered rather little in the past; they also suggest that the false belief that institutions matter has mattered more, and has had pernicious effects. Unfortunately, misplaced reliance on institutional solutions is likely to lead to more failures in the future" (Mearsheimer 1995, 49).

Liberalism and Support for IGOs

Liberals have a very different, much more optimistic view of humankind and international relations. Politics according to liberals is not a zero-sum game, indeed, "Mutual cooperation on issues ranging from international trade to nuclear nonproliferation to disease prevention can yield global public goods on a massive scale…Major actors in world politics therefore have an incentive to realize the benefits that come from long-term mutual cooperation and avoid the costs that come with mutual defection" (Drezner 2011, 47). This, of course, does not mean actors always choose cooperation, even if it is beneficial to everyone. There are a number of strategies and conditions, such as those which lengthen the shadow of the future and economic interdependence, which the liberal paradigm suggests make cooperation more likely and longer-lasting.

Democratic peace theory is a major tenet of liberalism. This posits that democracies do not go to war with one another and are more likely to cooperate with each other. This is fundamentally different from the realist idea that a country's form of government has only a limited effect on policy, or to put it more bluntly, that states'

internal characteristics do not matter. Additionally, democracies' "domestic laws and institutions [provide them] with the means to credibly commit to international agreements" (Drezner 2011, 49). Evidently, liberals are quite fond of IGOs. Indeed, Liberals are responsible for the very creation of international organizations. Their belief in and desire for cooperation among states worldwide led to the successful establishment of numerous IGOs. As aforementioned, economics plays a major role in liberalism, which is "deeply enmeshed with neoclassical economics" (Haas 1982, 49). International relations, according to the liberal paradigm, should be "based on a division of labor that efficiently maximizes the welfare of all," and it should ensure international life is "stable and give[s] satisfaction to those who might lose out in a pure liberal order…liberals wish to fashion 'strong' regimes, which maximize efficiency, stability, and the hierarchy appropriate to the issue to be regulated" (Haas 1982, 49). Liberals believe that, even though "anarchy constrains the willingness of states to cooperate, states nevertheless can work together and can do so especially with the assistance of international institutions" (Grieco 1988, 486). Liberal proponents of international institutions, as optimistic as they might be, are not blinded either. These "liberal institutionalists treat states as rational egoists operating in a world in which agreements cannot be hierarchically enforced, and…institutionalists only expect interstate cooperation to occur if states have significant common interest" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 39). IGOs have been and continue to be successful, in many liberals' eyes, and they remain relevant, especially as an instrument for peace, freedom and prosperity.

Stephen D. Krasner argues regime analysis shares "the fundamental assumptions of a realist structural paradigm: an international system composed of egoistic sovereign

states differentiated only by their power capabilities" (Krasner 1982, 355). He points out

that perhaps regimes deserve more credit than realists give them. Regime analysis may

not be just a passing fad. For example, a "change in power distribution," which realists

view as of the utmost importance in international relations and in the decisions that are

made in international organizations, "does not always imply a change in outcomes

because regimes may function as intervening variables" (Krasner 1982, 357). If regimes

do "assume a life of their own, a life independent of the basic causal factors that led to

their creation in the first place," then one must allow for the possibility that these regimes

are important, and do have some independent impact on international relations (Krasner

1982, 357). "Ultimately," he writes, although "state power and interests condition both

regime structures and related behavior…there may be a wide area of leeway,"

considering that "Principles, norms, rules, and procedures may not conform with the

preferences of the most powerful states" (Krasner 1982, 357).[2] He also notes the

historical formation of international regimes is important to their study and scholars'

understandings of IGOs.

Krasner points out the importance of time in international regimes. The latter's

"creation usually occurs at times of fundamental discontinuity in the international system,

such as the conclusions of major wars" (Krasner 1982, 357). Indeed, the aim of liberals

who promoted the creation and propagation of IGOs, the "goal of the [so-called]

perpetual peace project was to bring reason to bear on the problem of war, in order to

construct a World order that would progress towards an elimination of war" (Ashworth

1995, 109). In the aftermath of wars and, as such, "When regimes are first created[,] there

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[2] Again the 2003 Iraq war seems like such an instance.

is a high degree of congruity between power distributions and regime characteristics: powerful states establish regimes that enhance their interests. But over time the two can drift apart" (Krasner 1982, 357). "In general," Krasner continues, "the basic principles and norms of regimes are very durable and, once a regime is created, adjustment is likely to involve altering rules and decision-making procedures…Once regimes are established, they assume a life of their own" (Krasner 1982, 357-58). The United Nations has been around since 1945 and still plays a significant role in world politics. It has experienced change over time. Whether or not one agrees with its policies, or whether it does too much or not enough, the United Nations indisputably does have some impact on the world stage, and if it has lasted seventy years, despite its issues and lack of power, one can hope this means the UN is doing something beneficial on the world stage. It is legitimate to claim that, in some form or fashion, international regimes and organizations do matter. To once again take the global climate change regime as an example, although the Kyoto Protocol failed to meet its stated goals, it was successful in reducing certain countries' carbon emissions. There have been some notable failures, such as China, but overall there are more successes, as the sum of CO_2 emissions from Kyoto signatory nations has declined.

Robert O. Keohane writes that, even though imperfect, there are mechanisms in place which promote compliance by member states with international regimes. He states, "International regimes are decentralized institutions. Decentralization," however, "does not imply an absence of mechanisms for compliance," Keohane notes, "but it does mean that any sanctions for violation of regime principles or rules have to be enacted by the individual members" (Keohane 1984, 98). He admits "Decentralized enforcement of

regime rules and principles is neither swift nor certain. Yet, in many instances, rules are obeyed" (Keohane 1984, 98). Sometimes, governments even comply with international rules when it is not in that state's self-interest. According to Franck, this is in part explained by the principle that, "In any society, but especially among states, the compliance pull of law is based on the expectation of each participant that most others, most of the time, will obey the law—all of it, not just some subsets, and not only when it is in their immediate interest to do so. That law has an inherent capacity to generate compliance is…as fundamental to the state system as it is ephemeral" (Franck 2006, 90-91). It is

> faith in law's ability to predict state behavior [that] is the key to its ability
> to pull nations toward voluntary compliance…The real power of law to
> secure systematic compliance does not rest, primarily, on police
> enforcement…but, rather, on the general belief of those to whom the law
> is addressed that they have a stake in the rule of law itself: that law is
> binding because it is the law. That, of course, is a fragile psychological
> belief (Franck 2006, 91).

And while this belief is fragile and its wavering can lead to chaos, there is nonetheless a prevailing trend of compliance, even when the law does not necessarily benefit a state. This apparent deviation from egoism offers some evidence that realists' pessimism might be at least slightly exaggerated. Realists assume that governments are purely and entirely egoist, but "Governments are composed of individuals, some of whom have values that extend beyond their own narrowly conceived self-interest," there is even a possibility "that empathy could have profound effects on the prospects for international cooperation" (Keohane 1984, 108-109).

Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin refute many of Mearsheimer's claims in their article, "The Promise of Institutionalist Theory." Mearsheimer often demands proof

that IGOs matter, and Keohane and Martin are more than happy to oblige, pointing out major governments' significant investments in "material and reputational resources in NATO, the EU, and also in organizations such as the [WTO] and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 40). Mearsheimer asserts policymakers, particularly idealistic American ones, are deluded. But Keohane and Martin retaliate by asking if, "In light of states' investments in international institutions, it is fair to turn Mearsheimer's question around: could we not legitimately demand evidence either that leaders of governments are deluded or that NATO and the EU are designed to deceive unsophisticated observers" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 41)? Fundamentally, they pose the question, if institutions were really useless and worthless, then would state leaders really invest so much time, effort and resources into creating and maintaining them?

Mearsheimer also tends to exaggerate how much faith liberals have in institutions. Institutionalists do recognize the limits of IGOs, "institutions make a significant difference in conjunction with power realities," they are subject to power plays (Keohane and Martin 1995, 42). The authors also object to the criticism that institutionalists dismiss relative gains issues; "Two issues are more significant: (1) the conditions under which relative gains are important; and (2) the role of institutions when distributional issues are significant—that is, when relative gains are at stake" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 44). The main point to take away from institutionalists on the issue is that the importance of relative gains "is conditional on factors such as the number of major actors in the system and whether military advantage favors offense or defense;" furthermore, "distributional conflict may render institutions *more* important" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 44). One

way this can be the case is when many states are involved in a cooperative arrangement on which they might disagree, for in such complex situations, "international institutions can step in to provide 'constructed focal points' that make particular cooperative outcomes prominent…just as institutions can mitigate fears of cheating and so allow cooperation to emerge, so can they alleviate fears of unequal gains from cooperation" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 45). In fact, some "studies show that institutions…change the incentives for states to cheat; they also reduce transaction costs, link issues, and provide focal points for cooperation" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 49). Although they are far from perfect, "in a world politics constrained by state power and divergent interests, and unlikely to experience effective hierarchical governance, international institutions operating on the basis of reciprocity will be components of any lasting peace" (Keohane and Martin 1995, 50).

Assessing IGOs

Helen V. Milner concentrates on three economically-focused international organizations to demonstrate their flaws as well as the positive effects these have had. These institutions are the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (now called the World Bank), and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was expanded and institutionalized into the World Trade Organization (WTO). "Conventional wisdom," she explains, "has held that international institutions…have been largely beneficial for the countries in them" because they are believed to "constrain the behavior of the most powerful countries and provide information and monitoring capacities that enable states to cooperate" (Milner 2005, 833-34). That claim has been challenged by anti-globalization activists, leading

Milner to combine normative and empirical studies in search of an answer. The three economic institutions she examines are in need of reform, Milner concludes, but they should not be abolished.

As previously noted, international institutions are not static and do evolve over time. The same is true of the IMF, World Bank and WTO, whose roles have changed and whose "membership has become nearly universal" (Milner 2005, 836). As with many current IOs, these economic institutions were created by the victorious powers following World War II. They were designed to maintain a stable economy and to "help the developed countries create a cooperative and stable world economy in a nonglobalized world" (Milner 2005, 836). This is not the world they operate in today. From a total membership hovering in the twenties upon their conception, these organizations now accommodate 150 countries or more. Criticism pointed at the lack of progress in developing countries may in part be due to the fact that, "Except for the World Bank, the original and primary mission of these institutions was not promoting growth in the developing world," but "since the change in their roles from the 1970s onward, they have [nevertheless] increasingly been judged by their impact on the poor" (Milner 2005, 836).

Milner finds that these institutions are in need of reform, but are likely to have been more beneficial than harmful. The "record of economic outcomes" in developing countries "has raised questions about the impact of these international economic institutions" (Milner 2005, 837). Whether or not these countries would have been better off without these organizations' support, however, is a counterfactual question which cannot be definitely answered. But since states are rational actors, "The rush lately by all countries to join these institutions suggests that developing countries have found them to

be more beneficial than the alternative of staying out" (Milner 2005, 838). Even so, these institutions have not had as beneficial an effect as expected of them.

Milner lays out some of the challenges associated with the World Bank, IMF and WTO. These IGOs "have had a difficult time constraining the large, developed countries [which] have [often] bargained hard to maximize their advantage vis-à-vis the developing nations" (Milner 2005, 848). These institutions might have helped these developing nations by providing easier or better "access to trade, aid, and loans," however they could have done so without bargaining so hard at little cost to their political capital, thus providing "more benefits for the poor" (Milner 2005, 848). There is also the problem of asymmetry. For instance, although these IGOs have helped "provide monitoring and information…it is the developing countries that are monitored and provide more information than otherwise" (Milner 2005, 848). Furthermore, "For these three organizations, reciprocity vis-à-vis the developing world has not been a central mission; trade agreements have often been very asymmetric and the aid and lending programs are one way;" and while their impact on developing countries' "domestic situation has been powerful," it has "not always [been] benign" (Milner 2005, 848).

The WTO, IMF and World Bank have not been nearly as beneficial for developing countries as many would have hoped. One possible explanation is that "globalization has simply overwhelmed these institutions and that their impact is minor compared to other factors," (Milner 2005, 848). It is also possible their problems "lie in the pressures exerted by the large, developed countries and private producers and investors. Both of these groups have shaped the functioning of the WTO, IMF, and World Bank," and they often strive to serve their own interests, sometimes at the expense

of poorer countries; "Finally," Milner notes, "one cannot overlook the claim that part of the problem arises from the internal organization and procedures of the institutions themselves" (Milner 2005, 848). Still, it remains important to give due credit to these IGOs for their accomplishments, namely in giving the developing world access to markets which could otherwise have been unattainable, and for providing economic aid to them—though perhaps not as generously as they could have.

While reform may be overdue, it is not time to abolish these institutions, which have helped, in some—perhaps limited—capacity, developing nations. Milner states, "even though problems abound with the institutions, one cannot rule out the counterfactual: without these institutions many developing countries could be worse off as they faced bilateral negotiations with the most powerful countries" (Milner 2005, 848). Though the WTO, World Bank and IMF are plagued with issues, it is important to move forward. To do so, "these institutions could be reformed at low cost to the wealthy countries to provide more benefits to the poor" (Milner 2005, 849). More research ought to be conducted: "Identifying who gains and who loses from existing policies is important both to determine the need for policy change and to build support for such change" (Milner 2005, 849). Despite their flaws, therefore, it is imperative that these institutions are not dismissed but rather allowed to reform and change in order to better fulfill their mandates.

Conclusion

Neither liberalism nor realism is wholly true or the definitive gospel of international relations, however, parts of both theories are applicable to different aspects and situations that arise in IR. There is undeniable value to be found in international

organizations, just as there are inevitable shortcomings attached. IGOs have impacted the world, sometimes in beneficial ways, other times not. States often are self-interested, it is true, but many individuals are capable of empathy and this is sometimes reflected in the realm of international relations. Whether, as realists claim, cooperation only works—and barely so—to the extent that states stand to benefit from it, or whether it stems from a common desire for peace and the desire to promote freedom and rights across the world, international organizations and regimes do and will continue to exist.

Some IGOs, such as the World Health Organization, give credence to liberal claims that they provide benefits worldwide and have a generally positive impact on the global population. However, liberal idealism can also become harmful at times. The case of NATO illustrates the necessity to be cautious and take heed of realist warnings. The expansion of the organization has led to violent conflict in Eastern Europe—Georgia and Ukraine—and heightened tensions between Russia and the West.

Chapter II - NATO and Russia: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Introduction

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was originally designed to curb the Soviet threat and protect Western Europe from Communist expansionism. In Zoltan Barany's words, "The collapse of the Soviet Union effectively cancelled the raison d'être of the Atlantic Alliance" (Barany 2006, 165). Having "managed to adapt itself to a radically different world," NATO not only survived the end of the Cold War, but grew in scope, power and membership (Barany 2006, 166). Some scholars, generally of the liberal persuasion, have viewed this as a positive sign, one of the West's triumphs and a vibrant sign of transnational solidarity. Others of the realist school of thought, though, believe the Organization's expansionism is dangerous and threatening—they argue NATO is a source of tensions between East and West, particularly where Russia is concerned. Starting in 1994, during what Victor Israelyan calls the cold peace, two issues "caused the greatest tension and have the most potential to continue," as they have, "to upset U.S.-Russian relations—the expansion of [NATO] and the recognition of Russia's special interest in the countries of the former Soviet Union" (Israelyan 1998, 51-52). The questions which scholars still pose today include whether or not NATO should have ceased existing, should it pursue expansion, and what ought to happen to the Organization today? Examining Russia's interests in the former Soviet bloc, and its reactions to NATO's expansionist policies and actions in Eastern Europe can help indicate which of these two views might be more accurate, or at least, more relevant in today's political context.

NATO was a product of the Cold War and its original purpose reflected this. By the time the Soviet Union collapsed, the organization, which was founded in 1949, had achieved its three main goals, "countering the military threat that the Soviet Union posed to western Europe and North America," (Barany 2006, 165), along with preventing "the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe…and encouraging European political integration" ("A Short History of NATO"). As such, the alliance could, potentially, have been disbanded. "With the collapse of the Soviet Union and its concomitant grip over eastern Europe," Leonard concurs, "some critics argued that NATO lost its reason for being" (Leonard 2000, 519). Writing in 1992, Charles L. Glaser stated that, since the end of the Cold War brought "The collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union," the military threat facing the West was greatly reduced; moreover, it was "widely believed that Russia is uninterested in attacking the West. These changes," Glaser argued, "allow the United States and its NATO allies to make substantial reductions in the military forces dedicated to deterring Russian attack" (Glaser 1992, 533). He also supported the view that "the United States should emphasize policies that encourage the evolution and stabilization of Russian goals that improve the long-term prospects for peace;" and as "the end of the cold war essentially eliminates a military requirement for the United States to deploy forces in Europe," Glaser asserts, "it creates instead a political role for American military forces in a new European security structure" (Glaser 1992, 533-534). Others went farther than simply suggesting a political restructuring of NATO, proposing instead the complete eradication of the alliance (Steel, Ronald).

Outliving NATO's Purpose

Long before the Cold War ended, scholars foresaw the Organization would one day lose its purpose and thereby cease to exist. As early as 1964, Ronald Steel predicted NATO's demise: the Organization's "mission, the defense of Europe, was completed in Nikita Khrushchev's time…as normal, if often hostile51, relations prevailed between the Western and Eastern blocs. NATO had lost its function and should dissolve" (Kaplan 1995, 4). Lawrence Kaplan notes that many "pundits looking beyond the Cold War have decided that NATO will dissolve, or should dissolve [as] a new world order would make the old alliance unnecessary" leading to "successor organizations [that] would replace NATO's function" (Kaplan 1995, 18-19). But contrary to expectations, this did not happen. Given the prevalence of such views that proved drastically mistaken, it is important to explore why NATO survived, who its opponents were and why, why alternate organizations did not successfully replace the alliance, and what effects NATO's expansion has had on east-west relations.

Part of the explanation for why NATO did not immediately dissolve lies in the turbulent nature of the Cold War's end. The rise of ethnic conflict "among the newly independent nations in the former Soviet empire [and] insecurity among the former Eastern European satellites of that empire," along with the general disarray and widespread resentment witnessed in Europe at the time, meant NATO remained a reassuring force of military security for many Europeans (Kaplan 1995, 19). There was also the unsurprising fact that thousands of highly-paid and well-connected NATO administrators, officials and other employees resisted the dissolution of the alliance (Barany 2006, 165). In 1995, Kaplan therefore predicted that NATO would not

disintegrate, and two decades later he has been proven correct. He also correctly hypothesized that the previously "unsatisfactory partnership with Eastern Europe [would] be replaced by membership;" however, he was wrong, sadly, when he wrote that, as "Russia discovers that America's presence in Europe through NATO is a stabilizing force it will become more accepting of the Western alliance" (Kaplan 1995, 20). So how did Kaplan and liberals like him justify the alliance's continued existence and growth?

Liberal Support For Expansion

Liberals defend expansionism of NATO based on several arguments. First, there was and still is a widespread belief that this move will deter Russian aggression. Second, the idea that this would "reduce the likelihood of conflict among NATO members, ameliorating security dilemmas and forcing them to accept current borders and pursue the peaceful resolution of disputes" was widespread (Reiter 2001, 41). Additionally, as President Clinton told the 1997 West Point graduating class, he believed "that the extension eastward strengthened democracy, civilian control of the military and provided added security for the United States" (Leonard 2000, 520). Most fundamental to the pro-expansionist argument is Democratic Peace Theory, which leads liberals to conclude that expanding NATO "would further democratization in the region, which in turn would help to stabilize the area because democracies are unlikely to fight each other" (Reiter 2001, 41). Democratic Peace Theory maintains that "true democracies do not invade one another and do not engage in aggressive wars" (Jeane Kirkpatrick qtd. in Reiter 2001, 41). Justification for expansion overwhelmingly came from liberal American voices. The Clinton administration used this theory, maintaining "that one of the chief goals of expansion was 'locking in democracy's gains in Central Europe,' because 'democracies

resolve their differences peacefully'" (Mearsheimer 2014, 9). President Clinton also claimed "that NATO could 'do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West: prevent a return to local rivalries, strengthen democracy against future threats' and create the conditions for prosperity" (Barany 2006, 167). Former Deputy Secretary of State during the Clinton Administration, Strobe Talbott, agreed, maintaining that "Moving the borders of NATO eastward…would help 'to solidify the national consensus for democratic and market reforms' that already existed in states like Hungary and Poland and thus enhance the prospects for peace in the region" (Mearsheimer 2014, 9). The challenge, according to Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State from 1997 until 2001, was "to finish the post-war construction project…[and] expand the area of the world in which American interests and values will thrive" (Mearsheimer 2014, 9). Talbott also claimed "that collective defence remained an imperative and should be extended to the newly independent democracies. True, the threat NATO had been created to counter had been eliminated, but new threats could arise 'that would require NATO to protect its members and to deter attack'" (MccGwire 2008, 1283). This clearly indicates a fear of a resurgent Russia which liberals believed an expanded NATO that included former Warsaw Pact countries would be better able to counter were it to become a threat. Aside from the general liberal belief in the importance and benefits of international institutions, the spread of democracy and the fear of a resurgent Russia are the two most significant hallmarks of liberal support for NATO extension.

NATO and Democracy…Or Not?

Whether this expansion actually spreads democracy is a matter of importance, to both liberals and realists, because the alliance's growth was heavily reliant upon the

principle of spreading and strengthening "democracy in former communist states" (Reiter 2001, 44). In fact, the democracy argument was touted by all advocates of enlargement and the main justification for it. Reiter, a realist, does concede that, if valid, "the claim that NATO enlargement will spread democracy…would be the strongest argument in support of such action" (Reiter 2001, 46). But does it do so?

NATO could bring democratization in a variety of ways. First and foremost, the prospect of membership could serve as a tantalizing carrot which would prompt democratization in NATO-aspiring countries. Conversely, there can be no carrot without a stick. If member states adopted democratic reforms and subsequently reverted to authoritarian rule, NATO should be able to credibly threaten them with expulsion.[3] However, while many other organizations have provisions for the expulsion of states that revert to autocracy, as Reiter points out, "there is no legal basis for the ejection of a state from NATO, within the North Atlantic Treaty or elsewhere" (Reiter 2001, 52). Lastly, NATO membership could "help to solidify civilian control of the military [as] Alliance membership will be contingent upon institutionalizing…civilian control of the military" which tends to prevent military coups and other militaristic threats to democracy (Reiter 2001, 55). Furthermore, "membership in a democratic alliance, especially one that is highly institutionalized, provides an environment within which transgovernmental contacts between militaries can spread norms of civilian control of the military" (Reiter 2001, 55). On all these points, the historical record shows little to no evidence that NATO itself is responsible for bringing about democratization.

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[3] Ostensibly, NATO has to at least pretend to care. In actuality, it appears as though the alliance does not care about reverting to authoritarianism, as demonstrated by the historical record.

By examining the cases of Turkey, Spain, Portugal and Greece in the Cold War

era, Dan Reiter concludes there is little historical evidence in favor of NATO being a

force for democracy. NATO membership, he writes, "has exerted only minimal influence

on democratization. Regarding civil-military relations, NATO membership has generated

disparate results [and there] is little support for either the carrot or stick arguments.

NATO has never sanctioned, much less ejected, a state for domestic political changes, but

not because it lacked opportunity" (Reiter 2001, 58-59). This fact lends credence to the

realist idea that NATO is a rational actor which is much more concerned with strategy

than ideology. The post-Cold War record is also examined. Yet once more, the evidence

shows that "the promise of NATO membership [did not] speed the democratization

process in" Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, which entered NATO in March

1999, "because their societies and their elites were committed to democracy anyway," as

these states "had made long strides toward democracy even before the NATO carrot was

dangled before them" (Reiter 2001, 59-60). In these cases, it appears as though

democracy was the driver for seeking NATO membership, not vice-versa. The carrot

argument is therefore dubitable, at best. Similarly, the military did not seriously threaten

democracy in these states, also casting doubt unto the claim that NATO membership can

democratize countries by improving civilian control of their militaries. Reiter notes that

the countries seeking membership in 2000 were all fairly democratic already.[4] Dan Reiter

concludes "that NATO membership has not and will not advance democratization in

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[4] This can be confirmed by delving into Freedom House's ratings for these countries. In 2002, Albania was found to be partly free, with a score of 3.5. In 2015, the country was still only partly free, its score having improved only slightly, to a 3.0. Estonia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia were already considered free as early as 1999.
Macedonia, which applied for membership but did not obtain it, was found partly free in 2015, with a score of 3.5, improving from a score of 4 in 2002. (Freedom House).

Europe" (Reiter 2001, 42). Other IGOs, particularly the EU, are seen as more powerful

forces for democratization, whose eastward expansion appear less injurious to Russia

than NATO's,[5] which would allow for both the spread of democracy in the region while

maintaining fairly healthy relations between Russia and the West.

Pursuing Expansion Regardless

Despite all of the contentions, protests and prospects for conflict expansion posed,

NATO chose to pursue this policy. NATO was one of the many institutions that the West

could build upon to expand its influence throughout the world, and the West seized this

opportunity. Charles A. Kupchan writes that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, "The

United States and Europe promptly teamed up to integrate their former adversaries into

the Western order. The European Union and NATO opened their doors to the new

democracies of Central Europe" (Kupchan 2012, 73). G. John Ikenberry corroborates

this, as he claims that the "first post-Cold War impulse of the George H. W. Bush

administration in the early 1990s was to…build and expand regional and global

institutions," across both "security and economic areas" (Ikenberry 2011, 232). Part of

this strategy involved "the evolution of NATO to include associate relations with

countries to the east" (Ikenberry 2011, 232). By the end of the 1990s, "The first round of

NATO expansion was accomplished, providing an institutional basis to stabilize and

embed new entrants into the Western order…The Bush [Senior] administration was

determined that NATO stay engaged on the European continent and do so with the

United States in the lead, perpetuating its role as a stabilizing presence" (Ikenberry 2011,

234-35). While it is often believed that the West's main goal was to "*integrate* the

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[5] It is important to note that Russia does oppose Ukrainian membership in the European Union.

Soviets (and Russians) into pan-European and pan-Atlantic institutions[,] the evidence…does not show that integration of the Soviets into new or existing institutions was dominant in 1990. Rather, the goal was to get the Soviets out" (Sarotte 2010, 135).

Three countries acceded to the alliance at the end of the twentieth century. This move was largely guided by the United States, which some saw as having too much influence in post-war European affairs. The U.S. largely "assumed NATO's leadership often to the consternation of its allies who wanted a larger role in the formulation of policies and in the decision making process" (Leonard 2000, 519). Of course, nations wanted to join the alliance, independent of the United States' desires. "The sources of demand for IGO membership," write Donno, Metzger and Russett, are clear, "States with transitional or fragile domestic institutions, or those in need of greater international legitimacy, desire membership in order to ensure peace, enhance their credibility, and reap the benefits of multilateral cooperation" (Donno et al. 2015, 251). This is why, although the United States shares the greatest responsibility for NATO expansion, it is important not to discount the role new or prospective members played themselves. According to Thomas Leonard, "In April 1993…Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa, respectively the Presidents of the Czech Republic and Poland, urged new US President Bill Clinton to expand NATO eastward" (Leonard 2000, 518). This was not a decision to be taken lightly, but after "months of wrangling among the president's advisors, agreement was reached to move forward cautiously" (Leonard 2000, 518). This "post–Cold War vision of the alliance" as Clinton envisioned it, "specifically [included] former Warsaw Pact nations" (Reiter 2001, 43).

Subsequently, "at the July 1997 Madrid summit, NATO invited the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to negotiations over their membership" (Reiter 2001, 43). Out of the initial twelve nations that expressed an interest at the outset, these three were deemed "qualified because of their firm democratic footing, market economies and settlement of boundary and ethnic conflicts with their neighbors" (Leonard 2000, 520). In March 1999, they officially joined as NATO's newest members, which some argued insured lasting peace for twentieth and twenty-first century Europe. There were even some who "held out hope that Russia might continue to democratize and eventually become eligible for membership!" (Leonard 2000, 523). Russia is often treated as a special case, but some liberals insist that the Russian government should instead be encouraged "to apply for NATO membership," and the alliance "should help Russia carry out the far-reaching political and military changes that would eventually qualify it to enter the alliance. The mere prospect of joining NATO," Kramer contends, "would give a salutary fillip to the frequently stalled processes of democratization and military reform in Russia, and would strengthen the hand of pro-Western forces" (Kramer 2002, 732). Though Russia joining the alliance was always a far stretch, which has proven too optimistic, it is still laregly believed that NATO is a force for peace and cooperation.

Next Up…The Baltics

When the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland officially joined the alliance, in 1999, this invited backlash in Russia. Alexei Arbatov, former deputy chairman of Russia's parliamentary defense committee warned "that Russia has historic grievances with" the three new member countries and insisted "that Russia should have been consulted regarding their admission to NATO" (Leonard 2000, 524-25). After those three

nations were accepted, nine more countries applied for membership in 2002. Today, eight of those are NATO members.[6] Russia had, from the very start, unequivocally stated its opposition to the accession of the Baltic states to the alliance. Unlike Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic which "are buffeted by other nations from the Russian boundaries…Estonia and Latvia border directly upon Russia and a third [Baltic nation], Lithuania, is adjacent to Kaliningrad, an important Russian Baltic Sea outlet. Bulgaria and Romania," for their part, "are strategically located on the Black Sea," hence why Russia perceived this eastern encroachment as a threatening move (Leonard 2000, 225). Of those countries applying for membership in 2002, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia's situation "was complicated because they [had been] republics of the Soviet Union until August 1991" (Kramer 2002, 731). NATO itself had "rejected the Baltic states initially because their armed forces [did] not meet NATO's standards and," most importantly, because they had "problems with their Russian minorities and with Russia" (Blank 1998, 115). Because "any NATO movement into the Baltic region is likely to aggravate [anti-Western] attitudes [in Moscow] and create an irreconcilably suspicious and hostile atmosphere between Russia and the West—one that could result in a Russian return to Cold War postures and policies," there was strong opposition to Baltic NATO membership (Kramer 2002, 747). Liberals object, saying opponents of expansion "greatly overstate the damaging effect that the admission of the Baltic states will have on Russian–Western relations" (Kramer 2002, 747).

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[6] Macedonia did not obtain NATO membership.
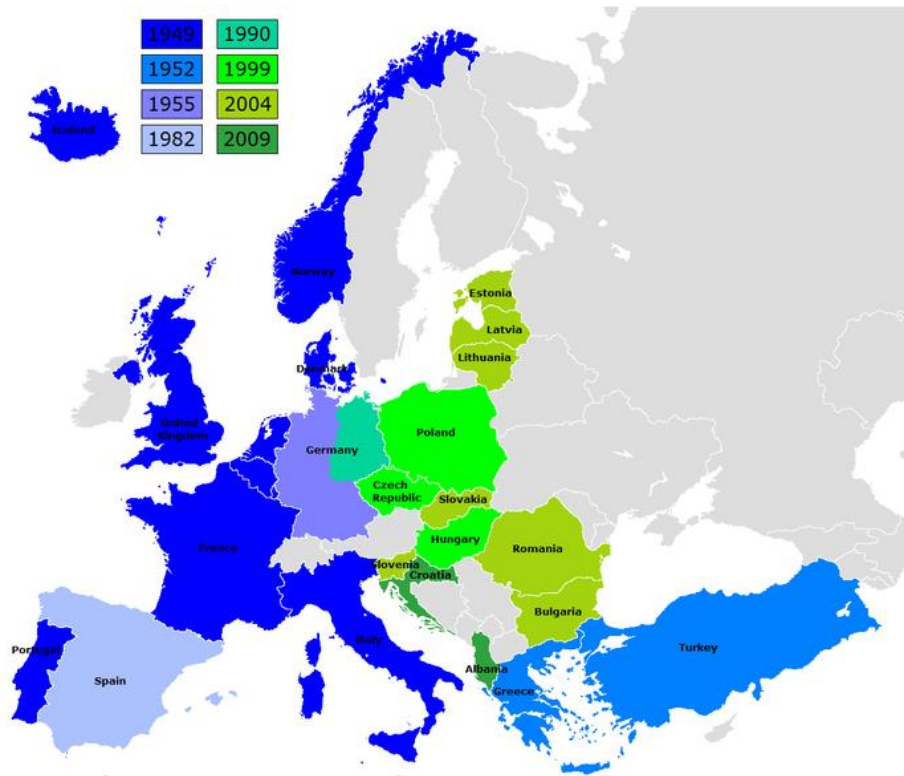
Although, as aforementioned, there had been reticence due to the fear of antagonizing Moscow, "the extension of NATO membership to the Baltic states during the second round of enlargement [had, by 2001], become far more plausible and indeed probable," thanks to small but significant changes in NATO, the Baltic states and Russia's position (Kramer 2002, 731). The September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks were partially responsible for a rapprochement between Russia and the west. Even before 9/11, Russia had begrudgingly shifted its attitude stating in

> The 'Foreign Policy Concept' promulgated by the Russian government in July 2000…that 'Russia sees good prospects for the development of relations with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania…' The document set two preconditions for good relations with the Baltic states: first, that Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania must respect Russian interests…and second, that the Baltic governments must uphold the rights of Russian and Russian-speaking minorities (Kramer 2002, 747).

Despite sustained objections from realists, liberals maintained that "The entry of the Baltic states into NATO" was a positive move, but one that "should be accompanied by a gradual reorientation of the alliance. Rather than preserving NATO permanently as a predominantly military organization, the member states should increasingly emphasize its political role" (Kramer 2002, 732). Barany agrees, favoring expansionism as a diplomatic and common security effort rather than a military one (Barany 2006, 167). There was a subsequent shift in the nature of NATO from a heavy military focus to a political one—if Eastern European states were to be incorporated into the alliance, it had to be a political decision (Barany, 2006 167). Although "Russia still opposed the admission of the Baltic states into NATO, [it] would not stake its whole relationship with the West on this issue," as Russian president Vladimir Putin and others had realized the Baltics would, no matter what, join NATO (Kramer 2002, 748). This move toward greater acceptance of NATO, though it had started around 1997, was 'helped along', so to speak, by Al Qaeda's September 11th attacks.

<center>*NATO and Russia/NATO vs. Russia*</center>

9/11, as terrible an event as it was, also provided an opening for improved east-west relations. Some scholars, including Peter B. Zwack, thought the time was "opportune to consider establishing a tangible, combined NATO and Russian military entity to jointly face the challenges of the post-9/11 world," which would also lead to an overall improvement of relations (Zwack 2004, 89). A NATO-Russia Brigade or a NATO-Russia Contingency Command would have been "a major step forward both symbolically and functionally for NATO and Russia" (Zwack 2004, 91). Neither Russia nor NATO and its members are ready for the political leap of granting the former

membehsip in the alliance, and it would be a particularly hard sell for member states which are former Soviet sattelites. But by most accounts, by the time 1997 rolled around, NATO-Russian political-military relations had dramatically improved, despite "remaining pressures in the relationship," to the point that the "Russian government…recognized that stability with the West, including enhanced cooperation with NATO, is essential for Russia's development and security" (Zwack 2004, 94). This became even more obvious after Al Qaeda's terrorist attacks, as Putin himself declared that NATO "bears serious responsibility for maintaining stability in the world" (Zwack 2004, 94). The fact that Russia and the rest of the western world have converging interests, in the form of stability in south-central Eurasia, particularly the Middle East, could also have been, and for a time was, a force for cooperation.

Important to liberals' ideas is the notion that Russia has been and remains a serious threat. Harvey Waterman asserts, that some states, "especially the Baltic countries, still face Russian bullying in the form of overt military threats as well as threats to do economic harm…Indeed," Waterman insists, "for some the failure to achieve NATO membership may itself be a source of destabilization, because they think that membership in Western organizations might help them resist the Russians. These states want all the insurance they can get" (Waterman et al. 2001, 222). Realists challenge this claim that NATO expansion has the potential to deter future Russian aggression. Russian ambitions in the immediate post-Cold War were rather limited, and aside from a few ultranationalists, there was no impetus for aggression toward the country's neighbors. Furthermore, "The breakup of the Soviet Union left it…without the military strength to confront the west. The Russian army fell into disarray, its naval fleet

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into disrepair and its nuclear weaponry available for sale" (Leonard 2000, 519). In other words, Russia "exhibited no inclination to rebuild the Soviet empire through threats or force, especially against the states that have formally applied for NATO membership," and it also lacked the ability to do so, hence the argument that joining the alliance was a form of defense for those states was moot (Reiter 2001, 46). Russia in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries had lost its great power status, and having limited capabilities, it posed no serious military threat to its former satellites.

Realist Critique of Expansion

Realists offer a wide set of counterarguments which dispute liberals' optimistic predictions about the effects and benefits of NATO expansion. Reiter offers but one anti-enlargement argument when he writes that "The weakness of the democratization argument, coupled with the costs and risks of further enlargement, caution against pursuit of this policy in the near or medium term. Instead," he suggests, "the West should rely on the European Union (EU) to spread democracy, an approach that is more likely to foster democratization yet less likely to alienate Russia" (Reiter 2001, 42)[7]. Moreover, realists are skeptical, at best, about the veracity of Democratic Peace Theory, making the democratization argument all but worthless in their eyes. Particularly, realists insist on debunking what they view as the erroneous assumption that NATO deters Russian aggression, rather, they contend, the alliance's expansion stokes it. Notably, there is a prevalent worry that "expansion may jeopardize relations between Russia and the West, pushing Russia away from cooperating on issues such as strategic arms control and peacekeeping in the Balkans, and perhaps turning it back toward belligerence and even

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[7] Again, Ukraine is somewhat a special case, although the prospect of NATO membership is arguably more antagonizing to Russia than EU membership.

ultranationalism" (Reiter 2001, 42). There are scholars who would argue this has already happened, or that this trend is currently underway.

But even if one were to dismiss these arguments, the real financial costs associated with NATO expansion are significant, and it was unlikely (and some would argue this has largely proven true) that new members would contribute much to the alliance. Additionally, having more members complicates the decision-making process and renders reaching a consensus more difficult. The cultural aspects of the problem should not be underestimated either. Although they may not be as significant a hurdle nor a pressing potential problem, the desire to socialize prospective and actual member countries—their population, but their militaries especially—into Western norms might be both naïve and, in a sense, dangerous. Waterman writes, enlargement can "contribute to regional political order, and co-opt younger generations into Western norms and perspectives" (Waterman et al. 2001, 227). This can lead to clashes between the old and young generations of a country or region.[8] There are many cautionary historical tales of the problems (attempted) westernization of cultures may entail,[9] and these ought to be considered, even in Eastern Europe, despite the apparent will of some, perhaps even many, to adopt western norms.

While some analysts still worry about a revival of Russian nationalism and, along with it, a rebuilding of its military power, "this prospect does not justify NATO enlargement;" especially since "NATO enlargement is likely to increase the chances of renewed Russian belligerence, rather than provide a useful insurance policy against it…enlargement will jeopardize the West's relationship with Russia" (Reiter 2001, 47-

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[8] As recently witnessed in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.
[9] For instance, see Afghanistan.

48). Despite popular opinion, realists do not favor aggressive and belligerent policies, rather they emphasize caution, often referred to as prudence. This means that restraint should be exercised by world leaders, and that idealism needs to be put aside at times (Mazarr 2003, 505). Ideologically, pushing NATO's borders eastward would represent the strength and unity of democracy, and establish long-lasting peace through the spread of western values against Russian authoritarianism and repression. Practically speaking, however, it is prudent to halt the Organization's eastward push, because it aggravates the Russian government and anti-Western sentiments in the country, heightening tensions and therefore the risk of conflict. Although many "see NATO as an insurance policy against future Russian expansion westward," others "argue that NATO's eastward thrust will more likely produce a nationalistic response in Russia and rekindle its interests in eastern Europe" (Leonard 2000, 535). In the twenty-first century, it is often forgotten that "Expansion eastward also violated promises made in 1990 to Mikhail Gorbachev;" but the insult to Russia did not stop there, "At the Madrid summit, the Ukraine signed a [charter with NATO which] provided for the establishment of information offices in Brussels and Kiev and for the consultation on a variety of issues including civil emergency planning and nuclear safety" (Leonard 2000, 524). Predictably, this stirred renewed rumblings of discontent in Russia.

John J. Mearsheimer, the quintessential realist, summarizes Russia's position on the matter, highlighting the fact that "Russia was deeply opposed to NATO expansion, which it viewed as a serious threat to Russian security" (Mearsheimer 2014, 50). Reiter similarly cautions that further enlargement is likely to cause greater damage to Russia-West relations than previous rounds of expansion. Indeed, in 2000, President Putin

declared that "'the expansion of military alliances' poses a threat to Russia's borders,"

meaning enlargement might push "Russian leaders away from the belief that the West is a

trustworthy partner in cooperation" (Reiter 2001, 49). While liberals firmly believe that

"Should [U.S.] intervention [in Europe] be called for again, a prior commitment to

NATO can be expected to facilitate cooperation by the countries of the region"

(Waterman et al. 2001, 226), realists would argue this intervention might only become

necessary *because* of NATO and the perceived threat it poses to Russia.

But warnings were not heeded and NATO expanded. This potentially dangerous

move was decried by some in American politics. Indeed, in June 1997, fifty U.S. officials

and experts stated in an open letter to President Clinton, "their belief that 'the current US-

led effort to expand NATO…is a policy error of historic importance'" (MccGwire 2008,

1282). They believed that, in Russia, it would "strengthen the nondemocratic opposition

[as] NATO expansion continued to be opposed across the whole political spectrum in

Russia" (MccGwire 2008, 1282). Gregory O. Hall corroborates this, writing that, "From

the outset, Russian leaders and commentators from across the country's political and

ideological spectrum have stood in strong opposition to the prospect of NATO expanding

its membership eastward, especially into the former USSR" (Hall 1999, 23).

Furthermore, expansion "would draw a new line of division" in Europe, "would degrade

the alliance's ability to carry out its primary mission," and in the U.S. there would be

debate over the costs such an expansion would entail (MccGwire 2008, 1282). Other

officials expressed concerns that this policy

> risked endangering the long-term viability of NATO, significantly
> exacerbating the instability that [existed] in the zone that lies between
> Germany and Russia, and convincing most Russians that the United States
> and the West [were] attempting to isolate, encircle, and subordinate them,

rather than integrating them into a new European system of collective security (MccGwire 2008, 1283).

The "extension of NATO," some found, was "an illogical business" (MccGwire 2008, 1284). Not only were Russians wary of such a move by the West—"it is generally acknowledged that Moscow is very worried by the hostile implications of NATO expansion and that Russia has 'legitimate concerns' about this development"—but additionally, "in 1990 Mikhail Gorbachev was given top-level assurances that the West would not enlarge NATO, ensuring a non-aligned buffer zone between NATO's eastern border and Russia" (MccGwire 2008, 1285). The Soviet leader, "Gorbachev and [former Chancellor of Germany, Helmut] Kohl had essentially already reached a gentleman's agreement on February 10 [1990]," whereby "Kohl told Gorbachev that NATO would not expand eastward, and the Soviet leader agreed to internal German economic and monetary union, a process that had already begun" (Sarotte 2010, 120). Gorbachev even called "for a new post–Cold War pan-European security structure. He hoped for an organization that, while yet ill-defined, would stretch from the shores of the Atlantic to his country" (Sarotte 2010, 111). These hopes and assurances were, in the end, all for naught.

A Russia-Inclusive NATO and other Optimistic Alternatives

While it was suggested that, in the post-Cold War world, "a German federation would exist outside of NATO…the [existing] Western structures proved most useful to the search by all major states for mechanisms of restraint, reassurance, and integration" (Ikenberry 2011, 232). But the idea that this meant the creation of a "wider pan-European security structure that would also include the Soviet Union" was shunned, leaving Russia out of a common European security alliance (Ikenberry 2011, 232). And yet, McGwire

wrote in 2008, "It is officially accepted that there is no Russian threat to the [Central and Eastern European] states for the next decade or more. And there is universal agreement that the security of Europe requires the integration of the republics of the former Soviet Union (FSU), especially Russia, into a stable security system" (MccGwire 2008, 1285). Unfortunately, through lack of political efforts on both sides, early hopes that Russia would be effectively included in a new defensive and democratic alliance, encompassing the U.S. and all European states, were dashed, and such an expansive partnership never came to life (Israelyan 1998, 47). In the long-run, it can be assumed such a partnership would have been more advantageous, as the eastern giant would, or at least could, have been more thoroughly included in the post-Cold War order, perhaps leading to less resentment. Although it is up for debate whether Russia truly had an interest in such an alliance, the fact that Gorbachev supported a pan-European security alliance and that Russia later sponsored an expanded Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—as detailed below—indicates the country did have an inclination for a combined east-west defense system. The resulting greater inclusion could potentially have led to a rapprochement of values and to the creation of common, rather than conflicting, goals.

Russia sought to replace the U.S.-led NATO as "the central organizing pillar of European security" with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (Mearsheimer 2014, 50). Indeed, "Russian leaders emphasize the necessity for a joint Russian-Western role in devising and maintaining a framework for European security into the twenty-first century. However, such a mechanism, in the opinion of many Russian observers, should emanate from an evolved Organization for Security and

Cooperation in Europe" (Hall 1999, 23). Moscow has advocated for "a Russian-led CIS[10] as an equal pillar with NATO in European security under the OSCE's supervision," this would allow Russia veto power to "safeguard its sphere of influence and restrain NATO's freedom of action" (Blank 1998, 118). But, Mearsheimer notes, instead of pursuing this route,

> Recognizing that Russia's weakness would preclude any retaliation…the United States ignored Russia's concerns and pushed NATO to accept the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland as new members. Russia has also opposed U.S. policy in the Balkans over the past decade, especially NATO's 1999 war against Yugoslavia. Again, the United States paid little attention to Russia's concerns (Mearsheimer 2014, 49-50).

Ikenberry remarks, "the expansion of NATO membership into Eastern Europe and the former Soviet sphere drove" the growth of the United States' alliance partners, resulting in "a global alliance system that has steadily expanded worldwide" (Ikenberry 2011, 238). Russia, evidently, did not become a partner in this system. Mearsheimer states plainly "Russia and the United States have not worked together to create the present order in Europe" (Mearsheimer 2014, 49). This lack of cooperation is a mistake. While it is understandable why neither side was ever too enthusiastic about the prospect of a U.S.-Russia defense alliance, it is also unfortunate, as such an alliance would not only be powerful, but could have avoided some of the conflicts which have arisen between these two nations in the twenty-first century. There would certainly have been significant obstacles in the way of this happening, notably a probably inevitable divergence of interest between east and west. But events, such as 9/11, can lead to a convergence of said interests, as was observed in the early 2000s. The difficulty in both creating and

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[10] Commonwealth of Independent States

maintaining such a prospectively far-reaching alliance are not to be underestimated, as noted below.

Prospects for a coalition that included Russia and satisfied both east and west were not always so bleak. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), today OSCE, is in fact, "the only post-Cold War regional institution that seeks to include all of the European states;" the problem, however, is its weakness (Kay 1995, 113). Although the OSCE could have been and, to a certain extent, has been,

> a very successful framework for promoting fundamental values of conflict prevention, human rights, democracy, the rule of law, freedom of movement, the inviolability of borders, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and peacekeeping operations…its structural inability to make or enforce decisions and its cumbersome membership of fifty-three states ranging from 'Vancouver to Vladivostok' makes the CSCE very weak (Kay 1995, 113).

In the twentieth Century, the Russian Federation "embarked on a concerted effort to empower the CSCE as an alternative to NATO expansion," but despite "the assertiveness in Russian foreign policy stressing the CSCE, any working security order in Europe must have NATO at its core" (Kay 1995, 113-14). As Europe faced "political, economic and military instabilities," NATO was determined to be the organization most capable of returning stability (Kay 1995, 114). Sean Kay believed that NATO "expanding too soon could further encourage nationalists in Russia by conjuring up renewed concerns of encirclement," and this appears to have indeed been the case (Kay 1995, 114). The Kremlin initiated a proposal where the CSCE "should take over the political coordination of peacekeeping missions organized by the CIS, NATO, the NACC, and the WEU,"[11] but this "placed NATO states in the difficult

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[11] Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), Western European Union (WEU).

position of trying to balance the strong opposition of the Baltic states and the Ukraine, the reality that NATO would not assume such a broad regional role,[12] and a need not to exacerbate Russian alienation over the growing public debate about possible NATO expansion" (Kay 1995, 120). There was reason to be hopeful as an equal NATO-CSCE partnership could have enhanced peace and stability in Europe. This could have satisfied Russia's desire for an alternative form of security expansion across Europe. Furthermore, it could have allowed for pooling and optimized utilization of each organization's resources, also helping in burden-sharing and tighter integration of states. In actuality, NATO's power has generally grown, while the CSCE has been marginalized.

Has NATO brought Stability or War?

Whether NATO expansion has actually helped stability in the region of Eastern Europe is debatable. Multiple events since the Cold War's end have demonstrated the potential for contention that NATO can sometimes exacerbate. "NATO's interventions in the Balkans and the war against Serbia" in the 1990s is but one instance of such a pattern; "As diplomatic negotiations at the U.N. Security Council over the crisis in Kosovo unfolded in 1998, Russia refused to agree to authorization of military action in what was an internal conflict. In the absence of U.N. approval, an American-led NATO operation did intervene" (Ikenberry 2011, 247). To this day, Russia refuses to recognize Kosovo's independence.[13] Two subsequent and fairly recent Russia-NATO crises include the Russo-Georgian War of 2008 and the Ukrainian civil war of 2014. Şafak Oğuz explains

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[12] Perhaps not the case anymore in 2016.
[13] It is interesting to note, however, that Russia has (rather cynically) used Kosovo as evidence that its annexation of Crimea was within international legal realms. Russia also used Kosovo as justification in the cases of *de facto* states Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

that "Russia occupied Georgia, a NATO candidate, in 2008 and officially recognized two breakaway regions threatening Georgia's territorial integrity" (Oğuz 2015, 1). Five years later, a similar scenario played out in Ukraine, another NATO candidate state. Troublesome for Russia was the 2008 Bucharest Summit which "became a cornerstone for the membership process. Leaders 'welcomed Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO and agreed that these countries will become members of NATO;'" this decision "pushed the limits of Russian flexibility. The risk, in Moscow's eyes, was that the candidacies of Georgia and Ukraine would now start to gain momentum and become unstoppable" (Oğuz 2015, 3). This had previously been a concern of the West as well—"NATO's existing members consistently decline to…set [Georgia] on the road to membership, out of concern over its ongoing risk of conflict with Russia" (Donno et al. 2015, 251). Donno et al. argue the reticence regarding Georgian admission is due to "Georgia's level of security risk [which] is high [as] It is located in an unfriendly neighborhood, with contested borders, ruled by a government with questionable democratic credentials, and, perhaps most important, locked in an adversarial relationship with Russia" (Donno et al. 2015, 253). But these worries seemed to wane as the western world grew more confident and relations with Russia improved. Hence, in 2008, "NATO affirmed an intention to admit the country [Georgia] eventually;" the subsequent Georgian war, however, "created even stronger opposition— particularly from Germany, France, and other Western European members—to any further steps toward integration" (Donno et al. 2015, 253).

Unfortunately, it was this caution, which fizzled out at the 2008 Bucharest summit, that allowed for more relaxed relations. The mere possibility of extending

NATO's sphere into Georgia broke this cycle, leading to reactionary rhetoric and actions. Frustrated and on guard, "Russia, based on the lessons learned in Kosovo, declared Georgia as part of its sphere of interest and as one of its red lines in reference to NATO's expansion. [As noted,] The Alliance…ignored Russia's warnings" (Oğuz 2015, 10). Georgian President, Mikheil Saakashvili, is far from innocent in causing the war, and Georgia's use of violence in South Ossetia was deemed unjustifiable by the international community. Russia found the defense of its ethnic population abroad warranted intervention. NATO, meanwhile, failed to take a strong stand against Saakashvili. Despite Georgian violence, the organization maintained its commitment to help move the country closer to membership. The situation devolved rapidly, "President Dimitri Medvedev issued a statement emphasizing that Russia will provide effective assistance to South Ossetia and Abkhazia because of NATO's decision. The head of the Russian Military Staff stated that Russia will do everything (necessary) to prevent Georgia from joining NATO," and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov highlighted that "Russia would do its utmost not to allow Georgia and Ukraine into NATO" (Oğuz 2015, 3). Russia-West relations did slowly and progressively improve again, until 2014, when Russia invaded Crimea.

The question of Ukrainian NATO membership is particularly problematic. At the 2002 "Prague Summit, NATO Secretary-General Robertson said that it would probably take another 5 years before Ukraine, a country with enormous political and economic problems, to say nothing of its habitual human rights violations, could join the Alliance" (Barany 2006, 173). These types of prospective offers worry Russia—after all, had Robertson been right, Ukraine could have contemplated NATO membership as early as

2007. Unfortunately, there seems to be some inability on the part of the western world to recognize that Russia views NATO as an actual and legitimate threat to its security. Although most western liberals find it unpleasant to admit this, strategically speaking, it makes sense for Russia to be worried. In the post-Cold War, the West has persisted "in treating Moscow as its main rival in the post-Soviet space," and NATO's continued push to the East means Russia has found "itself [completely] surrounded by unfriendly states," those NATO countries or otherwise West-reliant countries in the West and in Northeast Asia, the highly unstable Middle Eastern world to the south, and elsewhere in Asia, Russia is confronted by the rise of China, "whose power and influence are leaping ahead, but whose future political and military course…remain uncertain" (Israelyan 1998, 57).

Ukraine's accession to NATO is, ergo, one of the most controversial and contentious subjects of expansion, especially because "Ukraine has many more, stronger, and longer-standing historical, linguistic, economic, social ties to Russia than any other former Russian republic" (Barany 2006, 174). Some argue NATO membership for Ukraine "would be a dangerous and completely counterproductive step," because the "relationship between Ukraine and Russia" is of utmost importance (Lieven 1997, 55). Ukrainian and Russian intellectuals argue that "Pursuing classical 'balance of power' tactics against Russia would result in the unnecessary economic and psychological exhaustion of Ukraine…A belief that Ukraine should consistently oppose Russia on the international stage is erroneous" and it would therefore be "more reasonable and beneficial to move toward the European Union and the non-military structures of NATO independently but in parallel," but above all, "A non-confrontational strategy concerning Russia is warranted" (Lieven 1997, 58). As Glaser warned two and a half decades ago,

"whatever benefits [NATO expansion] might provide must be weighed against the risk of increasing Russian insecurity. If expanding NATO into Eastern Europe increases Russian insecurity, Western security might also be reduced, for example, by increasing Russia's incentives to exert control over former Soviet republics or former members of the Warsaw Pact" (Glaser 1992, 537). Sadly, this advice was not heeded.

In 2012, Charles A. Kupchan seemed optimistic about the prospects of improved East-West relations. He first notes that Russia is a peculiar state, which "bolsters its credentials as a counterweight to the West," but while the Kremlin has "crossed swords with Washington over U.S. missile defense and NATO enlargement," Russia might simultaneously, "be uniquely poised to help build bridges between the Western order and whatever comes next," because "Moscow has a long history of diplomacy and engagement with the West, yet also considerable credibility among emerging powers" (Kupchan 2012, 111). At the time he wrote this, there was even a dialogue "under way about more fully anchoring Russia in the West, possibly through Russian membership in NATO" (Kupchan 2012, 111). Unfortunately, such a path to peaceful relations seems dreadfully damaged, if not destroyed, in the wake of the 2014 Ukraine Crisis. In fact, the Kremlin has cited NATO's eastward expansion as justification for its assertiveness and renewed aggressiveness in Eastern Europe.

Conclusion

It is unfortunate the situation has devolved to such a point that reconciliation with Russia seems even more difficult to achieve than after the 2008 Georgian War. The question that mattered most when considering expansion was whether "further NATO enlargement would do lasting damage to…the internal politics of Russia and U.S.

relations with that country?" Waterman answered that this did "not seem likely, because

enlargement is offensive to the Russians much more for its symbolism than for its

invasion of a sphere of influence in which Russian influence has greatly waned"

(Waterman et al. 2001, 225). Unfortunately, the symbolism and fear of a real invasion of

this sphere appear to have been stronger than scholars, such as Waterman expected,

especially in light of both the 2008 war with Georgia and the 2014 crisis in Ukraine.

Kupchan believes Russia to be an important player in establishing a post-unipolar order,

stating, "if the Atlantic community plays its cards right and succeeds in integrating

Russia into its institutions, it may well find Moscow a particularly useful arbiter in

negotiating the shape of a post-Western order" (Kupchan 2012, 111). It is much too late

today to do away with NATO, and it is unlikely at most that it will cease to exist any time

soon. Unfortunately, one cannot simply turn back time and change the past. Limited

expansion[14] that satisfied both the west and quelled Eastern European states' fears while

simultaneously avoiding stepping on Russia's toes would have been optimal. This could

have pleased all sides or, at the very least, would not have angered and 'threatened'

Russia. But this was not the path history followed. As such, NATO's expansionist policy

was responsible, in part, for initiating the Ukraine crisis.

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[14] Ideally, this would have meant only the incorporation of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary into the Alliance. At most, the Baltic states as well.

Chapter III - The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Ukraine Crisis

Introduction

Ukraine as it exists today is a rather young state which is plagued with conflictual internal divisions. These come in the form of cultural, linguistic, regional and ethnic cleavages and it can be easily argued that they are partly responsible for the country's struggling or failing democracy. In the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, the west of the country used nationalistic pride and pro-west tendencies to rebel against their former 'master' while in the east and Crimea, which belonged to Russia from the 18th century until 1954, the people expressed strong Russian nationalism. This situation means that Ukrainian politics is heavily divided along those same ethnic and linguistic cleavages. Not only are there significant internal divisions, but the country is also caught between two giants, the West and Russia, vying for power and influence. Both have used economic, historical, political and ideological means to try to secure their goals. The military alignments of Ukraine and the defensive alliances seeking its membership are paramount. In particular, the relationship between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Russia and Ukraine has been a contentious subject which was partly responsible for the recent annexation of Crimea by Russia and the separatist rebellion in eastern Ukraine.

The Crimean peninsula was the flashpoint of the Ukraine crisis, in part due to its ethnic, cultural and linguistic ties to Russia, but especially because of its strategic value—which is the main reason it seems doomed, historically speaking, to be caught in the midst of wars, fought over, torn apart, traded and invaded. Its main strategic worth is its access to the Black Sea. In 2010, the Kharkov Accords were signed between

Yanukovych and then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev—these renewed and extended the agreement allowing Russia's Black Sea Fleet to be stationed in Sevastopol from 2017 to 2042. Given the prevalent anti-Russian leaning of the new government, and its pro-EU and pro-NATO nature, it seems likely the Accords would have been rescinded, posing a serious obstacle to Russia's access to its Black Sea base in Sevastopol. It is therefore possible that, perhaps, fear of losing this strategic asset it what encouraged Russian President Vladimir Putin to annex Crimea.

Although the crisis began over whether the Ukrainian government should sign an economic deal with the EU or Russia, NATO's role in the crisis is more telling and significant than the European Union's. Mainly, this is due to the nature of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. While the European Union represents a real and serious economic competitor for Russia, especially were Ukraine to join this institution, NATO is a military alliance which has been Russia's adversary since its very conception in 1949. The EU has no army and a poor track record on taking effective military action. Russia has real practical, tactical and strategic reasons to fear NATO encroachment into its sphere of influence, as a NATO-aligned Ukraine would expand this hostile military threat and bring it to one of Russia's most important borders.

Ukraine's Political Pendulum

In 2004, electoral fraud led to the election of pro-Russian candidate, Viktor Yanukovych. Ukraine was then swept up in a nation-wide peaceful protest against government corruption, which later became known as the Orange Revolution. It was successful in bringing to power the more progressive, pro-western candidate, Viktor Yushchenko. The latter had run on a platform that favored Ukrainian membership in

NATO. However, despite high hopes from his constituents, Yushchenko was not proactive and accomplished very little. He failed to successfully bring Ukraine closer to NATO or EU membership, and two years later, his opponent, Viktor Yanukovych, was elected, putting an end to such pursuits. Since the collapse of Yushchenko's Orange Coalition, "Ukraine's relations with NATO have emerged as a particularly divisive issue" (Larrabee 2007, 48). The country is heavily divided along regional lines regarding whether Ukraine ought to form deeper ties with the West or with Russia. These cleavages soon led to another political uprising.

In 2014, during Yanukovych's second term, another movement, Euromaidan, took root, but this one was led by only a minority, and violence spread along with it. The instability created as pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovych was forced to flee the country led to a series of events, centered around Crimea and eastern Ukraine, which have negatively impacted relations between Russia and the West. For years, the Crimean peninsula has been predicted to be a point of contention. In a 2007 article, F. Stephen Larrabee notes, "Given Russia's historical claims on Crimea and the fact that the majority of Crimea's population is composed of ethnic Russians, many Ukrainians fear that Moscow could be tempted to exploit the latent separatist sentiment in Crimea as well as the ethnic tensions with the Tatars in order to increase Moscow's leverage over Kyiv" (Larrabee 2007, 54). In 1997, Anatol Lieven predicted that "as long as the current order or anything like it remain[ed] in place, Ukraine [would] not be directly threatened with Russian conquest or subjugation," but he warned, a "much greater potential threat comes from some combination of economic failure and a feeling of alienation on the part of the Russian and Russian-speaking populations in Ukraine," both of which were happening in

2014 (Lieven 1997, 74). Following Yanukovych's overthrow and the introduction of anti-Russian language laws, Russia annexed Crimea, the peninsula which was transferred to Ukraine by former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in 1954. This created an international uproar as Russia violated Ukraine's territorial integrity and international norms of non-intervention and sovereignty. The actual and planned eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been accused of either being a cause for or hailed as a solution to the Ukraine crisis.

Some argue NATO must expand to deter Russian imperialism while others view the organization as a source of Russian fears which can lead to greater insecurity and, consequently, aggressive defensiveness. This can be explained by the security dilemma. According to Barry Posen, because

> Relative power is difficult to measure and is often subjectively appraised[,] what seems sufficient to one state's defence will seem, and will often be, offensive to its neighbours. Because neighbours wish to remain autonomous and secure, they will react by trying to strengthen their own positions. States can trigger these reactions even if they have no expansionist inclinations. This is the security dilemma: what one does to enhance one's own security causes reactions that, in the end, can make one less secure. Cooperation among states to mute these competitions can be difficult because someone else's 'cheating' may leave one in a militarily weakened position. All fear betrayal (Posen 1993, 28).

In order to determine which view, liberal or realist, is more applicable or correct, and what actions should be taken in order to maintain peace and stability in the region and among the West and Russia, several factors must be considered and examined. First, the motivation behind Russia's actions is important to try to discern what its intentions and capabilities were and are regarding plans in Ukraine and the rest of Russia's sphere of influence. Second, one must consider what factors indicate risks of further Russian hostilities and what indicates the contrary. Then it becomes crucial to determine whether

NATO expansion and greater military activity on Russia's borders will deter Russian aggression or make it more likely by heightening tensions and stoking existing fears.

The Kremlin does not appear to have plans, desires, or most importantly, the capacity to invade all of Ukraine or any NATO member country at this juncture in time. The invasions of Georgia in 2008 and of Ukraine in 2014 did not have for an end goal the occupation of the entire countries, as some western pundits suspected, instead, the Russo-Georgian war and operations in eastern Ukraine were smaller-scale wars with a heavy reliance on propaganda and widespread use of information warfare rather than traditional modes of engagement. Also important in these cases are the domestic separatist elements, to which the conflicts have been largely confined. Russia's annexation of Crimea was largely a strategic move, but with deep historical and cultural ties which are often neglected but are actually primordial in understanding Russian foreign policy. NATO's eastward expansionism is an aggravating factor for Russia, and cooperation between the two should therefore be encouraged, with an easing of tensions and, on one end, respect for existing boundaries, principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and on the other, a scaling back of military activities and the termination of eastward expansion.

Russia, Ukraine and the West—"It's Complicated"

Relations between Russia and the West have always been complicated. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, they have been fighting for control and influence over Ukraine. The ethnically diverse country, and the Crimean peninsula in particular, have been widely identified as possibly explosive points of contention. As Vsevolod Samokhvalov points out, "Ukraine has been repeatedly described as an apple of discord, bone of contention and root of disagreement between Russia" and the West, including NATO and the

European Union (Samokhvalov 2015, 1371). Russia and the West (mainly through the EU and partly via NATO) have both tried to push and pull Ukraine to imitate them. This goes for the "political practices which correspond to their values, visions or interests," as Ukraine is encouraged to mold its democracy according to two very different styles (Samokhvalov 2015, 1372). In the economic dimension too, "each of the two actors are trying to open Ukrainian markets for their economic agents and to create more favourable conditions for trans-border trade with Ukraine and economic activities in Ukraine" (Samokhvalov 2015, 1373). One cause of the Ukraine crisis was, indeed, disagreement over whether the country should sign an economic deal with Russia rather than the EU. On an ideological level too, Russia offers a very different model than Europe. On the one hand, Ukraine and Russia share a Soviet and communist past and have similar historical experiences. The West offers a more progressive and human-rights and rule of law-based approach. The Ukrainian government has often emphasized a "rejection of its Soviet past and history, focusing on its trauma and promotion of Ukrainian language" (Samokhvalov 2015, 1373). This is an internally divisive issue as well, split along east-west lines. As with political and economic choices, the ideological courses Ukraine can choose from seem antithetical and mutually exclusive.

As such, many of Ukraine's nation-building decisions represent zero-sum games, whereby either Russia, or the West gains influence, power and money but seldom—if ever—can both prosper simultaneously. This is most evident in the security realm. As Samokhvalov states, "in the dimension of foreign policy and international security architecture, the EU and Russia seek to involve Ukraine in their security projects," for instance,

the EU is seeking Ukraine's alignment with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) decisions and its participation in various Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions, with possible formal NATO membership, whereas Russia is seeking to involve Ukraine both in integration processes in the post-Soviet space, in particular to [the] Eurasian Union and Russia-led European security architecture or, at least, to secure its neutrality. Given Russia's sensitivity about Ukraine's accession to NATO, the dilemma was also framed in zero-sum terms (Samokhvalov 2015, 1373).

The potential of Ukrainian membership in NATO is perhaps the most controversial and zero-sum decision to face not only the country itself, but Russia and the West as well.

It is widely recognized that Russia views the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a threat and an enemy force. Putin has often emphasized his belief that "the West, and the United States in particular, represented threats to Russia;" something that was highlighted in "Russia's 2010 Military Doctrine [which] cites NATO enlargement as the greatest military danger, a theme repeated in the Military Doctrine that Putin approved in December 2014" (Kramer 2015, 12). Put differently, "Moscow sees itself in a permanent state of siege at the hands of a Western order that it believes is using nonmilitary as well as military forces against Russia" (Blank 2015, 69). Mearsheimer neatly summarizes the nature of this sentiment: "Russia's deep-seated opposition to NATO expansion shows that it fears the idea of NATO's conventional forces moving closer to its border. Russia obviously does not accept the argument that its powerful nuclear retaliatory force provides it with absolute security" (Mearsheimer 2014, 133) This is partly explained by the realist notion, also expressed by Mearsheimer, that great powers, due to the fundamental insecurity of their status as such and the constant threat of being outmatched and out-powered, are never satisfied with existing borders, which in Russia's case have dramatically shrunk since the Cold War's end. States therefore constantly seek to expand

their spheres of influence and to expand surrounding buffer zones in order to increase

their security, hence why Russia seeks Ukraine's alliance, or at least its neutrality. In

sum, Russia feels NATO is a serious threat which it would be unable to combat

successfully, and the country believes an attack by the Organization is not unbelievable

or out of the question.

It is also common knowledge that Russia is highly territorial, so to speak, and is

uncomfortable with western encroachments into its sphere of influence, as explained

above, particularly as it concerns both Georgia and Ukraine, two countries with which

Russia has had rather violent disagreements in the recent past. Although it would be easy

to say it was the Kremlin's ambition alone that drove Russia to act as it did in the

Georgian war, the annexation of Crimea and the Ukraine crisis, this would be an unfair

and reductive statement. There are many other confounding variables aside from

imperialist ambitions. Indeed,

> Ukraine has many more, stronger, and longer-standing historical,
> linguistic, economic, social ties to Russia than any other former Russian
> republic. Public opinion polls conducted in late 2004 confirm that roughly
> half of Ukrainians…are saddened by the Soviet Union's demise.[15]
> According to another survey, nearly 80% of Russians are convinced that
> Ukrainians and Belarusians are really Russians, and nearly 70% do not
> think that Ukraine is a genuine country (Barany 2006, 174).

According to Andrew T. Wolff, the current rift between Russia and the West is "a result

of a complex mixture of economic, political and historical factors, but one of its more

curious antecedents is a disagreement over an alleged promise [not to expand NATO

eastward] made over 20 years ago. Russia says the origins of the Ukraine crisis lie in

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[15] By contrast, the figures for those who believe the USSR's demise caused more harm than good is 25%
for Kazakhstan and only 8% for Turkmenistan (Esipova, Neli and Julie Ray).

NATO's decision to expand the alliance" (Wolff 2015, 1103). This should lead rational political actors to move forward cautiously with NATO expansion.

Blame and Ambitions

Of course, the West has a different take on the crisis. It generally accuses Russia of being responsible for creating problems in Ukraine—many westerners contend the crisis "was sparked by Russian intervention in the internal affairs of Ukraine via the illegal annexation of Crimea and the backing of separatist groups in the Donbas region"—and they credit NATO for being a stabilizing force in all of Europe—"NATO enlargement plays no part in the crisis," western leaders assert, "because enlargement provides stability for all of Europe, and therefore is not threatening to Russia" (Wolff 2015, 1103). In classical liberal terms, "The West attributes the persistent tensions between itself and Russia to the latter's unwillingness to undertake liberal reforms and to cooperate with western powers" (Wolff 2015, 1103). According to realist doctrine, however, 'liberal reforms' are a façade. Regime type does not matter, as international relations are about power and capabilities, so whether Russia is liberal or conservative is actually irrelevant.[16] As Mearsheimer writes, "the international system creates the same basic incentives for all great powers. Whether a state is democratic or autocratic matters relatively little for how it acts towards other states" (Mearsheimer 2007, 72). The West in concerned about power plays just as much as Russia, and NATO is an instrument it can use to flex its diplomatic and military muscles.

Further evidence that the West is not primarily concerned with democratization, the main claim of liberals, is the ample scholarship which proves the link between joining

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[16] One of the most obvious examples of this (the insignificance of government type) is the United States' relationship with Saudi Arabia.

IOs and democracy is not infallible, far from it. Poast and Urpelainen find that "while IO membership can promote democratic consolidation through external support for institutional development, it cannot directly prevent authoritarian reversals in transitional democracies. Moreover, IO membership is particularly important for countries that democratize in the shadow of past military rule," which is evidently the case for Ukraine (Poast and Urpelainen 2015, 107). Additionally, the United States has pursued policies abroad where they encourage the formation of group rights along ethnic and religious lines. This can often be anti-democratic. As Lise Morjé Howard states, the "pursuit of 'ethnocratic' solutions not only runs contrary to American ideals, but it is also not pragmatic, in that it enables the creation of regimes that are fragile, divided, and often dependent on outside assistance to maintain peace" (Howard 2015, 721). Although "Individual political rights and civic national identity lie at the core of American democracy…When mediating ethno-religious conflicts…US foreign policymakers often eschew their own country's foundational values in favor of rigid, group rights-based regimes. Indeed," these so-called "'ethnocratic' regimes enjoy a poor track record in terms of forwarding democracy and self-government. They often…prove institutionally fragile and prone to ongoing fractionalization and conflict" (Howard 2015, 721). In Ukraine, the government which the U.S. currently backs is ethnically divisive. The mere fact that the crisis in the country reached its tipping point with the introduction of an anti-Russian language law is revealing, especially when one considers the fact that 14.8 percent of Ukrainians' mother tongue is Russian and ethnic Russians make up 17.3 percent of Ukraine's population (All-Ukrainian Population Census-2001) According to Volodimir Paniotto of the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, "more than 80% of

Eastern Ukrainians use Russian" as their language of convenience, and about 30% of the

population consists of Russophone Ukrainians (Paniotto 2005, 9). Whether the U.S.

pursues anti-democratic policies by design or whether they stem from a genuine intention

to democratize and liberalize nations is up for debate, though realists would argue this

really does not matter. In Morgenthau's words, "Realism maintains that universal moral

principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulation

but that they must be filtered through the concrete circumstances of time and place"

(Morgenthau 1993, 11). That is to say that states must prioritize politically successful

over moral actions, because "There can be no political morality without prudence, that is,

without consideration of the political consequences of seemingly moral action. Realism,

then, considers prudence—the weighing of the consequences of alternative political

actions—to be the supreme value in politics" (Morgenthau 1993, 11). What is clear is that

evidence is present which demonstrates two crucial elements policymakers either ignore

or are unaware of. First, pressuring countries to join international organizations, such as

NATO, does not necessarily lead to long-term democratic reforms, as previously

demonstrated (Reiter 2001, 58-60).[17] Furthermore, since NATO is a military alliance, the

implications to Russia, should Ukraine or Georgia join the organization, are

fundamentally different than if it were the World Health Organization or the International

Air Transportation Association, for instance. Unlike these, NATO does not just facilitate

cooperation, reduce transaction costs and lengthen the shadow of the future (Keohane and

Martin 1995, 42; Drezner 2011, 50), its status as a military alliance whose original

historic purpose was countering the Soviet Union makes it a fundamentally different

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[17] Albania represents such a case, where despite joining NATO, the country remains only partly free.

matter. Second, encouraging ethnocratic regimes, such as the new Ukrainian government, is anti-democratic as it supports the marginalization of an important ethnic minority[18]

<p style="text-align:center">To Join or Not to Join? Ukraine's Dilemma and Russia's Fear</p>

Ukraine has gone back and forth on its commitments to join NATO. In April 2005, when Yushchenko was in power, "NATO granted Ukraine Intensified Dialogue status, which is generally regarded as an important preparatory step toward obtaining a Membership Action Plan (MAP) and eventual membership" (Larrabee 2007, 48). The serious discussions among NATO members to grant Ukraine membership worried Russia, but "Yanukovych's return to power in August 2006 scuttled these plans" (Larrabee 2007, 48). His political base mostly comes from the east and south of the country, which holds a generally negative view of NATO and favors building ties with Russia instead. One particular poll found that "in October 2006, only about 17 percent of the Ukrainian population supports NATO membership. According to the same poll, more than 50 percent would vote against NATO membership in a referendum," which is the mechanism Yanukovych argued should be used to determine whether or not Ukraine should join the alliance (Larrabee 2007, 49). There is also significant reluctance among some NATO members themselves to admit Ukraine into the alliance.

Aside from economic and political concerns, such as the level of democratization and a healthy financial system[19], some countries have also taken Russia's 'feelings,' so to speak, into account—many "worry that Ukrainian membership would antagonize Russia and lead to a deterioration of relations with Moscow" (Larrabee 2007, 50). As

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[18] It should be noted this critique applies equally to Russia, which simply backs a different ethnocratic regime.

[19] Ukraine's "shadow economy roughly equal[s] half the economy. In 2003…the shadow economy [had] reached half of Ukraine's GDP," and this figure "did not decline in the Yushchenko era" (Kuzio 2011, 94).

aforementioned, this is something realists foresaw at the end of the Cold War and it has

proven to be a valid concern. But while political powers such as Germany and France

hold this opinion and tread carefully as a result, "The United States has been one of the

strongest supporters of Ukrainian independence and integration into Western structures,

particularly NATO" (Larrabee 2007, 59). The prevalent view among Americans is that

"the door to NATO membership should be kept open. Although," Larrabee warns, "its

admission should not be artificially accelerated, membership in NATO could be an

important means of anchoring Ukraine more closely to the West in the medium term,

especially because Ukraine's chances of joining the EU in the next decade are slim,"

despite EU membership receiving greater popular support in Ukraine (Larrabee 2007,

60). Others agree, stating plainly, "we should not close the door to NATO for Ukraine or

to any other potentially qualifying country that meets the alliance's standards" (Kramer

2015, 16). Putin and his government have been dedicated to stalling or stopping

Ukraine's westward pull.

Although the current government,[20] headed by Petro Poroshenko, may be

western-focused, the same cannot be said of the population at large. The regions in the

east, particularly Donetsk and Luhansk, were already angered by the overthrow of

Yanukovych and, many of them are ethnic Russians or Russian speakers, afraid of the

changes the new anti-Russian government would bring. Where NATO is concerned, the

lack of popular support in Ukraine itself makes joining the Organization unlikely,

however, just as eastern Ukrainians worried, it is possible Russia also saw in the new

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[20] This government, it should be noted, is comparably undemocratic as Yanukovych's.

government elite the potential for such a move, no matter how unpopular it would have been.

Some scholars, such as David Kramer, believe Putin unintentionally accelerated "Ukraine's westward shift" by annexing Crimea and supporting the rebels in Donbass (Kramer 2015, 11). However, his claim that "Ukraine has never been more united" is questionable (Kramer 2015, 11). As evidence, he cites the fact that the Rada, Ukraine's Parliament, voted in favor of "revoking Ukraine's 'non-bloc' status and enhancing cooperation with NATO, [which] never would have happened had Putin left Ukraine alone" (Kramer 2015, 11). The constantly changing political leadership, low approval ratings and rampant corruption of Ukraine indicate the contrary. For instance, "On April 10th, [2016], after weeks of vacillation, the prime minister, Arseniy Yatseniuk, whose popularity had plummeted along with Ukrainians' living standards, offered to resign…his [two year] administration was tarred by corruption scandals and stalled reforms. Mr Yatseniuk's offer of resignation was followed by dissension and backroom horse-trading. The squabbling exemplified Ukraine's lack of a responsible political elite" ("Clean-up Crew" 2016). The truth, then, is that Ukraine is incredibly divided, especially along regional, linguistic and ethnic lines. To state that Putin is solely responsible for destabilizing the country fails to take into account how the crisis started and the cultural cleavages that exist. Those are at the root of Ukraine's war.

Ukraine's Civil War

There are several factors that influence the likelihood of civil wars. Despite not having been officially labeled as such, the conflict between the Ukrainian government and the Donbass region rebels qualifies as one—"Civil wars are violent conflicts that take

place primarily within one state, involve the government and at least one organized rebel group, and entail some minimum number of people killed" (Cunningham 2016, 309). David E. Cunningham cites "Quantitative studies [which] have found that civil war is more likely when states have low average incomes, mountainous territory, nondemocratic governments, large populations, and have recently experienced a civil war" (Cunningham 2016, 307). Ukraine falls into most of these categories and follows other patterns that make rebellion by minority groups more likely, namely that the latter "are geographically concentrated" in the east and south, and have recently been "excluded from political power" (Cunningham 2016, 307-08). Ukraine is fundamentally unstable due to the type of ethnic inequalities present in the country which makes it prone to civil conflict. According to Christian Houle, "Under conditions of high [Between Group Inequality (BGI)] and low [Within Group Inequality(WGI)] ethnic and class cleavages reinforce each other," and these "Reinforcing cleavages…accentuate in-group loyalties, enabling groups to mount challenges against democratic regimes" (Houle 2015, 470). As a result, "when WGI is low, BGI destabilizes democracy by accentuating conflicts over distribution/redistribution and by increasing the political salience of ethnicity" (Houle 2015, 470). In Ukraine, as the inequality between ethnic Ukrainians and Russians increases, "the gap between the preferences of different groups for different economic policies widens," with the former favoring pro-EU policies and the latter supporting economic deals with Russia (Houle 2015, 470). As is often the case, the initial breakdown of (an already fragile) democracy in Ukraine came with a sudden and undemocratic regime change which deposed the established government, not with a civil

war. But the new regime was more discriminatory, and at least as undemocratic, as the one that preceded it. As a result, civil tensions rose to a breaking point in the east.

Rebels and governments often calculate the chances of receiving international aid before launching into a civil war. It is particularly important for the rebels, so "for civil war to occur, dissidents have to have some expectation that they will achieve success by engaging in it," something which can be helped by an outside force (Cunningham 2016, 313). Depending on the circumstances, international aid can lessen the likelihood of war breaking out or enable it. In the case of Ukraine, the latter occurred, as both sides received international support. The Ukrainian government obtained non-lethal military aid and the West's political and financial support. Meanwhile, the separatists were backed by Russia, which provided training, weapons and professional soldiers. Perhaps it was the expectation (or knowledge?) that the Kremlin would back them which encouraged the separatists to declare themselves an independent republic. In general, these kinds of rebellions, start with an attempt to solve differences diplomatically, which the Donbass rebels initially tried to do. But in the event that this failed, as was eventually the case, the separatists could feel reassured they would have, with Russia's help, the capacity to engage in an armed conflict with a reasonably good chance of success.

The Russian Threat According to Liberals

Liberals find reason to worry about the possibility of Russian imperialist ambitions and therefore encourage NATO to take on a more involved role in Eastern Europe. They focus on the weakness of Russia's neighbors and on its repeated air and naval incursions into foreign territory. Since 2014, there has been a worrisome increase in Russian military activity. Putin "has challenged NATO states and others with provocative

military flights and submarine maneuvers" (Kramer 2015, 14). According to Elizabeth

Braw, the Russian military [has] paid [many] illegal visit[s] to its ex-Soviet underling[s],"

including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania; even Sweden and Finland have been victims of

"unwelcome Russian attention" (Braw 2015, 31-32). Belkin, Mix and Woehrel

corroborate this claim, noting that "in the past year Russian forces have performed air

and land exercises near Swedish and Finnish territory" (Belkin et al. 2014, 299). In 2014

alone, Stephen J. Blank adds,

> Moscow repeatedly threatened the Baltic and Nordic states and civilian
> airliners, heightened intelligence penetration, deployed unprecedented
> military forces against those states, intensified overflights and submarine
> reconnaissance, mobilized nuclear forces and threats, deployed nuclear-
> capable forces in Kaliningrad, menaced Moldova, and openly violated the
> Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987 (Blank 2015, 67).

The fact that Russian leaders indicated that "in 2015 they will concentrate on developing

military capabilities in the Baltic, Crimea, and the Arctic" adds to the legitimacy of

western concerns about the Kremlin's future intentions (Blank 2015, 68). Mearsheimer,

who himself opposed NATO expansion, notes that "NATO expansion was predicated on

the belief that Russia might someday try to conquer territory in central Europe"

(Mearsheimer 2014, 133).[21] Liberals therefore feel vindicated in their push for expansion.

Many liberals favor NATO expansion and there is hope that "Russian military

aggression could indirectly serve to boost support for NATO membership in Sweden and

Finland" (Belkin et al. 2014, 299). Sweden is particularly concerning to some, because of

its weak military. The Swedish government apparently bought into the concept that the

End of History had come and perpetual peace had descended upon Europe. Their military

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[21] While some might view the annexation of Crimea as proof this fear has been validated, others, as will be examined below, might point to NATO expansion being the culprit in guiding Russia's actions.

capabilities have hence declined strongly and some have gone so far as to state that "Sweden would only be able to defend itself for a week without NATO support" (Braw 2015, 32). In the post-Cold War era, Sweden opted for defense cuts and against NATO membership, although it did join the European Union.

Many in the West have opined that Sweden and Finland ought to reconsider and take steps to join the defensive alliance. Russian opposition to such a move is strong, as highlighted by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's statement in 2013 "that Moscow would be forced to 'respond' if Finland or Sweden joined NATO" (Belkin et al. 2014, 299). In 2014, "Sweden along with Finland finally took the half-step of signing a cooperation agreement with NATO" (Braw 2015, 33). Given negative public opinion toward NATO membership, however, it is unlikely Sweden or Finland will soon join the alliance.

The Baltic states, on the other hand, are constantly wary of Russia and have built up their militaries instead. "As soon as they regained independence," in 1991, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania "began building territorial defense-based armed forces, the military setup that most wealthy Western nations maintain," and they eagerly and quickly joined NATO as well (Braw 2015, 33). As such, they are comparatively better equipped to deal with an aggressive Russia. But downsides associated with joining NATO exist, notably, that although the Baltic states insist on defense against a possibly imperialist Russia, "NATO's larger member states [demand] a military focused on fighting the Taliban and other non-territorial threats, not Russians…Though still worried about Russia, the small-state trio did as it was told and adapted its militaries to foreign missions, away from home defense" (Braw 2015, 33). Russia and NATO even cooperated on missions in

Afghanistan, but when the 2008 war between Georgia and Russia came, the Baltic states found their suspicions vindicated. To them, the war was "a historical turning point that proved them right in their suspicion that the Russian bear would sooner or later begin to prowl" (Braw 2015, 34). While the Baltic states saw 2008 as the turning point in their relations with Russia, it took the 2014 Ukraine crisis for the rest of the West to embark on the same boat. This was partly because, even though "the international setting which led to the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia should have…spurred further politico-military integration" on both sides (Vieira 2014, 566), the energy dependence of Europe upon the eastern giant led to continued cooperation.

NATO member countries, including the United States, have agreed to provide Ukraine with non-lethal military aid following the annexation of Crimea and rebellion in Donbass. There is a strong NATO presence in the Baltic states, already, although "their NATO allies have not agreed to a permanent troop presence" yet (Braw 2015, 36). This is a cautionary move, as Russia is likely to view a significant and permanent foreign presence near its border as a threat. Unfortunately, the prevailing mood lately has been inflammatory, as evidenced by more frequent and large-scale NATO exercises near Russia's borders since 2014, though so far, cooler heads have prevailed, on both sides. However, not everyone might agree with that statement. Some have branded the Kremlin irrational. Braw ironically notes that biding one's time and ignoring unreasonable aggression only works if "the bully" is rational, but, she comments, "What if he is unpredictable and, say, decides to annex a chunk of another country without prior warning and in fact without even being officially present in the disputed territory?"

(Braw 2015, 37). Her, and other Liberals', message is clear. However, realists can and do convincingly portray the Kremlin as rational.[22]

<div align="center">*Changing the Game?*</div>

Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization states that an attack against one of its members is an attack against all, and therefore, all member states are tasked with protecting each other in the event of war. Realists, as expressed below, view this as a safeguard against Russian aggression, as a matter, not of intentions or desires, but of military capability. Russia has been beefing up those capabilities. Some worry that "within five years Russia could run multiple Ukraine-sized operations in Europe. In rethinking the character of contemporary war, Moscow has arguably moved beyond its adaptation of the US concept of network-centric war, which drove previous defense reforms starting in 2008" (Blank 2015, 69). By 2025, it is believed possible that Russia's forces "would have parity with the US and NATO in conventional and nuclear dimensions of high-tech warfare, and therefore the capability to deter and intimidate NATO" (Blank 2015, 69-70). This seems dubious. Even though Russia is and will keep building up its military forces, so will Poland, the Baltic states, and most significantly, the United States, NATO's leading country. Article 5 means Russia would probably not attack a member of the organization, regardless of its improved capabilities.

Regardless of these actual military capabilities, whether they be strong enough in a few years to confront NATO or not, liberals have begun to worry that Ukraine might be changing the game in a way that makes the application of Article 5 murky. The Ukraine crisis has created a concept which can be aptly called 'ambiguous warfare.' As Braw

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[22] See below, "The Realist View—Don't Poke The Bear"

highlights, "events in eastern Ukraine, where separatists are suspected of operating in conjunction with Russia, an allegation denied by Moscow…are changing the military game," and the question becomes, "how do you prove that [Ukrainian rebels] are connected to Russia? That is the weakness of the NATO treaty" (Braw 2015, 36). This is cause, certain policy-makers and scholars contend, for an expanded and more permanent NATO influence and presence in Eastern Europe. This seems illogical. While troops permanently based in Eastern Europe serve as a deterrent against conventional warfare, they will not stop cyber-attacks, propaganda campaigns, the funding of subversive groups and similar non-conventional means of waging war which are the most prevalent methods in this case.

The Realist View—Don't Poke the Bear

Realists have a much different opinion regarding the Ukraine crisis, the role NATO has and should play, and what the West's response should be. Realist thought offers a more prudent approach, one that still values military preparedness but advises against rash and alienating actions. While it is important for NATO, the EU, and the U.S. to offer Russia a united front which opposes the latter's aggressiveness, there are some issues with the West's reactions.

First and foremost, there is a lack of cultural understanding and an inability or unwillingness to understand Russia's reasoning. There is a mainstream alarmist trend that contends Russia's actions in Crimea were the beginning of a renewed imperialist dream, and potentially the first step in pan-European conflict with Russia as the conquering aggressor. For any scholar who understands Russia's motivations, this is a questionable claim. As a rational actor, the Kremlin is aware it would not be able to win a war against

NATO, and since an invasion of one member country represents an invasion of all NATO members, it is extremely unlikely Russia would attack such a nation. Furthermore, if Russia had intended to invade all of Ukraine, as some believed—"Some observers believe Russia could use widespread violence in eastern Ukraine as a pretext for military intervention" (Belkin et al. 2014, 294)—it would have already done so. According to "Respected Russian military observer Pavel Felgenhauer…Putin's military window of opportunity for an invasion of eastern and southern Ukraine [was] from [April 2014] to about mid-May" (Belkin et al. 2014, 294). Military experts agree Russia does not have the capacity to occupy the entire nation state of Ukraine. Other time frames of opportunity have come and gone without a wide-scale Russian invasion which would extend beyond Crimea. For instance, the Kremlin failed to seize an opportunity to create chaos "in eastern and southern Ukraine" when it failed to "disrupt Ukraine's May 25 presidential election" which could have provided "the pretext for an invasion" (Belkin et al. 2014, 294). Although, as realists often stress, it is impossible to be certain of countries' intentions, especially when they are hostile, it appears as though Russia did not and does not wish to invade or occupy all of Ukraine. Realists, however, would focus more heavily on the fact that Russia does not possess the military capability and capacity to successfully occupy Ukraine beyond Crimea's borders or to invade any NATO member country.

<div align="center">Cooperation and Lack Thereof</div>

The United States has been actively cooperating with its NATO partners in the east following the 2014 crisis. Even prior to this, though, the United States had been working closely, particularly with Poland, to improve defense in that region. The U.S.

government, despite its reduction of troops stationed in Europe and its "pivot" toward

Asia, "remains prepared and able to honor its commitments to the defense and security of

fellow NATO member states" (Belkin et al. 2014, 300). Despite non-lethal military aid

which the U.S. has provided to Ukraine (for instance, 300,000 Meals Ready to Eat) and

significant American contributions to eastern European defense, some believe those still

fall short. Critics have argued "that more should be done to support Ukraine, reassure

allies in Central and Eastern Europe, and counter Russian aggression. Some have called

for bolstered and possibly permanent NATO and/or U.S. troop deployments in Central

and Eastern Europe, as well as more frequent military exercises, including in the Black

Sea" (Belkin et al. 2014, 300). Senator John McCain has been a strong proponent of such

actions. According to him, Ukrainians "love the United States of America, they love

freedom–and I don't think you could view this as anything other than our traditional

support for people who want free and democratic society…the destiny [they] seek lies in

Europe" ("John McCain tells Ukraine Protesters…" 2013). McCain has even argued in

favor of sending lethal military aid to Ukraine, criticizing President Obama for refusing

to do so, "Since the crisis in Ukraine began nearly a year ago, President Obama has

stubbornly refused to provide lethal military assistance that would help Ukraine defend

its sovereign territory and determine its own political future free of Russian coercion. By

doing so, the President has isolated himself from the growing consensus…that this

beleaguered democracy needs and deserves increased American support" (McCain 2015).

While intra-NATO cooperation has benefited from the crisis, relations with

Russia have taken a serious hit. As a consequence of the Ukraine crisis, "NATO

suspended all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia on April 2 [2014]"

(Belkin et al. 2014, 295). Defense along NATO members' Russian borders has been

shored up. Diplomatically, Russia was "kicked out of the Group of 8, and Putin left the

November Group of 20 meeting in Brisbane, Australia, early after receiving a brow-

beating from other leaders" (Kramer 2015, 14).

The Future of NATO Enlargement

Among liberals, the answer to Russian aggression tends to be a resounding:

"Expand NATO!" They view the organization as a force for peace and stability, which is

not unusual, given their long-standing belief that IGOs help enhance cooperation and the

spread of democracy in the world (as noted in chapter I). Following the actions of Russia

in Ukraine, "some U.S. observers and Members of Congress [called] for a more

concerted NATO effort to enlarge the alliance, particularly to the east" (Belkin et al.

2014, 297). But what if NATO is a cause of, rather than a solution to, the Russian

problem? This is a point some realist scholars have argued, quite convincingly at times.

Even before the Ukraine crisis arose, NATO's eastward expansion was a point of

contention. Scholars have continually asserted that "Ukraine's potential NATO

membership is arguably the most important and complex enlargement decision facing the

Alliance, just as the emergence of an independent Ukraine was the most significant

geopolitical consequence of the Soviet Union's disintegration" (Barany 2006, 174).

Expansion would be a grave mistake, as the prospect of eastward NATO enlargement is

one of the main causes for the 2008 Russo-Georgian war and one of Russia's

predominant concerns with Ukraine. Indeed, "Some observers assert that the Ukrainian

government could be cautious about expressing ambitions to join NATO for a number of

reasons, including sensitivity to public opinion and possible opposition to membership

from countries within the alliance that would be reluctant to further antagonize Russia" (Belkin et al. 2014, 298). Putin has often cited the West's promise "that after Germany's unification, NATO wouldn't spread eastward. The then NATO Secretary-General told us that the alliance wouldn't expand beyond its eastern borders" and the Russian president "went on to admit that the fear of Ukrainian entry into NATO had partly motivated his decision to annex Crimea;" it is important to grasp the fact that "The Russian government views the situation in Ukraine through a lens of repeated western betrayal, creeping NATO encroachment and disrespect for its security concerns" (Wolff 2015, 1103).[23] As a matter of fact, one factor which heightened Russian fears in April 2014 was "NATO Secretary General Rasmussen's assertion that the door to NATO membership for Ukraine remained open," however, some NATO members disagreed with that statement and quickly expressed this; for instance, "German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier reportedly countered that 'NATO membership for Ukraine is not pending'" (Belkin et al. 2014, 298). Since "the policy of enlargement caused a significant and longstanding breach in relations between the West and Russia [and in] order to reduce these tensions, NATO leaders must admit they have failed in their attempts to turn Russia into a reliable, western-oriented partner, realize that their open-door enlargement policy has created insecurity in Europe, and alter this policy by injecting it with geopolitical reasoning" rather than a constant focus on liberalizing others (Wolff 2015, 1103-04).

A geopolitically-motivated NATO would mean altering some of the alliance's current trajectories. Rather than "evaluating countries for membership on the basis…of normative criteria," which Ukraine does not currently meet regardless, NATO would take

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[23] It should also be noted that Russia itself has not always lived up to its post-Cold War commitments. In particular as it regards Ukraine's nuclear weapons.

into account "how their inclusion increases overall alliance security, especially in relationship to Russia" (Wolff 2015, 1104). This would mark a dramatic departure from the current mentality, but it is not the only change necessary. The geopolitical NATO would encourage the creation of buffer zones which would reduce "tensions between the West and Russia through the creation of separating space. A geopolitically driven enlargement policy would seek to establish Ukraine as a neutral buffer zone" (Wolff 2015, 1104). The Organization would therefore "pursue enlargement in the Balkans and Scandinavia, but would deny admission to Georgia and Ukraine," a theoretical about-face from current rhetoric which aims to have these two countries join as soon as they meet required criteria (Wolff 2015, 1104). This would mean greater stability in Europe and lead to improved East-West relations.

In Ukraine too, there is strong opposition to joining the Organization, which makes Ukrainian membership unlikely. Despite an earlier push by the Kuchma and Yushchenko administrations to move closer to the West, under President Viktor Yanukovych, Ukraine renounced previous aspirations to join NATO. This, evidently, suited Russia, which perhaps feared that the new and more radical government which forced its way to power in 2014 would seek membership once more. It is unlikely this will happen, though, for the same reasons it was abandoned previously. As aforementioned, the majority of Ukrainians do not favor NATO membership and it is an issue that is highly divisive and split along regional lines. A March 2014 opinion poll found that "34% of Ukrainians were for NATO membership, and 44% opposed, with a regional split of 74% for membership in western Ukraine and 67% opposed in the east" (Belkin et al. 2014, 289).

Conclusion

Relations between the West, Russia and Ukraine have never been easy, and they certainly have hit a few important roadblocks these past few years. Ukraine has struggled to establish successful democratic government and has been fairly consistently unstable throughout the past two decades, whether under more pro-Western or more pro-Russian leadership. As easy as it is for governments in the West to point to Russia's destabilizing influence and illegal actions toward its little brother, it is important to recognize that mistakes have been made on all sides, not just the easternmost one.

The most notable error the West has made is the continued eastern expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Russia sees this defensive military alliance as an enemy force and a real and serious threat. As the Cold War was drawing to a close, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was given top-level assurances NATO would not expand further east. This promise was broken, leaving the Russian Federation bitter and betrayed. The paternalistic 'Motherland' has always viewed Georgia and Ukraine as part of its own sphere of influence and, ergo, as 'off-limits' to western powers. Since all great powers seek to achieve regional hegemony, it is logical and by no means atypical that Russia seeks to maintain its superiority and influence in the region, impeding the West's attempts to encroach upon this territory. By annexing Crimea, Russia behaved as a rational actor, seeking to protect its geostrategic assets and drawing on deep cultural ties to obtain what it wished without much bloodshed. Russia's support of the separatists in Ukraine can also be viewed as rational, since the new government they were rebelling against was, at the minimum, pro-West, and could be feasibly considered anti-Russia.

In this particular case, realist views are more applicable and the West ought to follow a realist-based policy, rather than a liberal one. Liberalism can be commended on its pursuit of human rights and democratization, but in the Ukraine crisis, the paths which its proponents recommend incite warmongering. Perhaps in the future it will be possible for Russia and NATO to view each other as peaceful neighbors, but for now, the best option is to halt eastward expansion.

Conclusion

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, intergovernmental organizations have widely proliferated. The League of Nations, though not the first IGO, served as the template for modern-day IGOs. Its failures highlighted the importance of strong state commitment, economic interdependence, cultural ethnocentrism and perceived legitimacy. Successful subsequent organizations have learned from the League's shortcomings, and today, they occupy an important place in international relations. IGOs have come to cover a wide range of subject matters, from aviation, to economics, health and defense. Some have greater legitimacy and are much more effective than others. Although they do not all serve the same purpose, fundamentally, IGOs strive to help governments improve cooperation on common issues which affect them. Although they have their limitations, IGOs will continue to play a significant role in international relations for the foreseeable future. Efforts should therefore be directed at how to best reform and improve IGOs in order to maximize their utility, efficiency and beneficial impact.

One of the most important defense alliances of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which was formed in 1949 in order to defend Western Europe from the Soviet Union. When the Cold War ended, there was much heated debate about what ought to happen to the organization, given it had outlived its initial mandate. Liberals champion the proliferation of IGOs, believing them to be effective means of cooperation, and hence a force for peace and stability. As such, liberal voices strongly favored the continued existence and the eastward expansion of NATO in the post-Soviet world. Realists, on the other hand, foresaw many potential problems arising from this expansionist path. Realist thought offers a more prudent approach to

international politics. Since the world is anarchic, states are self-interested actors who value power above all else, as that affords security. Although a more pessimistic view than liberalism, realism prescribes a more prudent approach to international relations. While they view the world as constantly subject to discord, they tend to advocate for policies which make war less likely. In the case of NATO, realists favored either the dissolution of the alliance, or at least, they counseled against the organization's expansion. Correctly, they assumed pushing NATO's borders eastward would create instability and lead to heightened tensions between the west and Russia, which would fear western encroachments into its backyard, thereby upsetting the fragile balance of power. Liberal predictions argued NATO would be a force for democracy, peace and stability, however it could be argued the 2008 Russo-Georgian war and 2014 Ukraine crisis may have demonstrated the contrary. Fears that the organization, which Russia views as a hostile military force, would encroach upon Russia's sphere of influence led to retaliatory rhetoric and action.

Unfortunately, it is too late now, in 2016, to turn back the clock and prevent the expansion of NATO. It is not too late, however, to stop or restrain eastward expansionism and halt the growth of the defense alliance. It has also become unlikely at best that early liberal hopes that Russia would one day be incorporated into the organization will be realized. Instead, it appears as though other means of west-Russia cooperation ought to be pursued, perhaps with the eventual goal of a NATO-like defense alliance which includes both the U.S. and Russia. For now, however, the best course of action available to peace and stability appears to be a scaling back of NATO and the cessation of its expansion, particularly eastward into Russia's 'backyard'.

IGOs do not necessarily bring peace and stability. Liberals support these organizations' proliferation in the world based on the premise and widely-held belief that they can help democratize nations and create more cooperative, and hence peaceful, relations between states, leading to greater stability in an anarchic system that is naturally volatile. Realists dispute these claims on all counts. The case of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's expansion seems to indicate that, at least where this particular IGO is concerned, liberals are incorrect. In fact, where the 2008 Russo-Georgian War and 2014 Ukraine crisis are concerned, NATO seems to have partial responsibility for stoking tensions and inciting conflict. Given that NATO is a military alliance and therefore somewhat of a special case, being the only IGO of its kind, this does not mean that all IGOs are prone to such conflict-inducing behavior, however, it should lead scholars and policymakers to move forward cautiously with IGO expansion.

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Curriculum Vitae
Noëlie Frix

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<u>Skills Summary</u>:
- Excellent reading, writing, verbal and research skills
- Experience writing analytical research essays, especially on historical and political topics
- Currently working on International Organizations-focused thesis (concentrating on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
- Fluent in English and French; conversational Spanish; Russian and German basics
- Analytical, inquisitive, adaptable, independent, motivated
- Quick learner; open-minded, willing to accept information that challenges preexisting views
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<u>Academic Education & Honors</u>:
- Master of Arts, Political Science, IUPUI: October 2016. (GPA 3.892)
- Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, IUPUI: August 2015 (GPA 3.957)
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<u>Awards and Recognition:</u>
- Dean's List, IUPUI: Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015
- Winslow Prize in Political Theory ("the best essays or papers written on the topic of political theory"), IUPUI: May 2015
- Phi Alpha Theta: National History Honor Society, IUPUI: March 2015
- The Robert V. Kirch Scholarship ("awarded annually to outstanding political science juniors to help with their academic costs during their senior year"), IUPUI: May 2014
- The Plater International Scholars Program ("designed for exceptional incoming freshmen who are committed to combining academic excellence with global citizenship"), IUPUI: August 2013-August 2015
- National Honor Society, Carmel High School: 2012-2013
- National AP Scholar Award: 2013
- President's Education Awards Program in recognition of Outstanding Academic Excellence: 2009, 2013

<u>Languages</u>:
- French: native
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- German: basic, learning in progress

Work/Volunteer Experience:
- Paid English Tutor – November 2015-April 2016
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- Paid French Tutor: September 2012-May 2014
- Volunteering – English tutoring: Summer 2011, 2012
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Other Personal Accomplishments:
- Kukkiwon certified Taekwondo black belt (2011); medals won in tournaments, including Bronze and Gold at the 2008 Junior Olympics, Texas; Silver and Gold at 2010 U.S. Open Taekwondo Hanmadang, Chicago; member of the Ahn's Taekwondo School demonstration team
- Self-published my first young-adult fiction/fantasy novel, *War of the Immortals* (March 2015)
- Two analytical articles published on thesimmonsreview.com