

**Destructive Double Standards:
Great Powers and the Security Community Paradox**

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Abstract

Existing research on security communities, networks of states that have transcended the use of military force as a means of conflict resolution amongst themselves, has been dominated by the discussion of the process by which these unique relationships emerge and develop. While theories of security community evolution have been plentiful, there has not yet been a substantial effort to study the inverse: security community dissolution. I contend that the presence and number of great power members has an important effect on the long-term stability of security communities. This is due to what I term the security community paradox: that states must disavow the use of force with community partners while retaining the capability to employ force against extra-community states. Great powers feel the pressures of the security community paradox more than weaker states due to their larger portfolio of global security commitments. As a result, I argue that security communities with more than one great power will be subject to instability whereas single great power security communities will be more stable. However, the complete absence of a great power patron is expected to pose an obstacle to the development and consolidation of a security community. I conduct a plausibility probe of my hypotheses in six cases of security communities and present predictions as to how each of the active cases will develop in the coming years. If accurate, my argument implies a possible future where relations between security communities, rather than individual states, will become the primary focus of international politics.

As the Cold War came to an end in the early 1990s, the world of international relations theory was confronted with a moment of unique change in the international system. A pivotal question faced by all scholars after the collapse of this bipolar world order was the nature of the international system that would replace it. Historically, a return to power politics along new lines of alignment dashes the initial hope of a new peaceful international order. The question facing the international relations community was whether the end of the Cold War would be any different. The idea of security communities held out the hope that post-Cold War states, even in the absence of a clear existential threat such as the now-defunct Soviet Union, could continue to exist in a world of relatively peaceful conflict resolution and cooperation. This position was taken by a school of theory, the constructivist “security community” approach, reviving Karl Deutsch’s earlier behavioralist notion that states may establish relationships that preclude the use of force as a means of conflict resolution. These hopes seemed to be borne out by the notable success of the world’s most significant security community, the American-European north Atlantic, to continue to serve as an engine of international peace in the 1990s. However, recent tensions over American security behavior in Iraq and the Middle East have once again cast doubt upon the long-term durability of the community. The issue of security community dissolution, a hitherto underexplored topic, serves as the motivating concern of this paper.

In this study, I argue that the security community concept has at its core a fundamental paradox that works to degrade, if not destroy, the bonds of trust forged between states that enable such communities to form in the first place. This paradox is that states in a security community have on the one hand accepted that non-violent conflict resolution is an admirable norm for security behavior between themselves, but on the other hand continue to exist in a world where violent conflict with non-community members remains possible. States most likely to engage in

such conflict with non-community members, known as great powers, therefore are presented with the problem of balancing its reputation within its security communities with its interests *vis a vis* states outside this community. The behavior of great powers, in sum, has the potential to disrupt the bonds of trust and shared identity on which security communities depend for their continued existence.

This paper will proceed in four sections. In the following discussion, I will begin with a brief introduction to scholarship on the security community concept and its relative dearth of work on the collapse of security communities. I will then introduce a theoretical framework describing how the presence, and number, of great powers in a security community will affect their long-term stability and viability. The third section will provide an empirical survey of several security communities and how the presence or lack of great powers may affect their fortunes in the future. I conclude with some thoughts on the theoretical and practical implications of the security community paradox for the evolution of the international system in the 21st century and beyond.

Security Communities in the Post-Cold War World: A Foundation for Lasting Peace?

As the end of the Cold War came within sight, the debate as to what would replace it began in earnest. Echoing the pessimistic realist conventional wisdom, Mearsheimer (1990) argued that Europe was headed “back to the future” towards a world of multipolarity and increased tension. The death of the Soviet threat, he argued, would inevitably lead to a steady degradation in the unity of the Western alliance that helped to bring it about. The realist warning

was countered by the arguments of the neo-liberal institutionalist paradigm, most clearly delineated in the 1980s through the work of Keohane (1984), that the enviable network of security and non-security based institutions developed during the Cold War held out the possibility of continued cooperation and peace. These two fundamentally rationalist perspectives on international relations were also joined by the increasingly persuasive constructivist perspective that emphasized the important role played by social factors in inter-state relationships.

In the 1990s, a third argument was introduced to bolster the contention that the victorious West may, counter to the predictions of realism, would continue to exist in a state of peace and cooperation. Additionally, this peace will not be solely ensured by the incentives provided by international institutions, as the neo-liberals suggest. Adler and Barnett (1998) re-introduced the concept of the security community as a focus of international relations theory. The concept, which originated with Deutsch's (1957) early pioneering work on community as it developed in the north Atlantic during the Cold War, was updated by Adler and Barnett to take recent work on social theory into account. Adler and Barnett's critique of Deutsch's original effort centered around his highly behavioralist technique in identifying security communities through measurably dense communicative interaction. Adler and Barnett countered that such a definition of community is too limited: it discounts the hard-to-measure roles that social and institutional factors play in building and maintaining such communities. In their version, security communities depend on the formation of collective identities that serve as the underlying barrier to violent conflict. The mere absence of conflict is insufficient to establish such a community identity; it must be cultivated over time. This updated and conceptually holistic vision of the security community phenomenon has served as a guide for recent scholarship on the topic (e.g. Wæever 1998; Acharya 1998; Hurrell 1998; Gonzalez and Haggard 1998; Shore 1998).

Analogues of the security community concept can be found in perhaps the most influential constructivist work of the past decade: Wendt's (1999) logic of "Kantian anarchy" closely parallels Adler and Barnett's definition.

Recent research on security communities, almost without exception, has focused upon how they are built and consolidated. This is natural as security communities, as an empirically identifiable phenomenon, are fairly recent in origin. The dearth of a large pool of long-lived and mature security communities naturally prejudices scholarship towards an emphasis on the early stages of community formation. This has led to a general lack of work on how, once built, these communities might be undermined or even destroyed. One notable exception can be found in Ingimundarson's (2005) study of the potential collapse of the US-Icelandic security community in the wake of the Cold War. Ingimundarson argues that the removal of the strategic rationale provided by the threat of the Soviet Union has led to a steady collapse of US security cooperation with Iceland, despite the island nation's virtually unqualified support for American foreign policy. However, it is important to note that Ingimundarson's explanation is largely realist: it is the removal of a material threat that has led to this split. While an interesting take on a particular case, it is less clear that the forces Ingimundarson describe are applicable to the more significant relationships found in the Western security community as a whole. Nevertheless, he poses the intriguing idea that material changes in the international system may have possible impacts on socially-based relationships.

Adler and Barnett do briefly note that the presence of a security community does not necessarily imply its permanence; the forces that bring about community are subject to change and may theoretically invert to bring about community dissolution (Adler and Barnett 1998: 57-58). Given that the material conditions of the system, in their view, might bring about the

formation of a security community, it is not unreasonable that a change in these conditions might also bring them down. However, for such a material change to affect a security community as Adler and Barnett describe, a mechanism must be posed for how powerful and durable social bonds would be broken by such changes. There is skepticism, articulated most notably by Wendt (1999: 312) that Kantian relationships can backslide into a more conflictual Lockean relationship (a lower order of cooperation where states accept limits to their competition, but do not operate as a community). The argument against regression is that there are prohibitive social and material costs involved in destroying such a relationship, once it exists. Therefore, communities are thought to be durable due to their social foundation.

In order for a security community to be undermined, it would theoretically require the social foundations upon which it depends to be undermined. Purely material changes (a la Ingimundarson 2005) must be shown to impact not simply on behavior, but the social understandings upon which they are based. It is only then one can say a security community is under threat. Cracks in the social foundations of the north Atlantic security community have been identified in the relatively disparate interpretations of the September 11th attacks in the United States and Europe by Frederking et al. (2005). They find an “interpretive gulf” between the United States government and global, including European, interpretations of the 9/11 attacks with Americans viewing the event in more power political terms. This gulf was, they argue, only exacerbated by the Iraq War. While Frederking et al. illustrate a social mechanism for what may be the early stages of a break in the transatlantic security community, they do not provide a persuasive causal story for why this break has appeared. I argue that understanding the social break Frederking et al. describe requires a materialist explanation: that the U.S. faces security

challenges many of its fellow European community members do not, thereby leading it to differential interpretations of events.

Great Powers & the Security Community Paradox: A Theory of Community Stability

Security communities, as much as they represent a departure from the historical norm of violence as a legitimate method for resolving state differences, are constrained by the fact that they must co-exist in world in which the old rules still apply. In other words, security communities must live with the fact that one of their members might come into violent contact with a state that is not a current community member. This is the heart of what I describe as the security community paradox: they are built on an identity that includes a norm of non-violence but they must, at the same time, retain the capability to use violence. Indeed, Wendt recognizes this when he states: “A Lockean culture with 200 members will not change just because two of its members acquire a Kantian identity, unless perhaps they are also its only two superpowers, in which case other states may follow suit” (1999: 365). Wendt makes two points relevant here. First, Kantian relationships, or security communities, must exist in this parallel non-Kantian world. Second, the power of the states that become involved in these security communities has an impact. Wendt therefore implies that if the two most important competitors in a system were to bury their differences via a Kantian relationship, much of the violent competition in this system may decrease enough to allow other to form as well. In this passage, Wendt affirms the pivotal role played by great powers in the system and how their behavior can influence social relationships throughout the system.

States in a security community exist in a dual world whereby they abrogate the option of using force in their relations with some states but retain that right in others. This requires a large degree of trust: states must be certain their community partners will not turn their arms retained for use against others on themselves. However, in most cases, this problem is for practical purposes almost irrelevant. This is because the vast majority of the states in the international system are weak. Weak states, by which I mean all non-great powers, are not free from security concerns, but their lack of capabilities severely hinders their ability to protect interests on a more than very local geographical scope. This limitation is embodied in the quantitative empirical concept of politically relevant dyads (first introduced by Weede 1976). Most of the states of the international system can therefore be thought of to interact primarily with their geographic neighbors. However, the politically relevant dyad concept contains a key provision whereby some states, the great powers, are considered a relevant dyad to every state in the world. These global states, within the context of security communities, face the pressures of the security community paradox to a much greater degree. Great powers will face much more tension in their relations with both great and weak power community partners because of the global nature of their roles.

Great powers will by and large have a tough time co-existing with each other in a security community unless they face a common material threat. Great powers, being global powers by definition, simply have more opportunities develop conflicts of interest. They therefore will have a tough time making the leap of trust necessary to form a security community. Multiple great powers also make the leadership and guidance of security communities more difficult. With multiple power centers, battles over the direction of community policy, both internally and towards the outside world, become much more likely. The obvious exception to this situation is

where an external threat provides an impetus for great powers to work together within a security community regardless of their specific difference. However, multiple significant power centers within a security community serve as latent tectonic fissures that threaten to erupt and divide or destroy the community as a whole.

Great powers will also face tensions in their relationships with weak state community members. The very asymmetry of the power relationship provides the first basis for such tension: a weak state may have little choice or recourse in the event the great power decides to bully its partner. The relationship also faces tension from the asymmetry in responsibilities. Great powers will by tend to bear a disproportionate weight of the responsibility to defend and promote the interests of the community in the international system. This increased responsibility not only threatens to anger the great power faced with these added burdens, but it threatens to indirectly undermine the weak state's long-term trust and faith in its powerful partner.

The longer a security community involving a great power and a weaker power exists, the more time will have passed since the weaker state has been fully exposed to the norms of violence still faced by the great power in the larger international system. Weak state security community members, being incapable of providing much substantial help anyway and content to enjoy the benefits of protection, can be expected to engage in little violent conflict. Weak states, thus freed from having to worry about their material security, will be in a position to fully internalize the norm of non-violent conflict resolution – as long as they are security community members it will become the only sort of conflict they are likely to know. Great powers, having much more contact with the non-community world, are more likely to acquire a “friends & potential enemies require different rules” perspective on violence in conflict resolution. This bifurcated stance towards the use of violence is how great powers overcome the security

community paradox: violence remains an option in dealing with certain states while being an inconceivable tool in their relations with others.

The idea that violence is a legitimate policy option in some circumstances will appear increasingly foreign to weaker security community members the longer they remain a part of the community. Since their communities will likely encompass some or all of their immediate neighbors, they will have less substantive contact with non-community members than great powers. This disconnect will, over time, lead them to discount the likelihood that these non-community members can represent the existential threat worthy of violent suppression. They are more likely to come to the less-contradictory conclusion that violence should be largely abandoned in relations between *all* states both “friend” and “enemy.” The result is weak states that increasingly do not comprehend or condone violent actions taken by their great power brethren even if it could be argued that these actions served the larger community interest. This difference in perspective – a great-powers-are-from-Mars, weak-powers-are-from-Venus dynamic if you will – therefore threaten to disrupt security communities involving the two types of state.

However, difficulties in relations between weak and great powers within a security community can be suppressed by the lack of alternative options. In a multi great power security community, these weak states will be able to play off one powerful partner against another. A specific great power may engender the distrust of its weaker partners and they may gravitate towards one of the others. Therefore, the presence of a number of weak states potentially amplifies the risks to multi great power community stability. Security communities involving multiple great powers and weaker powers are therefore expected to be very volatile entities. The great powers have multiple structural reasons to lose trust in one another and the weak powers

have multiple structural reasons to lose trust in their great power compatriots. In these situations, violent action by an involved great power has the potential to divide the community. Its fellow great powers could protest its actions, and the weaker members of the community could potentially revoke their trust in the offending great power.

Although great powers themselves pose existential risks to the existence of security communities, they also have the potential to provide pivotal contributions. A great power can provide a great degree of credibility to a community, even going so far as to act as a magnet for other states. Adler and Barnett note that security communities tend to be facilitated by the presence of significant power, though not necessarily as a product of design as in the case of Eastern European states flocking to the north Atlantic after the end of the Cold War (1998: 40). Great powers provide protection for their larger security communities. They do this both directly through mutual assistance guarantees and indirectly by removing themselves from the list of potential threats a community member must prepare to face. Great powers are able to protect community interests on a global scale. Great powers also provide leadership and direction for the security community as a whole. Indeed, the successful evolution of a security community almost requires a great power to maintain credibility and order. Security communities without a great power could potentially provide both mutual protection and operate without a distinct leadership voice, but the durability of such communities in the face of challenges is, to say the least, uncertain. I argue that least one great power member is pivotal to a successful security community.

It is evident that the most stable possible situation for a security community would be to have a single great power among its membership, but no more. This is not a prescription for tension-free relations, as it would experience the normal tensions great and weak powers face in

security community situations. However, single great power security communities have notable advantages that will tend to offset these risks. These communities can operate confident in the great power's ability to provide security and promote community interests worldwide. A single great power also provides the community with a natural leader and force for direction. While it is certainly possible for great powers to abuse this position of responsibility and trust, it is expected that the mutual interest great and weak powers have in continued peaceful relations will give a lone great power more "slack" than it would receive in a multiple great power community. In a multiple great power community a weak state has options as to where it places its allegiance; in a single great power community a switch of allegiance by a weak state will likely be very costly if not impossible.

To summarize my argument in this section, I argue that the presence and number of great powers within a security community serves as a crucial variable that will predict to the communities long-term stability. Great powers face intense pressures by virtue of their requirement to lead a double life as a non-violent state towards their security community partners, and as a potentially violent state towards members outside of their community. While great powers provide pivotal resources in the evolution of a successful security community, more than one in a community can serve as a source of tension and rupture. Therefore, I argue that security communities containing multiple great powers will be highly unstable without a common threat to contain their differences. A security community without great powers, on the other hand, will be unlikely to survive without the resources and leadership of a great power patron, and are therefore also predicted to be unstable. A security community with a single great power, while not free from tension, is expected to be the most stable of the three. This single great power provides resources and leadership and provides disgruntled weaker partners with

fewer options for alternative allegiance. This implies that, over time, security communities with single great powers will be the most stable and least likely to implode over the long run.

Security Communities in Action: Durability or Decay?

Any empirical examination of security community dissolution is presented with an obvious vexing problem: to date there have been no significant cases of a clear security community collapse. Therefore, any theory on security community dissolution must exist as a fundamentally predictive one – an explanation for an event that has not yet occurred. As a result, I do not claim the following section can serve as a definitive empirical test of my theory. The intent will be to provide what Eckstein (1975) has called a plausibility probe into my theoretical ideas. I will seek to illustrate the beginnings of potential community problems and their relationships with great power behavior or lack thereof.

Given the natural limitations of this format, I am confronted with the option of exploring a single case in great depth, or a variety of cases in lesser detail. Given the scope of my theoretical discussion, I have decided to err in favor of more cases. While this will limit the discussion of any one case, I believe that it is important to illustrate the importance of great power behavior in several security communities to bolster my theory's credibility as a generalizable explanation as much as possible.

In pursuit of this goal, I have selected six cases on the basis of my primary independent variable: the presence and number of great powers in a security community. Two cases have been chosen representing each value of this variable I described in the previous section. It is

important to acknowledge the contributors to Adler and Barnett (1998) as some of their chapters served as a starting point for cases I chose to look at in my own study (namely Wæever 1998; Acharya 1998; Hurrell 1998; Gonzalez and Haggard 1998; Shore 1998).

The term “great power” itself is a contentious one. There is no universal agreement on a list of which states have been great powers in the international system and during which times. While it remains an imperfect and debatable standard, I have chosen to accept the list of great powers as established by the Correlates of War project (Small and Singer 1982). The COW list has achieved reasonable acceptance as a common definitional standard in the field and will serve as my own for the sake of the following empirical investigation.

Selecting cases of multi great power security communities is complicated by the fact that there have really been no examples of such a phenomenon other than the US-European northern Atlantic community. Therefore, I have chosen to examine this multi great power community in two different time periods: during the Cold War & after the Cold War. The two cases of no great power security communities I selected reflect more geographical diversity. I chose to select the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) community and the Mercosur community of South America as my two cases for this particular portion of my investigation. Finally, I chose to examine the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and the US-Japanese Security treaty as my examples of single great power security communities.

Multi Great Power Security Communities

The North Atlantic Security Community: The Cold War Years

The northern Atlantic security community has been, without any close second, the most intensely scrutinized case of states that have given up the use of force as a tool in their relations.

This community arose primarily from the need for war-ravaged Western Europe to work with the United States to counter the threat of absorption by the Communist Soviet Union. Europe required American help not only to counter Soviet power, but to rebuild itself economically and establish bonds of trust on a continent that had been obliterated by two world wars in thirty years. The north Atlantic community was cemented militarily through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and economically through organizations like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This arrangement bound the great powers of the United States, France, and Britain together within a framework that would develop into the north Atlantic security community.

Strains between the great powers within the north Atlantic community were evident practically from the beginning. A key formative experience of the community was the Suez crisis in 1956 when the US famously failed to back the efforts of France and Britain to resist Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal. Scholars have pointed to this crisis as the origin of the tensions between France and the US within the north Atlantic community (Risse-Kappen 1995). While relations between the US and Britain, along the lines of the so-called "special relationship" forged during the Second World War, recovered after this crisis, the American relationship with France never fully healed. This tension between France and its fellow northern Atlantic great powers would become noticeably public when Paris withdrew its forces from NATO's unified command structure in 1966.

Despite the obvious conflict between France and NATO's American leader, the Soviet threat served as a point of common interest that prevented the relationship from reaching the point of complete rupture. While France had withdrawn from NATO's command structure, it specifically re-iterated its belief in the utility and need for the alliance itself (Stein & Correau

1966). While geopolitical realities in Europe protected NATO from complete rupture during the Cold War, the bonds between them were nevertheless strained.

The involvement of the US in the Vietnam War exemplified the strain being placed on the north Atlantic security community's unity during the Cold War. The US, being a global power with a perceived responsibility to prevent Communist expansion in Southeast Asia, became involved in a war that was deeply unpopular at home and abroad. While American involvement in Vietnam did not result in a noticeable change in European governmental policy towards the NATO alliance, this involvement and its subsequent failure to prevent the Communist re-unification of the country had noticeable ramifications on European public opinion. The debacle in Vietnam resulted in a noticeable decline in European public opinion of the United States from 1963 through 1982 in both Britain and France (Russett and DeLuca 1983).

Despite these social strains, the north Atlantic security community endured these crises because of the Soviet threat. While their public opinion had somewhat turned against the United States during the Vietnam and post-Vietnam era, the continuing presence of the Soviet Union led European governments to resist the potential rupture of NATO. The resistance of European governments to these pressures eventually led to a recovery in the public's views on the United States with the passage of time and events. In a later study of European public opinion, it can be seen that by the closing years of the Cold War, the United States had largely regained its former pre-Vietnam public standing in both Britain and France (Smith and Wertman 1992).

In summation, the north Atlantic security community was subjected to the very pressures for dissolution I described in the theoretical section of this paper. Disparate interests between the great powers in the Suez crisis and Vietnam conflicts applied immense pressure on the north

Atlantic great powers' ability to trust one another – a crucial element in the continued existence of a security community. However, the external threat provided by the Soviet Union compelled the governments of the community to resist these pressures and maintain their relationship. This incentive to weather political storms allowed this community to survive.

The North Atlantic Security Community: The Post-Cold War Years

With the removal of the threat posed by the Communist world, the external incentive for the north Atlantic security community's great powers to bury temporary political differences had been largely removed. Not only had the external conditions facing the community changed, but with the re-unification of Germany a fourth great power had been added to their number. The material pressures toward community had dissipated. The question then became whether this community could continue to survive based upon the social infrastructure of trust that had been inherited from the Cold War conflict.

NATO in the post-Cold War era became an organization in search of a continuing mission. Without a continuing Soviet threat, the rationale behind the interstate institutional infrastructure of the north Atlantic security community became unclear. Nevertheless, NATO not only continued to survive, but it began a process of expansion into former Eastern Europe. As observers of this expansion have noted, the mere possibility of instability and disorder in the former Communist European world became the new "threat" opposed by the north Atlantic community (Fierke and Wiener 1999). Instead of the Soviet Union, NATO became a mechanism to entrench capitalist economics and democracy in this region and forestall a collapse into poverty, authoritarianism and ethnic conflict. This commitment was put to an important substantive test in the 1999 Kosovo war. NATO's success in this conflict in the former

Yugoslavia not only served to demonstrate the importance of this new mission but the alliance's ability to facilitate it. The Kosovo conflict was followed by the absorption of much of Eastern Europe into NATO in 1997 and 2003.

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11 2001 at first seemed to herald a new era of reinforced unity between the north Atlantic great powers. Within twenty-four hours of the attacks, NATO had invoked its common-defense clause signifying the attack as one on all of its members. The resulting war against al-Qaeda and its Taliban associates in Afghanistan therefore received explicit community support. The larger "war on terror" also held out the potential of a new external threat that the community could collectively confront. However, the actions of the US after the Afghan war have put this new unity in question. With the Taliban largely defeated, the Bush administration then turned to the question of Saddam Hussein's Iraq and its possible pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.

The weapons of mass destruction crisis of 2002-2003 and the subsequent Iraq war have posed the greatest challenge to the survival of the north Atlantic security community since its inception. The US, along with Britain, proposed a strict and unyielding stance on the Iraqi regime that left little room for a negotiated solution. France, along with Germany and the non-community great powers of Russia and China, opposed this approach. The division within the north Atlantic community saw the weaker state members (such as Italy, Spain, Poland, Greece, Belgium, etc.) being forced to choose sides in the dispute. In the end, the Iraqi regime prevaricated long enough to provoke the US and its "coalition of the willing" to embark upon its effort to forcibly evict Saddam Hussein from power. While the US and its associates quickly achieved its initial aim of defeating the Iraqi regime, this victory has been followed by a prolonged occupation highlighted by an effective insurgency and numerous problems in the

construction of a post-Saddam government. The long-term ramifications of this conflict within the north Atlantic security community are far from clear.

It is evident that in the years after September 11th and the Iraq war perceptual schisms have emerged within the northern Atlantic community. The question since the Iraq war has been whether this represents a long-term trend towards the implosion of the north Atlantic community or whether it is a temporary phenomenon largely reducible to the policies of the current Bush administration. The evidence from public opinion data is largely inconclusive. Recent studies have shown that while core values seem to remain the same within both American and European societies, attitudes towards the use of force and when they should be employed have diverged (Isernia and Everts 2004).

These empirical findings seem to imply that the social bases that have served as the foundation of the north Atlantic security community continue to survive and may be energized by a change in political leadership in the US. However, the difference in attitudes towards the use of military force, a key element of what we call security communities, brings into question whether the community can survive. If the American public has become more willing to use force than its European partners in light of recent historical events, further intra-community conflicts would seem inevitable. The question becomes whether potential future crises involving terrorism or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in North Korea and Iran will bridge this perceptual divide and provide a revitalized sense of external threat to galvanize the north Atlantic community, or whether these future crises will only drive this wedge deeper.

My theory predicts that multi-great power security communities can only survive in an environment where external threats exist to overcome natural internal rivalries. Terror and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction may yet provide a new threat for the north Atlantic

security community. It is, at this point, unclear whether such new threats will be sufficient to reverse incipient perceptual gulfs on the use of military force between Europeans and the US. I am pessimistic that this will occur. I argue that while such issues may postpone a north Atlantic community schism, it will not fundamentally address the conflicts of interest that have helped to bring about this growing perceptual divide.

The north Atlantic security community has survived numerous crises of internal cohesion during its existence. The external environment has repeatedly assisted by providing the community a reason to work out their differences. It would seem unlikely for this to continue indefinitely. I contend that the death of the north Atlantic security community is not a matter of “if”, but “when.”

No Great Power Security Communities

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Security Community

ASEAN, like the north Atlantic security community, was forged as a by-product of the larger US-Soviet global conflict. The community originated in 1967 largely because of the threat of Communist expansion in Southeast Asia and the threat this posed primarily to the regimes of Indonesia and Thailand. The Vietnam War and the possibility of an ever-increasing Communist Chinese voice in the region gave these states an incentive to work together for common ends (Acharya 1998; 2001). While loosely affiliated with the US and its global efforts to combat international Communism, this organization never shared a parallel multilateral security arrangement to play a role akin to NATO in the north Atlantic community. Therefore, ASEAN was born as a community without a resident great power. ASEAN is not a fully-developed security community: it at best can be described as “nascent” (Acharya 1998). Nevertheless, the

organization has not seen an armed conflict between its members and a norm of nonviolent intergovernmental conflict resolution seems to have taken root in the region.

The original five members of ASEAN (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) managed to form the core of this nascent community. Not long after ASEAN's birth, it was forced to confront the crisis of the Communist victory in the Vietnam War and the subsequent onset of a new war in Cambodia. While ASEAN was able to maintain its solidarity in the face of these crises, they notably failed to succeed in positively intervening – especially in the humanitarian disaster in Cambodia (Leifer 1999). The failures of the organization to positively influence these events left it a comparatively marginal institution until the end of the Cold War.

In the mid-1990s, after the end of the Soviet Union, the potential of ASEAN to serve as a positive force for change in the region was re-kindled. With the governments of the region overcoming their ideological battles and seeking to establish a regional voice to bolster their standing in the face of the new economic realities of globalization, ASEAN again became a focus of efforts to build an effective collective instrument. ASEAN expanded from its founding membership into Vietnam in 1995 and into Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia in 1997.

The new expanded ASEAN organization was soon beset by a series of crises. The Spratley Island chain, claimed by several ASEAN members, was identified as a possible source of lucrative oil and petroleum resources. Another claimant to these new suddenly valuable unoccupied islets could be found in ascendant China, which was accused of building military installations in the islands in 1995. ASEAN notched perhaps its greatest success in this particular confrontation (Acharya 1998). While a final resolution over ownership of the islands has not yet been reached, ASEAN brokered an agreement whereby all claimant states would de-militarize

the islands and report any future intent to construct a renewed presence. ASEAN not only suppressed internal conflict over the future of the islands, but also forced the external power of China to at least delay staking its own claim. However, barring a final territorial arrangement, potential conflict with China remains a very real possibility; a conflict the militaries of ASEAN would be hard pressed to resist if it were to materialize.

China has also played an unconstructive role in ASEAN's efforts to modify the undemocratic behavior of the military government of Myanmar. The military in Myanmar, which has been in power since 1962, has been actively repressing a democratic movement since a popular uprising in 1988 attempted to overthrow the regime. Scholars have argued that a subsequently close diplomatic relationship between Myanmar and the government of China (which itself violently repressed a democratic movement in the famous Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989) emerged as a result of these common pressures for democratic change (Storey 2000). ASEAN, in an effort to build regional unity and attempt to positively influence Myanmarian behavior within the framework of the organization, admitted the military regime regardless. However, ASEAN has practiced a norm of "non-intervention" that made the application of institutional pressure on the regime difficult. ASEAN has therefore been criticized for its failure to broker any substantial progress in the conflict between the Myanmaran regime and its democratic opposition.

ASEAN has also been accused of failing to positively act in two other regional crises of severe importance: the East Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the East Timor crisis of 1999 (Khoo 2004). The Asian financial crisis, which originated in Thailand, created an economic snowball effect where the international investment started to flee the region. While some member states – such as Malaysia – accused outside speculators in instigating the event, the fact

remained that ASEAN was institutionally helpless to intervene in the currency crisis. The UN referendum on East Timor's status as a part of Indonesia also saw the failure of ASEAN to act proactively to forestall a potentially bloody civil war. In the end, it was the intervention of non-ASEAN states like Australia that saved the situation. ASEAN, in short, has failed to pass several significant tests of its relevance.

ASEAN, while it has achieved many notable accomplishments not least of which is a prolonged period of peace in a recently conflictual region, is a community which has not been nearly as significant in influencing specific events as originally envisaged. There are two notable problems with ASEAN. First, it lacks a significantly dominant member state to provide direction in the development of the organization and leadership in the face of crises. Second, it lacks an internal geopolitical counterweight to the growing influence of China in the region. In so many words, what ASEAN lacks is a great power. ASEAN has two possible futures: one including China or one opposing Chinese influence. An ASEAN that accepts China into its membership would likely be more stable. However, it is unlikely an ASEAN including China would provide a positive influence in favor of democratic or liberal politics. An ASEAN including un-democratic China may find the maintenance of the non-violent norms required in a security community difficult in the long run. On the other hand, an ASEAN that chooses to oppose China will likely find itself outmaneuvered and outgunned. In such a situation, the death of the ASEAN community's relevance would be only a matter of time. In either case, the prospects of future peace and unity in Southeast Asia appear grim.

The Mercado Común del Sur (Mercosur) Security Community

The Mercosur free-trade area was founded in 1991 between Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The organization, much like the enlarged 1990-era ASEAN, was brought into being in hopes of bolstering the ability of several notable South American economies to survive the sometimes turbulent winds of globalization. The most notable feature of Mercosur was that it represented a new spirit of cooperation between Brazil and Argentina – two states that had suffered a history of conflictual relations that had defined South American relations for almost two centuries. The organization was made possible by the arrival of democratic political regimes in both countries in the early 1980s. The subsequent rapprochement was cemented by the foundation of the Mercosur institution. Like ASEAN, Mercosur is not primarily a military alliance but an organization with an economic focus. However, the fact that it links together two of South America's greatest natural rivals into a forum enabling the peaceful resolution of disputes justifies its classification as a “nascent” security community (Hurrell 1998).

Mercosur, like ASEAN, lacks a member state that can currently be classified as a great power. However, unlike ASEAN, it possesses a pair of clear leading states to provide direction. The Argentine-Brazilian diarchy is clearly the engine of community activity; no other member or prospective member is capable of providing a voice comparable to either of these pivotal states. Consensus and a spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between these two states is what made the Mercosur community possible in the first place (Hurrell 1998). Naturally, the future progress of Mercosur will hinge on continued consensus between these two states.

The importance of the Argentine-Brazilian bilateral relationship and the relative lack of powerful institutions in Mercosur clearly set this security community apart from the other cases examined thus far. While Mercosur does possess a secretariat and the other usual trappings of

regional organizations, these institutions have not had the same import as their counterparts in Europe or Southeast Asia. This underinstitutionalized regionalism has been attributed to the domestic political problems prevalent throughout South America (Malamud 2003). Given that the region's national governments have had such a poor track record of administrative effectiveness, the presidents of Brazil and Argentina have avoided investing much responsibility in what would likely have been yet another set of ineffective political institutions. Instead, Mercosur's birth and development have been dominated by a bilateral dialogue primarily between the presidents of these two countries. This fact has admittedly led to progress where there might have been none, but has left the community organizationally vulnerable to fluctuations in the relations between these two states.

Political change and crises in Brazil and Argentina have largely prevented the Mercosur community from deepening regional cooperation. While the 1990s saw a steady flow of agreements on various areas of potential economic and monetary cooperation, the union has since been dominated by trade and investment disputes between its two key members. Mercosur has therefore been stuck at the "customs union" stage of integration, and even here cooperation has been incomplete (Malamud 2003: 54). In 2002, the uncertainty and change manifested in the Argentine financial meltdown and the election of the new Lula presidential administration in Brazil further contributed to Mercosur's paralysis. An additional complication is the fact that while Brazil is gradually achieving a more prominent global role as an "intermediate state" with the potential of future great power status (Lima and Hirst 2006), Argentina's future prospects are far more modest. The delicacy of the Argentine-Brazilian relationship raises questions about the long-term prospects of the emergence of a stable South American security community.

Mercosur's future is further clouded by the activities of its powerful neighbor to the north: the United States. The US-sponsored Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) has been interpreted as a possible challenge to the future fate of Mercosur as a dominant regional organization (Carranza 2004). While the FTAA has not yet fully gotten off the ground, the influence of the US in the region's politics has been felt in other ways as well. Recently Chile, an associate member of Mercosur, has been forging increasingly close links with the US via a free trade agreement. Uruguay has also been reported as considering a closer relationship with the US at the expense of its Mercosur partners (*Economist* January 21, 2006). Difficult relations between the US and President Hugo Chavez threaten to exert a negative influence on Mercosur's developments when Venezuela assumes membership in the organization later this year. It is possible that Chavez, employing Venezuela's great oil resources, might turn the organization in more of an anti-American geopolitical direction (*Economist* December 10, 2006). In short, American activity in the region will likely effect the future consolidation of Mercosur into a mature security community.

The future path of Mercosur is unclear, and this ambiguity can be largely attributed to the absence of a dominant great power in the organization. While the Argentine-Brazilian axis provides a certain degree of leadership and guidance absent from organizations like ASEAN, the progress of the community is subject to changes in this very precarious bilateral partnership between former adversaries and natural competitors. To a certain degree, this dynamic resembles the problems of multi great power security communities. At the same time, neither of these states can yet be considered a great power with the clout to offset the challenges presented by the US in the region. In effect, this leaves Mercosur with the worst of both worlds: the lack of a clear singular leading voice and the lack of a legitimate counterweight to outside interference. The

future of Mercosur will hinge upon the relations between the rising power of Brazil, its once and potentially future rival of Argentina, and the activities of the dominant power of the hemisphere: the United States. The emergence of Mercosur as an independent and consolidated security community in the near future is therefore very much in doubt.

Single Great Power Security Communities

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Security Community

The status of the NAFTA area as a security community is open to debate. The NAFTA treaty is purely an economic one, does not create an organization or supra-national body of binding law, and does not bind the three members of the community in a common military alliance. It does, however, identify three states that are undoubtedly tied economically, politically, geographically, and socially. None of the three states that constitute NAFTA (Canada, Mexico, and the United States) have engaged in a violent dispute in almost 100 years and there is no evidence that any of them seriously consider their militaries as a potential tool in their relations with one another. Therefore, the NAFTA group fits the substantive definition of a security community as it has been employed in this study.

The United States serves as the pivotal hinge holding the NAFTA group together. The US sits geographically between the two and is by far the most important economic component of the community. As such, it is uncertain whether NAFTA should be considered two independent security communities (separating the Mexican-American and Canadian-American relationships) or an integrated one. The substantial differences between the two relationships has previously lead to their examination as isolated cases (e.g. Gonzalez and Haggard 1998; Shore 1998; Golob 2002). However, I argue that the presence of mutually permeable borders, especially in the age

of modern terrorism, has linked the three states of the North American continent together in such a way that they should be considered a single unit. The dominant partner in any event remains the US, as its status as the only great power of the three would imply, and therefore links the community together geopolitically.

While Canada and the US remain more integrated with each other than either is with Mexico, there has been substantial movement towards an integrated continental security system. The US and Canada, both members of NATO, have long coordinated with each other in the defense of the continent's airspace. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) has been monitoring American and Canadian airspace since its inception in 1958. The United States and Canada have also long shared what has been called the longest unfortified border in the world. While the economic disparities between the US and Mexico, and the resultant issues of labor migration, have prevented them from sharing a similarly open border, military forces in the area are not primarily tasked with defending their respective states from one another. In the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, the importance of maintaining a continent-wide system of border security became enshrined in a series of accords (Meyers 2003). While these accords have met with only limited success in their intended purpose, they reinforce the perceived importance of maintaining relatively open and peaceful interaction within the NAFTA area. A common security infrastructure and common borders are classic hallmarks of a stable security community.

While the Iraq war placed a strain on relations within the NAFTA community, there is ample evidence that it has not affected the long-term relationships between the US and its smaller Canadian and Mexican partners. The geographical and economic facts of North America preclude either of the smaller states from being able to seriously contemplate an alternative

to continued cooperation with the US. Indeed, barring a new hostile militaristic stance from the US, a highly improbable scenario, they would have little reason to attempt to find one. Canadian observers have noted that, while it may seem unsavory to some, the country remains too far from Europe or Asia and has little choice but to remain engaged with its American neighbor – otherwise, they likely face isolation (Noble 2003). Mexico would seem to have more options for integration with the large Latin American contingent to its South. However, Mexico’s membership in NAFTA and its apparent decision to integrate with the more economically developed US has largely foreclosed this option. Indeed, Mexico has largely been ontologically excluded from such a course via Mercosur’s re-focus on “South American” rather than “Latin American” cooperation (Lima & Hirst 2006). It would seem that, regardless of differences over American global policy, NAFTA’s members view themselves as inextricably bound.

While geography obviously plays a substantial role, the presence of the US as the sole and supreme leader of the NAFTA security community creates a clear and stable set of relationships likely to endure for a long time. The United States possesses the power to protect its smaller North American partners, and has economic and social interests in doing so. The smaller powers have every incentive to continue to work with this source of protection, regardless of specific policy differences, as long as the US does not pose an existential threat. The lack of alternatives for all of the NAFTA states would seem to indicate a security community built to endure for the long haul.

The US-Japan Security Community

The US-Japan Security treaty first signed in 1951 in an effort to bolster the anti-Communist coalition in East Asia marked the beginning of a unique security relationship. In the

Second World War, the Empire of Japan had acquired a reputation for aggression and brutality through its behavior throughout the region. Indeed, in the United States, opinion data shows that the level of mistrust for the island nation had reached the point where 13% of the American public believed that the entire Japanese population should be exterminated (Schaller 1985: 3-4). Upon the final surrender of Japan after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it was quickly determined by the United States that the country that orchestrated Pearl Harbor should no longer be allowed to threaten the region. When Japan's postwar constitution of 1947 was written by American occupation authorities, an article was included banning the state from ever maintaining the implements of war. While the interpretation of this provision, known as Article IX, has been flexible enough for Japan to build and maintain a so-called Self-Defense Force (SDF) of largely immobile military assets, the state in essence entrusted its security to American stewardship. This relationship, while not commonly referred to as a security community in the extant literature, bears all the hallmarks of one: a prolonged absence of violent conflict, a rejection of military force as a tool of interstate relations, and provisions for the common defense against external enemies.

The US, in essence, became a proxy that would protect the interests of Japan abroad in exchange for a passive stance that would simultaneously serve as a barrier to Soviet expansion while not becoming a threat of its own right. In an effort to maintain this division of labor, the United States extended the protection of its so-called "nuclear umbrella" allowing Japan to declare itself a non-nuclear weapons state (Maeda 1995). This relationship worked very well during the entire course of the Cold War.

Japan would take the opportunity provided by American protection to redouble its efforts to rebuild its shattered economy. The government would be allowed to re-establish itself as a

trading economy within the American policed economic order. The enormous advantage of this protection gave the Japanese government every incentive it needed to maintain the unique security arrangement despite protests and pressures within the country for a reassertion of independence and sovereignty in security affairs. This orientation manifested itself in the government continuing to renew its security treaty with the United States despite popular opposition in 1960 and again against somewhat weaker opposition in 1970 (LaFeber 1997).

Even the American defeat in Vietnam did not serve to fundamentally change this relationship, though it did weaken it. After the US withdrew its forces from Vietnam, the Japanese SDF did begin to embark upon a serious re-evaluation of its formerly passive military stance via renewed investment in its rather small military budget. However, the changes instituted during this period did not represent a fundamental change of policy as the country acquired very little power projection capability and continued to demonstrate its intention to remain non-nuclear (Maeda 1995). The US-Japanese alliance managed to survive every major challenge thrown at it during the course of the Cold War without the fundamental dynamic of community changing.

While Japan perhaps had a sufficiently large economy to be considered a great power during the Cold War, its demonstrated lack of the traditional capability to project its material might denied it this designation. Since Japan did not attempt to protect its own interests abroad, it did not come into any conflict with the US over these interests. This allowed this relationship to continue on unhindered by the same kind of tensions the Americans experienced with their allies in Europe.

Upon the end of the Cold War, however, we can see evidence that this relationship beginning to change. While the Cold War relationship had been built upon a unique set of

mutually reinforcing incentives, the disappearance of the Soviet Union altered these calculations considerably for both states. The realities of East Asia had changed markedly after 1991. Without the obvious Soviet threat, American desires to maintain a heavy martial presence in the region have declined. Japan has slowly been re-assuming its place as a “normal” state with its formerly immobile SDF engaging in unprecedented deployments abroad in support of UN missions (such as Cambodia) and American efforts in the Middle East. Japan is also beginning to diversify its relationships on the Pacific Rim by attempting to replace its formerly bilateral arrangements with regional states with the beginnings of a more multilateral nature (Katzenstein and Okawara 2002/2003). In short, Japan is beginning to assert a new identity resembling that of a normal great power. If this transformation does take place, the future of this relationship is unlikely to resemble the past.

Conclusion: Whither Security Communities?

As I admitted at the onset of my empirical investigation, the conclusions that can be reached on my theoretical expectations of security community dissolution are constrained by the limitations of existing data. I have not been able to point to any clear cases of a security community imploding as a result of great power behavior. Also, each of my cases involving a great power in a security community involve the United States; a limitation for which I have no remedy. However, five of the six empirical cases I discussed can be considered “active.” In short, they have each failed to reach their final acts.

With the exception of the Cold War-era north Atlantic security community, which has passed into history, the other cases still face uncertain futures. I have, over the course of my five active case studies, outlined a series of predictions for the future of each security community. For the post-Cold War Atlantic, the ASEAN, and the Mercosur security communities, I portray uncertain futures. I predict that each of these communities will face inexorable pressure to rupture in the coming years. For the NAFTA community, I have predicted a positive and stable future. For the US-Japan relationship, I have predicted the conditional dissolution of this security community. As long as Japan continues on its track towards a normal great power status, this community will begin to experience the difficulties of all multi great power security communities and will begin to rupture. The progression of world events will serve as an experimental laboratory that will in time reveal the veracity of my framework.

If accurate, my theory poses a challenge to the constructivist argument that the international system is headed in a direction whereby violent interstate conflict will become the exception rather than the rule. If in fact single great power security communities are the only ones likely to be stable in the long term, then this dynamic will serve as a barrier to the formation of more globally observed non-violent norms. The hope that the community that has flourished in the north Atlantic can serve as a vision of the world's future would be, unfortunately, undermined. With great powers straining to maintain their non-violent relationships within security communities, it will be difficult for Wendt's islands of Kantian anarchy to merge into a new system-wide ethos.

Nevertheless, this study does not fully vindicate the accuracy of the realist perspective on the primacy of material capabilities in the evolution of international affairs. Realism, with its narrow focus on military alliances, does not take into account the role played by economic and

other regional interrelationships that can also serve to forge normative bonds. Although threats may give rise to security communities, they are not necessary for communities to continue on thriving and surviving as the NAFTA case continues to demonstrate. Moreover, security communities may take shape in the absence of a significant external existential threat altogether, as in the Mercosur case. While I have introduced the realist concept of great powers as a potentially crucial factor in the death of security communities, I have also reaffirmed the important role played by social environment in which these powers operate.

The potential vision of the future international system implied by my theory would seem to be a dire one. If single great power security communities will be the most stable, it would indicate that the world is destined to become divided into multiple tightly bound security communities each tied to their dominant great power. This would not signal a full return to old-fashioned multipolar power politics, however. It would continue to exhibit pockets of self-contained Kantian communities co-existing with other communities. These independent security communities would, in Wendt's terminology, then be linked in Lockean competition. In short, this would imply that security communities and their great powers might acquire the status as new dominant actors of international relations. With states coordinating their activities within their communities, differences in intra-community policy toward the external should diminish over time. In essence, this would lead to inter-community relations surpassing inter-state relations in importance and significance. The result would be nothing less than a complete redefinition of the primary actors of international politics.

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