



NATO and the Arctic: Theorizing NATO's Twenty First Century Problem

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NATO and the Arctic:
Theorizing NATO's Twenty First Century Problem

Daniel Akikie

A Thesis in the Field of International Relations
for the Degree of Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies

Harvard University

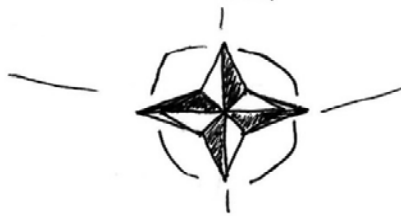
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Abstract

Understanding how constructivist theory applies to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) can help us to understand not only its beginning, but also where it is going. Constructivist theory reflects the importance of identity and ideology within NATO. It reveals the dueling identities within the organization that widely shapes its behavior and creates a better understanding of NATO's approach as well as its actions within the Arctic region. A resurgent Russia in addition to climate change both play impactful roles in shaping the shifting Arctic environment and in the understanding of how NATO will interact within the region.

NATO and the Arctic:

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Author's Biographical Sketch

Daniel Akikie was adopted from Lima, Peru and grew up in Massachusetts. His family was deeply engaged in politics and worldwide travel which promoted his interest in politics, government, and international relations at a very young age. He attended Drexel University in Philadelphia where he earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science with two minors: one in History and a second one in International Relations. During college he engaged in two Co-op internships, one with his local representative at the Massachusetts State House, and another one with his US Senator in Washington DC. Both experiences fueled his varied interests and proved beneficial in his understanding of the mechanics of the United States federal government. Daniel returned to Massachusetts to work at a small financial firm while he studied at Harvard University's Extension School.

Dedication

Dedicated to my partner, Franck, and my parents, whose patience and continual support helped me pursue my passions and continue my education.

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Chapter I.

Introduction

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was an integral part of European security during the Cold War. By offering security within Western Europe the United States (US) deterred threats of aggression and external pressure from the Soviet Union (USSR). This security helped Western Europe to recover faster and to form a strong bond with the United States. Varied scholars attribute these accomplishments at least in part to Article V of the organization's foundational treaty. Article V is famous for defining an attack against one member as an attack against all. This defensive policy, laid out in Article V, defined the boundaries of the relationship between the West, led by the United States, and the East, led by the Soviet Union. Scholars like Ringsmose and Rynning concurred by singling out NATO's strategic concepts as proof of the organization being defined as a defense alliance in accordance with Article V.¹ Even historian Timothy Ireland acknowledged the importance of Article V in the formation and passage of the North Atlantic Treaty.² These few examples can be attributed to the significance of military power dynamics that encompassed the Cold War.

Though there has been a historical emphasis on deterrence, it is imperative to underscore the importance of ideology in the formation and staying power of NATO. The

¹ J. Ringsmose and S. Rynning, "Introduction: Taking Stock of NATO's New Strategic Concept," in *NATO's New Strategic Concept: A comprehensive Assessment*, eds. J. Ringsmose and S. Rynning (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2011) referenced in Trine Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 144

² Timothy P. Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance*. Vol. no. 50. (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1981) 110-121

two sparing parties in the Cold War were largely defined by distinct ideologies. Scholars like Trine Flockhart and Alexander Wendt agree that NATO was constructed around a shared ideology, hence it is more than just a military alliance.³ They argue that NATO is a community of likeminded states. Historian Lawrence Kaplan, acknowledged this stating, NATO fulfilled “the promise of a genuine community as outlined in the treaty’s preamble.”⁴ This notion is validated even further by NATO Secretary-General Manfred Wornier affirming, “[NATO] became the expression of a common purpose and political vision, a community of values and destiny...to ensure the cohesion and solidarity of our liberal democracies.”⁵ Deterrence through military defense, as well as ideological divisions were the defining aspects of the Cold War within Europe.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO continues to play a substantial role on the continent, though it has transformed significantly from its defensive policy and use of deterrence. The alliance has participated in operations outside of Europe and has moved away from focusing purely on defense. This evolution is characterized around the changing identity of the organization. Some have speculated that without its main adversary NATO has been at a loss of how to define itself. This identity crisis presented the alliance with many questions about its future as well as justification of its necessity.

³ Trine Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 1st ed. 142

⁴ Lawrence Kaplan, *NATO and the United States: The Enduring Alliance* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988) 183-184 quoted in Walter Hixson, “NATO and the Soviet Bloc: The Limits of Victory” in *NATO in the Post-Cold War Era: Does it Have a Future?* eds S. Victor Papacosma and Mary Ann Heiss (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995) 35

⁵ “Fortieth Anniversary of NATO,” speech by NATO Secretary-General Manfred Wornier, April 1989, Brussels, in *Changes and Continuity in the North Atlantic Alliance* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1990), 43 quoted in Walter Hixson, “NATO and the Soviet Bloc: The Limits of Victory” in *NATO in the Post-Cold War Era: Does it Have a Future?* eds S. Victor Papacosma and Mary Ann Heiss (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995) 34

Scholars have tried using international relation theories to answer these inquiries throughout NATO's history.⁶ These theories continue to face challenges to understanding the alliance's endurance and evolution.

A variety of international relation theories provide an explanation for NATO and its actions but only one is paramount. According to constructivism, NATO's evolution and endurance can be attributed to its intricate web of identities. These identities have allowed the organization flexibility in its operations and most importantly in its ever-changing security situation. Constructivists recognized that this flexibility is derived from a multilayering of identities. The first layer is foundational and inflexible; it is the underlying ideology that all member states share or aspire to achieve. Its roots are founded in Cold War history and largely influenced NATO's creation. The second layer is the organizational identity embedded in two articles of the alliance's treaty. Finally, there is an operational identity that changes and is based on the priorities of each individual member. These priorities included collective defense, conflict management, and cooperative security. By applying a historical analysis to NATO and the Cold War a genuine pattern emerges about how constructivism plays a key role within the alliance.

This analysis can be applied to the history of NATO in the Arctic. In depth analysis can assist researchers to understand constructivism's application in the present. During the Cold War there was limited involvement by the alliance in this region, but as climate change transformed the overall environment, NATO's regional policy evolved as well. These changes create new fault lines within the global environment and as some scholars note, like Sharon Effendy, Bernadeth Franchika, and Vanessa Anthea, a return of

⁶ Theories include: realism, liberalism, constructivism, neo-classical realism, and institutionalism just to name a few. And will be covered more in the next chapter.

Cold War great power rivalry.⁷ Constructivism aids in understanding policy choices that NATO and its members implement in this Arctic region. The power of identity and ideology within constructivist theory have long been an integral part of NATO. This research demonstrates Arctic policy reflects whatever identity is being prioritized by NATO and its members.

⁷ Sharon Effendy, Bernadeth Franchika, and Vanessa Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War: Why the US Needs NATO in the Arctic," *Jurnal Sentris*, (2021) 29

Chapter II.

International Relations' Theories and NATO

This chapter provides a more substantial analysis of theories within international relations and their application towards NATO. When studying international relations, scholars usually refer to existing international theories to provide simplified explanations for their research on state-to-state relationships. Quoting John Mearsheimer, an American political scientist, “there is no escaping the fact that we could not make sense of the complex world around us without simplifying theories”.⁸ Theories help simplify the understanding of an intricate world, summarize observations, and provoke critical thinking.⁹ The application and research of international theory in relation to NATO is essential in order to simplify, generalize, and understand its vast bureaucracy. It is therefore interesting that those theories have yet to be seriously applied or researched.

Mark Webber, a Professor of International Politics at University of Birmingham, recognizes the lack of research in this area and underscores NATO's extensive literature.¹⁰ There is reason to believe that the shortage of scholarly or academic associations affiliated with NATO is the cause. Webber acknowledges that in contrast to

⁸ John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2001), 8-9 quoted in Adrian Hyde-Price, “Theorising NATO” In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 1st ed. 23

⁹ Hyde-Price, “Theorising NATO” 23

¹⁰ Mark Webber, “Introduction: Is NATO a theory-free zone” In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 1st ed. 2-3

the European Union, NATO lacks these fundamental academic institutions.¹¹ Referencing Schimmelfennig, Weiner, and Diez, contributions on integration theory, he provides an example of how such affiliations can contribute to academic research and the creation of unique theories.¹² Nevertheless, he further outlines current research into four broad categories: events, themes, membership and prescriptive.¹³

These categories lack depth in the ability to understand NATO. Research on events affecting the alliance or focusing on individual state actors, creates a narrowly centered methodology. Such approaches tend to emphasize the how.¹⁴ One cannot truly understand a topic by concentrating on singular details. Thematic research helps to understand broader trends but does not address the members, the organization, or their collective interests. Prescriptive research uses analysis to identify either organizational or operational shortcoming and therefore is too focused on outcomes.¹⁵ It does not provide a deeper perspective or understanding of the alliance. These reductionist investigations do not provide broad explanatory concepts about NATO's policies or operations that can be only discovered through theoretical research.

Though the lack of theoretical work is apparent, what is available can be broken down by application. One set of research looks at the theory in relation to international

¹¹ Webber "Introduction" 11

¹² A. Wiener and T. Diez eds., *European Integration Theory*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), referenced in Mark Webber, "Introduction: Is NATO a theory-free zone" In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 11

¹³ Webber "Introduction" 2-6

¹⁴ Webber "Introduction" 4-5

¹⁵ Webber "Introduction" 6-7

security and society.¹⁶ Another is focused on NATO's being symptomatic of some already established phenomenon, like alliance theory, economic theory or public goods theory.¹⁷ There is an additional subset of work that provides an explanation for activities, like expansion or partnerships.¹⁸ Analyzing across these applications begets a few distinct international theories like neo-classical realism, liberalism, institutionalism and constructivism.¹⁹ It is important to analyze these theories by looking at three questions that scholars need to answer in order to understand NATO. These are: What is NATO? Who is NATO for? Why NATO endures? Furthermore, applying historical analysis to these questions will help to distinguish the relative strength of each theory in its applicability towards NATO.

What is NATO?

Across the spectrum of theories, not one theory argues against NATO's military defensive purpose. Liberals and constructivists believe that this military aspect is not the defining character of NATO. Liberalism primarily focuses on the domestic and societal character of members as a basis for the functionality and formation of NATO.²⁰ For them NATO is an arena of actors, not an actor itself.²¹ The focus on domestic groups is too narrow but is a strong contrast to other theories. Constructivists on the other hand focus

¹⁶ Webber "Introduction" 7

¹⁷ Webber "Introduction" 8

¹⁸ Webber "Introduction" 9

¹⁹ Webber "Introduction" 10

²⁰ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 95

²¹ Benjamin Pohl, "NATO and Liberal International Relations Theory" In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 1st ed. 132-133

on identity. They acknowledge the importance of ideology like shared values and norms, apart from material factors like power.²² This shared ideology is a foundational identity marker that allows the members to find commonality and to foster close bonds. As Trine Flockhart, a Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern Denmark, states, “[NATO] is associated with clear collective identity derived from a long history as a Euro-Atlantic security community with attendant identity markers of democracy, human rights, and political stability”.²³ NATO’s expansion is another representation of common identity within the organization. NATO appeared to only extend membership based on states demonstration to uphold values.²⁴ Clearly shared values and identity play an important role within NATO according to constructivists.

This commonality amongst its members is crucial in putting forth the narrative of unity. Unity is fundamental to the core tenants of Article II and Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty. Both articles are grounded in consensus-based decision making, helping to reinforce the alliance’s identity of common values as well as shared risks and burdens.²⁵ Constructivist scholars define these two articles as being a secondary, organizational layer of identity. These treaty articles provide an explanation for what characterizes NATO. Outlined in Article II is the act of cooperation to support a peaceful and friendly rule-based order; and in Article V, an agreement of collective defense.²⁶ The

²² Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising,” 141

²³ Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” 149

²⁴ Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” 149

²⁵ Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” 145

²⁶ Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” 143-144

unity that originated from shared identity was at its peak during the Cold War due to the clear contrasting ideologies between the alliance and its adversary.²⁷

In contrast neo-classical realists and institutionalists focus primarily on the military aspect of the organization. Neo-classical realists profess this purpose as deriving from the power struggle within an anarchistic world, but with a caveat that individual states play a significant role as well.²⁸ NATO is therefore a military alliance that reflects the relative security environment and its assessment by member states.²⁹ Such an explanation does become more difficult to sustain in a post-Cold War world. This notion is similar to the institutionalist's perception of the alliance; yet they differ in the recognition of member states' interests. For an institutionalist it is NATO itself that matters because it functions independently from members.³⁰ These theorists largely define NATO as an instrument to be utilized by its members. The utilization of this tool is shaped by the environment whether it is power and wealth or by cultural milieu.³¹ Neither of these theories considers the power of ideology.

²⁷ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 149-150

²⁸ James Sperling, "Neo-Classical Realism & Alliance Politics" In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 1st ed. 62

²⁹ Sperling, "Neo-Classical Realism & Alliance Politics" 62

³⁰ Frank Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 1st ed. 94

³¹ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 97

Who is NATO for?

Theories for international relations fall into either of two categories based on member state interests or community interests. Constructivists and institutionalists assert that NATO services the community on which it is founded. Constructivists recognize operational missions as the basis for NATO's third identifier. These undertakings are collective defense, cooperative security, and crisis management.³² This third level of operational identity differs from member to member. Each member prioritizes these functions differently, consequently defining how the member will choose to participate within the alliance. Constructivists see NATO as serving a collection of likeminded states that focus on three core tasks, all of which will help illustrate why NATO endures.

Institutionalists explain that the community is the bureaucracy of NATO and point to the power within the organization received from continuous development of technical expertise, and the authority that members surrender to it.³³ This power allows NATO not only to stand independently from its participants but to have leverage as well. NATO, therefore, can impose and shape the behavior, identity, and interests of its members.³⁴ Most importantly institutionalists contend NATO serves its own organizational interests. Such analysis is too simplistic as it ignores the interests of individual members.

Liberals and neo-classical realists define NATO's purpose as encompassed by its members' national interests and security. Neo-classical realists see NATO as limited by

³² Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 148

³³ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 98

³⁴ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 98

state security interests and policies and, therefore, beholden to its members. Quoting R.L Schweller, a professor of political science at Ohio State University, “exogenous shifts in relative distribution of power (the independent variable) are refracted through domestically derived constraints and opportunities (the intervening variables) that generate idiosyncratic foreign policies (the dependent variable).”³⁵ Liberals concur with this assessment but point to domestic groups instead of the state as the motivating actor. Benjamin Pohl, Head of Programme Climate Diplomacy and Security at Adelphi University, states “fundamental purpose of foreign policy is not predetermined but depends on the intensity of preference of influential groups in society”.³⁶ Whether it is through the state or domestic groups, both liberals and neo-classical realists agree that NATO serves its members’ interests. This assessment is too simplistic as these theories ignore the interests of the collective. While the alliance consists of competing interests amongst its members, the organization with its common ideology and values has its own interests that must not be disregarded.

Why NATO Endures?

This fundamental question haunts scholars and theorists because NATO recently has evolved and adapted frequently. It is hard to create and to apply theory to this evolution because theories do not readily adjust as quickly as the alliance itself. When a new world event causes NATO to abruptly change, scholars are forced to readjust previously held perceptions. Using historical events and perspectives, theorists can try to

³⁵ R.L. Schweller, “Unanswered Threats: A Neo-classical Realist Theory of Under-balancing,” *International Security*, 29(2), (2004), quoted in James Sperling, “Neo-Classical Realism & Alliance Politics” In *Theorising NATO: New Perspectives on Atlantic Alliance*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price 1st ed (London: Routledge, 2016), 62

³⁶ Pohl, “Liberal International Relations Theory” 118

devise an explanation that might offer some meaningful insight into how the alliance will proceed. The most advantageous part of using theories in this manner is that as the organization develops so does the theory. Good theories are adaptable and fine-tuned by each newly acquired piece of information.

Neo-classical realism does not offer a concrete reason for endurance but does provide a warning regarding disunity amongst members. If differences in the internal priorities of states and threat perceptions between members escalate, NATO's durability will suffer.³⁷ Liberalism focuses on the domestic environment and promotes the idea of a coalition of the willing as a source of endurance. These two theories do not provide a long-lasting picture for NATO but paint a picture of internal strife and a lack of cohesion.

Institutionalists define four post-Cold War developments as an explanation for NATO's abiding endurance. Persistence is primary and is derived from members of the alliance already having "sunk costs" and a lack of any real alternative to address European security.³⁸ Within these dynamics, members would unlikely be precipitous in thinking about any abandonment of the alliance. The second development is organizational flexibility. During the Cold War NATO required consensus and participation from all its members with few caveats.³⁹ Post-Cold War strategy loosened these requirements. The organization moved towards a coalition of the willing and initiated the inclusion of non-member states' partnerships.⁴⁰ The two other developments

³⁷ Sperling, "Neo-Classical Realism & Alliance Politics" 64-65

³⁸ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 99

³⁹ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 101

⁴⁰ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 101-102

in the post-Cold War period are expansion and intervention. Granting membership to countries with shared values and norms accompanied by a significant desire to share the burden of upholding them, led to a reinvigoration of NATO's identity.⁴¹ Finally NATO's evolution from deterrence to intervention has managed to keep it relevant.⁴² Of further importance is the actuality that members continue to share common interests and values. As stated, "NATO's identity as an alliance of democracies features prominently in many accounts of what makes NATO special and persistent".⁴³ All of these far-reaching factors contribute to the longevity of the alliance according to institutionalists.

Finally, constructivists attribute NATO's endurance to its layered identities that are key to understanding how constructivists view the alliance. NATO's organizational identity is based on Article II and Article V of its founding treaty. Constructivists argue that collective cooperation and collective defense are dueling identities that are basics built into the alliance's founding.⁴⁴ It is important to understand throughout NATO's existence one organizational identity took priority over the other. During the Cold War collective defense was the priority, while the post-cold war era has given preference to cooperation and partnerships.⁴⁵ This duality within the alliance gives it adaptability and can be extremely useful within an intricate and ever-changing security environment. Additionally, this duality allows flexibility to reinvent the narrative the organization defines for itself.

⁴¹ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 109

⁴² Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 107

⁴³ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 100

⁴⁴ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 144

⁴⁵ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 144

NATO's organizational identity is not the only identity that provides this flexibility. Constructivists indicate a third identity is derived from NATO's operations. The three responsibilities of defense, cooperative security, and crisis management offer members more flexibility.⁴⁶ Such flexibility allows NATO to avoid deadlock. Since NATO more currently has prioritized partnerships as its main identity and its activities rely less on cohesive unity and instead focus on cooperation. There remains, however, the fundamental importance of projecting an image of cooperation and unity within the alliance. Flockhart elaborates on this by stating, "tact agreement not to openly disagree about such fundamental questions as 'what NATO is' has enabled the alliance to continue as though [each of] these identities are entirely complementary".⁴⁷ This cooperation can be a full throttle endorsement and an active participation in whatever operation NATO decides to partake, or it can be just a basic acknowledgment of other members interests. Here the coalition of the willing is less of a negative destabilizing factor as espoused by the other theories. The various identities of NATO allow the organization and its members the flexibility to adapt without risking disunity, and consequently becomes the most important factor to its endurance.

Theory Outlook on NATO

After exploration of the contrasting theories, constructivism offers the clearest explanation for NATO's operations and for its evolution in the twenty-first century. Adrian Hyde-Price, a Professor of political science at University of Gothenburg, summarizes the purpose of theories by stating, "there is ... broad consensus that theory

⁴⁶ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 148

⁴⁷ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 156

involves simplification, abstraction and generalization.”⁴⁸ Any theory that is applied needs to expound upon the history of the alliance and clarify it in a simple way. The theory must be generalized enough to provide an explanation for behavior without limitations. Of significant importance is the need to define the various aspects of NATO, for example, organizational structure, operations, member states, and rhetoric. Any one of these featured facets must provide a clear explanation for the difference between the organization’s operations and members’ participation. If a theory can bring clarity and understanding about the historical path of the alliance, it might lead to a more profound understanding of the present and a visionary’s guide to the future.

Too Hyper-focused on Details

Liberals are overly focused on finite details such as domestic individuals and groups explaining the occurrence of recent interventions by the alliance through that lens. A state participates most often when it is in a defined domestic interest of its own entity; for example, the operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Libya.⁴⁹ In Libya, Afghanistan, or Bosnia there are specific domestic interests at play that affect certain members’ participation. This narrow focus does a disservice to scholarly research in that it ignores other fundamental elements of NATO including identity, power, and security environment. It also does not address the intricate bureaucracy of the alliance or its evolution and longevity. Liberalism’s main flaw is the seemingly intense spotlight on

⁴⁸ Hyde-Price, “Theorising NATO” 25

⁴⁹ Pohl, “Liberal International Relations Theory” 122

domestic aspects; this dimension consequently keeps it from truly engaging in the complex factors and bureaucracy that is NATO.

Too Much Bureaucratic Emphasis

Institutionalists identify and understand NATO as a tool. The theory identifies the alliance as a community of shared values and norms, whose threats are not just purely military but ideological rivals as well.⁵⁰ This definition explains NATO's reaction in the face of an adversary with a distinct identity rivaling its own. Institutionalists are internally divided by possible uses of that tool: is it a defensive or offensive apparatus? This division is subdivided into rational and sociological groupings. Rationalists see the alliance as a tool encouraging cooperation, whereas sociological institutionalists view it as a military arm of the West.⁵¹ While not unified in agreement on how that tool is used, they both view the organization as an independent actor separate from its member states. Rational institutionalists emphasize that institutions, like NATO, will eventually overcome individual membership control and act independently.⁵² The theory recognizes the importance of shared ideology, but its main flaw is the focus on the organization. It does not provide an assessment of members' interests. Moreover, in the post-cold war environment funding has shrunk and the bureaucracy has downsized, and those events weaken the claim of institutional power.⁵³ This kind of movement further undermines the argument of institutionalism.

⁵⁰ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 98

⁵¹ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 98

⁵² Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 96-97

Too Much Importance Placed on Power

Neo-classical realism is the only other theory that contends with constructivism. Power and security are central factors that affect the organization and its members states. This dichotomy between NATO and its members is akin to institutionalists' approach to understanding the organization as an independent actor. These theories differ, however, in the idea of common values or ideology underpinning the alliance. Neo-classical realism rejects the notion of community character.⁵⁴ Its focus is on the members' assessment of current security environment and how it affects NATO activity.⁵⁵ This theory is more effective in its explanation of the difference between each members' participation; it, however, does not consider the lack of defection within the organization. Power maximization and security are main factors but in the absence of a security threat, as is the case of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, what incentivizes members to stay? Some members might seek power maximization, but it is hard to argue that all thirty nations are power hungry. Iceland is a glaring example of a member that does not need, nor does it seek power maximization. Alexander Wendt would concur asserting, "self-help and power politics do not follow either logically or causally from anarchy and that if today we find ourselves in a self-help world, this is due to process, not structure."⁵⁶ By not addressing the underlying shared identity that leads to cohesion of the alliance, neo-classical realism is inadequate in its summarization and explanation of NATO.

⁵³ Schimmelfennig, "NATO and Institutional Theories of International Relations" 100

⁵⁴ Sperling, "Neo-Classical Realism & Alliance Politics" 63

⁵⁵ Sperling, "Neo-Classical Realism & Alliance Politics" 63

⁵⁶ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (2): (1992) 394

Conclusion: Constructivism Wins Out

Constructivism fulfills the purpose of explaining NATO on a broader scale. It understands that the organization's endurance is based on its ability to be flexible in an everchanging environment. It recognizes that the multilayer of identities creates this flexibility, endurance, and strength. The first important layer is a shared ideology, one that both Flockhart and Wendt acknowledge helps members distinguish friend from foe.⁵⁷ The second layer is the organizational identity and is defined by the priority of either Article II or Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty. This theory thoroughly explains its flexibility and application throughout NATO's history. Constructivists offer a thorough explanation for the alliance's continued cohesion after USSR dissolution by highlighting the importance of identity and shared values. Finally, constructivists can thoroughly explain the varying levels of participation by its members through several operational identities: defense, cooperative security, and crisis management. These aspects encompass why constructivism suits NATO.

Adrian Hyde-Price warns that the alliance cannot be solely defined by one theory.⁵⁸ The importance of theory in understanding NATO's complexities highlights the need to compare and to revise them. Each year NATO's continued longevity engenders new analysis, information, and international dynamics that need to be thoroughly researched. Scholars provide a necessary service by updating theories to reflect current realities through an intellectual contrast and review of international theories in relation to the alliance. Comparing theories is necessary to better understand the varied complex interactions in the world.

⁵⁷ Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 397

⁵⁸ Hyde-Price "Theorising NATO" 28

That is not to say, however, that there is no place for other theories within NATO's complex bureaucracy. Each has its strengths and weaknesses. Constructivism will not be the only theory to fully understand NATO's history and operations in the foreseeable future. In the examination of other theories, however, one can see distinct flaws in their approach to NATO. Flockhart reaffirms this stating, "the benefit of constructivism lies in its ability to get at aspects of NATO's development that are not visible to the more traditional perspectives."⁵⁹ Constructivist theory is more applicable than the other theories due to its ability to encompass many characteristics and to simplify them. Constructivism has excelled in its summarization, simplification and understanding of the alliance and its interactions to date.

Easy application of constructivism allows scholars a better understanding not only of NATO, but the deeper role ideology plays in international relations. Research involving the role of ideology in NATO mirrors the research development of the Cold War which faced similar problems in its infancy by primarily focusing on details, including military operations, economic policy, or individual superpowers.⁶⁰ Not until recently has research expanded due to the abundance of declassified evidence and globalized perspectives, including deeper investigations in applying the importance of identity within the Cold War period. Constructivism assists in explaining the bipolar environment that was shaped along ideological lines and how this division influenced NATO's creation and eventual evolution. As Cold War research progressed and evolved, NATO emulated this movement. While other theories are useful in understanding pieces

⁵⁹ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising" 157

⁶⁰ Odd Westad. "The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century" In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*. Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 5

of the alliance, the lack of ideology does a disservice to understanding the history of both the Cold War and NATO. Using constructivism as a lens to understand the Cold War and NATO's emergence, allow a better understanding of the alliance's actions in modern times.

Chapter III.

Cold War Research

To understand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) it is important to recognize and to explore the environment in which it was developed as well as the fundamental role ideology played within the context of constructivism. It is, therefore, imperative to study the Cold War broadly to understand how ideology affected events and state actors. Initial Cold War research had a heavy emphasis on hard power, particularly in the aspect of military containment and world economics while minimizing other aspects, such as the importance of ideology.⁶¹ This research applied realist theory concepts such as an emphasis on the balance of power that evolved during the Cold War. Part of the intense importance of national security and intelligence stemmed from scholars who attempted to apply the lessons that were learned after World War II.⁶² Cold War research was limited due to documents at this time being either highly classified by Western governments or unattainable due to the secrecy of the Soviet and Eastern European governments. Cold War history in its infancy was limited in all aspects.

After the collapse of the Berlin wall in 1991, and the eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union, access to archival information from Eastern European and Russia formed a more complete picture of this time period. This increase in evidence and knowledge led

⁶¹ Westad. "The Cold War and the International History" 5

⁶² Westad. "The Cold War and the International History" 9

to broader and clearer interpretations.⁶³ The power of globalization increased connectivity throughout the world and led to more expansive diversification in the field of history, thus contributing to the growing analyses of events.⁶⁴ Historians continued to expand interpretations by modifying the research process through the formation of more inquisitive and probative questions, and via the use of technological advancements in media that expanded the field of evidence.⁶⁵ The military and economic focus that largely shaped the initial understanding of the Cold War were now questionable and needed further investigation. Historian Odd Westad commented on this evolution by stating, “We need to indicate how Cold War conflicts connect to broader trends in social, economic and intellectual history as well as to the political and military developments of the longer term of which it forms a part.”⁶⁶ New research illuminated the importance of ideology that enveloped the world.⁶⁷ It can be argued that ideology was the foundational aspect of the two spheres of influence that emerged out of World War II and that due to the competitive nature of these ideologies the resulting bipolar world was inevitable.

Studying ideology during the Cold War is primarily important because it was a foundational aspect of constructivist theory. A crucial aspect of this theory was that countries can distinguish between friend and foe. Flockhart built this concept on the work of Alexander Wendt. Flockhart stating, “[He is] widely recognized as having brought

⁶³ Gjert Dyndal, “How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy: Revelations from NATO Archives,” (Journal of Strategic Studies, Aug 25, 2011) 559

⁶⁴ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 2

⁶⁵ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 2

⁶⁶ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 2

⁶⁷ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 6

attention to identity as the main constitutive influence.”⁶⁸ For Wendt, the Cold War provided a myriad of examples of how constructivists view international relations; for instance, in describing the division within the dimensions of polarity, he asserts, “Relations between the poles may be amendable ... but the atmosphere of distrust leaves little room for such cooperation.”⁶⁹ Wendt acknowledged that states with significant issues of trust are less likely to cooperate with one another which explains the animosity between the Soviets and Americans. Constructivists like Wendt presented the ideological divide as a construct that influenced the events of the Cold War. Wendt asserted, “US military power has different significance for Canada than for Cuba.”⁷⁰ By pointing out this example he further affirmed his argument that states can seek cooperation based on factors other than power. The importance of ideology, therefore, within the context of the Cold War needed to be examined to understand how the ideological divide influenced NATO.

Ideologies that Shaped the Cold War

At first glance these ideologies may seem unique, but the foundational history of both the Soviet Union and the United States are surprisingly similar. Both nations were born out of revolution and embraced ideologies with global aspirations.⁷¹ They both evolved from the rejection of “old traditions of privilege, heritage, family and locality”.⁷²

⁶⁸ Flockhart, “Understanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” 142

⁶⁹ Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of it” 418

⁷⁰ Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of it” 397

⁷¹ John Gaddis, “The Cold War: A New History” (New York: Penguin Press, 2005) 7

⁷² Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 14

But this commonality in history does not bridge the vast difference between these two nations. The governments created out of these respective revolutions reflected a chosen dogma that permeated every aspect of society. The power distribution within these governments, as Westad stated “symbolized two modern extremes in the way politics was conducted domestically”.⁷³ The United States has power dispersed between different federal branches of government, state governments and respective branches, as well as heads of corporations and military leaders. Such decentralized power stood in stark contrast to the centralization of the Soviet Union government. Americans rejected concentrated authority while the Soviet Union embraced it.⁷⁴ It is important to note that decentralized power within American democracy allowed American elites to seek a broader approval and legitimacy that in turn kept them well connected with the rest of the country, unlike the Soviets.⁷⁵ But these ideologies did more than affect just governmental structures; they also left a mark on each superpower’s culture.

Ideology and Culture

The ideologies of the United States and the Soviet Union were so prevalent in each respective society that they influenced cultural heritage. The Soviets clung to ideas of “social justice, collectivism, and state planning” while Americans supported “individual liberty, anticollectivism and market value”.⁷⁶ American ideology since its founding was inspired by ideas from John Locke, a prominent English philosopher. As

⁷³ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 9

⁷⁴ Gaddis. “The Cold War” 7-8

⁷⁵ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 15

⁷⁶ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 13

David Engerman, a professor of history at Yale, describes it, “Lockean liberalism was, at its core, a theory of liberty, one that viewed liberty as defined for the individual, based in law, and rooted in property.”⁷⁷ This basic idea of liberty during the founding of the United States was clearly rooted in individualism and its guaranteed protection by the government whose power was limited to structural freedoms like protection of private property and democratic participation, not liberal freedoms of equality.⁷⁸ Westad noted, “Liberty... was not for everyone, but for those who, through property and education, possessed the necessary independence to be citizens of a republic.”⁷⁹ As the country grew, however, American ideology evolved and expanded as well.

As a growing international power, the individual aspects of American freedom became increasingly expansionist. Liberty, therefore, included economic aspects, such as the importance of increasing free markets, and structural aspects, like self-governance.⁸⁰ Its development gradually and inevitably spread which was embodied in the doctrine of the time known as “Manifest Destiny”. Capitalism guaranteed this gradual expansion. Notably, Americans did not think that self-governance was for everyone, but only for those who were deemed worthy. This notion was reflected in their imperialist conquests during the nineteenth century and summed up in Kipling's poem about “the white man’s burden,” which fosters the prevailing idea that America needed to civilize non-European

⁷⁷ David Engerman, “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1962” In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 20

⁷⁸ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 20-21

⁷⁹ Odd Westad, *The Global Cold War: third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 10

⁸⁰ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 21-22

populations.⁸¹ This form of liberty, however, continued to influence American policy throughout most of the twentieth century.

The Soviet ideology in contrast was rooted in Marxism and was largely based on its view of capitalism. Capitalism was seen by the Americans as the gradual and inevitable spread of liberty; the Soviets saw a completely oppositional version. Capitalism was the exploitation of the ruling bourgeoisie that accompanied European imperialism.⁸² The Soviet Union and its leaders made no distinction between the capitalist's states like the US and the imperial states of Europe because, to them, both were exploitative systems.

These systems to the Soviets were unsustainable and would eventually sow the seeds of demise. The competitive nature of capitalism would eventually lead the ruling elites to push the working class into a revolution, a clearly opposite notion from the gradual philosophy of the Americans.⁸³ This competitiveness would also lead to ruthless conflict between different capitalist states.⁸⁴ Marxism, to the Soviets, was the philosophy of an inevitable revolution that would defeat capitalism and give rise to communism. This outlook shaped Soviet culture by structuring it in such a way as to avoid the ills of capitalism. With an emphasis on collectivism, and social advancement of the underprivileged, the Soviets would transform peasants into industrial workers with an

⁸¹ Westad. "Global Cold War" 15

⁸² Engerman. "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War" 22

⁸³ Engerman. "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War" 23

⁸⁴ Engerman. "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War" 22-23

emphasis on avoiding the capitalist step that exploited workers in Europe and the US.⁸⁵
The Soviet form of its modern society would couple advancement with equality.

Ideology and Foreign Policy

The ideologies that effected both governmental formation and domestic culture influenced foreign policy as well. American democracy and the domestic need for broad legitimacy allowed its elites to form “diverse and pluralistic alliances with elites in Europe and East Asia”, including the politically diverse parties of Europe and Japan.⁸⁶ Compromise building was natural within a democracy. Hence US foreign policy was formed around compromising “between Right (nationalism/ imperialism) and Left (Bolshevism) by promoting a liberal internationalism.”⁸⁷ This ideologic influence greatly assisted in the formation of alliances around the world. More importantly it will factor into the negotiations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The natural inclination to compromise contributed to the relative adaptability of NATO. Constructivists argue that this ideological influence is the origin of the alliance’s inherent flexibility. The Soviet’s centralized government did not achieve the same results.

Soviet foreign policy drew from its ideology in a completely different way. They saw governments, especially democratic ones, as tools for ruling elites, and liberalism as a charade to mask capitalist tendencies.⁸⁸ They chose, therefore, not to work closely with other governments but rather cooperated with insurgency groups in other nations. The

⁸⁵ Westad. “Global Cold War” 40

⁸⁶ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 15

⁸⁷ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 25

⁸⁸ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 23

Soviets chose “workers over statesmen”.⁸⁹ These formative actions explain why the Soviets chose to install friendly Eastern European governments rather than to run the risk of having to collaborate with elected officials. The Czechoslovakia coup is a prime example of the Soviet approach in relationships with Eastern Europe. Such parallels between ideology and governmental policy are striking and proffer clear examples of ideologies that influenced foreign policy during the period of the Cold War.

Ideology and Economy

Clearly ideologies played a central role in each countries’ respective economy. The United States’ embrace of free market capitalism was well documented. Americans regarded democratic liberalism as a perfect complement to capitalism because the prevailing notion was that liberty could only be guaranteed through the power of the individual and ownership of private property. Americans expected that businesses free from governmental burdens or subsidies would flourish and grow precipitously.⁹⁰ The Soviets, on the other hand, embraced public ownership and central planning, both necessary entities to avoid the consumptive evil of capitalism. As a result of World War II, the economic strength of both countries empowered military growth. Because their economies were essential to victory, it was no surprise that the Cold War competition focused on the difference in economic systems.

⁸⁹ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 25

⁹⁰ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 14

Since both powers rejected direct military confrontation with each other, economic rivalry between capitalism and state socialism took center stage.⁹¹ This economic strength vested the competition between these two countries and allowed the funding of sustained military armaments for deterrence and subsidized close allies.⁹² The Soviets used its rapid industrial transformation which included the rejection of European imperialism as a way to influence recently independent nations in the third world.⁹³ The Americans paired democracy and commercialism to pursue market friendly policies. Odd Westad notes, “American commercial expansion led to hopes of new foreign markets, or at least to a fear that such markets, were they to exist, could become the domain of others.”⁹⁴ It was crucial for Americans to rebuild the industrial hubs of Japan and West Germany: a speedy economic recovery would guarantee the linkage between those power centers and the United States.⁹⁵ These ideologies affected each country's economic planning and were an important element in the Cold War rivalry.

⁹¹ Charles Maier, “The World Economy and the Cold War in Middle of the Twentieth Century” In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 44

⁹² Maier, “The World Economy and the Cold War in Middle of the Twentieth Century” 45

⁹³ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 40

⁹⁴ Westad. “The Global Cold War” 15

⁹⁵ Melvyn Leffler, “The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945-1952” In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 77

Ramifications of Ideology during Cold War

The importance of ideology cannot be understated as each superpower perceived its own unique philosophy as a beacon of hope that other countries could follow. Each superpower's national security laid in the eventual spread of its doctrine across the world. World War II further grounded this connection between national security and these dual tenets. As David Engerman acknowledged, "Hitler's rise demonstrated the vigor of supposedly archaic forces of racial nationalism; the old order continued in spite of liberal (Wilsonian) and radical (Leninist) challenges."⁹⁶ How to proceed with this new power and its competing ideologies perplexed both nations. The Soviets placated German fascism because it perceived no difference between capitalism and fascism.⁹⁷ This policy was formalized in the Nazi- Soviet Pact of August, 1939, but was reversed after Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in June, 1941. The grand alliance of Allied powers arose from the Americans and the Soviets sharing a common enemy which forced each nation to put ideology aside to focus on the defeat of the Axis powers.⁹⁸ Both powers were instrumental in the defeat of Nazism, during World War II.

Due to success in World War II, both countries claimed legitimacy of one's own ideology. As John Gaddis, Professor of Military and Naval History at Yale University, states, "The stark fact that the Americans and the British could not have defeated Hitler without Stalin's help meant that World War II was a victory over fascism only- not over authoritarianism."⁹⁹ This dueling legitimacy factored heavily in post-World War II events

⁹⁶ Engerman. "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War" 30

⁹⁷ Engerman. "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War" 30

⁹⁸ Engerman. "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War" 31

⁹⁹ Gaddis. "The Cold War" 9

and shaped how each country viewed the other. As David Engerman further clarified, “Each side claimed to find the Nazi specter in the other”.¹⁰⁰ For the United States, authoritarian parallels existed between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, while the Soviets saw the Americans as progressing towards fascism, regarded as another form of capitalism.¹⁰¹ These factors laid the foundation for the division of Europe and the globe.

Notably these superpowers were not seeking direct confrontation with one another, but rather relied on economic growth and control of global opinion as evidence of their superiority.¹⁰² Neither one wanted to conquer or immediately to transform the other because both ideologies were grounded in the idea that eventually the other country would change. Such importance in demilitarizing the rivalry only enhanced the significance of the ideology. Glaringly and singularly significant was the fact that the world had fought two world wars in half a century and neither power wanted to lead the world into another global conflict

Dual legitimacy established each ideology with universal applications. Each doctrine allowed broad social inclusivity as they required only political and social conformity, leading to universality.¹⁰³ The magnitude of these philosophies can be measured by the other allied powers at the time. Both the United Kingdom and France were influenced by the United States’ ideology, while China, after a long civil war, eventually joined the Soviets to form a universal communist manifesto. A constructivist would point to this occurrence as an example of countries recognizing the difference

¹⁰⁰ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 35

¹⁰¹ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 31

¹⁰² Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 32

¹⁰³ Westad. “The Cold War and the International History” 15

between enemies and friends.¹⁰⁴ Engerman noted, “The universalism of both the American and Soviet ideologies turned a bipolar conflict into a global conflagration, with devastating results.”¹⁰⁵ The easy applicability and universality of these victorious ideologies forced many nations to choose a side or to become a battleground by proxy during the Cold War. Shared ideology and values motivated states to distinguish friends from enemies.

As events unfolded during the Cold War it was easy to forget the importance of ideology. During that time, scholars viewed events in unusually simplistic terms. The Marshall Plan, for example, was seen as a restoration of Western Europe’s economy and a development for closer ties with the United States. Regarding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Europe was too weak to defend itself and needed US backing to thwart any Soviet aggression. The power imbalance in Europe required a dual approach of economic support and military aid. Such attitudes are reflected in news articles of the time, quote, “economic recovery and security against aggression are closely related and the requirements for each must be carefully balanced.”¹⁰⁶ These significant events that occurred in the aftermath of World War II were not just separate anomalies that happened in a vacuum, but rather were carefully crafted plans that were intertwined and significantly influenced by American ideology.

Both the Marshall Plan and NATO were ideologically constructed to foster America’s foreign agenda while also providing resources in the rebuilding of Europe.

¹⁰⁴ Flockhart, “Unstanding NATO through Constructivist Theorising” 143

¹⁰⁵ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 43

¹⁰⁶ “Text of U.S Policy Statement on the North Atlantic Defense Pact,” *New York Times*, Jan 15, 1949.

Constructivists profess that the division in Europe along ideological lines laid the foundation for such concepts. Both policies offered psychological help to Europeans who suffered in the devastation of the aftermath of World War II.¹⁰⁷ These programs later strengthened the bonds between a democratic Europe and the United States. These policies were catalysts in the enormous task of rebuilding Europe and centered around the powerful industrial country of Western Germany.¹⁰⁸ Clearly these democratic, centralized policies were significantly influenced by capitalistic tendencies in the American ideology. These American policies complemented each other: the Marshall Plan addressed economic rebuilding and NATO addressed the security for that process. An examination of these events during this time clearly provided evidence that capitalism, self-governance, liberty, and the power of the individual were all key aspects of American ideology. These aspects were imbedded in the administration of these policies which gently reinforced American ideology in Western Europe by reflecting willing European participation in US containment strategy.

The willing participation of Europe was a key reflection of American philosophy. Since compromise was a fundamental aspect of the ideology, any sense of strong arming or exerted pressure would contradict these espoused values of the Americans. Engerman asserted, “the United States led an ‘empire by invitation’ while the USSR ruled an ‘empire by imposition.’”¹⁰⁹ The contrast made American ideology more appealing to Western Europe. Such distinctions did not continue as the Cold War dragged on because

¹⁰⁷ Leffler. “The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy” 77

¹⁰⁸ Leffler. “The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy” 79

¹⁰⁹ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 33

conflicts in the third world provided a role reversal.¹¹⁰ In Europe and East Asia the United States used its influence and power not to coerce countries into its strategy of containment but persuaded them. As Engerman notes, “The flipside of containment was integration- bringing the Free World together”.¹¹¹ Bringing the Free World together was America's Cold War strategy of containment by using all the elements of their ideology: economics, culture, military, and governance. It was the crucial factor in what constructivists recognize as the foundational identity of NATO.

¹¹⁰ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 33

¹¹¹ Engerman. “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War” 35

Chapter IV.

Cold War Beginnings: NATO's Creation

In the last chapter the Cold War era was characterized by dueling parties constantly confronting, competing, and attempting to outsmart one another to maintain influence and power. The United States and its allies were worried constantly about the threat from the USSR, enabling the creation of a bi-polar world between two former World War II allies. In this chapter the ramifications of ideology on American foreign policy are analyzed further and defines its role in NATO's creation. These elements are important in the understanding of the development of organizational and operational identities.

American foreign policy was widely influenced by the Long Telegram and the containment strategy formulated around it. The adversarial standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union was embodied further in the Truman Doctrine. In his address to Congress and the nation President Harry Truman stated, "The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world."¹¹² The President's emphasis on free people clearly defined in ideological terms the division within the international community. Furthermore, it would layout the conditions for how the US would identify allied nations and cement its position as a bulwark against the Soviet menace.

¹¹² Edward Judge and John W. Langdon, *The Cold War Through Documents: A Global History*, (Prentice Hall, 2017.) 29

In 1948, the Soviet Union overthrew the Czechoslovakian government and installed a pro-Soviet regime.¹¹³ After the coup in Prague, fears of American and Western Europeans were validated and quickly resulted in the creation of the Treaty of Brussels, an economic and military pact composed of the United Kingdom, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Belgium.¹¹⁴ This treaty was created to strengthen defense and cooperation among Western European countries.¹¹⁵ It offered a good example of a country's ability to seek cooperation amongst likeminded countries, rather than a prioritization of self-preservation. Wendt concurred asserting, "A strong liberal or constructivist analysis of this problem would suggest that four decades of cooperation may have transformed a positive interdependence of outcomes into a collective 'European identity'."¹¹⁶ By 1949, the USSR's repetitive vetoing at the United Nations (UN), accompanied by the blockade of Berlin only intensified the fear.¹¹⁷ It is tempting to focus on the prevalence of fear as a major factor behind collective action; fear alone, however, does not necessarily guarantee cooperation.

To thwart future aggression, the United States initiated strategies to reinforce its allies. By earnestly counteracting Soviet actions, the US strategized that it might be able to keep Soviet power in check. Part of this new American foreign policy was the creation of regional alliances. In the North Atlantic, both Canada and the United States along with other members of the Treaty of Brussels, initiated discussions about the creation of a

¹¹³ Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance*, 68

¹¹⁴ Judge and Langdon, *The Cold War Through Documents: A Global History*, 58

¹¹⁵ Judge and Langdon, *The Cold War Through Documents: A Global History*, 58

¹¹⁶ Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It," 417

¹¹⁷ James Reston, "U.S. Asserts Soviet Forces Formation of Atlantic Group," *New York Times*, January 15, 1949.

North Atlantic defense pact that eventually resulted in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As far back as 1948, discussions considered a later expansion to include other Western democracies.¹¹⁸ Clearly fear is not the main driver; otherwise, any country in or around Europe might be considered for entry into this new organization. The emphasis, however, was to recruit likeminded Western democracies. Clear evidence exists, for example, that Iran wanted to be considered for entry into the organization but was rebuffed, quoted in a memo to President Truman, “while we consider it impractical to include Iran in the proposed North Atlantic agreement, we are equally anxious to avoid giving the impression that by placing emphasis on our commitment to western Europe we are abandoning Iran.”¹¹⁹ Such proof reaffirmed a key inference that Americans were clearly cognizant of and definitive of countries it preferred in the alliance. Americans and early Cold War historians claimed that the Cold War was defined by the West’s interest in self-defense and protection of its values from Soviet aggression.¹²⁰ By defining what they considered the West, Americans were able to draw upon shared ideology, constructivism’s foundational identity, and incorporated it in the qualifications for membership.

The Post World War II Security Threat:

On September 28, 1948, an assessment titled Threats to the Security of the United States was conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and delivered to the

¹¹⁸ “Memo, Clark Clifford to Harry S. Truman, ca. 1948.” Truman Papers, Clifford Files. North Atlantic Pact [4 of 5]: North Atlantic Treaty. Harry S. Truman Library. Independence, MO. Accessed Apr 24, 2019.

¹¹⁹ “Summary of Telegrams, Department of State, February 2, 1949.” Truman Papers, Naval Aide Files. January-April 1949. Harry S. Truman Library. Independence MO. Accessed Apr 24, 2019.

¹²⁰ Westad, “The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century” 3

office of the President as well as to multiple directors of intelligence throughout the government.¹²¹ The assessment focused squarely on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), stating, “For the foreseeable future the USSR will be the only power capable of threatening the security of the United States.”¹²² According to the CIA, this tenet set the tone for the rest of the assessment by identifying the significant threat from the Soviet Union. Their evaluation stemmed from the “consequence not only of Soviet strength, but also the weakness and instability prevalent in Europe and Asia.”¹²³ The emphatic argument that appeared consistently throughout the report was that the rest of the world was too weak and unstable to thwart any influence or military pressure from the Soviet Union. Reinforcement of the Soviet’s two main goals was identified within this assessment, which stipulates, “To exploit every opportunity presented by the weakness and instability of neighboring states to expand the area of Soviet domination” and “to prevent or retard the recovery and coalition of Western Europe and the stabilization of the situation in the Near East and Far East.”¹²⁴ The Soviets exploitation of weakness and chaos were pivotal to its standing and projection of power according to this document and significantly strengthened its international position.

The Soviets main strategy was to exploit a neighbor’s weakness and directed threats at Western European countries. The report stated, “industrial capacities of

¹²¹ “ORE 60-48, Threats to the Security of the United States, 09/28/1948”. September 28 1948. Record Group 263: Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1894-2002. Intelligence Publication Files, 1946-1950. National Archives at College Park. College Park, MD.

¹²² “Threats to the Security of the United States” 1

¹²³ “Threats to the Security of the United States” 1

¹²⁴ “Threats to the Security of the United States” 1

continental Western Europe could greatly enhance the Soviet industrial war potential”.¹²⁵ This quote outlined two significant inferences. Western European industrial capacity was a vital asset, an assessment shared by scholars, like Leffler, who analyzed American efforts to rebuild and incorporate Western Europe industry into its own system.¹²⁶ Secondly, this industrial capacity must be prohibited from Soviet control because it would strengthen its position in the event of a war. The preference, therefore, was that these capacities be guarded by the United States and fall under US control to enhance American power which then defined United States’ national security interest in Western Europe. Another primary motive was to stem communist spread into Western Europe. The security assessment stated, “Communist strength and political capabilities remain considerable, especially in France and Italy.”¹²⁷ The United States worries about this because these parties could “retain significant capabilities for subversion, espionage, and sabotage” and “would constitute a dangerous fifth column in the event of war”.¹²⁸ These communist elements threatening actions against previously stated US national interests clearly drew attention to the importance of the region and these formidable security threats had to be addressed.

The report offered solutions to the issues it raised and promoted American intervention in Western Europe with calls for enhancement of US security through “the existence of a stable world situation or by the availability of military bases overseas”.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ “Threats to the Security of the United States” 3

¹²⁶ Leffler, “The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945-1952” 77

¹²⁷ “Threats to the Security of the United States” 6

¹²⁸ “Threats to the Security of the United States” 6

¹²⁹ “Threats to the Security of the United States” 4

The only practical solution that the report offered was expansion of US military bases overseas and this development played a vital role in the United States' choice to pursue military alliance which clearly emphasized the future importance of Article V within NATO's founding. Military power, however, as constructivists have defined, was not the only tool the United States had to enhance its security.

While the report mentioned the strong presence of communist parties in Western Europe, it acknowledged that these parties were not strong enough to hold any political power or influence. One aspect of the drive to prevent these parties from expansion was the continuous hope that the United States would assist substantially in Europe's recovery. As the assessment stated, "in large part the effect of hope engendered by indications that decisive US support of Western European recovery and independence might be expected".¹³⁰ American support was vital in the attempt to keep communist parties at bay. Emphasizing this point, the assessment further stated, "Should the hope turn to despair, Communist political capabilities would correspondingly increase."¹³¹ The use of strong, blunt language reiterated the utmost necessity of US intervention and support in Europe, not just for support to these countries but for American security as well. Documented already was an emphasis on cooperation and this presented the origin for Article II in the alliance's founding treaty.

In the report, under the section entitled Military, the security assessment clearly stated that without US support Western Europe will easily be overrun by Soviet forces.¹³² This military component to US involvement in Europe was crucial; American

¹³⁰ "Threats to the Security of the United States" 6

¹³¹ "Threats to the Security of the United States" 6

¹³² "Threats to the Security of the United States" 7

intervention was the only force protecting these countries from Soviet aggression. This United States intelligence report was abundantly clear that it supported an interventionist approach, especially because the Soviet Union pursued policies to leverage its own power and strength. To the Central Intelligence Agency, it was in the security interest of the United States to counteract Soviet aggression and influence around the globe.

The Beginnings of an Idea

The origination of the idea of the organization NATO was established in a memo between Clark Clifford, an important Democratic political adviser, and President Truman. In this memo, a discussion ensued about the means of presenting the idea of a regional alliance with the free nations of Europe to the American public.¹³³ Under one of the recommendations it stated, “An immediate approach then to be made to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Eire [Ireland], Italy and Portugal ...through diplomatic channels...explaining to them the scheme for a declaration by the President”.¹³⁴ The use of the word immediate related the urgency in establishing diplomatic channels with these countries and outlined their strategic importance to the collective security agreement. The list of countries reaffirmed the earlier assessment that the United States previously had presented qualifications for NATO membership. The memo stressed that these diplomatic communications should remain secretive until each country clearly defines its intention to join the pact.¹³⁵ This item suggested that the United States either was unsure of support for such a pact from

¹³³ “Memo, Clark Clifford to Harry S. Truman, ca. 1948,” 2

¹³⁴ “Memo, Clark Clifford to Harry S. Truman, ca. 1948,” 1-2

¹³⁵ “Memo, Clark Clifford to Harry S. Truman, ca. 1948,” 2

certain countries or it wanted to avoid public scrutiny if there was minimal support.

Notably, the memo indicated some hesitation from the American negotiation as it related to the best approach in laying groundwork for NATO's creation. Careful planning demonstrated a strong desire for success and signified that the alliance was deliberately and consciously considered.

Further research outlined the extensive negotiations and outreach between Europe and the United States. The Americans reached out to many European partners, as listed in Clark's Memo, to discuss their interests, concerns, and suggestions.¹³⁶ There was a plethora of evidence to outline these communications; some were behind the scenes cooperation amongst allied members and others were publicly discussed in the news media. The Swedish government, for example, clearly professed through internal negotiations, that it would not seek any association with western powers.¹³⁷ Via media the Irish placed the condition of Irish unity for joining the alliance.¹³⁸ Ireland even objected privately to joining any alliance that included the United Kingdom through diplomatic channels.¹³⁹ Belgium, requested that the US government restrict the treaty area by excluding the Mediterranean.¹⁴⁰ These kinds of discussions ensued, until ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Consensus building was a critically

¹³⁶ "Memo, Clark Clifford to Harry S. Truman, ca. 1948," 1-2

¹³⁷ "Summary of Telegrams, Department of State, January 10, 1949," Truman Papers, Naval Aide Files. January-April, 1949. Harry S. Truman Library. Independence MO. Accessed Apr 24, 2019.

¹³⁸ "Irish Make Unity a Condition," *New York Times*, Feb. 1 1949.

¹³⁹ "Summary of Telegrams, Department of State, February 3, 1949," Truman Papers, Naval Aide Files. January-April 1949. Harry S. Truman Library. Independence MO. Accessed Apr 24, 2019.

¹⁴⁰ "Summary of Telegrams, Department of State, January 10, 1949."

important element of American ideology and these negotiations demonstrated how deeply that ideology permeated most American policies during that time.

On February 24, 1949, the CIA drafted another report including an evaluation of the effects of US foreign military aid. It concluded, “US military aid program and, more importantly, the Atlantic Pact will encourage resistance to Soviet aggression insofar as they are recognized as a basis of hope for the eventual achievement of real peace and security.”¹⁴¹ This assessment examined the psychological aspect of the pact regarding participating countries receiving US military aid. The report noted that Europe was struggling through its recovery as a result of the “bitter experience of war and hostile occupation.”¹⁴² The pact helped to mitigate some of these psychological traumas and to assist Europeans in recovery from long term suffering.

The report suggested that alleviating some of the worries in European capitals strengthened the security ties through common cause and a drive for a “convincing guarantee of immediate security.”¹⁴³ What this means was European’s psychology at this stressful time forced them to seek meaningful assurances and not weak promises. Note that the concept of common cause, as stated previously within constructivist theory, was included in the founding of NATO. This perception of European psychology created a stronger pact as shared common interests fueled members’ desire to see it succeed. Participation by other countries assisted in stabilizing the overall environment.¹⁴⁴ The

¹⁴¹ “ORE 41-49, Effects of a U.S. Foreign Military Aid Program, 02/24/49” February 24, 1948. Record Group 263: Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1894 – 2002. Intelligence Publication Files, 1946-1950. National Archives at College Park. College Park, MD.1

¹⁴² “Effects of a U.S Foreign Military Aid Program” 3

¹⁴³ “Effects of a U.S Foreign Military Aid Program” 3

¹⁴⁴ “Effects of a U.S Foreign Military Aid Program” 3

report stated that the pact will not bring immediate security but will lay the foundation for more cooperation through the use of military deterrence in the future.¹⁴⁵ This information was vital to the origins and importance of Article II and Article V in the alliance.

The formal declaration and acknowledgement of the North Atlantic Pact started in President Truman's inaugural address. Senator Arthur Watkins, from Utah, mentioned it in his telegram to President Harry Truman, dated March 7, 1949, that "In your inaugural address you declared that a joint defense agreement between the United States and certain European democracies was being negotiated".¹⁴⁶ New York Times journalist James Reston referenced this inaugural address again in his article entitled, "Truman's Four Points have Wide Implications." Reston wrote, "'full weight behind the European Recovery Program,' provide in the North Atlantic security pact 'unmistakable proof' of the joint determination of the free countries to resist armed attack from any quarter".¹⁴⁷ Together both quotes conveyed the singular purpose of establishing a North Atlantic alliance "within the context of President Truman's speech" as defense for free democratic countries. Both the telegram and the news article showed a pattern of the US government clearly stressing the cultural aspects of shared freedom and democracy with little emphasis on its military nature. Both pieces of information outlined the importance of American ideology in the Atlantic Pact's purpose and laid a foundation for supporting its creation.

¹⁴⁵ "Effects of a U.S Foreign Military Aid Program" 3

¹⁴⁶ "W.J. McWilliams to William Hassett, with attachments, March 16, 1949." Truman Papers, Official File. OF 66: North Atlantic Treaty Misc. Harry S. Truman Library. Independence MO. 6

¹⁴⁷ James Reston, "Truman's Four Points have Wide Implications." New York Times, January 23, 1949.

Importance of Shared Identity

Since its foundation shared identity as well as values have shaped NATO and its history. Secretary of State at this historic time, Dean Acheson, echoed this sentiment in a press release, affirming “Similarities of [institutions, moral and ethical beliefs] are not superficial, but fundamental. They are the strongest kind of ties because they are based on moral conviction, on acceptance of the same values in life.”¹⁴⁸ Research on the origins of the Cold War emphasized the importance of ideology in forging the “West” as an oppositional force to the Soviet Union; the ideological component, however, has rarely been applied to studies of NATO specifically. Most often studies of NATO prioritized the military and defensive aspect of its identity.

In early NATO studies, the significance of Article V in defining the military aspects of Cold War relations emphasized its important priority. Sir Frank Roberts, President of the British Atlantic Committee, highlighted the importance of the military aspect of the organization. He outlined the military’s goals by stating, “in order, above all, to prevent war happening and to be available and better able to deal with it if by any chance the deterrent has not worked.”¹⁴⁹ Deterrence and military response were obviously the main objectives of the alliance. His view of NATO reinforced the importance of the military in the organization. Roberts clearly stated that the military side is the “main part of it”.¹⁵⁰ General J. Lawton Collins, a major general of the U.S. Army who served in

¹⁴⁸ “State Department Press Release, March 18, 1949” (18 March 1949), State Department Press Release, The Development of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Harry S. Truman Library & Museum, Independence, MO.

¹⁴⁹ Frank Roberts, “The Relevance of NATO to the True Needs of the North Atlantic Alliance (Lecture).” *Rusi* 122, no. 3 (Sep 01, 1977): 15

¹⁵⁰ Roberts, “The Relevance of NATO” 14

World War I and World War II, agreed with Roberts' assessment. He wrote, "that while NATO has important political, economic and cultural aims its initial development was in the form of a defensive military alliance ...evolved slowly and steadily...to meet a definite and growing Russian military threat."¹⁵¹ Constructivists do not dispute these claims but reaffirmed them as an important underpinning of Article V in NATO's identity.

Constructivist theory, however, gives greater importance to other aspects of NATO's identity. General Collins insinuated the existence of a founding cultural aspect. He emphasized the military dominance of the treaty, but like a constructivist also alluded to the purpose of preserving freedom and democracy. For instance he stated that, "The struggle is not between the United States and the U.S.S.R. alone- it is between the people of the Free World, who are dedicated to the concept of the dignity of the individual and the liberty of all people, and the leaders of the Communist world determined to impose their imperialistic slavery on all mankind."¹⁵² This powerfully emotive description of the dichotomy that existed during the Cold War echoes constructivists' ideas that the military force was heroically preserving and fighting for its cultural identity. Collins simplified this idea when writing, "If freedom is to live, NATO must not die."¹⁵³ Constructivists agree that there is a common fundamental ideology in NATO that helps to promote unity. These inspirations emphasized the cultural milieu amongst alliance members that underpins all the other identities and laid the foundation for cooperation within NATO.

¹⁵¹ J. Collins, "NATO: Still Vital for Peace." *Foreign Affairs* 34, no. 1 (1955): 370

¹⁵² J. Collins, "NATO: Still Vital for Peace." *Foreign Affairs* 34, no. 1 (1955): 379

¹⁵³ J. Collins, "NATO: Still Vital for Peace." *Foreign Affairs* 34, no. 1 (1955): 379

An argument was made that some members do not fit into an alliance that identifies itself as an organization of liberal democracies. Roberts mentioned that the North Atlantic Alliance has not always been made up of democracies.¹⁵⁴ In particular, he pointed to the return of Greece and Portugal to democratic regimes in 1974, and lamented, “what had always been a rather difficult argument as to how you have a dictatorship in a democratic alliance.”¹⁵⁵ Roberts sufficiently challenged any argument for cultural harmony between NATO members with the use of this example. Even today members like Turkey, Poland and Hungary have largely turned away from liberal democracy. Constructivists argue that these deviations are no more than examples of the flexibility within the organization itself; as long as these members choose to uphold the values of the alliance they remain integral members. More importantly, constructivists emphasize that if the identity of the organization at the time is stressing partnerships and cooperation, then structural uniformity is not a priority.

Researchers of NATO have only started to affirm the constructivists’ concept of dual organizational identities: common defense and enforcement of common rules through cooperation. The common defense identity has a long history of research behind it because it correlated to power and to military, both strong factors during the Cold War period. Enforcement of common rules and promotion of cooperation were vitally important to NATO’s identity. “The second Article is equally fundamental” noted, David Acheson in a press release and further stated, “[it] is the ethical essence of the treaty – the common resolve to preserve, strengthen and make understood the very basis of tolerance,

¹⁵⁴ Roberts, “The Relevance of NATO” 14

¹⁵⁵ Roberts, “The Relevance of NATO” 14

restraint and freedom.”¹⁵⁶ This idea was corroborated by Wendt who outlined that cooperation often leads to increased cohesion and new common priorities. He stated, “the process of cooperation tends to redefine ... identities and interests in terms of new intersubjective understanding and commitments.”¹⁵⁷ Americans valued willing European participation and consensus building. As mentioned in chapter two, this cooperation was derived from the ideals of liberal democracies. The extensive consultations between members in negotiating the North Atlantic Treaty was further proof of the importance of cooperation and its value within the alliance. Such collaboration and consultation had an impact on major elements of the treaty. Article II was clearly a product and reflection of this fundamental ideology that underpinned the alliance.

Constructivists emphasize that NATO’s various identities provide it the flexibility to adapt and to accommodate. Hence NATO can put forth a multi-identity that encompasses defense, promotion of norms and cooperation, and crisis management. Through this historical analysis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, these identities are clearly developed with defined connections between the fundamental and organizational properties. Chapter three discusses the foundational ideology derived from the ideological division in the Cold War. NATO’s creation along with the foundational ideology influenced the inclusion of Article II and Article V. These two articles were described by Flockhart as, “in line with American grand strategy which emphasized both power and partnership.”¹⁵⁸ These articles are a kinetic representation for the foundational

¹⁵⁶ “State Department Press Release, March 18, 1949” (18 March 1949),

¹⁵⁷ Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of it,” 417

¹⁵⁸ Flockhart, “Understanding NATO” 144

ideology and are tools for the alliance to use in a joint consensus; they will function as the core influence of operational identities as NATO continues to evolve.

Chapter V.

NATO and the Arctic

In the Arctic NATO's strategy has been ambiguous. Constructivists root this ambiguity in the overlapping and competing operational identities within NATO. This chapter addresses the operational identities that are reflected in the alliance, especially in the Arctic. This region is structurally complicated due to the intricate layering of multilateral and bilateral institutional networks ranging from small non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to regional institutions like the Arctic Council.¹⁵⁹ NATO's Arctic members prefer to use multilateral organizations, like the Arctic Council, when addressing issues related to the region; this dynamic, however, excludes the military alliance, NATO. This exclusion was especially evident following the Cold War, as Arctic states no longer viewed Russia as an immediate military threat and chose to increase cooperation and dialogue with their former adversary.

New points of contention arise in the Arctic because climate change is radically altering the region's landscape. Melting ice has increased mobility within the formerly frozen region and has opened the region up to new resources. Arctic nations, primarily Russia, have been taking full advantage of these changes. Following the 2014 Ukraine crisis NATO saw a renewal in distrust between its members and Russia.¹⁶⁰ Climate change and increased Russian activity has altered the assessment of Nordic countries' view on having NATO in the Arctic. Even formally neutral Nordic nations like Sweden

¹⁵⁹ Olena Podvora & Taras Zhovtenko, "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" (2019) 164

¹⁶⁰ Duncan Depledge. "NATO and the Arctic" (2021) 83-84

and Finland questioned whether they should explore NATO membership as well.¹⁶¹ While Sweden and Finland have not formally joined NATO these countries did sign a military treaty with other NATO Nordic countries in the region.¹⁶² These changes demonstrate how integral NATO is to Nordic countries' territorial defense and its renewed importance to the region.

Constructivist Theory and the Arctic

The changing physical environment increases tension and competition between the nations that border the Arctic Sea. Melting ice, for example, has increased access to previously ice locked natural resources and shipping lanes. Among these competitors are five North Atlantic Treaty Organization members: Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Canada, and the United States. NATO's role within the Arctic region is important to analyze due to alliances' importance in Europe as well as its endurance and expansion on the continent. During the Cold War, ideological differences were employed to justify the alliance's defense and deterrence against the Soviet Union's autocratic government. Constructivists focus on the organizational identity of common defense as influencing the rationale behind this policy. These scholars argue that the shared values and ideology of NATO's members only increased unity and cooperation.

Today identity still affects not only the structure of the alliance but also its continued evolution. With the end of the Cold War, common defense became less of a priority for the alliance. The organization has evolved and developed a consensus amongst its members, promoting dialogue whenever possible, and increasing

¹⁶¹ Slavyana Boldyreva et al. "Political Discussions on Admission of Neutral Countries of the Arctic Region to NATO in the 1990s-2000s: Inclusion or a limited neutrality?" 145

¹⁶² Boldyreva et al. "Political Discussions on Admission of Neutral Countries" 148

transparency. Constructivists use these developments as NATO enhancing its second organizational identity: cooperation. More importantly these are all key tenets within the shared ideology of liberal democracies. The influence of identity in the alliance's evolution following the Cold War is evident, particularly in the Arctic region.

There is, however, a dichotomy between national and organizational interests in NATO's approach to the Arctic. These contrasting concerns are only a conflict of identity that has no bearing on the fundamental ideology of NATO. Identity does play an important role in the formation of NATO's agenda and strategic interests. Constructivists acknowledge that NATO itself has greater flexibility in meeting today's needs by drawing inspiration from the basic tenets of liberal democracy which affects the overall identity structure of the organization and its members.

Cold War

During the Cold War, the North Atlantic was a key region to observe and to develop military strategy but did not include the Arctic. "In NATO strategy, the [Arctic] did not have a prominent and independent position" according to Dr. Gjert Dyndal, Dean of Academics at the Royal Norwegian Air Force Academy, elaborated even further, "it was generally associated with Scandinavia, predominantly the southern parts and the Baltic Sea."¹⁶³ Furthermore, key members such as Norway and Denmark wished to see the Arctic as demilitarized as possible, even refusing deployment of foreign troops on either nation's soil, and avoiding military exercises above a certain latitude.¹⁶⁴ In 1949,

¹⁶³ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 563

¹⁶⁴ Helga Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic: is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic in a peaceful region now faced with non-military challenges?" (London: European Security, 2011) 349

Iceland declared that no foreign forces or bases would be permitted in its territory during peacetime.¹⁶⁵ In 1958, the United States proposed an Air Watch commanded by the United Nations (UN) to patrol and to survey the Arctic; the Soviets dismissed this as propaganda.¹⁶⁶ The alliance consistently tried to avoid any provocation or militarization within the Arctic. The region was affected by “missile trajectories, long-range bombers and nuclear submarines.”¹⁶⁷ These weapons were primarily transitory in nature and not permanent installations in the region. NATO’s opposition to emphasizing the Arctic stemmed from its members’ desire to keep it a demilitarized zone and hampered any singular analysis or strategy.

An analysis of NATO’s strategic concept documents showed the role ideology played in its early stages. Newly declassified strategic concepts shed some light on early policy. The importance of consensus and collaboration was imbedded in the alliance from the beginning, corroborating constructivists’ notion that cooperation was a foundational identity in the alliance. It is worth noting the significant amount of consultation that occurred amongst the allies as described in the summary that was provided by NATO and included with these declassified strategic concepts. Clearly members were sensitive to the interests of others: there was an example of Denmark wanting to assure clear and concise language in the first strategic concept about the use of nuclear weapons.¹⁶⁸ Another

¹⁶⁵ Albert Jónsson, *Iceland, NATO and the Keflavik Base*, (Reykjavik: Icelandic Commission on Security and International Affairs, 1989) 23

¹⁶⁶ Lindsay Parrott, “Soviet Veto Bars U.N. Arctic Check; Debate is Bitter” *New York Times*, May 3 1958

¹⁶⁷ Haftendorn. “NATO and the Arctic” 351

¹⁶⁸ Gregory W Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, (NATO International Staff Central Archives, 1997). xiii

example of members consulting concerns was France's objection to the exclusion of the "right to first use" policy in regards to nuclear weapons in later concepts.¹⁶⁹ These two examples demonstrated that consensus and collaboration, key tenets of democratic institutions, were an integral part of the alliance. Notably these examples outlined the importance of presenting unity through such cooperation.

Early strategic concepts were focused on deterrence and defense of the territorial integrity of the alliance. Most early strategic concepts and internal debates focused on the aspect of nuclear weapons in the structure of NATO's deterrence and defense. In the beginning the organization relied heavily on the American nuclear umbrella to guarantee its security and this strategy became known as Massive Retaliation. According to Dyndal, it was created in response to Europe's inability to meet NATO's 100 division troop buildup due to lack of "political will [and] the economic strength."¹⁷⁰ To constructivists it makes sense that the alliance in the beginning focused on its deterrence strength. While Article II of the foundational treaty talked about cooperation, during the Cold War preference and priority were given to the common defense represented in Article V.

Many European states vigorously fought to keep the strategic concepts as broad and ambiguous as possible.¹⁷¹ In the event of Russian aggression they could react quickly and with very few limits; this response is another aspect of Massive Retaliation. Constructivists point to the operational identity trilemma of the alliance as the reasoning behind this ambiguity. Member states want flexibility built into any participation, through

¹⁶⁹ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xxiii

¹⁷⁰ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 564

¹⁷¹ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xiii

collective defense, cooperative security, or crisis management. The alliance also perceived nuclear weapons not only as a deterrent but as a defensive measure that could hamper the Soviet's large active army advantage.¹⁷² Changes in nuclear deterrence evolved in steps developed from the current events at the time. Constructivists identify these changes as a reflection of the layers of identity within the institution.

The biggest developmental change came from the Soviets' acquisition of nuclear weapons, which changed the calculations of nuclear deployment. No longer could these kinds of weapons be used in warfare without the dangerous possibility of reciprocal reaction. A push by some nations in the alliance occurred to define and to seek clarity regarding nuclear retaliation because Europe now was on the front line of any nuclear war.¹⁷³ The second event that changed strategic strategy was the launch of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik, which proved it had the ability to use rockets and intercontinental ballistic missiles to threaten the United States.¹⁷⁴ These climactic events created a pinnacle point of reflection in the alliance.

Europeans feared that these significant developments might change American's unwavering obligation to NATO, in particular regarding Article V. As French President Charles De Gaulle wrote, "No President is going to trade Washington for Leon."¹⁷⁵ The worry was that in the event of an attack the United States might retract its commitments to Europe. Dyndal noted that this dilemma was considerably French-led skepticism.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xiii

¹⁷³ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xxi

¹⁷⁴ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xxi

¹⁷⁵ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xxi

This development was important because now the Soviets possessed the means and capability of attacking the US directly; such direct repercussions might weaken America's resolve to adhere to their Article V commitments. A push occurred from the Europeans for explicit confirmation that the United States will keep the nuclear umbrella in place.¹⁷⁷

The American government began to resist direct confrontation and commitment by pivoting towards more flexibility in the definition of what constituted a triggering nuclear retaliation event.¹⁷⁸ In the early 1960's during the Kennedy administration, the US pursued a policy describe by Dyndal, as the introduction of the Flexible Strategy¹⁷⁹ This conundrum between European and American interests reflected the changing priorities in operational identity of what NATO does, in the face of new information. Americans advocated for cooperative security and crisis management, while Europe supported collective defense. The result was a continued ambiguity of operational identity; the organizational identity of NATO, however, remained unchanged.

After the French withdrawal from military command structure, Flexibility Strategy was later fully embraced by NATO.¹⁸⁰ This flexibility was a key component to NATO's success because under Article V it allowed its members to present a united front through the organizational identity of common defense while allowing selectivity in members' participation. Dyndal agreed by identifying an example of this flexibility in 1967, when NATO was able to increase maritime activity in reaction to an increase in the

¹⁷⁶ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 555-565

¹⁷⁷ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xxi

¹⁷⁸ Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, xxiv

¹⁷⁹ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 565

¹⁸⁰ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 569

naval capacity of the Soviets.¹⁸¹ Flexibility once again allowed the alliance to meet its changing environment, substantiating the basic principle of constructivism.

Post-Cold War Inaction

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many members of NATO no longer perceived the need for an alliance grounded in defense planning and secrecy. The organization rather, wanted more transparency because it might offer greater chances of collaboration with other nations and might decrease miscalculations by adversaries.¹⁸² In accordance with this new policy the first publicly available strategic concept was released to the public in 1991. NATO declassified older strategic concepts and provided a summary to allow the public some context.¹⁸³ Updated concepts laid out the plan for NATO's de-escalation from its military defense priority; this movement was reasonable given that their main adversary appeared to no longer be a threat. These later strategic concepts focused on more obscure security objectives like terrorism, drugs, and crime.¹⁸⁴ In other words, NATO moved away from preferring Article V to an emphasis on Article II. In April 2009, Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, reaffirmed this position by insisting on enhancing NATO's preventative and political activities over military involvement, specifically within the Arctic.¹⁸⁵ These actions reflected NATO's

¹⁸¹ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 582

¹⁸² Javier Solana., Forward to *NATO Strategy Documents*, edited by Gregory W Pedlow, (NATO International Staff Central Archives, 1997) vii

¹⁸³ Solana, Forward to *NATO Strategy Documents*, vii

¹⁸⁴ Podvora. "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" 167

¹⁸⁵ "Q&A Session with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the NATO Youth Forum," April 2, 2009

perception of Russia's diminished threat, and the alliance's need to focus on collaboration over defense.

A shift by Arctic member states focused on multilateral organizations and international law treaties to continue the peaceful coexistence that existed even during the Cold War. In 1996, eight Arctic states formed the Arctic Council to coordinate maritime and environmental issues in the region.¹⁸⁶ This strategy increased collaboration between these nations and most importantly, led the Arctic Council to take a central role in the region. The Council created a comprehensive forum to address environmental issues, scientific cooperation and social assessments, yet it has no enforcement mechanism and excludes any political or security issues.¹⁸⁷ Arctic NATO members have contributed actively to nonmilitary operations through the Arctic Council with the use of search and rescue, disaster relief, and other shared concerns within the region.¹⁸⁸ Arctic members supported the resolution of territorial disputes through the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), an international law that governs coastal territory.¹⁸⁹ Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, himself stated, "that the Arctic should be 'a zone for peace' and that the only way to deal with rival territorial claims was through negotiations in compliance with international law."¹⁹⁰ These actions presented examples of the Arctic members' emphasis on the importance of dialogue and

¹⁸⁶ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic" 339

¹⁸⁷ Kenneth Yalowitz, "Arctic Climate Change: Security Challenges and Stewardship Opportunities" in *Environmental Security in the Arctic Ocean*, eds. P.A. Berkman and A.N. Vylegzhanin, (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media 2013) 33

¹⁸⁸ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 83

¹⁸⁹ Yalowitz, "Arctic Climate Change" 33

¹⁹⁰ Yalowitz, "Arctic Climate Changes" 33

cooperation through the alliance. With the demise of an adversarial Russia, this preference for the organizational identity of cooperation, found in Article II of the NATO treaty, was accomplished.

Russia's reduced threat was not the only factor in NATO's Arctic policy. Another factor to consider is the alliance's evolution into a more political-military organization due to the significant changes in a wider understanding of security.¹⁹¹ This transformation included the flexibility to address the multitude of threats that now faced the alliance; in the Arctic, reduced threats included the decrease in NATO's military and defense strategy. The United States for example, removed its forces from Iceland, leaving nations feeling vulnerable.¹⁹² Furthermore, regional security and priorities were downgraded for more international threats. To face these broad threats, Olena Podvora, an Associate Professor at National University of Ostroh Academy, identified three mutually reinforcing elements that NATO relies on for security policy: "dialogue, co-operation and the maintenance of a collective defense capability."¹⁹³ These elements, according to constructivists, are clearly aspects of NATO's preference for cooperation at the time. Podvora also identified three main tools utilized by the alliance, including "collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security" which are outlined in the Strategic Concept of 2010.¹⁹⁴ All of these are reflected in constructivism theory, further validating the theories utilization.

¹⁹¹ Podvora. "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" 166

¹⁹² Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: Is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic?" 348

¹⁹³ Podvora. "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" 167

¹⁹⁴ Podvora. "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" 168

The lack of prioritization of the Arctic led Norway and Iceland to advocate for a more active NATO role. These two nations warned their allies not to lose focus on the region, but their calls were not heeded.¹⁹⁵ Canada disapproved of any NATO presence in the Arctic because it feared that it would undermine the progress of regional cooperation.¹⁹⁶ Ottawa rebuked any mention or emphasis of the Arctic region in NATO's policy texts.¹⁹⁷ Canada was not the only member to blame for the alliance's ambivalence. The lack of US attention to the region also "weakened the case for any meaningful action."¹⁹⁸ This coordination and dialogue between members was a comprehensive illustration of the alliance's preference for cooperation over common defense at the time.

NATO has not singled out the Arctic as an important region of interest, because this action might leave an impression that NATO is selective in its regional concerns.¹⁹⁹ Scholars warned such blatant negligence of this area endangered NATO by being unprepared for any conflict that might lead to questions of relevance and allegiance. Such fallout would fundamentally harm the cohesion of the alliance. Increased investments and integration of armed forces are better tools to enhance the organization's goals.²⁰⁰ These risks, however, did not motivate the alliance to prioritize the region. Scholars noted that the slow recognition and response allowed Russia to establish the narrative that NATO is

¹⁹⁵ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 81

¹⁹⁶ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 81

¹⁹⁷ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 83

¹⁹⁸ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 81

¹⁹⁹ Podvora. "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" 169

²⁰⁰ Roberts, "The Relevance of NATO" 15

the aggressor, militarizing the Arctic.²⁰¹ Sporadic media attention strengthened Russia's narrative because it did not create a routine of normalcy for NATO's presence in the Arctic. The result from the alliance preferring member cooperation under Article II provided flexibility for the operational identity trifecta; cooperative security, collective defense, and crisis management. Internal divisions derived from competing operational identities have allowed Arctic planning to stall in NATO, but rising tensions finally may be motivating the alliance to act.

Rising pressures and the importance of deterrence motivated NATO to adopt a common strategy for the Arctic, but internal divisions remained. Competing national interests amongst its members also prevented an Arctic strategy from emerging in NATO.²⁰² Some members debated the involvement of NATO in the region that might unnecessarily provoke Russia to start a militarization of the region. Another lingering internal division was the non-recognition by Denmark, Norway, Canada, and the United States of Iceland's claim of status as an Arctic nation; this action prevented Iceland from attending some Arctic forums under the auspices that it was not an Arctic coastal state.²⁰³ Such divisions impeded normalizing NATO's role in the Arctic. Constructivists attribute this dilemma to competing operational identities between members. How some members viewed NATO's Arctic role prevents a uniformed NATO strategy.

A good number of member-states have instinctively prioritized their own national interests above the mutual interest of the organization. These competing forces of

²⁰¹ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 89

²⁰² Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic" 353

²⁰³ Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic" 339

national and organizational interests are the main obstacle to any formal policy in the Arctic. As Olena Podvora stated, “security approach results from the way security and national interests are being perceived within... not all NATO member-states share the same approach towards security in practice and not all are ready to discard their ambitions and interests with regard to the Arctic.”²⁰⁴ Constructivists again highlight the differences in operational identities within the alliance. Outside of common defense, the organization does not need complete unity to operate. NATO’s shared foundational ideology amongst its members is highly valued as was its post- Cold War preference for cooperation under Article II; before 2014, no threatening adversary or ideological rival could change that preference.

In January 2009, the alliance held a seminar to address security in the Arctic.²⁰⁵ The alliance agreed to a multilateral approach. “Building its policy towards the Arctic as a part of ‘comprehensive approach,’ which foresees that NATO cooperates together with other institutions like the EU and the Arctic Council” stated Podvora.²⁰⁶ The focus on cooperation affected NATO’s operations. Scholars at the time cited a lack of evidence of any new Cold War arising in the Arctic and argued that the region will remain an area of cooperation.²⁰⁷ In 2014, NATO’s Arctic policy and organizational identity started to change when Russia annexed Crimea that raised awareness of its potential threat to its Arctic neighbors. The alliance increased surveillance of Russia and its activities,

²⁰⁴ Podvora. “NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi” 165

²⁰⁵ Podvora. “NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi” 169

²⁰⁶ Podvora. “NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi” 169

²⁰⁷ Oran Young, “Arctic Futures: The Power of Ideas” in *Environmental Security in the Arctic Ocean*, eds. P.A. Berkman and A.N. Vylegzhanin, (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media 2013) 130

particularly in the Arctic. Constructivists perceive this moment as the beginning of NATO's deemphasis of selective cooperation and its move towards the importance of a collective defense.

Renewed Interest

While Norway and Iceland led the charge for NATO action in the Arctic, continued Russian aggression changed the minds of many members within the alliance. Norway and Iceland requested more military drills, patrols, and planning; until recently they have been largely ignored. In May 2013, *Defense News* reports, "Although NATO is aware of increasing concern among Nordic and Baltic nations about Russia's military rebuilding programs, there will be no major change in the alliance's strategic positions in the [Arctic]".²⁰⁸ As of 2016, however, these requests finally found support from allies and resulted in an increased military presence in Norway and Iceland.²⁰⁹ Part of this change was the annexation of Crimea but also included growing fears of Russia's military buildup in the Arctic. Podvora summarized that the source of anxiety comes from the large Russian fleet equipped with nuclear ice breakers and the renewal of long-range bomber patrols within the region.²¹⁰ Increased military activity by Russia was an alarming development for all European countries.

In May 2020, Assistant Secretary General Camille Grand reiterated this changing occurrence by observing, "what's interesting for me is that member nations that are party

²⁰⁸ Gerard O'Dwyer, "NATO Rejects Direct Arctic Presence," *Defense News*, May 27, 2013, LexisNexis 16

²⁰⁹ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 85

²¹⁰ Podvora. "NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi" 181

to the Arctic Council traditionally were a bit guarded on the fact that NATO should play a role. But now they are more in favor of seeing NATO, let's say, show its flag in the region as well."²¹¹ NATO and, in particular, its Arctic members, were recalculating strategic positions on what role the alliance will play. This change as documented by Assistant Secretary General Grand was NATO's inherent flexibility in action. The alliance was transitioning back to centralizing its identity around Article V to meet its security interests. Heightened tension from Russia's invasion of Ukraine reverberated in other international organizations like the Atlantic Council, that led to a breakdown in relations; tensions started to change the perception and interests for NATO Arctic members. The following subsections are four Arctic members that differed in operational identity, but all are strongly encouraging NATO to form a consensus on defense strategy in the Arctic.

Canada. In 2009, Canada supported the policy of keeping NATO out of the Arctic, primarily due to its various territorial disputes with Denmark and the United States.²¹² It also had an ongoing dispute with the European Union and the United States about the recognition of the Northwest Passage as an international waterway, which it had resisted.²¹³ Canada feared that allowing NATO greater participation in the region would create increased pressure to resolve these disputes. It was especially contentious since NATO's Treaty has an explicit mention of members resolving territorial disputes before

²¹¹ Sebastian Sprenger, "NATO's Camille Grand on the Alliance's Arctic Track," *Defense News*, May 12, 2020

²¹² Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic" 350

²¹³ Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic" 341

joining the organization. These reservations, however, have not stopped Canada from investing and setting policy in the Arctic on its own.

In a speech by James Wright, a Canadian diplomat, he outlined four main pillars that crystallize Canada's Arctic vision: "clearly defined boundaries; dynamic economic growth and trade; vibrant Northern communities; and healthy and productive Eco-systems."²¹⁴ From this list the policy of clearly defined boundaries were most important. Canada was acutely aware and protective of its territorial issues though it has not stopped Canada from participating in military exercises with either Denmark or the United States.²¹⁵ Excluding NATO, Canada relied on multilateral organizations like the Atlantic Council to handle Arctic issues as its preferred national policy towards upholding vibrant Northern communities.

The speech further defined Canadian policy goals of Arctic governance in three key areas: "enhancing key bilateral relationships; pursuing a strengthened Arctic Council; and working through multilateral institutions."²¹⁶ Part of this strategy was pursuing a search and rescue treaty in the Arctic Council.²¹⁷ These policy objectives presented Canada's preference for an operational identity based on crisis management and cooperative security. If the alliance shifts its organizational identity from cooperation to

²¹⁴ James R. Wright. "Keynote Speech: 'Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy'" in *Environmental Security in the Arctic Ocean*, eds. P.A. Berkman and A.N. Vylegzhanin, (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media 2013) 104

²¹⁵ Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic" 350

²¹⁶ Wright, "Keynote Speech" 106

²¹⁷ Wright, "Keynote Speech" 107

defense, Canada shifts its priorities accordingly. Canada already initiated informal planning and discussions behind the scenes.²¹⁸

Norway. In NATO's agenda, Norway was the leader propelling the Arctic forward because its principal interest was to keep the alliance focused on the region. Since the 1950's, Norwegians consistently have argued for greater focus on regional concerns.²¹⁹ The national preference clearly emphasized NATO's military defense identity. Norway's Defense Minister Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen, reiterated this disposition in a 2013 interview stating "Collective defense is the backbone of NATO."²²⁰ Historically, Norway has seen NATO as the primary guarantor of its territorial claims and integrity.²²¹ So fundamental was it to Norway's security that it presents itself as an ardent supporter of continuing to keep the alliance relevant and cohesive.²²² This support, however, does not prevent Norway from assuring its own its security, especially in response to NATO's reluctance to a presence in the Arctic. This kind of movement might be interpreted as Norway wavering between the two operational identities, cooperative security, and collective defense.

One example of self-protection was Norway's investment in developing a Nordic defense cooperation.²²³ This action was the consequence of prioritizing common defense at the operational level. The common defense priority was the result of Norway's

²¹⁸ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 88

²¹⁹ Dyndal, "How the High North became Central in NATO Strategy," 581

²²⁰ O'Dwyer, "NATO Rejects Direct Arctic Presence" 16

²²¹ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic" 345

²²² Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic" 347

²²³ O'Dwyer, "NATO Rejects Direct Arctic Presence" 16

territorial dispute with Russia that spans back decades: the Svalbard Treaty in 1920, allowed all signatories, including Russia, equal access to the Svalbard islands and its resources.²²⁴ The treaty granted Norway limited control over the territory. Norway, for its part, stated that it applies Article V regarding the territory and that it is solely responsible for its defense.²²⁵ Russia disputed this action. This territorial dispute influenced Norway's preference to keep a balance between its ties with NATO and Russia.²²⁶ It is abundantly clear why Norway, in 2014, reacted to the events in Ukraine as a disturbing warning sign. Norway was the first NATO member to station its strategic military apparatus in the Arctic and has made it a national priority.²²⁷ It advocated aggressively for NATO to refocus attention on the region. In 2018, these appeals were heard, and NATO responded with a massive exercise, *Trident Juncture*, that practiced the reinforcement of Norway.²²⁸ Norway already prioritized the operational identity of collective defense and will support NATO's organizational identity shift toward prioritizing Article V.

Iceland. The country of Iceland also perceived the drift of alliance priorities and worried about its vulnerability. Iceland's participation was limited by a cultural history of neutrality, no establishment of any active military and a veritably small population.²²⁹ It relied heavily on the United States and NATO for security.²³⁰ Iceland even leaned on its

²²⁴ James K Wither, "Svalbard NATO's Arctic 'Achilles' Heel'" 30

²²⁵ Wither, "Svalbard NATO's Arctic 'Achilles' Heel'" 30

²²⁶ Wither, "Svalbard NATO's Arctic 'Achilles' Heel'" 33

²²⁷ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic" 346

²²⁸ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 87

²²⁹ Jónsson, *Iceland, NATO and the Keflavík Base*, 13

²³⁰ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic" 348

allies in the organization for administrative support.²³¹ In 1988, Iceland increased its involvement in NATO affairs by outlining its concerns about nuclear warheads at sea and wanted any disarmament agreements to include nuclear naval capabilities as well.²³² The alliance took these demands into consideration but did not agree fully to the Icelandic government's request with the vital understanding that maritime waterways were the life blood of NATO.²³³ Herein lies a perfect example of Iceland's cooperative operational identity in action in relation to the alliance.

After the Cold War, as the organization shifted its strategic priorities, Iceland struggled with the question of how to address the remaining gap in security. As a small nation both in size and population, Iceland was acutely conscious of its susceptibility and continued to prioritize the operational identity of cooperative security. It turned to multilateral organizations such as the Arctic Council to champion its national interests in the region and to strengthen its relationships with fellow Nordic countries.²³⁴ Iceland joined Norway in creating a community of Nordic countries that collaborated with NATO and complemented it. Denmark and Norway, for example, flew patrols at Iceland's behest.²³⁵ In 2009, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland signed a mutual defense treaty.²³⁶ According to Baldur Thorhallsson, a professor in political science at the University of Iceland, Iceland's security needs cannot be adequately addressed by Nordic

²³¹ Jónsson, *Iceland, NATO and the Keflavík Base*, 16-18

²³² Jónsson, *Iceland, NATO and the Keflavík Base*, 19

²³³ Jónsson, *Iceland, NATO and the Keflavík Base*, 20

²³⁴ Hatendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: Is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic?" 349

²³⁵ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: Is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic?" 348

²³⁶ Slavyana Boldyreva and Roman Boldyrev, "Political Discussions on Admission of Neutral Countries of the Arctic Region to NATO in the 1990s-2000s: Inclusion or a limited neutrality?" 148

states alone.²³⁷ Thorhallsson argued that, based on realism's theory of power dynamics, countries seek protection or power maximization in reaction to a lawless international arena. This notion, however, does not fully describe Iceland's position as it was never truly on its own, but lacked priority. Prioritization and abandonment are completely different concepts. Iceland's cooperation with other Nordic countries was an expression of its own prioritized operational identity.

Iceland had received support from allied air forces to monitor and to fly missions four times a year; Iceland covered most of the cost.²³⁸ To be clear, however, Iceland was careful to craft its policies in such a way that they avoid any impression of militarizing the Arctic: they feared a response from Russia.²³⁹ In pairing Icelandic actions with fellow Nordic NATO members, an abundance of examples exist of members balancing their priorities between the operational identities of cooperative security and collective defense. Due to internal disagreements in NATO the Nordic Arctic nations moved forward with cooperation and coordination outside the alliance.²⁴⁰ The Nordic countries worked together diligently to encourage NATO to refocus on the Arctic. Similar to Norway, Iceland will welcome the alliance's shift in organizational identity because it prefers cooperative security as its operational identity,

United States. Even though the United States is a coastal nation, it has not taken any direct action or expressed any interest in the Arctic. Americans emphasized freedom of the seas and relied on multinational organizations, like the Atlantic Council, to protect its

²³⁷ Baldur Thorhallsson, "A Small State in World Politics: Iceland's Search for Shelter," *Stjórnmal Og Stjórnsýsla* 14(1), (2018) 77

²³⁸ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: Is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic?" 348

²³⁹ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: Is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic?" 349

²⁴⁰ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 83

interests.²⁴¹ This freedom of the seas policy correlated with the previously mentioned territorial and waterway disputes with Canada, especially the Northwest passage. The United States, under the same premise, also wants the North Sea route classified as an international waterway but Russia claims it as its own.²⁴² The North Sea and the Northwest Passage are vital economic transportation routes, and any claim of territory will enrich and empower the owner. Americans have a strong interest to keep both passageways open and to prevent any economic disadvantages or hegemony from happening.

Regional interest was further limited by a substantial political barrier within the structure of the American government. The United States only has one state that borders the Arctic, Alaska. This sparsely populated state has a small congressional representation and consequently, has weak political clout.²⁴³ In 1994, the American government outlined six policy goals: national security, conservation, economic development, strengthened regional institutions, inclusion of indigenous communities, and enhancement of scientific research.²⁴⁴ Most of these goals can be attained by strengthening and cooperating with other Arctic nations through the Arctic Council. The United States saw the Council as the primary tool for environmental matters, enhancing cooperation and sustainable

²⁴¹ Haftendorn. "NATO and the Arctic" 350

²⁴² Sharon Effendy, Bernadeth Franchika, and Vanessa Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War: Why the US Needs NATO in the Arctic," *Jurnal Sentris*, (2021) 27

²⁴³ Raymond Arnaudo, "United States Policy in the Arctic," in *Environmental Security in the Arctic Ocean*, eds. P.A. Berkman and A.N. Vylegzhanin, (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media 2012) 82

²⁴⁴ Arnaudo, "United States Policy in the Arctic," 85

development.²⁴⁵ A disinterested Washington had no significant capability to act or to influence on policies in the Arctic.²⁴⁶

Since 2016, the United States' presence in the Arctic has expanded; for example, it deepened defensive ties with the Nordic countries of Finland, Norway, Iceland, and Sweden.²⁴⁷ This was in response to the buildup of Russian forces starting in 2007.²⁴⁸ The increased Chinese activity in the area was also a legitimate concern. In 2019, the US updated its Arctic strategy stating, "China is attempting to gain a role in the Arctic in ways that may undermine international rules and norms, and there is a risk that its predatory economic behavior globally may be repeated in the Arctic."²⁴⁹ Russian and Chinese activity in the Arctic has naturally drawn heightened US attention. Sharon Effendy and her co-contributors saw the United States acting and making policy based on the security dilemma created by two great powers, Russia, and China.²⁵⁰ These scholars exemplify a preference for NATO academics who rely on power dynamics to explain international affairs. The United States, due to its small regional footprint, primarily focused on crisis management in relation to its operational identity. As other nations in the region began to shift identities, the US was forced to shift as well. In the wake of the 2014 annexation of Crimea, a larger organizational shift was generated. Arctic states

²⁴⁵ Arnaudo, "United States Policy in the Arctic," 88

²⁴⁶ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: Is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic?" 352

²⁴⁷ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic" 85-86

²⁴⁸ Effendy, Franchika, and Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War," 33-34

²⁴⁹ Camilla Sorensen, "Intensifying US-China security dilemma dynamics play out in the Arctic: Implications for China's Arctic Strategy," *Arctic Yearbook* (2019): 2, referenced in Sharon Effendy, Bernadeth Franchika, and Vanessa Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War: Why the US Needs NATO in the Arctic," *Jurnal Sentris*, (2021) 29

²⁵⁰ Effendy, Franchika, and Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War," 29

were worried about China's long-term strategic objectives in the region and possible military deployment.²⁵¹ Being the largest contributor to NATO, the US's operational identity shift from crisis management to collective defense was expected, especially when its fellow allies felt threatened.

All these countries have competing operational identities but, they are beginning to converge based on the overwhelming strength of the organizational identity that took precedence over a member's individual operational identity. These competing interests consequently eased as current Russian activities began to change the alliance's calculation and strategy. These Russian activities included planting its flag in the North Pole, and its hybrid warfare in Ukraine. Recently Russia has returned to a Cold War mentality in its approach to Western countries. Cooperation has deteriorated as the Russians continued with provocative actions within its "near abroad," a Russian term for nearby countries within its perceived sphere of influence. In 2014, Russia used hybrid warfare, a combination of traditional and unconventional tools of war, in Ukraine that increased mutual distrust and created a mounting concern amongst Eastern European and Arctic members of NATO. Both Eastern Europe and the Arctic have seen an acceleration of Russian activity, including a buildup in military capacity, a resurgence in provocative drills, and increased incursions via sky or sea. The invasion of Ukraine in 2014 demonstrated to these countries that Russia is a malignant threat and can no longer be ignored militarily. Constructivists contend that this action is the reason for the alliances' return to prioritizing common defense over cooperation.

²⁵¹ Effendy, Franchika, and Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War," 29

Future Arctic Action

Even today, understanding challenges in the Arctic are perplexing. Climate change is a major factor of future changes occurring in the Arctic. The alliance must meet these new threats squarely, apart from a resurgent Russia, that is buoyed by the changes in the environment in the Arctic. Understanding how climate change affects the broader region is crucial. In *NATO, Climate Change, and International Security: A Risk Governance Approach*, Tyler Lippert investigates how NATO approaches this subject and identifies problems with NATO's approach to climate change. The first problem is NATO's difficulty with the definition of common terms like security which disrupts any collective research or long-term planning.²⁵² A second issue is that NATO cannot establish linkages between catastrophic climate events and potential hypothetical outcomes; it is hard, for instance, to draw a strong connection between increased aggression and environmental changes. As Lippert states, "[there is no degree of confidence about] the linkage between temperature and violent crime, as well as that between climate variability and small-scale communal violence".²⁵³ The last issue is compiling data that relies on historical factors; there is no guarantee that any of these factors will occur in the future.²⁵⁴ The three causes outlined above have hampered any unified response or strategy regarding climate change. Constructivists do not consider

²⁵² Tyler Lippert, *NATO, Climate Change, and International Security*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 44

²⁵³ Lippert, *NATO, Climate Change, and International Security* 37

²⁵⁴ Lippert, *NATO, Climate Change, and International Security* 44

this outcome as a failure of the organization but rather a resulting aspect of NATO's Article II identity.

The organization prefers its cooperative identity especially when it is not faced with an external threat. While climate change affects some elements of defense, like naval movements through Arctic waterways, its intangibility is a concept that prevents members from being united, under Article V. Rather than defensive unity, the organization chooses to follow selective cooperation. This notion is professed clearly by Lippert in NATO's approach to its understanding of environmental issues. NATO's use of the Science for Peace and Security program to understand environment and defense is divided into selective groupings that promote cooperation between the alliance and outside actors.²⁵⁵ NATO Arctic members prefer to use multilateral organizations such as the Arctic Council to address non-military policy within the region.²⁵⁶ NATO further emphasizes its preference for cooperation identity in addressing climate change. In order to address the climate aspect of security directly, NATO must rely on Article II and use Article V to focus on its other threat, a resurgent Russia.

As Russia accelerates its aggression on neighboring states, a constructivist theory predicts yet another change in identity for NATO. Now it must begin to face not only an escalating threat from Russia but also an ideological rival in China while both countries pursue an active role in the Arctic. This confrontation will force NATO to reverse its organizational identity from cooperation to common defense and will lead to clearer strategic planning. Although agreement on strategy is possible and necessary, there will be disagreement on methods of participation stemming from competing operational

²⁵⁵ Lippert, *NATO, Climate Change, and International Security* 53-55

²⁵⁶ Yalowtiz, "Arctic Climate Change" 33

identities. This ambiguity brings a certain kind of unity to the alliance that allows it to endure and permits its members to accommodate self- interests.

Chapter VI.

Conclusion

Constructivist theory is best used to comprehend the intricacies of NATO, its members, and its complicated web of converging interests. At its core is a flexibility that allows adaptation, cooperation, and unity. The continuous ambiguity in operational and organizational identity allows it to adapt and to endure; NATO's policy in the Arctic is an excellent example of how that theory applies. Shifts in Arctic policy correlate with how the alliance views its organizational identity, either through Article II or Article V. More importantly, the Arctic becomes more prominent when all members view it as a strategic region of interest that affects individual operational identity which sets limits for participation. The significance of operational identity helps to predict conduct by NATO members. By not restricting institutional structures or policies, the alliance and its members have flexibility that is key to constructivism's successful application to the organization.

Ideology is another important aspect. Constructivists recognize, like all international relation theories, that the world is chaotic and lacks global governance. These theories bring some clarity to the interaction of nations in anarchic environments. Neo-classical realism closely explains NATO operations but results in a fundamental disadvantage because it heavily focuses on power that emphasizes the idea that states are solely motivated by self-preservation and self-interest. This kind of selfishness that neo-classical realists profess, places the world in a one-dimensional environment.

Constructivists reject such notions and understand that the world is formulated by interaction among actors and institutions.²⁵⁷ The international world is multi-faceted, meaning, unlike neo-classic realism, constructivists believe that there are other motives and factors driving state to state interactions. Constructivist scholars recognize two schools of thought in international relations: one is realism motivated by self-interest and the second one is liberalism motivated by competition. These same scholars, however, promote a third dynamic, cooperation.²⁵⁸ Unlike liberalism and realism that recognize states as in a perpetual battle against one another, constructivists note that states can distinguish friend from foe. The importance of shared ideology and values encourage states to seek cooperation over competition or self-interest. The application of constructivist theory to NATO regarding the Arctic is a clear example. The alliance at its core has a foundational ideology that keeps its members from viewing each other as enemies.

The evolution of NATO's approach to the Arctic mirrors the changes that have occurred in the alliance over the years. During the Cold War, unity and cohesion were required because the organization prioritized common defense. Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been forced continuously to evolve due to the collapse of its main adversary, the USSR. Finding new objectives and redefining itself in order to stay relevant in a changing landscape compelled NATO to look abroad, with missions in Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria; it was no longer restricted to a particular region in its updating of strategic concepts. Constructivists attribute these events to members' differing preferences among the three operational identities. The emphasis on

²⁵⁷ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO" 143

²⁵⁸ Flockhart, "Understanding NATO" 143

cooperation as the primary identity allowed members to endorse but still not fully participate in these missions. The prioritization of national interests might be construed as an increase of nationalism, but in the absence of the organizational identity of common defense, NATO members are allowed to be more independent. Cooperation does not necessarily mean unity and explains the lack of priority given to the Arctic, apart from its Nordic members.

In reaction to increased Russian aggression NATO will reprioritizes Article V in its organizational identity. The outcome will foster increased unity within the alliance and less flexibility in member participation, as the alliance again will focus on common defense over cooperation. China's growing presence in the Arctic is a looming threat as well. Scholars disagree on an approach to handle the increased Chinese activity. Some scholars, like Sharon Effendy and her co-contributors, utilize traditional game theory to predict an increased NATO - US activity in the Arctic to counterbalance Chinese threats.²⁵⁹ Duncan Depledge, disagrees and proffers that China is a mere distraction and that the alliance must focus solely on Russia.²⁶⁰ Despite differing opinions, Arctic defenses can no longer be ignored. The alliance will be forced to build up defenses, closely coordinate policy, and encourage unity amongst its members in the Arctic. Constructivism theory outlines NATO's reversion to its Cold War mindset.

After weeks of building up forces on its borders, on February 24, 2022, Russia invaded its neighbor Ukraine with the full power of its military might. Russia's unprovoked military aggression has reaffirmed the necessity for the North Atlantic Treaty

²⁵⁹ Effendy, Franchika, and Anthea, "NATO in The Very Cold War," 33-34

²⁶⁰ Depledge, "NATO and the Arctic," 89

Organization. Throughout this research one fundamental factor recurs, and that is the power of rhetoric. The compelling nature of America's ideology and its rallying effect on other nations that share those values is a significant force. The power of ideology and identity re-occur throughout the extensive academic literature on NATO, whether it is alluded to briefly or studied extensively. It is hard to argue now that rhetoric about liberty, freedoms, and shared values are irrelevant. Ukrainians pursue and fight to be included in organizations like NATO that embody those ideals. The ability to recognize common ideology, values, ethics, and morals, assist nations in distinguishing friend from foe. This core constructivist tenet will guide the United States and its allies through the rapidly turbulent changes occurring in Europe. Ideology is NATO's strength and provides a solid foundation for the organization that prevents ruptures within the alliance and generally allows flexibility to occur at various levels.

The invasion of Ukraine has provided more examples of constructivist NATO viewpoints. The Russian invasion has solidified the transition of the organizational identity back to common defense under Article V. This transition is represented in the alliance's extensive defensive build up on NATO's eastern borders and reaffirmation of each nations' commitment to Article V. Furthermore, the invasion reflects the flexibility of differing operational identities between NATO members. Some nations have chosen to boost defense spending, some have chosen to send military hardware to Ukraine, some have mobilized defense units to Eastern Europe, while others have embraced crisis management in the form of welcoming waves of refugees. This monumental flexibility and massive collaboration further display the importance of the strength in the alliance.

The situation in Ukraine demonstrates that the conclusions reached in this research about NATO and the Arctic have wider applications.

The ramifications of war in Ukraine affect the Arctic. The world is witnessing NATO's defense buildup in Eastern Europe and before long the organization will look north to build up its Arctic defenses, too. A previously planned Norwegian exercise titled, Cold Response, now reflects greater importance and meaning.²⁶¹ Increased fear in the region finally leads the alliance to turn its attention purposefully and actively. NATO Scandinavian countries' pleas for prioritization can no longer be ignored, especially if Sweden and Finland decide to join the alliance. The changing security environment has forced each one of these nations to reconsider membership.²⁶² This research has been invaluable not only to understanding and to predicting NATO's involvement in the Arctic, and how the alliance will proceed in this rapidly changing world.

²⁶¹ "NATO Allies demonstrate strength and unity with exercise Cold Response in Norway" North Atlantic Treaty Organization. March 14, 2022.

²⁶² Lisa Abend, "Finland and Sweden Wrestle With the Benefits- and Risks- of Joining NATO," *TIME*. March 18, 2022.

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