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NATO's Institutional Adaptation and Post-strategic Security in Europe, 1990-97: Political Challenges and Theoretical Considerations

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Political Challenges and Theoretical Considerations

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Zusammenfassung

Die politischen ebenso wie die politologischen Debatten über die Zukunft der NATO begannen schon bald, sich vornehmlich um die Bündniserweiterung und um den gemeinsamen Ausgriff im robusten Konfliktmanagement zu drehen. Diese wichtigen Dimensionen der Zukunft der Allianz und ihrer Rolle bei der Friedenssicherung in und für Europa dürfen aber eine andere, ebenfalls grundlegende Dimension nicht übersehen lassen: die politischen Beziehungen innerhalb der Allianz und die Selbstpositionierung der Allianz gegenüber anderen internationalen 'Sicherheitsinstitutionen'. Dieser Aspekt ist nach dem Madrider Gipfel vom Juli 1997, auf dem die dann im März 1999 erfolgte Erweiterungsrunde beschlossen wurde, zu sehr in den Hintergrund geraten. Doch er ist entscheidend für die politische Zukunft und für die kollektive Handlungsfähigkeit einer erweiterten und um neue Funktionen ergänzten NATO.

Die folgende Untersuchung betrachtet deshalb die erste Welle der Anpassung der NATO an die Bedingungen und Herausforderungen post-strategischer Sicherheit und Sicherheitspolitik: die interne Anpassung der Allianz zwischen 1990 und 1997. Dabei verbindet die Arbeit politisch-praxeologische mit theoretisch-methodischen Fragestellungen (was ist ein geeigneter Bezugsrahmen für die Untersuchung der NATO mit ihrem Wandel zu einer genuinen 'Sicherheitsinstitution' mit dem Trend zu einem eigenen, von dem ihrer Mitgliedstaaten in wichtigen Stücken unterscheidbaren politischen Willen und einer eigenen politischen Identität?). Eine Empfehlung für die erweiterte Allianz ist, im Rahmen der neuen sog. Artikel-4-Operationen keine allzu breitgefächerten politischen Verantwortlichkeiten und wertpolitischen Verpflichtungen im Bereich der Friedenssicherung zu übernehmen oder allianzpolitisch nur noch sicherheitsgemeinschaftliche Identitätsbildung zu betreiben, sondern sich auf bestimmte und klar umrissene Funktionen in der post-strategischen Sicherheitspolitik in und für Europa zu konzentrieren.

Wenngleich zu erwarten steht, daß komplexes Konfliktmanagement in den nächsten Jahren die operative Hauptaufgabe der NATO sein wird, ist es ihr nämlich nicht anzuraten, sich zu weit von ihrem harten Funktionskern zu entfernen oder sich übermäßig zu 'politisieren' und allzusehr als Agentur politischen Krisenmanagements aufzutreten. Eine Überpolitisierung könnte die Funktionen und den Charakter ihrer militärischen Organisationsstruktur aufweichen und dadurch auf die Dauer bei den Mitgliedern, gerade auch den neuen, das Interesse an Integration und die Bereitschaft zu einem realistischen Verteidigungsbeitrag und zu Selbstverpflichtung gegenüber der Allianz schwächen. Gleiches stünde zu erwarten, wenn die NATO sich mehr und mehr vorrangig als Wertegemeinschaft und Integrationsordnung beschreiben würde.

Demgegenüber liegt eine grundlegende politische Herausforderung für die Allianz und ihre alten wie neuen Mitgliedstaaten darin, die paradoxen Folgen ihres Erfolgs zu bewältigen. Für nahezu ein halbes Jahrhundert hat sich die NATO als transatlantischer und darüber hinaus weltpolitischer Stabilitätsanker gegenüber der Bedrohung durch den Warschauer Pakt erwiesen. Dies auch deshalb, weil es immer wieder gelungen ist, transatlantische Beziehungskrisen gemeinsam zu meistern und Kompromisse zu finden, die Bündniskonflikte beilegten und zugleich Richtungen für die Weiterentwicklung und

den Wandel der Allianz vorzeichneten. Dies hatte auch Auswirkungen auf die Entwicklung der europäischen Regionalordnung insgesamt und die Vertiefung der westeuropäischen Integration. Diese Fähigkeit zu integrativer Konfliktregelung und zu gemeinsamen Richtungsentscheidungen, die zugleich auch Richtungsentscheidungen über die politische Handlungsfähigkeit eines sich weiter integrierenden Europas sind, gerade auch unter den veränderten Bedingungen aufrechtzuerhalten und zusammen mit den neuen Mitgliedern fortzuentwickeln (und in diesem Sinn durchaus eine handlungsfähige Wertegemeinschaft zu bilden), ist der Test für die Stellung der NATO in der Ära post-strategischer Sicherheitspolitik und im entstehenden Gesamteuropa.

L'OTAN est morte, vive l'OTAN!

Whereas scholarly inquiry into NATO's future beyond bipolarity brought forth a variety of post-Cold War security philosophies and treatments of Euro-Atlantic security affairs, the (pre)occupation with enlargement soon swept away much of those deep-grounded interests in NATO's further development. However, the shaping of new NATO's future and the post-Cold War European security order implies more than the aftermath and possible further rounds of enlargement or the question of the scope and strength of an out-of-Europe Alliance commitment. Another important dimension containing many pivotal issues relates to the *political* relationships *within* the NATO itself and with international institutions.[1] This dimension continues to have strong impact on NATO's performance and on North Atlantic Alliance politics in general. Enlargement did not terminate its relevance. It sparked a second wave in shaping NATO's future, but this first wave remains, and it remains critical. The subject matter of the present analysis is this first wave of NATO's adaptation between 1990 and mid-1997 (i.e. the Madrid Summit and the official invitation for Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to begin accession talks).

Several 'internal' aspects now as before have much politically explosive charge and impact on the Alliance's shape and role. One concerns the role and readiness of the European members' forces in the face of newly increased U.S. interests in a re-balanced transatlantic burden sharing.[2] Another relates to the elaboration and implementation of the new strategic concept, for example as regards the scope of and strength of commitment in so-called article 4 operations, that is, "NATO's post-cold war collective action problem".[3] Thus, already by the eve of the Madrid Summit, the question of enlargement had already ceased to be a genuinely *critical* issue in the "battle for consensus" within the Alliance - or at least found itself accompanied by others, *politically* more pushing ones.[4] If enlargement still was a contentious topic at Madrid, it was a struggle about numbers - inviting three or five -, whereas in less obviously spectacular controversial points, there were and persist deep matter-of-fact dividing lines between the allies.

While NATO's Madrid Summit was meant to be emblematic of the Alliance's take-off to a future of all-European security in unanimity, its overall balance was not so convincing. Having just agreed with Russia in May 1997 on a Founding Act, the Alliance seemed eager to solve all the remaining issues in one big shot. Yet at Madrid, its member nations neither succeeded to draw a final line under the concept of reducing the number of sub-regional commands (from 65 to 20), nor did they manage to solve the struggle between the U.S. and France over the U.S.-led AFSOUTH command in Naples,

1. See the historically informed analysis by Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).
2. See Michael O'Hanlon, "Transforming NATO: The Role of European Forces," *Survival* 39 (1997), No. 3, pp. 5-15.
3. See Joseph Lepgold, "NATO's Post-Cold War Collective Action Problem," *International Security* 23 (1998), No. 1, pp. 78-106.
4. Cf. the explication of NATO's transformation crisis provided by Rob de Wijk, *NATO on the Brink of the New Millennium. The Battle for Consensus* (London/Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1997).

with the latter demanding the next commander to be a European. This struggle contributed to France not realizing its expected return into NATO's integrated military structure. Moreover, not only were expectations disappointed but new rifts opened up, such as a quarrel between Britain and Spain over Spanish air and maritime restrictions on Gibraltar, resulting in the British blocking Spain's plans to join NATO's integrated military structure until late 1997, which it had stayed out of since its accession to the North Atlantic Treaty in 1982.

At the Madrid Summit, it thus became obvious that the internal dimension of NATO's future was not going to be overlaid by the Alliance's cooperative outreach and enlargement. That is not to say that expansion was not an important issue. In fact, the dominating *political*, as opposed to strategic, definition of expansion brings NATO close to its founding conditions, paradoxically. An expanding Alliance in some important sense is less bound to become a 'new' NATO than go back to its roots, if one will, resembling the pre-Cold War characteristics of the Alliance. NATO's specific *long-standing functions* enshrined in the Articles 2, 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty (or Washington Treaty, signed on 4 April 1949), such as providing for broadly-defined regional security, forming a reliable international milieu for projecting political and economic stability or serving as a framework for developing sustainable peaceful and stable relations between its member states, have remained remarkably unquestioned and even been reaffirmed by the system-change in Europe 1989-91 and its aftermath. Article 2 of the Washington Treaty is of special importance here. It reads:

> "The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them."

In 1948, when negotiations about a North Atlantic Treaty were already under way, in the policies of the United States, Britain and France the belief prevailed that the Soviet Union did not seek hot war and thus there was no immediate need to counter Soviet military threat. Instead, the envisaged North Atlantic Treaty, at that time, when Czechoslovakia had just been overthrown by a Communist coup and a Communist victory in the Italian elections appeared likely, was primarily seen as a deeply *political* endeavor in order to tie the reestablished West European democracies together in order to make them less amenable to potential Soviet infiltration and the "Communist peril" in general.[5] It also was a first enterprise to reconcile economic growth, political stability and security in Western Europe, at the same time linking all of these to the North American continent. In this regard, it was to a large extent the Atlantic Alliance which

5. See Escott Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope. The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty 1947-1949* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), pp. 18-19 and 99-112.

sparked the process of West European economic and political integration.[6] This development is now about to be successfully reiterated in respect of NATO's new members as well as its cooperating partners, thus reaching an almost all-regional scale.

A still more interesting point is that exactly after the loss of its adversary and subsequent growing into different straining and controversial new security roles (such as implementing UN sanctions, setting up diplomatic liaisons with the former Warsaw Pact nations, conducting own, and if necessary self-mandated security operations), NATO has developed specific new legitimating potentials and moreover a remarkable institutional attractiveness - obviously reaching far beyond its mere self-preservation. This not only has early become clear in the case of Middle East European states' wishes for accession, but also in the French "rapprochement"[7] towards the Alliance's integrated military structure.[8] The newest and most conspicuous proof of this trend is the evolving role of the secretary-general as a self-reliant actor and NATO's highest diplomat.

NATO has developed, to a considerable extent, a corporate identity (or, at least, the governments of its member states are prepared - whatever the reasons - to concede it a considerable extend of institutional action potential).[9] It has evolved beyond a narrow reflection of its member states' national security interests but is also more than a mere functional order so to render international cooperation in the realm of security more effective and consequently the collective good of collective self-defense cheaper. At the same time, nevertheless, NATO cannot be viewed as an autonomous political decision-making and action system. Despite its growing self-identity, the Alliance's interests and activities, when it comes to the underlying principles, are and remain but the smallest common denominator of its member states' interests and preparedness for action in the

6. See Francis H. Heller and John R. Gillingham, eds., *NATO: The Founding of the Atlantic Alliance and the Integration of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).
7. See Robert P. Grant, "France's new relationship with NATO," *Survival* 38 (1996), No. 1, pp. 58-80; Anand Menon, "From independence to cooperation: France, NATO and European security," *International Affairs* 71 (1995), pp. 19-34.
8. For general strategic accounts on the role and new roles of NATO after the Cold War, see Ted G. Carpenter, ed., *The Future of NATO* (London: Cass, 1995); Walter Goldstein, ed., *Security in Europe: The Role of NATO after the Cold War* (London/Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1994); S. Victor Papacosma and Mary Ann Heiss, eds., *NATO in the post-Cold War Era: Does it have a Future?* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).
9. Among the decisive factors leading to the Alliance gaining apparent corporate identity was the specific semantic character in which the enlargement discussion was conducted from its inception. Typically, the political debates on the side of the proponents of an enlargement as well as on the side of its opponents did not so much center on the objective fact in question (that is, the increase in the signatory nations of the North Atlantic Treaty and a corresponding increase in membership of NATO's military and political bodies and organizational structures) as they evolved along metaphorical paths. Those "security metaphors" strongly conveyed the connotation of an autonomous NATO as a coherent security institution and self-reliant international actor: the Alliance as an 'stability anchor', as a 'projector' and naturally evolving 'community of Western values' etc. - see Paul A. Chilton, *Security Metaphors. Cold War Discourse from Containment to Common House* (New York et. al.: Peter Lang, 1996). Together with the overarching "architecture metaphor" as it became the characteristic frame of the discussion about a post-Cold War Euro-Atlantic security order, this alone already caused an increase in NATO's institutional autonomy: No longer did national-power based geostrategic considerations or calculations in terms of the national interest of its member states furnish the chief points of reference, but whole institutional "pillars", "bridges" and "cornerstones", with the Atlantic Alliance often regarded as the leading and integrating institution (ibid., pp. 357-402, especially pp. 395-396).

transatlantic context; in other institutional contexts, such as the European Union, one and the same government's interests and preparedness for action may meet with different conditions and thus take significantly different shapes.[10]

Hence what matters for a sound scholarly account of NATO's development after 1989-90 and current outlook is to devise an analytical framework that allows for conceptualizing from a dual perspective the process of change which the Atlantic Alliance has been undergoing: firstly, treating NATO as a self-reliant *institution*, that is, *as NATO*, beyond a mere conglomeration of its member states' interests and policy orientations; yet at the same time, secondly, heeding that the Alliance does not exist in a vacuum. Though shaping an increasingly intrinsic-valued context for political action, it is again embedded in various other contexts. The foremost analytical consequence is to tie NATO and the process of its institutional adaptation to the new European security condition back to its constitutive actors, namely its member states, whereas at the same time seeing it in the light of the regional environment. This environment is formed by the new forms and conditions of Euro-Atlantic security politics as well as other existing or envisaged forms of security organizations, forums and initiatives in Europe.

As will be argued below, these demands can neither be come up to by taking recourse to the currently dominant debates about meaning and effects of international institutions, as carried out between proponents of neorealism and neoliberalism, nor - as it has been suggested - by taking in assumptions of the paradigm of critical social theory or by taking recourse to organizational analysis. Rather, an adequate conceptualization of NATO's institutional adaptation and the consequences for post-strategic security in Europe can only be achieved through a comprehensive *institutionalist* frame of reference, which must not remain confined to the narrow limits of questionable 'institutionalist' debates in international relations theory but borrow from general institutionalism in the social sciences. This paper, starting with identifying the shortcomings of the institutions debate in international relations, will sketch out a more promising frame of reference for analyzing institutional change. Following on from this, it will apply this framework to the Atlantic Alliance's institutional adaptation to the conditions of post-strategic European and transatlantic security policy.

Theoretical accounts of NATO's adaptation and prospects

An institutionalist debate, neglecting institutions

Foremost, it is indispensable to treat NATO on the grounds of more flexible theoretical and analytical instruments than the current *neorealist-neoliberal debate*[11] allows for. Influential efforts within this debate reduce the variety of neorealist and

10. See Philip Zelikow, "The Masque of Institutions," *Survival* 38 (1996), No. 1, pp. 6-18 (p. 8-12).
11. For readers, see David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Charles W. Kegley, ed., *Controversies in International Relations Theory. Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

neoliberal theories to whether they assume 'the' state to be 'the' actor in world politics, seeking 'absolute' or 'relative' gains when lowering itself to make common cause with other states.[12] Paradoxically enough, institutional forms *themselves*, while the occasion for the controversy, do not play a very prominent role in the current discussions but are only examined in their effects (as intervening variables) upon national interest-formation and rational state action: do states prefer a strong or a loose institutional framework when choosing to cooperate? Do they prefer institutional arrangements with few or numerous members? Do they prefer issue-specific or generalized cooperation?[13] What these discussions fail to capture is that the related theoretical assumptions exclusively focus on *state action* and that consequently questions relating to international-political institutions are, if anyway, analytically amenable to them only with severe restrictions. Yet among those numbers NATO - with its growing corporate identity and relative de-coupling from immediate effects of its member states' short-term calculations in terms of the national interest.[14]

Much of the neorealist-neoliberal controversy comes down to a questionable *structuralist* approach to international politics and security. For instance, neorealism of the Waltzian style, the predominant core orientation of neorealism's proponents in the debate with the neoliberals,[15] now as before asserts uniform reactions of the units to changes in the international-political matrix of power to be the essence of all international politics and security, as the keeping of each unit's international "position" in relation to the others is proclaimed to be the ultimate goal.[16] For Waltzian neorealism, or structural realism, the space between the global international system-structure with its anarchical organizing principle and the single states, or units, is thus logically empty.

12. See Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, "The Promise of Institutionalist Theory," *International Security* 20 (1995), No. 1, pp. 39-51; John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19 (1994-95), No. 3, pp. 5-49; John J. Mearsheimer, "A Realist Reply," *International Security* 20 (1995), No. 1, pp. 82-93.
13. For a comparative sum-up of the according neorealist and neoliberal propositions, see Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the limits of cooperation: a realist critique of the newest liberal institutionalism," in David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 116-140 (pp. 133-134).
14. Hellmann and Wolf can fully take the credit for directing discussion about the explanatory power of neorealist as compared to neoliberal assumption out of its often too metatheoretical impetus back to a practical case, that is, NATO's future. However, in their efforts to provide the debate with some more practical grounds, they overlooked the fact that both schools of thought, as outlined above, have less to say something about the future of the Atlantic Alliance itself (or its further organizational and functional development) than about the future behavior of its member states and the likely future effects of intra-alliance cooperation on their foreign and security policies. See Gunther Hellmann and Reinhard Wolf, "Neorealism, Neoliberal Institutionalism, and the Future of NATO," *Security Studies* 3 (1993), pp. 3-43. These restrictions also apply to the newer theoretical account on NATO's recent development provided by Robert McCalla, "NATO's persistence after the cold war," *International Organization* 50 (1996), pp. 445-475.
15. Waltz-inspired neorealism is far from being typical of the neorealist paradigm's response to the international-political change after the Cold War. For other important neorealist trends and branches see e.g. Barry Buzan, Charles Jones and Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy. Neorealism to Structural Realism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Benjamin Frankel, ed., *Realism. Restatement and Renewal* (London: Cass, 1996).
16. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 118-122 and 126. For a recent formulation of this axiom see Mearsheimer, "The False Promise," pp. 9-14.

Therefore, there can be no forms of institutionalized, sustainable regional cooperation, but only temporary "amalgamations", which come and go with the current structural shape of the world-political global constellation.[17] Even they always owe their existence - and, when time has come, their abolishment - to the "most powerful states in the system", which use them as arenas for settling their power relations.[18]

Consequently, structural realism, as some of its proponents frankly admit, regularly encounters difficulty when seeking to come to analytical terms with international cooperation that does not take place 'directly' in the international system and between, and exclusively between, single states, but within *institutionalized contexts*.[19] Neorealist alliance theory has attempted to elucidate that blind spot by switching over to asserting Waltzian structural effects *within* those institutionalized contexts[20]. Yet it is far from examining those contexts *themselves*, merely making an inventory of their possible effects upon national (cooperative) behavior.

Paradoxically enough, neorealism's neoliberal challenge in its common Keohane-inspired version typically exacerbates rather than alleviates these structural and systemic biases. Seeking to slacken and amend Waltz-type neorealist structuralism, it was fast at taking over insights from new institutional economics into international relations analysis, but stopped short of developing an institutional approach to international relations. Instead it continued, and still continues, to search for general world-political effects on 'the' states as such, which - in contrast to neorealism - it no longer assumes to stem from the anarchical organization of the international system, but from the degree to which international cooperation is "institutionalized",[21] for example guided by common norms, rules, reciprocal expectations and the structuring effects of political forms, such as international organizations.

These institutionalized forms of international cooperation then, as neoliberalism goes on to argue, help states to save on transaction costs and to avoid sub-optimal outcomes of cooperation, that is, they defuse the so-called "political market failure".[22] All this leads neoliberalism to assume that elements of institutional certainty of such kind will lead even strictly self-interest oriented actors to develop an interest in maintaining and furthering international cooperative forms.[23] In the last analysis, neoliberalism broadly takes over the structuralist methodology of its neorealist counterpart: It examines regular effects of international 'structures' upon 'the' states (how those structures themselves evolve falls beyond its scope). In contrast to structural realism, neoliberalism does not spot these structures in the anarchical organization of the

17. See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 91-92.
18. See Mearsheimer, "The False Promise," p. 13.
19. See Grieco, "Anarchy and the limits of cooperation," p. 335.
20. See Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36 (1984), pp. 461-495; Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neorealist First Cut," *Journal of International Affairs* 44 (1990), pp. 103-123.
21. Robert O. Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power. Essays in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1989), pp. 1-2.
22. Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 85.
23. Ibid., pp. 85 and 88-106.

international system, but in international "conventions"[24] which states, each following its own rational self-interest, commonly establish and comply with.

Neoliberalism's analytical interest is not in international institutions but state action. Institutions only count in their effects on national international behavior,[25] not as genuine entities in world politics. Consequently, neoliberal analysis of policy change or institutional change in international relations is not so much interested in how institutional forms themselves adapt to a changed international-political setting[26] as it is in the "*effects* of institutions" on the states[27]. International politics thus finds itself reduced to an endlessly iterated game of reciprocal adaptation of short-term national interests to some fairly common shared objectives such as avoiding sub-optimality in cooperation. Neoliberalism is far from being an institutionalist approach, let alone the "institutionalist theory" is has been seeking to declare itself.[28] All it can claim to be, as John Mearsheimer remarked, is a theory of *"institutionalized iteration"* of inter-state cooperation[29].

Political analysis in the realm of post-strategic security

Puzzling of such kind not only misses political reality, which also in the security realm does not simply consist in spot decisions with instantly calculable loss or gain-amounts but in confounded payoffs of different, intersecting political 'games' and joint acts, that is, "conjunctures"[30] of at first sight seemingly independent developments. It also fails to incorporate important theoretical insights beyond the cooperation-under-anarchy scope. For example, liberal-intergovernmentalist oriented research has shown that states not only jump forth from one cooperation-bargaining spot to another, but in contrast may use 'historical', already existing cooperative arrangements to back their current bargaining position or to mobilize domestic support.[31] In the end, the current neorealist-neoliberal debate, despite or rather because of its shallow institutionalist rhetoric, more hinders than fosters an adequate analysis of international-political forms, such as for example the Atlantic Alliance, which have grown beyond pure international cooperation. What seems to provide a better starting point than the concept of

24. Keohane, *International Institutions*, p. 8.
25. Robert O. Keohane, "Institutional Theory and the Realist Challenge after the Cold War," in David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 269-300 (pp. 273-274).
26. See the critics forwarded by William Wallace, "European-Atlantic Security Institutions: Current State and Future Prospects," *International Spectator* 29 (1994), No. 3, pp. 37-51 (p. 45).
27. See Keohane, "Institutional Theory", p. 295 (emphasis added).
28. See ibid., p. 271.
29. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise," p. 18.
30. Rey Koslowski, Rey and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding change in international politics: the Soviet empire's demise and the international system," *International Organization* 48 (1994), pp. 215-247 (p. 227).
31. See Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson and Robert D. Putnam, eds., *Double-Edged Diplomacy. International Bargaining and Domestic Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993) and Thomas Risse-Kappen, ed., *Bringing Transnational Relations Back in. Non-state Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

cooperation between states, defined as rational actors, and its 'structural' factors is the concept of *post-strategic security* and its theoretical ramifications.

The concept of *post-strategic* security rests upon the contrasting notion to traditional, zero-sum type strategic security and security politics, as it was dominating, and appropriate, during bipolarity with its clear bloc structures, well-defined and comparatively well-calculable actors and scenarios of crisis and threat. In contrast, the new era of post-strategic security, especially with a view to NATO and the new European condition, is characterized by an obvious transformation of conflict. This however is for the most part not a sign of an emerging congenial Europe, but due to the fact that the essential dynamic of conflict has, at least for the time being, sunk beneath the international level. In consequence, the currently most probable sources even of international or regional conflict are of intra- and transnational nature (e.g. ethno-nationalism, minorities, migration, or proliferation). In this regard, the texture of post-strategic security, what has come to be a trivial insight in the meantime, at first results from the vanishing bipolar pattern of world politics. Therefore, the 'narrow', strategically inclined concept of security has given way to a 'broad' or 'comprehensive' understanding of international security. This again results in growing competition between different European security institutions (NATO, WEU, OSCE and also the emerging European Common Foreign and Security Policy, or CFSP), which in their activity as well as in their political claims more and more come to overlap than to mutually reinforce, let alone 'interlock' each other. Post-Cold War European security seems "underinsured", despite, or rather because of, its institutional multiplicity.[32]

In contrast to strategic security policy as a procedure of deterrence and avoidance, post-strategic security needs to be a procedure of political development. Here at least, security politics have become genuine *politics*, beyond narrow calculations of military capabilities, bargaining, or strategies of crisis reaction. The existence, or absence, of a common political framework both of shared interests and understanding is the critical variable deciding about success and failure of post-strategic security engagement. In this sense, the condition of post-strategic security newly poses the classical question of alliance cohesion - which is especially important for the future of the Atlantic Alliance: decisive becomes the allies' ability to agree upon general political guidelines and devise according *common*, not just incidentally complementary, interests.

The crucial theoretical and political puzzle then is the *self-positioning* of the actors in the face of security trends and risks. This brings functions of theory on the foreground that lie beyond the scope of the neorealist-neoliberal controversy: not ex-post explanation, but policy recommendations and modelling. In contemporary international relations theory, especially the Copenhagen school[33] devotes itself to the related

32. See James B. Steinberg, "Overlapping institutions, underinsured security: the evolution of the post-cold war security order" (Santa Monica, CA, RAND, P-7811, 1993).
33. Major works include Barry Buzan et. al., *The European Security Order Recast. Scenarios for the Post-Cold War Era* (London: Pinter, 1990); Barry Buzan et. al., *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Ole Wæver, Pierre Lemaitre and Elzbieta Tromer, eds., *European Polyphony: Perspectives beyond East-West Confrontation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).

analytical tasks - together with proponents of a modified structural realism[34], which focuses on processes of regional political configuration that may vary from one issue to another, thus foreclosing any chance to be conceived of in structural terms of sustainable cooperation or iterated games. In this sense, it suggests itself to refrain from reasoning about the mere *condition* of international or regional security, directing attention to the *process* of "securitisation"[35]. NATO's adaptation to the post-strategic European security condition is not really amenable to a structural-systemic type of analysis (as they see it exemplified by neorealism and neoliberalism).

Especially the emerging paradigms of *critical social theory*[36] and *critical security studies*[37] have attended to overcoming the structuralist and monocausal bias that much of the neorealist-neoliberal controversy exhibits. Consequently, its proponents now and again engage in the debates over 'institutions' in international relations as sparked off by the general neorealist-neoliberal controversy.[38] However, critical social theory does not open a viable path to overcoming the mentioned shortcomings in conceptualizing NATO's institutional adaptation. While making a big step toward appreciating factors such a context dependence of political action and institutional forms, the institutions themselves still as always remain epiphenomenal. Though progressively understood as constitutive conditions for national interests, national identities and state action, they even here are not appreciated as political phenomena of an own kind and worth of being studied as such.[39]

34. Buzan, Jones and Little, *The Logic of Anarchy*.
35. Buzan et. al., *Identity*, p. 189; Ole Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization," in Ronnie D. Lipschutz, ed., *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995) , pp. 46-86 (pp. 57-75).
36. The founding work is Nicholas G. Onuf, *The World of Our Making. Rules and Rule in Social Theory* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989). Contributions include Hayward Alker, *Rediscoveries and Reformulations. Humanistic Methodologies fir International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Mark Hoffman, "Critical Theory and the Inter-paradigm Debate," in Hugh C. Dyer and Leon Mangasarian, eds., *The Study of International Relations. The State of the Art* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), pp. 60-86; Koslowski and Kratochwil, "Understanding change"; Richard Ned Lebow, "The long peace, the end of the cold war, and the failure of realism," *International Organization* 48 (1994), pp. 249-277; Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society. A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations* (London: Verso, 1994); Jan Aaart Scholte, *International Relations of Social Change* (Buckingham, PA: Open University Press, 1993); Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (1995), No. 1, pp. 71-81; Alexander Wendt and Raymond Duvall, "Institutions and International Order," in Ernst-Otto Czempiel and James N. Rosenau, eds., *Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges. Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989), pp. 51-73.
37. Works include Roger Carey and Trevor C. Salmon, eds., *International Security in the Modern World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992); Neta C. Crawford, "Once and Future Security Studies," *Security Studies* 1 (1991), pp. 283-316; Michael T. Klare and Daniel C. Thomas, eds., *World Security. Challenges for a New Century* (2. Ed., New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); Bradley S. Klein, "After Strategy: The Search for a Post-Modern Politics of Peace," *Alternatives* 13 (1988), pp. 293-318; Bradley S. Klein, *Strategic Studies and World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). See also the overview presented by Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, "Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods," *Mershon International Studies Review* 40 (1996), pp. 229-254.
38. See Wendt, "Constructing International Politics"; Wendt and Duvall, "Institutions and International Order".
39. See the contributions in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder, CO: Rienner, 1996).

Organization theory, too, although applied to the case of NATO's persistence and evolution after the Cold War in a manner that a first sight appears plausible and fruitful,[40] provides no viable alternative. Much as it is undeniable that NATO (in addition to its self-description as a Treaty Organization) possesses and further develops important traits of corporate identity which resemble organizations features,[41] these are not quite amenable to organization theory. 'Organizations' in its sense are defined by, for example, well-defined membership, fixed membership figures, durably marked boundaries, internal role and status differentiation, hierarchy in authority and by behavior paths shaped by the organizational structure and imposed on the members. With its various institutional out- and sub-buildings such as PfP, NACC, now the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Permanent NATO-Russia Council and the concept of Combined Joint Task Force headquarters (CJTF), the new NATO has no clear-cut membership structure and outer boundary, but both are subject to change from case to case, according to the activated context. Consequently, there neither are fixed general behavior paths. Nor can one speak of an organizationally warranted hierarchy in status and authority, for at least in terms of international law, all nations within NATO and cooperating with it stand side by side in sovereign equality and are not subject to any superior decision-making authority.

An institutionalist perspective on NATO's adaptation process: Three axioms

Given all those theoretical complications, the question arises how international relations scholars can hope to come to terms with the conditions and process of NATO's adaptation. The answer suggested here is: It is an institutionalist approach that seems must promising - as long as it relies on concepts and methods that stem from general *social science institutionalism* and go well beyond neoliberalism à la Keohane, as well as the whole neorealist-neoliberal debate about international cooperation. Institutionalism, as long as understood in terms of general social science and not just as a theory of cooperation, poses quite different and much more far-reaching questions.[42]

40. See McCalla, "NATO's persistence," pp. 456-461.
41. Ibid., pp. 460-461.
42. See for example James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions. The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1989); James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Institutional Perspectives on Political Institutions* (Oslo: The Research Council of Norway, 1994); Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, eds., *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991) as well as Gunnar Grendstad and Per Selle, "Cultural theory and the new institutionalism," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 7 (1995), pp. 5-27; John Ikenberry, "Conclusion: an institutional approach to American foreign economic policy," *International Organization* 42 (1988), pp. 219-243; Thomas A. Koelble, "The new institutionalism in political science and sociology," *Comparative Politics* 27 (1995), pp. 231-243 and especially with regard to international relations James A. Caporaso, "International relations theory and multi-lateralism: the search for foundations," *International Organization* 46 (1992), pp. 599-632; John G. Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters. The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Institutionalism in this sense mainly comes as a *methodology*; it pleads for a "methodological turn"[43], not so much for a whole theoretical turn. What makes it promising in the case of NATO is that it offers a frame of reference allowing for arranging some promising assumptions of neorealism, neoliberalism and critical social theory together and linking them with insights gained by general institutionalist thought in the social sciences. Moreover, an institutionalist frame of reference facilitates multi-level analysis. Far from conceiving of institutions in neoliberal substantialist fashion as mere intermediate structural factors or intervening variables mitigating between the effects of international anarchy on state action and international cooperation, it sees them embedded in various (such as national, international, regional or concurring institutional), intersecting contexts,[44] which may shift over time and from one situation to another, thus exerting variable effects. Such a point of departure provides the opportunity to treat NATO at the same time in its own institutional character as well as its context-dependency - from the general international-political condition of the European and Transatlantic regional system over other security institutions such as WEU and OSCE, the Alliances constitutive actors, that is, its member states, to creative acts by individual actors, such as single governments or even political personalities, for example NATO's secretary-general.

Although a gripping characterization or even handy definition of 'the' institutional approach or 'the' institutionalism as well as of the concept of 'institution' is yet to be achieved, over the years a useful inventory of institutionalist methodology and core assumptions has emerged. Following on from it, for the purposes followed here with respect to an 'institutional' account on Atlantic Alliance issues, three typically *institutionalist* assumptions can be highlighted:[45] path-dependency, discontinuity and multiple causation.

(1) Political developments are *path-dependent* -[46] not only in the sense of the tendency of once taken courses to persevere, but in the first place in the sense of the dependence of current decisions on past. Politics thus take place in pre-constituted contexts and cannot be sensibly reduced to rational choice in a mere structurally defined setting. Consequently, not only (national) political action (as for example critical social theory assumes[47]), but also institutional developments themselves follow the principle of *context-dependency*. Institutions not only form contexts for state action but themselves are again embedded in larger contexts, which in turn influence the conditions of the institutions' existence and development.[48]

43. Richard Little, "International Relations and the Methodological Turn," *Political Studies* 39 (1991), pp. 463-478.
44. Koelble, "The new institutionalism," pp. 234-235; March and Olsen, *Institutional Perspectives*, p. 16.
45. See Caporaso, "International relations theory and multilateralism," pp. 620-630; Ikenberry, "Conclusion," pp. 223-226.
46. See especially Caporaso, "International relations theory and multilateralism,", pp. 627-628.
47. See Wendt, "Constructing international politics"; Koslowski and Kratochwil, "Understanding change," p. 247.
48. Koelble, "The new institutionalism,", p. 235.

(2) Given this multiple codeterminancy, political change as well as political action under institutional conditions in general consequently proceed *discontinuously* and *episodically*.[49] Taken paths of development are co-influenced by contingencies and the need to react to new trends on a short-term basis. Additionally, *individual* or spot acts (as for example undertaken by single governments or officials) - whether intended or not - may exert effects on *collective* institutional forms. In this sense, interestingly to notice, already in 1979 Waltz had proclaimed the principle of the "tyranny of small decisions", which can under certain contextual conditions cause inconspicuous "'small' decisions" to trigger vigorous "'large' change".[50] Hence it becomes dubious to call for a new, rational-intentional *grand design* of the future of NATO or even the whole spectrum of European and transatlantic security policy.[51]

(3) The only rule political developments really seem to regularly obey to, then, is the one of complex *multiple causation*. This results already from the fact that they are not only influenced by present problem areas, but also by the respective institutional history.[52] For example historical ideas, which despite changed conditions cannot be abolished - already for reasons of continued self-legitimization.

With this analytical background, the subsequent institutional account on NATO will treat the following aspects: (1) the failure of the idea of a comprehensive solution for post-bipolar European security and its causes and in that light the problems of the concept of *interlocking institutions* of Euro-Atlantic security, which in practice however soon revealed the danger of reciprocal blocking; (2) the consequent orientation away from interlocking towards *interacting*, as it became clear during the Berlin NATO Summit of June 1996; (3) the question of the future and institutional design of post-strategic European security and the role of NATO, based on the preceding institutionalist account.

The changed setting and first phase of NATO's institutional adaptation - From 'interlocking' to 'interblocking'

Beyond the hopes for a grand design of post-strategic security in Europe

Making the case for an institutional analysis means everything but proclaiming a grand strategy of institution building as program for future European security politics as well as the future of the Atlantic Alliance. In contrast, such a collective approach was at best possible under the conditions of the Cold War's bipolarized structural "overlay"[53]. During that period, in retrospective at least, single security issues were surprisingly easy to couple and de-couple, and moreover the corresponding institutional designs could

49. March and Olsen, *Institutional Perspectives*, p. 14.
50. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 108.
51. Paul Cornish, "European security: the end of architecture and the new NATO," *International Affairs* (London) 72 (1996), pp. 751-769.
52. March and Olsen, *Institutional Perspectives*, pp. 16-17.
53. The concept of "overlay" stems from Buzan et. al., *The European Security Order Recast.*

well be sustained over crisis periods and changed basic conditions. Well-defined paths of communication existed, almost equally relevant and interdependent, but if necessary well-dividable in their specific contents. That became possible in consequence of the evolution of sufficiently *issue-specific* disarmament and negotiation regimes, such as SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks), MBFR (Mutual Balanced Forces Reduction), CSCE, SALT II, respectively INF/START (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces/Strategic Arms Reductions Talks), or the Stockholm process of confidence- and security-building measures.

Despite an unmistakable issue-interdependence and common global context (East-West relations), the single institutionalized forms of contact revealed a remarkable autonomy. Therefore, set-backs in one area could not immediately spread to another. Particularly because of the loose coupling, continuity in West-East-relations could also be maintained over periods of crisis. So for example after the break-off of the disarmament talks at Geneva in late 1983, the Stockholm conference on confidence-building and disarmament, started in January 1984, could serve as an alternative forum. This switch-over was made considerably easier by the fact that up to this point, important principles, norms, rules and procedures[54] had already emerged between the super-powers as well as both blocs as such. Given the question of common security as an overarching common reference point in the light of the atomic overkill, procedures and contents could well be transferred from one regime to another.

Such a neoliberal-evolutionary model is nevertheless of no promise for the new Europe (whereas it seemingly continues to form at least the implicit basis of many contemporary security concepts, such as the one of 'interlocking institutions'). Its two decisive prerequisites were, namely, a common political (and strategic) reference and at the same time a sufficiently clear specific content of each regime. Especially the common reference is obviously missing today. It is true that it is on all sides about coming to terms with the requirements of diffuse 'new challenges'. Yet just these challenges are not collectively defined any more, but each single actor (from national governments and defense ministries up to international organizations like NATO or the UN) undertakes attempts to define the situation autonomously, in terms of its individual - and not common - context and interests. Here, historical path-dependency comes in. Britain's defense whitebook for example is still oriented to the vision of global military engagement and force projection capabilities,[55] whereas the German whitebook of 1994 in large parts still understands security policy as a kind of global peace-service for humankind.[56] Also the second prerequisite for successful institutional interlocking as it could be seen in the 1970s and 80s is hardly given today, as there can be no question of specific, reciprocally separable contents and issues in the current institutional forms of

54. In the sense of the definition of an international *regime* as introduced by Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variables," in: Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 1-21 (p. 1).
55. See Bernard Bressy, "Trois livres blancs européens sur la défense," *Défense nationale* 50 (1994), No. 11, pp. 75-87 (p. 84).
56. See *Weißbuch 1994. Weißbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage und Zukunft der Bundeswehr* (Bonn, April 5, 1994), §§ 208 and 308.

European security politics (from NATO with NACC and PfP over WEU and OSCE to the ESDI-project). Rather, the problems have become cross-cutting and overlapping. All institutional forms have adopted a strong all-regional, common security component, and all claim responsibility for, or at least in principle envisage, a whole variety of security-political forms, reaching from humanitarian action and ethno-nationalist conflict management to international military operations.

NATO and the directions of institutional change

One particular paradox in NATO's institutional adaptation to the changed, post-Cold War setting makes it clear that any meaningfully institutional perspective on contemporary Euro-Atlantic security must at least combine neorealist and neoliberal assumptions, instead of either trying to play them off against each other. The paradox in question could be termed the *structural-functional paradox*, which has shown up in NATO's development since 1990: Neoliberalism predicted NATO's continued existence as such, yet if only in the pure sense of self-resistance against dissolution and with recourse to sweeping axioms like the alleged striving of states for keeping the transaction costs involved in international cooperation low.[57] What neoliberalism did not predict were *qualitative* institutional changes. Rather, according to its assumption of trivial institutional stickiness over changed settings and faded initial founding interests,[58] it had to expect a *functional* reorientation of NATO under retention of its structure - which Keohane explicitly predicted[59]. What NATO however has shown was, contrarily, *a structural reorientation under retention of its essential founding function* (that is, providing for common defense and concentrating on military concerns as well as forming a security umbrella for political and economic development and providing an arena for consultation about common concerns; see, respectively, articles 5, 2 and 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty).

The Alliance's unexpected specific potential for continued legitimization and increased institutional attractiveness precisely *after* the vanish of a conspicuous common threat was the final piece of evidence needed to flaw the Mearsheimerian, strict-neorealist scenario of a dissolution of NATO and a related relapse into an unstable and conflict-laden European concert of renationalized foreign and defense policies.[60] The Alliance's general political and military-operational goal-setting has been flexible enough to secure the maintenance of its integration until far beyond the turning point of 1989-90. So what appears to be the critical point for NATO's future is less saving its mere existence as such, or amending it by the adoption of new members, than the question of its *character* as a Euro-Atlantic security *institution* with the related informal

57. This follows for example form the general assumptions about inter-state cooperative behavior made in Keohane, *After Hegemony*, pp. 89-109.
58. See ibid., pp. 100-101.
59. Keohane, "Institutional Theory,", p. 287.
60. See John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future. Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* 15 (1990), No. 1, pp. 5-56.

rules, expectations, common interests, routinized political and military-operational procedures and a world-public image.[61] This leads to the general proposition that sharply defined common (military) threat fading, *alliances* tend to show the appearance and problems typical of a security *community*.[62] Then the question of *internal*, mainly genuinely *political* mechanisms for both continued intra-Alliance cooperation and external effectiveness becomes decisive.[63]

Nevertheless, such a point of view is no analytical patent remedy either. For example, the currently so popular thesis that international institutions condition national adaptive behavior and the shape of common interests[64] tempts one to overlook the question how these *institutions* themselves adapt to changed international-political conditions or if they are capable of such an adaptation anyway[65]. In this context, it can be shown that the ease of the bipolar overlay exposed NATO to classical international-political adaptive pressure in the structural-realist, Waltzian sense, meaning that changes in the international-political "structure" "shove" NATO as such towards certain courses of action so to maintain its 'position' in the international system.[66] In the final analysis, structural realism à la Waltz is not quite applicable to that phenomenon as its "units" are states, making international organizations and institutional forms fall out of its analytical scope. Despite, a structural-realist based model for NATO's institutional adaptation in the 1990-97 period is quite elucidating.

Adaptive pressure and institutional potential

According to such a model of adaptive pressure, NATO's "London Declaration" of July 1990 stated that "this Alliance must and will adapt."[67] The approach was, whereas

61. Michael Brenner, "The Multilateral Moment," in Michael Brenner, ed., *Multilateralism and Western Strategy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 1-41 (p. 8); Duffield, "NATO's Functions," p. 777; David G. Haglund, "Must NATO fail? Theories, myths, and policy dilemmas," *International Journal* 50 (1995), pp. 651-674 (p. 662).
62. See Haglund, "Must NATO fail?", pp. 663-664 and 673-674; Steve Weber, "Does NATO have a future?" in Beverly Crawford, ed., *The Future of European Security* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 360-395 (p. 362-368).
63. Weber, "Does NATO have a future?", pp. 363-364; but cf. equivalent long-standing assumptions held by neorealist alliance theory as promoted by Synder, "The Security Dilemma," pp. 485 and 494-495; "Snyder, "Alliance Theory," p. 196.
64. Following Keohane, *After Hegemony*, p. 63; Keohane, *International Institutions*, pp. 8 and 11.
65. See William Wallace, "European-Atlantic Security Institutions," p. 45.
66. Kenneth N. Waltz, "Reflections on Theory of International Politics: A Response to My Critics," in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 322-345 (p. 336). This adaptive pressure firstly resulted from the 'trivial' necessity for military re-orientation after the strategic enemy's disappearance and growing national interests in reduced defense expenditures, secondly of course from the emerging much-invoked 'new security tasks' (cf. for example the out-of-area debate), and finally form the fact that NATO had sneaked into a sort of "self-proclaimed collective security organization", together with the according political principles and behavioral norms. See Simon Duke, *The New European Security Disorder* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 311.
67. *London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in London on 5th-6th July 1990,* § 1.

retaining the primacy of collective self-defense, to sincerely review and revise the formulation of this common defense, so that

> "the Alliance's integrated force structure and its strategy will change fundamentally to include the following elements:
>
> - NATO will field smaller and restructured active forces. These forces will be highly mobile and versatile so that Allied leaders will have maximum flexibility in deciding how to respond to a crisis. It will rely increasingly on multinational corps made up of national units.
> - NATO will scale back the readiness for its active units, reducing training requirements and the number of exercises.
> - NATO will rely more heavily on the ability to build up larger forces if and when they might be needed."[68]

This identified imperative of adaptation found its concrete political and military consequence in "The Alliance's new Strategic Concept" as agreed upon during the Rome Summit of November 1991. Accordingly (amending, not replacing, its traditional political and military functions), three new roles for NATO were envisaged: the "dialogue with other nations", an "active search for a cooperative approach to European security", and complementing as well as reinforcing "political actions within a broad approach to security", thereby contributing with the "Alliance's military forces" to the management of such crises and theirs peaceful resolution", "which might lead to a military threat to the security of Alliance members".[69] One further component of this plan for institutional adaptation was to establish a concrete "diplomatic liaison"[70] with the former Warsaw Pact countries, which subsequently found its institutional formation in the set-up of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in December 1991 and the Partnership for Peace program in January 1994.

With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, NATO moreover had consciously turned to a generalized enemy. Correspondingly, the new Strategic Concept stated:

> "In contrast with the predominant threat of the past, the risks to Allied security that remain are multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional, which makes them hard to predict and assess. NATO must be capable of responding to such risks if stability in Europe and the security of Alliance members are to be preserved. These risks can arise in various ways."[71]

This way, the Strategic Concept precisely did not give up the traditional core functions of the Alliance but reaffirmed them - whereas at the same time acknowledging the need for far-reaching institutional changes exactly because of the continuance of its principle rationale. As the Strategic Concept continued (following the counter-

68. Ibid., § 2.
69. *The Alliance's new Strategic Concept. Agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7th-8th November 1991*, §§ 20 and 43.
70. Steinberg, "Overlapping Institutions," p. 6.
71. *The Alliance's new Strategic Concept*, § 9.

neoliberal way to *structural changes* while *retaining* its basic *functions*, as described above):

> "Two conclusions can be drawn from this analysis of the strategic context. The first is that the new environment does not change the purpose or the security functions of the Alliance, but rather underlines their enduring validity. The second, on the other hand, is that the changed environment offers new opportunities for the Alliance to frame its strategy within a broad approach to security. ... NATO's essential purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty and reiterated in the London Declaration, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Based on common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the Alliance has worked since its inception for the establishment of a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe. This Alliance objective remains unchanged."[72]

However, the Strategic Concept agreed upon in Rome did not mark but a fairly common agreement on NATO's future and adaptation. One common statement was *that* it would be all about a fundamental adaptation to new political and military challenges while preserving the primacy of collective defense. Though, even this consensus was in large part a product of the member states' national self-interest, some of which were seeking to ease their stretched defense budgets by creating new, collectively financed, multi-national force structures.[73]

Therefore, the Atlantic Alliance's unexpected capacity of adapting to changed world-political conditions, at the same time preserving and extending its traditional legitimization, can - paradoxically - not be sufficiently explained by its *autonomous* institutional potential. Well corresponding to the institutionalist axioms suggested above, such as discontinuity of change and multiple causation, a complementing recourse to explanatory factors on the level of NATO's constitutive actors (which are and remain its member states) is indispensable. A perspective on the constitutive actors can also make clear that the rapid common reaction to the emerging new challenges was not an evolutionary result of parallel, enlightened, entwined or multilateralized interest of the majority of NATO states (as neoliberalism could argue) but rather an example of the principle of the "self-reliant optimality potential" of international "bargaining solutions"[74].

Accordingly, the growth of international institutional forms is always co-determined by the will of the relevant states to let the related developments pass beyond their direct, unilateral influence. In international institutional settings, states typically lose abilities and opportunities to unilaterally influence the related outcomes or organizational

72. Ibid., §§ 15-16.
73. Alexander Moens, "The Formative Years of the New NATO: Diplomacy from London to Rome," in Alexander Moens and Christopher Anstis, eds., *Disconcerted Europe. The Search for a New Security Architecture* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), pp. 24-47.
74. This concept has been developed by what could be called the German school of policy network analysis, see for example Fritz W. Scharpf, "Die Handlungsfähigkeit des Staates am Ende des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts," *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 32 (1991), pp. 621-634 (p. 630).

behavior to the credit of politically leveled, "comprehensively efficient solutions".[75] At the same time however, they gain the chance of bringing in their own goals freely and (at least according to the fiction) without regard to their status or relative position - whereas having to take on no exclusive responsibility for the consequences of the collective solutions found, although each single state can profit from effective solutions, regardless of its own contribution.[76]

An according assumption has recently been introduced into neorealist theorizing as the "voice opportunity"-propositions, borrowing from the theory of organization.[77] Of distinguished interest here is "the level of policy influence partners have or might attain in the collaborative arrangement."[78] Following on from this, assumptions out of neorealist and organization theory can be brought together into an institutionalist argument that underscores the importance of 'soft', contextual factors in rational state action and international cooperation. According to the "voice opportunity"-proposition, and against neoliberalism, states not only seek institutional arrangements to make cooperation cheaper and increase their individual substantive gains, but also and arguably foremost to find contexts and opportunities conducive to articulating and publicizing their national policies and interest:

> "[I]t points to the possibility that states may look at a collaborative arrangement in terms both of the substantive benefits and the *opportunities for effective voice it provides*. 'Effective voice opportunities' may be defined as institutional characteristics whereby the views of partners (including relatively weaker partners) are not just expressed but reliably have a material impact on the operations of the collaborative arrangement. [...] In other words, states (and particularly weaker states) may view effective voice as a 'good' that they enjoy as part of being in a collaborative arrangement, and enjoyment of a satisfactory level of this 'good' may itself be a basis for assessment by states of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the arrangement."[79]

The voice opportunity proposition offers a common denominator for a bunch of developments significant for the future of NATO and post-strategic security in Europe. It can, for example, well account for France's rapprochement to NATO, assuming that the French government was seeking to broaden its available contexts for national policy and interest articulation in the light of the Alliance's increasing politicization after the end of bipolarity. Moreover, it can explain the success of NATO's initiatives for cooperation with its former adversaries, PfP and NACC, as well as former Warsaw Pact countries' pressing wishes to become regular members of NATO and Russian demands for a security charter codifying its relation to the Alliance - as all these developments

75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.
77. See Joseph M. Grieco, "State Interests and Institutional Rule Trajectories: A Neorealist Interpretation of the Maastricht Treaty and the European Economic and Monetary Union," in Benjamin Frankel, ed., *Realism. Restatement and Renewal* (London: Cass, 1996), pp. 261-301 (pp. 287-288).
78. Ibid., p. 287.
79. Ibid., p. 288.

may be viewed as attempts to utilize a well-practiced institutional context, that of the Atlantic Alliance, for purposes of making oneself and one's national policies more visible on an all-European scale.

Bargaining about institutional outreach and change

A complete institutionalist account of NATO's adaptation has to delve further into its constitutive context and look into the dimension of intergovernmental bargaining. A perspective on intergovernmental bargaining can elucidate the parallelism of different approaches to institutionalize post-strategic Euro-Atlantic security cooperation as well as for the existence of institutional fragments that seem not to fit into the current setting but despite endure and function. This hints upon the path-dependency and multicausality of institutional development and once more suggests that there can be no one grand strategy of institutional design. Here is a telling example of inter-governmental bargaining about the shape of an envisaged European pillar of the Alliance:[80]

During the Bush Presidency, the United States were responding openly reserved to the reviving European attempts to develop an own security and defense identity (and a related operative reactivation of the WEU). The "Bartholomew telegram", a sharp diplomatic note the U.S. government sent to the then-Secretary General of WEU, Willem van Eekelen, harshly shattered the illusion that a harmonic parallel institutional adaptation of NATO on the one hand and the WEU as well as the common-security policy dimensions of the EU on the other could be accomplished. In a letter to all then-EC member states' governments, then-Secretary of State James Baker repeated the objections expressed in the Bartholomew-telegram less sharply and at the same time made the Bush administration's acknowledgment and support of the envisaged ESDI dependent on several criteria to be met by the Europeans: All related developments should, in the final analysis, strengthen the Atlantic Alliance's effectiveness and keep it the main forum for all questions of European security; NATO must be able to maintain and if possible even deepen its integrated military structure; to avoid conflicts between the Europeans over the concrete shape of ESDI which may also weaken the Alliance, all related considerations and steps should not be undertaken but by all European NATO members together.

These U.S. demands rendered for example Germany in a precarious position, actually forcing it choose between the transatlantic security link and its traditional security bilateralism with France. To this decisional pressure added the fact that at NATO's Copenhagen Summit in June 1991, the U.S. had succeeded to thwart French

80. The argument follows my *Die aktive Beteiligung Deutschlands an militärischen Aktionen zur Verwirklichung Kollektiver Sicherheit* (Frankfurt/M.: et. al. Peter Lang, 1995), pp. 158-159. See also Finn Laursen, "The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union: Words or Deeds?" in Ingo Peters, ed., *New Security Challenges. The Adaptation of International Institutions. Reforming the UN, NATO, EU and CSCE since 1989* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 153-177.

plans for a rapid reaction force within the WEU in favor of a British lead NATO-troop, which then became the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). In a remarkable diplomatic move, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl managed to escape the imposed decisional pressure through a package solution. In the "October initiative", together with the French President François Mitterand, he announced the plan to incorporate the development of ESDI into the creation of the European Union by making the WEU the then future European Union's defense component. The first step into that direction, the initiative proposed, should be made by a combined Franco-German corps, which in the meantime has become the Eurocorps. The almost parallel creation and existence of the Eurocorps and the ARRC thus is a conspicuous expression of the just described Euro-American and more specifically Franco-German-American interest conflict over the further institutionalization of a European security identity and package strategy adopted by the Kohl-Mitterand chief of government, or "COG", collusion[81] in order to defuse it.

This relevance of bargaining factors seems at first sight to provide a strong argument for neoliberalism, but a closer look makes it clear that neoliberal connotations of bargaining are to narrow-focused here. Typically, as noted in the introduction, for neoliberalism bargaining entails intentionally establishing common 'institutional' constraints so to stabilize cooperation and overcoming the political market failure, that is sub-optimal outcomes of cooperative arrangements where 'perfect' outcomes could have been reached. Once established, those 'institutional' forms of international cooperation are then, in turn, supposed to exert an enlightening effect on the national interest of the states involved. Considerations of such kind cannot account for *discontinuous* institutional developments. That is because the market-failure axiom and others may answer the general 'how?', yet certainly don't answer the concrete 'why and when?' of cooperation. Also have they little to say about interdependence between 'actors' and institutional 'structures' and about how much and how strong structural opportunities actors need to act effectively or, conversely, to what extend positive structural effects on cooperative behavior are dependent on benign actors, or 'agents'.

Reconciling the historical and the structural moment

To accomplish a complete 'how' and 'why' explanation, as Wendt has pointed out, it is therefore necessary to link "'structural' analysis", which typically "explains the possible" (for instance the common interactional context with its affordances and constraints), with a more "'historical' analysis" that allows for the delimitation of the "actual" within the structurally explained general institutional context.[82] This

81. Andrew Moravcsik, "Introduction. Integrating International and Domestic Theories of International Bargaining," in Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson and Robert D. Putnam, eds., *Double-Edged Diplomacy. International Bargaining and Domestic Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 3-42 (p. 31-32).
82. Alexander Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41 (1987), pp. 335-370 (p. 362).

"historical", or "actual", analysis is concerned with action strategies and individual actors, as opposed to the materialized institutional framework 'structural' analysis primarily looks at. Both however cannot be sensibly conducted, or even be conceived of, as separate analytical steps delving into distinct phenomena. In contrast, as Wendt further has emphasized, "agents are inseparable from social structures in the sense that their action is possible only in virtue of those structures, and social structures cannot have causal significance except insofar as they are enacted by agents. Social action, then, is co-determined by the properties of both agents and social structures."[83]

This assertion of a co-determinism between the agents constituting an institutional form and the shape and development of that institutional form itself well corresponds to the assumptions within the neoinstitutionalist paradigm in general social science[84]. As far as NATO's strategy definition after 1990 is concerned, this methodological background of any sound institutionalist analysis makes at least two things clear: firstly, the impact of bargaining, as outlined above, is a necessary amendment of, and not a contradiction to, institutionally focused analysis; secondly, even that delimitation is again to be amended by a focus upon actual actions of actual actors in actual situations (Wendt's "historical" dimension).

Thus, in addition to the mentioned state strategies of self-interest calculation and bargaining, also *creative acts* of individual actors are to be taken into consideration to arrive at complete explanations of the course and content of NATO's institutional adaptation. For example, the Alliance's general strategy revision was temporarily interrupted by derivative attempt to secure NATO's continued relevance and public support by way of ad hoc-activism. An illustrating example is the Venice speech of May 1993, delivered by the then-Secretary General Wörner, in which he proclaimed a tactic of selective shop-window operations. It was much inspired by the assumption that NATO was in acute danger of loosing its obvious "raison d'être", notably in the perception of its member states' electorates, and thus forced to present itself to the world public as an indispensable provider of "security and stability"[85]. For that sake, Wörner stressed, it should not make available its capabilities to the UN, but self-responsibly engage in such conflicts that promise to be well-suited for making the Alliance's genuine "usefulness in dealing with immediate crises and problems"[86]. Consequently, Wörner cautioned, NATO would have to strictly refrain from any intervention in conflicts and crises where not publicly visible success could be expected or where NATO could not lead the related operations independently, especially in terms of military command and control[87].

In the end however, the trend emerging from those considerations to conspicuously prove NATO's further right to exist and its military operability in the face of post-strategic security threats went past the Alliance's real new challenge: to elaborate a clear

83. Ibid., p. 364.
84. See March and Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*, pp. 160-162.
85. "Speech by the Secretary General of NATO Mr Manfred Wörner at the annual General Assembly of the International Press Institute" (NATO Press Office, May 10, 1993), p. 3.
86. Ibid., p. 7.
87. Ibid., p. 7.

concept for the intended future military and political forms of defense cooperation and integration, reflecting the post-strategic security condition on a long-term basis.[88]

Corrections and the second phase: Functional self-restraint, structural change, and 'interacting'

This problem was soon realized, and thus after an episode of operational activism, the Brussels Summit of January 1994 marked a turn to the questions of concrete structural adaptation. The CJTF concept laid the basis for NATO's military-operative readjustment (the definitive design of which however was not agreed upon before the Berlin Summit of June 1996), and the PfP program with its bilateral cooperative arrangements based upon the respective concrete requirement took to solving the question of a well-defined political and strategic outreach to Middle-Eastern and Eastern Europe, beyond the diffuse idea of a general transfer of stability.[89]

Yet even the decision taken back in November 1991 to establish the NACC as an instrument to defuse the immediate pressure to decide about the when, how and who of an eastward expansion cannot sufficiently be explained as a deliberate policy of institution-building, but has also to be seen in the classical realist sense, that is, in the light of national interests. In retrospect, NACC especially furthered two important German interests: establishing an institutional framework to foster compliance with the disarmament regulations of the treaty about Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and providing for continued international safeguard of the reunification's consequences in the field of European security (for example the subsequent expansion of NATO's military structures and defense area to the territory of former East Germany).[90] France however took that as an attempt to set up a kind of German-U.S. bilateralism in European security affairs and anticipating political isolation, it replied with a counter-balancing strategy in the form of institutional duplication. That way it sought to decrease the relative importance of the perceived increased political importance of NATO and its new institutional ramifications such as NACC. This counter-balancing was realized with the help of WEU, which was supplemented by a consultative forum consisting of selected East European countries.[91] Notably, the French behavior was in perfect accordance with the power-principle of classical realism and the structural logic of Waltzian neorealism - both nowadays so often sweepingly reprimanded as obsolete.

Whereas NATO's initial post-Cold War strategic impetus, that is functionally confining itself to military tasks, especially collective self-defense, has become visibly blurred in the course of the out-of-area debate and subsequently in the enlargement

88. See William T. Johnsen and Thomas-Durell Young, "Preparing for the NATO Summit. What are the pivotal issues?" (Carlisle, PA, U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1993).
89. See *Declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, on 10-11 January 1994* (NATO Press Communiqué M-1[94]3, January 11, 1994), § 1 and appendix.
90. Peter Schmidt, "Germany, France and NATO" (Carlisle, PA, U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1994), p. 14.
91. Ibid.

discussion, a strategy of self-limitation is now as before be appropriate and advisable - for the Atlantic Alliance remains an indispensable and effective, but is not any longer a *comprehensive* 'security provider'. When in November 1991 the North Atlantic Council came up with the formula of "interlocking institutions"[92], it of course still believed the Alliance to be able to play a general leading role in devising future European security structures and accordingly declared: "The Alliance is the essential forum for consultation among its members and the venue for agreement on policies bearing on the security and defense commitments of Allies under the Washington Treaty."[93] This vision however soon found itself disappointed, when other European security institutions promulgated their own, competing concepts for future European defense and security. The first step made the newly founded European Union as soon as in February 1992 with the project for a common European Security and Defense identity (ESDI), followed by the WEU with its Petersberg Declaration and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which - symbol enough - assembled in Helsinki, its founding location, and presented a comprehensive program for future European security.

Given this institutional competition in general post-strategic European security issues, it is problematic that after the end of bipolarity NATO - while *militarily* sticking to collective defense - *politically* has striven for a general involvement in the European security agenda, which it early institutionalized in the form of NACC. So it has come that the concept of *interlocking institutions* under the political and strategic guidance of the Atlantic Alliance threatened to become in practice rather a functionally unspecified, more inhibiting than reinforcing juxtaposition of *interblocking institutions*. That was also due to NATO's attempt to present itself as the leading 'stability-projector', which early enough had adopted paradoxical forms. For example, the Alliance not only collectively admitted the Soviet successor states into NACC - despite of the involvement of three of them either in war-type conflicts with one another (Armenia and Azerbaijan) or with secessionist groups (Georgia) - but the member states of NATO also, while facing growing problems with their attempts to settle the war in their immediate strategic neighborhood (ex-Yugoslavia), successively broadened the Alliance's self-declared security guaranteeship: in June 1992 CSCE was officially offered operational support, including the Alliance conducting peace-keeping operations under a CSCE mandate, and in December the UN security council was offered according kind of support.[94]

Here once again the Berlin summit of June 1996 marked a decisive turning point: Whereas the communiqué of the ministerial meeting of the Defense Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group of 29 November 1995 still maintained that "[t]he Alliance

92. *Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7th-8th November 1991* (NATO press communiqué S-1[91]86, November 8, 1991), § 3.
93. Ibid., § 6.
94. Hugh De Santis, "Romancing NATO: Partnership for Peace and East European Stability," in Ted G. Carpenter, ed., *The Future of NATO* (London: Cass, 1995), pp. 61-81 (p. 63).

continues to be the linchpin of European security"[95], half a year later in Berlin NATO gave up its claim to a leading role in the interplay of European security institutions, thus relinquishing the organizing principle of *interlocking institutions* and turning to a new principle that could be termed the one of *interacting institutions* - namely a coordinated interplay of the different post-strategic security strategies and institutions in Europe that does not rest upon one lead-institution, but rather on the idea of general common regulations for a well-defined functional sharing. Nonetheless, the different action units will not be isolated from one another but interconnected especially by using common organizational modules.

That became most obvious in the NATO Council practically charging the West Europeans, respectively the WEU, to develop an own military operability,[96] which effectively meant to establish the since the times of De Gaulle so much debated European pillar *within* NATO itself. This pillar however is not to set up a European parallel structure to the traditional transatlantic pillar, but in contrast to be "separable but not separate" from it.[97] This is to be ensured by two structural interconnections: on the one hand the concept of allied Combined Joint Task Force headquarters (CJTF HQs), that is, integrated operational command and control nuclei attached to selected NATO commands but at the same time, as the case may be, removable from NATO's command and control structure and available for Europeans-only operations, for example within WEU; on the other by the principle of double hatting, that is, making forces answerable both to NATO and WEU.

The CJTF-concept, more precisely, refers to building military command cells with some steady command and staff elements, but no permanent military integration or even a standing rapid reaction force.[98] Its innovative element are permanent multinational operative nuclei - in contrast to the up to now prevailing ad-hoc arrangements for the command and control structures of multinational military operations beyond collective self-defense. Structurally, the CJTF concepts rests upon a kind of double unit-construction system: According to the type of mission - firstly - among all nations wishing to participate in a certain action, force units optimized for the foreseeable tasks are identified and then - secondly - taken out of the respective national units, combined and assigned the CJTF HQ selected and augmented for the operation in question.

CJTF perfectly exemplifies the path-dependency of institutional innovation, its co-determination by past decisions, and also the multiple causation of institutional change. Altogether, additionally to its strict military-operational functions, CJTF can fulfill a fivefold coordinative task.[99] First it can guarantee, by developing clear-cut criteria, that multinational force units really become effectively integrated and operative. So CJTF

95. NATO Press Communiqué M-DPC/NPG-2(95)117, § 24.
96. *Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Berlin, 3 June 1996. Final Communiqué* (NATO Press Communiqué M-NAC-1[96]63, June 3, 1996), §§ 5-6.
97. *Declaration of the Heads of State and Government*, § 6.
98. See Charles Barry, "NATO's Combined Joint Task Forces in Theory and Practice," *Survival* 38 (1996), No. 1, pp. 81-97.
99. "After the NATO Summit: New structures and modalities for military cooperation," explanatory memorandum by Rafael Estrella for the North Atlantic Assembly, NAA, AL 205/DSC (94) November 8, 1994, pp. 16-17.

should help to counteract the tendency prevalent in some NATO countries to contribute to multinational units, yet mainly in order to ease one's *own* defense budget and consequently not ensuring that the respective forces are trained and equipped in a way that actually allows for multinational interoperability. Second CJTF can provide a common framework for joint exercises of NATO and PfP nations' military forces, helping to smooth the way to enduring cooperation in military and security affairs. Third CJTF allows for linking NATO countries not integrated into the Alliance's military structure indirectly to that structure. Fourth CFTF HQs may serve as coordinating agencies between NATO and WEU or a future European defense organization in the framework of the envisaged European security and defense identity. Moreover, the CJTF HQs have the strategic function of providing WEU on a case-by-case basis with the necessary military and command-and-control infrastructure for own operations. Fifth, as an additional political function, CJTF HQs could act as connection authorities to the UN or OSCE.

Conclusion: Lessons for Theory and Policy

NATO and European security in an institutional perspective

From the institutionalist vantage point put forward in this paper, the question often enough is not one of neorealism vs. neoliberalism but one of adequately bringing them all in with their respective strengths according to the problem in question. Whereas neither neorealism nor neoliberalism alone have turned out to be capable of an adequate institutional analysis, some important neorealist and neoliberal concepts, placed into an overarching institutionalist framework, proved to be quite useful and promising analytical tools for conceptualizing institutional change in the Atlantic Alliance.

Notably, by far not only *neoliberal* assumptions (such as saving on transaction costs or rectify sub-optimal outcomes of cooperation) can explain why states may seek continued cooperation, for example in alliance contexts, even under conditions of missing international structural pressure in the sense of Waltz[100]. *Neorealist* alliance theory[101] for instance assumes that precisely the loss of the common enemy or threat perception can trigger a convergence in the members' national security politics. This is due to the effect of the intra-alliance security dilemma, which becomes virulent whenever security "collaboration" in the face of a common existential threat becomes, as a consequence of the vanish of that threat, security "coordination"[102]. That is, on the one hand alliance cohesion decreases, whereas on the other the regulation of genuinely *political* questions comes to define the agenda of alliance politics. In such a situation, the allies' behavior becomes far less predictable and calculable than it used to be during

100. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 79-101.
101. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma"; Snyder, "Alliance Theory".
102. In the terminology proposed by Patrick Morgan, "Multilateralism and Security: Prospects in Europe," in John G. Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters. The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 327-364 (p. 346).

the times of a common existential threat. Neorealist alliance theory assumes that to mitigate this so to speak 'political' security dilemma, member states will change to a strategy of intra-alliance balancing and counter-balancing so that the different national security policies will be converging over time - and finally come considerably closer to one another than it had been the case in the wake of a common existential threat.

Moreover, an institutional perspective on post-strategic alliance politics can bring together the neorealist and neoliberal approach to international cooperation. Within such a broader framework, *neoliberalism*, according to the findings presented here, can contribute to understanding and explaining the continued need for cooperative structures, that is, elucidating the according *institutional core conditions*. Thereto it appertains to sharpen the analytical and political sight for the literal polymorphy of international cooperative structures, which large parts of neorealism still will obstruct, for they continue to conceive of NATO as a mere military pact. However, NATO in particular distinguishes itself by a multiple institutional sub- and outbuilding (such as integrated headquarters, amending cooperative agreements and consultative bodies - for example PfP and then-NACC - or an own institutional representative, the secretary general). This institutional structure, and here *neorealism's* strength comes in, offers the member states various opportunities to articulate and pursue national interests. In this context, neorealist approaches make an important contribution to explaining and predicting the concrete shape and contents of institutionalized cooperation within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, as well as change in this framework.

The dual system of Euro-Atlantic security - and what NATO should not do

The practical question remains what in the light of the adduced NATO-related evidence will be the most feasible and likely form of future Euro-Atlantic security. Also here, an institutionalist perspective can help, such as the one provided by the newly developed approach of "multilateralism"[103]. *Security multilateralism* well grasps the principal quality of post-strategic Alliance engagement and its problems: Selective multi-state cooperation in changing coalitions will become both typical of and crucial for NATO's continuing relevance and effectiveness. This requires on the side of the member states the willingness and ability to (re)define their relations to NATO and with one another from issue to issue. Such a multilateralism will entail different coalitions within the Alliance, as the case may be.

The further development of security integration in the Euro-Atlantic area will thus neither follow a "master plan" nor a mere "trial and error" principle,[104] but rather paths shaped by national interests and prerogatives as well as institutional fundaments (for

103. See Brenner, "The Multilateral Moment"; Charles W. Kegley and Gregory A. Raymond, *A Multipolar Peace? Great-Power Politics in the Twenty-first Century* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994); Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters.*

104. Peter Schmidt, "The Evolution of European Security Structures: Master Plan or Trial and Error?" in David G. Haglund, ed., *From Euphoria to Hysteria. Western European Security After the Cold War* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), pp. 145-166.

example the Atlantic Alliance as an organized institutional form, PfP, NACC, now EAPC, or CJTF HQs as institutional amendments and common historico-political experiences within IFOR or SFOR in Bosnia). In the end, it will by crucial how the qualities and capabilities of cooperation and integration reached up to a certain point of time prove themselves effective in the light of security challenges. This has already become clear in the development of the CJTF concept, with its emphasis on multinational headquarters cells and multinational-multifunctional forces. The concept of CJTF unexpectedly and unpredictably well fitted the requirements posed by the decision to set up the multinational IFOR troop, namely coordinating a combined operation of NATO and non-NATO countries and establishing the required command and control structures.

More generally speaking, one can observe the emergence of a *dual system* of post-strategic European and Transatlantic security. The first of its two interdependent components is a sufficient defense capability for the case of classical geostrategic threats, reflected in suitable forms of high-level military cooperation and integration - keeping in mind that the related command and control structures at the same time also represent the preconditions of conducting effective multinational operations precisely beyond collective defense and short of war. The second component consists in sufficiently institutionalized forms of selective and graded reaction to sub-strategic security challenges or support tasks for operations conducted by the UN, OSCE or WEU.

This is not to say that NATO Alliance politics need to become politics of conflict management so to preserve the North Atlantic Alliance's relevancy and impact. The opposite may be true. Judging from the IFOR and the SFOR experience, NATO has been growing somewhat into the role of what may be called a robust interposition force and peace-keeping agency, also considerably contributing to coordinating and supporting the work of an almost inestimable lot of civil aid and reconstruction organizations. So it could be tempting to see NATO's most important role in a lead-organization for all facets of post-strategic conflict management. Such an approach, however, is already dubious in that it is likely to involve difficulty that is beyond the scope and control of the Alliance but for which it may be held responsible despite.

One should neither argue for a full 'politicization' of the Alliance. Such a politicization would be rendering the Alliance's operational stance increasingly ineffective and also increasingly invisible - thus undermining the benefits of post-strategic deterrence, nor for an operational hyper-flexibility. Over-politicization may result in rendering the Alliance's military component not only progressively ineffective but also increasingly invisible - thus undermining both the benefits of post-strategic deterrence and many members' interest in continued integration. Hyper-flexibility, for example in the wage of the CJTF-concept, would contribute to short reaction times and increased defense capabilities to meet uncertain and locally dispersed risks but also dissipate the Alliance's image and strength as a widely visible integrated security organization. It is precisely its operational hard core and institutional visibility beyond

strategic myths or mere "representational politics"[105] of imagined-identity construction that NATO as a security institution has so much invested in over the decades and that has, in retrospective, always turned out to be the driving force not only for its own continued integration and general relevance but also for the future course of transatlantic and European security.

After all, however, it cannot be denied that NATO's role in post-Cold War Europe is, and will remain, paradoxical to some extent - which is a necessary consequence of its political and military successes and institutional adaptability. For almost half a century, NATO and its members have successfully cooperated and acted under various world-political and Euro-regional conditions, and the Alliance has made indispensable contributions to regional and transatlantic, as well as arguably global, cooperation and stability, by far not only defined in military but also in general political terms. It has owed this success to prudent politics of its member states' governments and ultimately prevailing willingness and ability to make constructive compromises. *To maintain this ability and preparedness well beyond the threshold of the next century will be the fundamental challenge and chief test for new and enlarged NATO's stance in the European security order, its politics and common efforts.*

105. Bradley S. Klein, "How the West was One: Representational Politics of NATO," *International Studies Quarterly* 34 (1990), pp. 311-325.