

NATO AS AN AGENT OF SOCIAL
CHANGE: WHERE THE
CHALLENGES REST?

*(thoughts for a new research
program)*

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- Could NATO bring about social change in its member and membership-aspiring countries?
- A realist approach
- A social constructivist approach

WHY DO CEECs JOINED AND ASPIRE TO JOIN NATO?

- Rationalist explanations:
 1. Safety
 2. Cheaper defense
 3. An EU antechamber
 4. No alternative

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST EXPLANATIONS

- NATO is a democratic club where we belong
- NATO represents western values (and identity argument)

WHERE DO RATIONALISTS FAIL?

- The lack of a tangible rationale in Albania's and Croatia's NATO membership and Macedonia's and Kosovo's NATO membership aspirations
 1. Cheaper defense?
 2. Protection against foreign enemies?
 3. Democratic consolidation?

WHERE DO SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST FAIL? (few anecdotal data)

- The incapability of IOs and the lack of NATO direct interest to bring about social change
 1. The Greek-Turkey lingering conflict
 2. The lingering national-defense feeling among most of the NATO member countries' societies

HOW CAN WE RESEARCH ON NATO CAPABILITY TO BRING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE?

- A conceptualization of “social change”
 1. Elite compliance (logic of benefit)
 2. Institutionalization (logic of benefit)
 3. State socialization/internalization (logic of appropriation)

RESOLVING THE ENDOGENEITY PROBLEM (chicken-and-egg problem)

- Does NATO bring about social change or the rationale of its membership makes countries adjust their believe system accordingly (thin rationality/shared values hypothesis)?
- Parsing either the dependent variable or the independ variable (or both, if we can)

GAUGING CHANGE: EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVES

- Institutional/military change (*institutionalism, functionalism, neo-functionalism*)
- Institutional (at large) change (*institutionalism*)
- Institutional design change (*rational choice, institutionalist, social constructivist approach*)
- Leader behavioral change (*rational choice, social constructivist approach*)
- Public opinion change (*constructivist approach*)

INSTITUTIONAL/MILITARY CHANGE

(institutionalism, functionalism, neo-functionalism)

FALSIFICATION

- H1 = There is an institutional/military change and NATO membership/membership conditionality played a role
- H0 = There's an institutional/military change but no NATO membership perspective

PUBLIC OPINION CHANGE

*(an effort to gauge NATO-centered
norm internalization)*

- Does NATO membership/membership perspective make people from different/competing nations feel like allies
- If yes, how did they acquire those feelings?
- If not, why the process of socialization/norm internalization happening?

TOPICS TO THINK ABOUT

- Whereas interests brought NATO into existence, identity politics might help to keep it together (Robert Kagan)
- Could (or should—avoid normativism!) NATO transform to a cultural warrior?
- Could NATO serve as an identity forger in the conditions of the lack of a tangible identity threat?