

NATO's Out of Area Norm from Suez to Afghanistan
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Abstract: The parameters of NATO's out-of-area missions are defined not just by the treaty norms encoded in articles 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, but also by a social norm entrenched during the Suez crisis. The evolution of the social norm defining the responsibilities allies have to each other in NATO missions, together with changing definitions of security and mutual defence, have led to a situation where the distinction between Article 4 (concerning consultation on global security issues) and Article 5 (concerning mutual defence) is non-existent. This change can help explain the current inter-allied dispute over burden-sharing in NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

Tensions in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have increased as its International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission becomes more difficult and protracted. Growing numbers of casualties sustained while fighting the Taliban insurgency as well as increased domestic opposition has led some countries to contemplate removing their troops from Afghanistan while at the same time criticizing other countries for failing to remove national caveats, which would allow NATO to more easily shift troops around the country. The transatlantic dispute over Afghanistan differs from previous disputes not just because of the inherent difficulties of working in failed states, but also because have not yet worked out the parameters of their responsibility to each other as allies in an organization with a new mandate to act globally. This responsibility is defined not just by the obligations set out in the Washington Treaty and the Strategic Concept, but also by the way the member states have interpreted treaty obligations as rules and norms governing behaviour. In this paper I will argue that the interpretation of the legal norms into social norms can explain why the dispute over Afghanistan is so contentious. I trace the emergence and evolution of the out of area norm from the Suez crisis to the end of the Cold War, and end with an analysis of the current transatlantic conflict over the responsibilities of allies in Afghanistan.

The Cold War convention that an attack against one state was to be an attack against all states was clearly outlined by Article 5, but also by the social norm that mutual defence meant mutual defence from a Soviet attack. Military interventions undertaken co-operatively by NATO members in other states in other states were always to be seen as secondary, not to be brought before the Atlantic Council, as allowed by Article 4, for fear that the inevitable disagreements would threaten the integrity of the Alliance. This norm was established during the Suez crisis when the United States refused to become

involved in colonial issues. This established a hierarchy subordinating out-of-area missions to mutual defence that lasted through the Cold War before being eroded as NATO expanded its mandate. Today, territorial defence in Europe is no longer the main task of the Alliance, and the allies have redefined what they mean by security and mutual defence. Alliance norms have not caught up with the redefinition; the allies have yet to work out what responsibilities they have to each other in an environment where mutual defence cannot be clearly separated from out-of-area activities. It is the loss of this hierarchy which makes the transatlantic dispute over Afghanistan potentially serious, and which threatens the integrity of the Alliance in a way that previous (equally contentious) disputes have not.

The Out-of-Area Norm as Treaty Norm and Social Norm

Conventional wisdom derived from alliance theory holds that NATO survived serious out-of-area crises during the Cold War (such as the disagreements over the Suez canal or Vietnam) because out-of-area issues, that is, security threats not constituting an attack on a member state, were secondary.¹ True, but a tautology. NATO is by definition a coalition for collective defence, and therefore an out of area intervention is by definition secondary. This is where the distinction between the out-of-area norm as a treaty norm and the out-of-area norm as a social norm becomes relevant. The consensus that military interventions beyond the North Atlantic area were not to be undertaken as NATO missions had to be socially constructed in the talk and practice of the allies. The interests of allies are not self evident, and the interpretation of the treaty norm depended on how the allies thought about security, the boundaries of the alliances, and the scope of their responsibility to each other and to third parties. All of these changed over time.

This focus on norms is explicitly constructivist and studies NATO as not just an alliance based on common interest, but also a values community which shares a common identity and behavioural norms. Norms influence the way allies work together, and shape and are shaped by the community's identity. Norms of consultation, as studied by Thomas Risse, have helped to give smaller allies influence within the organization, and to mitigate conflict between the allies. NATO's norms of peaceful dispute resolution, civilian control of the military, and liberal democracy have served as a socializing mechanism for the integration of new member states.² Similarly, the out-of-area norm shaped interactions between the allies and provided a hierarchy of missions which a structured way for the allies to agree or disagree about common policy.

The North Atlantic Treaty of 1949, established a mutual defence community in the North Atlantic area: an attack on any member state in Europe or North America would be an attack on all members. Article 6 defined the territorial scope of the all-important Article 5, excluding all of the

colonies from the area called the North Atlantic (although not all countries border the North Atlantic), except France's Algeria. Via Article 4, the allies were encouraged to consult together if they felt "the territorial integrity, political independence, or security" of any of them was threatened.³ In order to be translated into meaningful guidelines for policy the allies had to develop norms and conventions which fleshed out how these articles of the treaty would be applied in practice.

The out-of-area norm as developed in regulation and in practice by the members of NATO has two parts. First, it states that security issues beyond mutual defence were to be seen as secondary to the overwhelming strategic interest in defence against the Soviet Union. The second part of the out-of-area norm had emerged by the 1980s as what Frode Liland calls a "non-policy" on security co-operation beyond mutual defence.⁴ The allies interested in co-operating to address the out-of-area security issue would form ad-hoc coalitions outside of NATO, while non-participating allies sometimes took up the slack of Atlantic defence in Europe to allow the resources of participating allies to be diverted abroad.⁵ The key aspect of this part of the norm was that a state wishing to recruit allies for a co-operative mission beyond mutual defence would not bring the matter before the North Atlantic Council, a consensus-based body in which disagreement could be fatal to the alliance. The norms of security co-operation within the Atlantic community depended on more than what was written in the NATO Treaty.

The evolution of the out-of-area norm

The out-of-area norm as a social norm interpreting articles 4 and 5 was established during the Suez crisis. The incident began in July 1956 when Gamal Abdul Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal and the Canal Company that had run it for decades, over the objections of most of the canal users. Resolution of the crisis by the United Nations looked promising until Israel invaded the canal zone on 29 October. After issuing Israel and Egypt an ultimatum designed to be almost impossible for the Egyptians to accept, France and Britain entered the canal zone in order to separate the Egyptian and Israeli combatants. Later the truth came out that France, the United Kingdom, and Israel had colluded to plan the invasion.

The Anglo-French invasion caused the crisis in transatlantic relations, and its resolution reinforced the distinction between in-area and out-of-area in NATO. While Britain and France did not bring the matter before the North Atlantic Council, they constructed their arguments for allied assistance in terms of the threat to their national security and to European security more generally. The British and the French constructed the nationalization of the canal as a threat to their national security both because it would threaten their economic security if oil could not pass through the canal, and because they argued that Nasser was like Hitler, and should therefore be stopped sooner rather than later.⁶ The French also

argued explicitly that its allies should assist it because Nasser was offering moral and material support to Algerian rebels.⁷ Both the *Assemblée Nationale* and the British Foreign Minister called for the solidarity and support of their allies. While NATO's article 5 was clearly aimed at threats from the Soviet Union, the British and French clearly argued that Nasser also threatened Europe and from there it is not hard to understand why they assumed the United States and other NATO members would at least tacitly support their policies.

The United States and other states systematically blocked all of the Anglo-French arguments which might have supported the use of force. The argument that the nationalization would threaten Europe's economic security fell flat when it became clear that oil would indeed pass through the canal. The Americans presented nationalization as a technical challenge, not a political problem, which neutralized comparisons to Hitler and arguments about Algeria.⁸ The French and British attempts to draw their allies into their global politics angered the Americans. In a statement so politically sensitive it was later withdrawn by the State department, Dulles made a strict delineation between the NATO area and the rest of the world:

Now there has been some difference in our approach to this problem of the Suez Canal. This is not an area where we are bound together by treaty. Certain areas we are treaty bound to protect, such as the North Atlantic Treaty area, and there we stand together, and I hope and believe always will stand absolutely together.

There are also other problems where our approach is not always identical. For instance, there is in Asia and Africa the so-called problem of colonialism. Now the United States plays a somewhat independent role. You have this very great problem of the shift from colonialism to independence which is in process and which will be going on, perhaps, for another fifty years; and there I believe the role of the United States is to try to see that that process moves forward in a constructive evolutionary way and does not either come to a halt or take a violent revolutionary turn which would be destructive of very much good. I suspect that the United States will find that role, not only today but in the coming years, will be to try to aid that process, without identifying itself 100 percent either with the so-called colonial powers or with the powers which are primarily and uniquely concerned with the problem of getting their independence as rapidly as possible. I think we have a special role to play and that perhaps makes it impossible for us, as I say, in every respect to identify our policies with those of other countries on whichever side of that problem they find their interest.⁹

Dulles's statement makes it clear that the United States had the power define the scope of the treaty in particular ways: the Atlantic alliance was applicable in certain areas – those defined by the treaty – and with respect to certain threats, which did not include those related to colonialism. Their arguments suggest that France and the United Kingdom perceived the Atlantic community, at least with respect to its interventions outside the treaty area defined by Article 6, as something akin to a great power concert. Dulles and the Americans quashed any chance that Article 5 could be interpreted as such, even if it was

argued that out-of-area issues represented a threat to the territory covered by the mutual defence provisions of NATO.

The establishment of the out-of-area norm as a social norm is closely related to the end of colonialism. As the North Atlantic Treaty was being drafted, the future allies argued over whether it would cover colonies, knowing that geographical boundaries would influence the shape of the alliance.¹⁰ The alliance matured at the same time as its European members, especially Britain and France, were divesting themselves of their colonial possessions. The United States, historically sceptical of European colonialism, did not wish to get involved in anything it perceived to be part of a colonial dispute.¹¹ Arguments about Suez suggest that, in the context of out-of-area disputes at least, the United Kingdom and France still viewed themselves as great powers with responsibilities to protect their interests to their possessions.

The French and British could not risk their security in Europe for their colonial possessions, and the Americans refused to accept that security threats to colonies were suitable issues for NATO. To establish colonial issues as secondary to Atlantic issues helped establish out-of-area issues more generally as secondary. Having seen how decisive they could be, such a policy made sense. The allies had to come to a way of dealing with their different interests, and this was to set a hierarchy of security interests with corresponding responsibilities. In this way, the Suez crisis helped make the nature and basis of the Atlantic community clearer. This analysis shows that to say out-of-area issues did not destroy the community because mutual defence was more important is a tautology; this hierarchy was solidified during argument about allied responsibility to each other.

The problem at Suez was not just that alliance norms of consultation had been violated, as Thomas Risse argued.¹² The allied crisis over Suez helped to define the parameters of the rules set out in Articles 4, 5, and 6: allies were to be consulted, security threats to the colonies or to economic security were not severe enough to warrant automatic support, and interventions outside the treaty area were not to threaten the mutual defence core of the Alliance. The social norm was enforced by a powerful actor and established a hierarchy of duties and responsibilities within the Alliance.

The norm that out-of-area interventions were to be secondary held through the Cold War, and the allies developed a series of ad hoc ways of agreeing or agreeing to disagree. Practically, they consulted with each other on an informal basis or in NATO bodies other than the consensus-driven North Atlantic Council, and sometimes agreed to carry the burden of territorial defence in Europe if an ally wanted to deploy its troops out-of-area.¹³ Disagreeing in the NAC would have been an unacceptable loss of face for the Alliance. In public debate, they found ways to portray the unity of their community on mutual defence issues even while having serious public disagreements about out-of-area issues.¹⁴ These

techniques maintained the hierarchy of mutual defence over out-of-area issues during contentious disputes such as the one over the Vietnam War, when the United States wanted support—which was not forthcoming—from its European and Canadian allies.

Arguments about NATO's out-of-area relations often say that they have been particularly contentious because of divergent interests outside the European region. Exceptions to the rule that mutual defence issues, where common interests were more obvious, were only made when out-of-area interests coincided with North Atlantic ones.¹⁵ But this argument presumes that it is possible to make some objective judgment about which disputes touched NATO interests and which did not. Indeed, what constituted NATO interests was precisely the heart of the debate amongst the allies. France was unable to convince its allies that its intervention in Egypt during the 1956 Suez crisis was related to the defence of Algeria, even though Algeria was included in Article 6's definition of the scope of Article 5. In the 1960s, United States was unsuccessful at using arguments about the links between Vietnam's defence and the defence of the West to get support from its traditional allies for Americanization of the war when Vietnam was clearly not covered by the North Atlantic Treaty. The norms of security co-operation within the Atlantic community depended on more than what was written in the NATO Treaty.

Article 4 Missions After the Cold War

At the end of the Cold War, however, the social norm (that out-of-area interventions were never to threaten the consensus of the alliance) which defined the interpretation of the treaty norm (that Article 4 consultations were secondary to mutual defence) was called into question. Without the military threat from the Soviet Union, the allies had to decide what the basis for their renewed co-operation would be. The allies had to work out which of the threats they argued they faced deserved a collective response. This process of threat definition raised the question of what constituted NATO's jurisdiction, defined both territorially and in terms of responsibility. As NATO chose to become involved in peace making, peace enforcement, and peacekeeping operations, its formally defensive mandate changed. As NATO became involved in Eastern Europe, out-of-area issues were increasingly the main task of the Alliance, and could no longer be considered strictly secondary, to be dealt with on an informal and ad-hoc basis in accordance with the out-of-area norm.

At the end of the Cold War, the allies made strong arguments for maintaining the Atlantic community even as the shape of the community changed quite radically. The new Atlantic community, argued Secretary of State James Baker, had to be an inspiration and a goal, and fulfill, finally, the promise of a pan-European security architecture.¹⁶ The shape of the new, post-cold war Atlantic community was influenced by constructions of responsibility and space. The Atlantic Community was portrayed as the

victor as the ideological war, and dissidents in Eastern Europe were portrayed as allies sharing their ideals. Shared values, German Foreign Minister Genscher argued, are what made the North American states part of Europe, and the same values constructed a responsibility to Eastern Europeans.¹⁷ President George H.W. Bush elaborated on the same theme:

We cannot welcome these nations to our world of values and yet hold them at arms length from our affairs. For 40 years we said: even though your voices are silenced by tyranny, we hear you. Now that these voices are free, can we turn a deaf ear?¹⁸

While a full study of the NATO enlargement is beyond the scope of this paper, the point here is that the allies were constructing a responsibility not just to member states with shared values, but also to other states which also shared those values. Rebecca Moore argues that the NATO allies now conceive of security as constructed from shared liberal values, and that NATO's new security mission is tied up with projecting values in order to sustain stability.¹⁹

This sense of responsibility was solidified during NATO's interventions in the wars in Yugoslavia. These interventions are properly considered part of the trajectory of out-of-area interventions even though Yugoslavia was seen to be historically part of Europe and, indeed, solving the problems in Yugoslavia was seen to be a test of the new post-cold war European security architecture. After the failure of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and the European Community (EC) to resolve the conflict, NATO became involved but its ability to use military force was hobbled by inter-allied disagreements over the value of air strikes. After a series of incidents which were increasingly damaging to NATO's credibility in Bosnia, the massacre in Srebrenica was the last straw. Not only did the allies face threats to their UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) troops on the ground, they could not maintain their Atlantic identities without acting to protect Yugoslav civilians, when they had argued that this was a problem the Atlantic community had an obligation and moral responsibility to solve.²⁰ Likewise in Kosovo, the allies acted militarily for humanitarian reasons, or at least with humanitarian justifications. Having failed to act decisively in Bosnia until the last minute, the allies were anxious to restore their credibility by using coercive diplomacy against Slobodan Milosevic.²¹

The end of the Cold War and the interventions in Yugoslavia mark a decisive shift in the social norm governing out-of-area interventions. The military interventions were missions in support of a particular set of values, rather than mutual defence missions. The security of the alliance was implicated in so far as its credibility was on the line, but these missions were clearly based in Article 4, which allows for consultation within NATO on security issues of common interest, rather than Article 5. They were also clearly not secondary issues. The buffer provided by the out-of-area norm—that non-mutual defence missions were always to be secondary so as not to threaten the integrity of the Alliance—did not

exist in the absence of a threat from the Soviet Union. NATO's credibility was argued to be threatened even on an issue that was not dependent on its ability to do mutual defence.

NATO Goes Global in Afghanistan

The attacks of September 11th, 2001 propelled NATO into the role of a global alliance. Out-of-area missions became an official part of NATO strategy in 2002, when the allies agreed at their summit in Prague that NATO needed to be able “to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, to sustain operations over distance and time, [...] and to achieve their objective.”²² The Prague Declaration acknowledged that NATO had been acting together on missions beyond mutual defence for some time: the Prague declaration referred to “NATO's fundamental security tasks *including* collective defence.”²³ Some of these, as in the case of Yugoslavia, were military interventions, but NATO supported the military modernization and democratization of its neighbours through the Partnership for Peace, and supported other organizations such as the United Nations and the African Union. This change in NATO's definition of its area of primary responsibility (as the entire world, wherever NATO's interests and/or values are engaged) meant that the old distinction between in- and out-of-area no longer applied, and the rules on how to agree or disagree on such matters, defined during the Cold War by the strict hierarchy established by the out-of-area norm, did not either. Missions sanctioned under Article 4 have become the bread and butter of NATO, but the rules for how to agree or disagree were always dependent on NATO having a more important mission in the defence of Europe. Now that the area of responsibility of NATO is defined globally, it seems that missions beyond mutual defence are the most common mission, with mutual defence the more serious but less likely use of the Alliance.

It turns out that the picture is a little more complicated. NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time on September 12, 2001, long after the Soviet Union had disappeared. This framed the debate as a matter of mutual defence, even though the United States ultimately declined NATO's assistance with its Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), largely because it feared being constrained by the decision-making procedures of the Alliance, which were already seen to threaten the United States's freedom of action during the Kosovo war. Terrorism further blurred the lines between mutual defence and out-of-area interventions, as NATO members engaged in overseas missions to protect their territory. This forward defence was enshrined in the national strategies of some of the NATO countries, and especially in the 2002 American National Security Strategy which called for “destroying the threat before it reaches our borders” and “acting preemptively” if necessary.²⁴

Despite the fact that OEF was not a NATO mission, it was broadly supported by NATO members who argued that Al Qaeda was a threat to all Western countries because it was an attack on

liberal values. In the arguments of the Western leaders, both the idea that OEF and NATO's invocation of Article 5 were not a choice but an inevitable reaction to the terrorist attack, and the idea that Western states had to intervene because Afghanistan was a failed state and this was a reconstruction mission were prevalent, often in the same speech.²⁵ Part of this dual reasoning relates back to the fact that there are two missions in Afghanistan, the OEF mission for ousting the Taliban and fighting the insurgency, and the ISAF, the stabilization mission responsible for providing the security necessary for reconstruction. On the ground and in the public mind, these missions are hard to distinguish. Even though these missions and NATO's mandate more generally continue to be couched in terms of North Atlantic security, mutual defence is clearly only partially related to territorial defence. Waiting until an attack on the territory of member states occurred before launching co-operative measures was unfeasible, and an attack could be planned and financed from many different locations, and even within the territory of a member state. The distinction between articles 4 and 5 is meaningless.

When NATO took over the ISAF mission, originally led by the United Nations, in 2003, time had faded the prevalence of the 9/11 attacks in the minds of most NATO members other than the United States. While the mission was still occasionally justified in the language of national security, more often participants emphasized the stabilization and reconstruction elements of the intervention. As the mission wore on and no end date seemed to be in sight, the allies also portrayed success in Afghanistan as a test of credibility for the Alliance.²⁶

By 2006, the ISAF mission had become a crisis for the Alliance. The poppy trade was growing, the Taliban was resurgent, and as the security situation worsened death tolls among the NATO countries began to rise. Those countries contributing the bulk of the troops in the most dangerous Southern provinces, like the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and the Netherlands were increasingly frustrated with the limits placed by other troop contributing nations on the freedom of movement of their troops. Much of the displeasure was aimed at Germany, which has resisted calls to move its troops to different parts of the country, preferring instead to emphasize its role working on reconstruction and development through its Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Konduz and Feyzabad in the north. In early 2008, Robert Gates, the American Secretary of Defense, sent German defence minister Josef Jung a confidential, 8-page letter pressuring the German government to send troops to the south and assist with the counter-insurgency.²⁷ The Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, has also been uncharacteristically frank for his office, declaring "we cannot afford the notion that certain Allies have only limited responsibilities and are combined to specific areas. Afghanistan is one country and one strategic theatre for NATO. We cannot have 26 different strategies. We need one NATO strategy."²⁸

Each ally's national foreign policy choices are straightforward enough to understand. Germany's policy of declaring the importance of the ISAF mission while refusing to change the mandate of German troops stems partially from Germany's somewhat pacifist political culture, but also from the reduced policy freedom enjoyed by the governing Christian Democrat Party trying to maintain a grand coalition with the Social Democrats, who lost votes to the more pacifist Green and Left Parties even for agreeing to the current deployment.²⁹ In Canada, getting involved in Kandahar province was a way of making it up to the Americans for refusing to support the war in Iraq and declining to join missile defence, but not a commitment that the government expected or prepared to last as long as it has.³⁰ At the Alliance level, however, it is necessary to be able to reconcile these national perspectives into a workable common policy. Article 4 does not dictate the responsibilities of allies once a mission has begun. Nor does the now defunct out-of-area norm help, because there is no overwhelming, commonly agreed threat to which all other disagreements can be subordinated. Even when a mission is argued to be undertaken for reasons of mutual defence and national security, the fact that it is much more difficult to say when success has been achieved and the fact that there is little real effect on the population at home means that success is unlikely to be overwhelmingly important to any particular country. Compounding the problem is the fact that the member states of NATO have argued that the survival of the Alliance is a stake in Afghanistan. How to make sure ISAF does not end up in disaster for the allies as well as for Afghans?

For now, a workable compromise seems to have been achieved at the NATO Summit in Bucharest. Canada agreed to leave its troops in Afghanistan through 2011, contingent on a number of factors, most notably the addition of 1000 troops from another country to the ISAF deployment in Kandahar. US President George Bush sent the Marines to Southern Afghanistan on a limited engagement, and the Americans will shift more soldiers south as they are relieved by French soldiers in eastern Afghanistan. While this solution keeps the ISAF mission afloat and avoids embarrassing troop withdrawals, it does little to resolve the underlying problem, which is that the allies still have not developed a new social norm to replace the useful hierarchy provided by the out-of-area norm. The social norms fleshing out the new dominance of these new missions which look like they should be Article 4 missions but which carry the seriousness (for the Alliance, if not necessarily for the security of individual member states) of mutual defence missions have yet to be developed. Policy divergences and differences in interests are normal. But NATO's recurrent crises do not reflect merely a divergence of interest. Social norms arose to help the allies disagree without threatening the integrity of the alliance, and when they become irrelevant, new ones must arise.

Conclusion

If the military power of NATO is to be used in the service of the interests of NATO member states, then the political community needs to survive as well. The end of NATO is unlikely to occur dramatically, because NATO is not strictly an interest-based Alliance which will be dissolved when interests are no longer held in common. Many of the military modernization and democratization programs (like the Partnership for Peace, the Mediterranean Dialogue, and the Istanbul Co-operation Initiative) may continue to exist, even if NATO no longer engages in co-operative military interventions overseas. More likely, states will cease to bring their security concerns before NATO and will instead co-operate through other institutions or on an ad-hoc basis. Of course this is exactly what they did during the Cold War, but that was at a time when NATO did not define itself by its stabilization missions. Crises will not cease. The old hierarchy seems impossible to apply: stabilization missions may be the new primary task of the Alliance, but the threats emerging from failed states requiring stabilization are not threats which can be deterred, and disagreement will be inevitable any time the Alliance actually used.

NATO needs new norms. This research suggests various ways that norms in NATO could emerge. At its 60th anniversary celebration in Strasburg-Kehl, the Alliance is set to unveil a Declaration on Alliance Security, which will launch the process of writing a new Strategic Concept. Revising the Strategic Concept would provide a new treaty norm. But as we have seen, treaty norms like Article 4 and Article 5 have to be interpreted by the allies in order to make sense of what they mean, when and how they apply. A new social norm could emerge out of a crisis, or when a powerful actor enforces a particular interpretation of a norm, as happened during the Suez crisis when the out-of-area norm was established. A norm might also emerge in the way that social constructivist scholars argue norms do: out of the domestic sphere, by a norms entrepreneur, or through a transnational advocacy network.³¹ These processes are more easily analysed in hindsight than they are foreshadowed.

In any case, new norms will emerge in the context of debates about the responsibilities owe to one another. Debates about responsibility lead to questions about what kind of a community NATO is or wants to be. What NATO will be is, to a great extent, defined by what NATO does. Debates about the identity of the community may begin in the abstract, as for example the debate on how far to expand membership, but are always influenced by the particular, like the crisis in Afghanistan or, earlier, the Balkan interventions. NATO's traditional pillars of mutual defence and common values provide signposts for how the allies should act in concert, but little guidance for actually working out the rules and norms which will guide policy.

NATO's problem in Afghanistan is that there are no guidelines for what allies owe one another in missions in which the stakes are somewhat less than the survival of a member state. With the

distinction between Article 4 and Article 5 rendered irrelevant, each NATO mission is determined on an ad-hoc basis. Rules and norms provide the shorthand in discussions of NATO missions; when they are well-established, as the norms on out-of-area intervention were in the Cold War, they allow the allies to bypass much debate and work out agreement on those issues which are more contentious. Norms fill in the content of an identity. NATO's identity could, very simply, be expressed as a community of liberal democracies which believe in the values of freedom, justice, and tolerance, and has the military might to back up its interest in regional stability with force. These precepts alone provide little guidance for policy. The out-of-area norm did, by delineating a hierarchy of activities and behaving as a short-hand for endless ad-hoc discussions about what exactly it meant to be a community of liberal democracies. But identities change, and so must norms. NATO's established identity as an alliance of liberal democracies with a responsibility to Eastern Europe led NATO to go out-of-area and eventually undermined the utility of the existing norm. These changes are in turn driving a change in the way NATO conceives of mutual defence. NATO needs to work out new norms to fill in that altered identity. This is a process which may take some time. It is only in the interaction between abstract discussions, like the one over a potential new Strategic Concept, and reactions to specific events, like the intervention in Afghanistan, that NATO's normative content will be debated and settled.

¹ Elizabeth Sherwood, *The Out-of-Area Debate: The Atlantic Alliance and Challenges Beyond Europe*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1985); Frode Liland, 'Explaining NATO's Non-Policy on Out-of-Area Issues During the Cold War', in *A History of NATO*, vol. 1, ed. Gustav Schmidt (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 173-189; Frode Liland, 'Keeping NATO out of Trouble: NATO's Non-Policy on out-of-Area Issues During the Cold War', *Forsvarsstudier/Defence Studies* 4(1999).

² Alexandra Gheciu, 'International Institutions as Agents of Socialization?' *International Organization* 59 (Special Issue) (2005), 973-1012; Rebecca Moore, *NATO's New Mission: Projecting Stability in a Post-Cold War World* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007), Michael C. Williams, *Culture and Security: Symbolic Power and the Politics of International Security*, (New York: Routledge, 2007).

³ NATO, 'The North Atlantic Treaty', <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/treaty.htm> (accessed 4 April, 2006).

⁴ Frode Liland, 'Explaining NATO's Non-Policy'.

⁵ Torunn Laugen, 'Stumbling into a New Role: NATO's out of Area Policy after the Cold War', *Forsvarsstudier/Defence Studies* 5(1999); Frode Liland, 'Keeping NATO out of Trouble'; Douglas T. Stuart, 'The United States and NATO Out-of-Area Disputes: Does the Cold War Provide Precedents, or Merely Prologue?' in *A History of NATO*, vol. 1, ed. Gustav Schmidt (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

⁶ Assemblée Nationale, 'Resolution Adopted by the French National Assembly Regarding the Nationalization of the Suez Canal Company (2 August)', in *Documents on International Affairs, 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1956); Anthony Eden, 'Broadcast by Sir Anthony Eden (8 August)', in *Documents in International Affairs 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: Royal Institute of International Affairs / Oxford University Press, 1956); Anthony Eden, 'Statement by Sir Anthony Eden in the House of Commons Regarding Establishment of Scua (12 Sept)', in *Documents on International Affairs, 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: Royal Institute of International Affairs / Oxford University Press, 1956); Hugh Gaitskell, 'Statement in the House of Commons (2 August)', in *Documents in International Affairs 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: Royal Institute of International Affairs / Oxford University Press, 1956).

⁷ Christian Pineau, 'Statement in the Assemblée Nationale (3 August)', in *Documents on International Affairs 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: Royal Institute of International Affairs / Oxford University Press, 1956).

⁸ See, especially, the press conference where Dulles argues that the problems only became unsolvable "in the context of great concepts such as 'sovereignty' and 'dignity' and 'grandeur' and the 'East vs. the West' and things of that sort" and that "the problems should be solvable if you break them down into concrete things." John Foster Dulles, 'Extract from a Press Conference by Mr. Dulles on SCUA (13 September)', in *Documents on International Affairs, 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: RIIA / Oxford University Press, 1956).

⁹ John Foster Dulles, 'Reply by Mr. Dulles at a Press Conference Concerning Reports of Differences between the United States and Britain and France Regarding the Suez Canal Users Association (2 October)', in *Documents on International Affairs, 1956*, ed. Nobel Frankland (Oxford: Royal Institute of International Affairs / Oxford University Press, 1956).

¹⁰ Mark Smith, *NATO Enlargement During the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance*, (London: Palgrave, 2000).

¹¹ Frode Liland, 'Explaining NATO's Non-Policy' provides a nice overview of the relationship between colonialism and NATO's out-of-area problems.

¹² Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Co-operation among Democracies: The European Influence on US Foreign Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

¹³ Torunn Laugen, 'Stumbling into a New Role', 16; Douglas T. Stuart, 'The United States and NATO Out-of-Area Disputes', 133.

¹⁴ Veronica Kitchen, 'Argument and Identity Change in the Atlantic Security Community' *Security Dialogue* 40(1) (2009).

¹⁵ Liland, 'Explaining NATO's Non Policy'. 177, 183.

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