

When security community meets balance of power: overlapping regional mechanisms of security governance

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Abstract. By now arguments about the varieties of international order abound in International Relations. These disputes include arguments about the security mechanisms, institutions, and practices that sustain international orders, including balance of power and alliances, hegemony, security regimes based on regional or global institutions, public, private, and hybrid security networks, as well as different kinds of security communities. The way these orders coexist across time and space, however, has not been adequately theorised. In this article we seek to show (A) that, while analytically and normatively distinct, radically different orders, and in particular the security systems of governance on which they are based (such as balance of power and security community), often coexist or overlap in political discourse and practice. (B) We will attempt to demonstrate that the overlap of security governance systems may have important theoretical and empirical consequences: First, theoretically our argument sees ‘balance of power’ and ‘security community’ not only as analytically distinct structures of security orders, but focuses on them specifically as mechanisms based on a distinct mixture of practices. Second, this move opens up the possibility of a complex (perhaps, as John Ruggie called it, a ‘multiperspectival’) vision of regional security governance. Third, our argument may be able to inform new empirical research on the overlap of several security governance systems and the practices on which they are based. Finally, our argument can affect how we think about the boundaries of regions: Beyond the traditional geographical/geopolitical notion of regional boundaries and the social or cognitive notion of boundaries defined with reference to identity, our focus on overlapping mechanisms conceives of a ‘practical’ notion of boundaries according to which regions’ boundaries are determined by the practices that constitute regions.

Introduction

By now arguments about the varieties of international order¹ abound in International Relations (IR). This contentious variety includes the security mechanisms, institutions, and practices that sustain international orders, including balance of power and alliances, hegemony, security regimes based on regional or global institutions, public, private, and hybrid security networks, as well as different kinds of security

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¹ By order we mean a pattern or arrangement of institutions and practices that advance a society’s common values, such as security, welfare, freedom, and equality. For a definition of social and international order see Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: MacMillan, 1977).

communities. While this demonstrates that we cannot assume one universal ordering principle or make essentialist distinctions between anarchic international and hierarchical domestic political orders,² it is remarkable that, to a large extent, the theoretical IR literature, following paradigmatic divides, has tended to treat varieties of international order as mutually exclusive. In some cases, a progressive order ‘ladder’ that political actors are supposed to climb up – beginning with balance of power and ending with security community or world government – has been suggested. In other cases, the variety of order has been theorised from a regional perspective. Even then, however, with a few exceptions, regional order has been conceived in exclusive terms. Our contribution to this volume is, first, the contention that, while analytically and normatively distinct, radically different orders, and in particular, the security systems of governance on which they are based (such as balance of power and security community), often coexist or overlap in political discourse and practice. Second, we aim to show that it is theoretically and empirically promising to make the overlap a key subject of research *in its own right*. This means going beyond *acknowledging* overlap in principle; it means understanding and explaining overlap and inquiring into empirical consequences for regional security governance.

We can approach the issue of overlap by asking: is the balance of power making a comeback in Europe? Just as a number of preeminent scholars in the field place serious doubts on the potential for generalising balance of power theory across time and space,³ balance of power thinking seems to resonate again (some might say, still) with European political practitioners: On 2 April, 2008, the French prime minister, François Fillon, was reported as having explained France’s (and Germany’s) reluctance to extend NATO membership invitations to Georgia and Ukraine at the NATO summit in Bucharest with the following words: ‘we are opposed to the entry of Georgia and Ukraine because we think that it is not a good answer to the balance of power within Europe and between Europe and Russia’.⁴ Analysts were quick to note that – beyond German and French tendencies to accommodate Russia, whether motivated by economic or less instrumental reasons – one ‘balance’ in question here could be seen as that between major European powers and the US.⁵ Another balance that is of concern to practitioners and analysts in this respect may be the balance between NATO countries and Russia.

Is the above instance indicative of a return to or continuation of competitive dynamics and a new French, German, or ‘European’ assertiveness? Or is the European security community⁶ so firmly institutionalised by now that it all but

² David Lake, ‘Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations’, *International Organization*, 50 (1996), pp. 1–33; Jack Donnelly, ‘Sovereign Inequalities and Hierarchy in Anarchy: American Power and International Society’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 12 (2006), pp. 139–70.

³ Stuart Kaufman, Richard Little and William C. Wohlforth (eds), *The Balance of Power in World History* (Houndmills, Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁴ Steven Lee Myers, ‘Bush Supports Ukraine’s Bid to Join NATO’, *New York Times*, 2 April 2008. URL (<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/02/world/europe/02prexy.html>), accessed 2 April 2008.

⁵ Ulrich Speck, ‘Back on Track? Germany and the Georgian and Ukrainian NATO Bids’, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 3 April 2008. URL (<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2008/04/3efa63ba-287b-4d84-b41b-8ad74dfca8ce.html>), accessed 19 April 2008.

⁶ Karl W. Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957); Emanuel

prevents the rearing of the head of Europe's balance of power past? Are instances of balance of power thinking, in other words, just anachronistic remnants from a bygone era without practical consequences in the mature European and transatlantic security community?

Questions with regard to the overlap and relationship between balance of power and security community are not only confined to Europe: For example, how do we square the hub-and-spoke system of American bilateral alliances in Asia and the realist, balance of power dynamics between the states in the region with what some see as an 'incipient' security community with ASEAN at its core?⁷ How do we explain the introduction of security-community practices to the Middle East in the early 1990s (the so called multilaterals) and attempts to construct a new regional identity in the Mediterranean (Samuel Huntington's sphere of contention between civilisations) involving both Christian European and Muslim and Jewish Middle Eastern states?⁸

Much effort has gone into making theoretical and conceptual arguments that come down squarely on one side or the other in each of the cases mentioned. Our starting point here is the contention that in fact it is reasonable to believe that *different mechanisms of security governance overlap* and that the security dynamics of a region are deeply affected by the overlap. From this it does not follow, however, that we must surrender all our theoretical efforts to overwhelming complexity. We might indeed follow John Ruggie in arguing that we still lack the vocabulary to describe dynamics in the (post-)modern system of states and 'multiperspectival', 'non-territorial' entities like the EU or security communities more generally, and we do not claim to invent this vocabulary here.⁹ But we will argue that we can begin to reflect critically on our current vocabulary by trying to conceptualise and understand this overlap.

There is an analytical and a practical-political/normative element to our exercise: The analytical goal is to notice and understand (conceptually and theoretically) the overlap of security mechanisms. The practical-political/normative challenge follows from the analytical in that the recognition of the coexistence and overlap between a variety of security orders and mechanisms begs the question of the possibility and the future of world order. Scholars and practitioners alike will have to grapple with the

Adler and Michael N. Barnett (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁷ Amitav Acharya and See Seng Tan, 'Betwixt Balance and Community: America, ASEAN, and the Security of Southeast Asia', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 6 (2006), pp. 37–59; G. John Ikenberry and Jitsuo Tsuchiyama, 'Between Balance of Power and Community: The Future of Multilateral Security Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 2 (2002), pp. 69–94; Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London; New York: Routledge, 2001); Ralf Emmers, *Cooperative Security and the Balance of Power in ASEAN and the ARF* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003).

⁸ Emanuel Adler, F. Bicchieri, B. Crawford and R. Del Sarto (eds), *The Convergence of Civilizations: Constructing a Mediterranean Region* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

⁹ John G. Ruggie, 'Territoriality and Beyond. Problematizing Modernity in International-Relations', *International Organization*, 47 (1993), pp. 139–74. An indication of the lack of vocabulary with regard to security mechanisms is the creation of notions like 'soft' balancing or 'muffled and channeled' balancing which describe qualitatively different dynamics from traditional balancing. For the former see Robert A. Pape, 'Soft Balancing against the United States', *International Security*, 30 (2005), pp. 7–45. For the latter Daniel Deudney, *Bounding Power. Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 50.

practical-political and normative questions for years to come. In this article, however, we limit ourselves to the analytical task.

In short, we seek to make four main contributions: First, theoretically our argument sees ‘balance of power’ and ‘security community’ not only as analytically distinct security orders but also focuses on them specifically as *mechanisms* based on a distinct mixture of practices. Second, this move opens up the possibility of a ‘multiperspectival’ vision of regional security governance and a conceptualisation of overlap. Third, our argument can help inform and enhance empirical research. For example, by focusing on the overlap of different kinds of security governance systems, and the practices that go with them, we may be able to get a better idea of the structural determinants of security policies, of whether, for example, a region may find itself in a transition between systems of security governance. Finally, our argument on overlapping mechanisms has an impact on how we think about the boundaries of regions: The traditional geographical/geopolitical notion of (regional) boundaries defines them with reference to location (answering the question ‘where are we/they?’); the social or cognitive notion of boundaries defines them with reference to identity (answering the question ‘who are we/they?’); the ‘practical’ notion of boundaries which we elaborate on here with our focus on overlapping mechanisms delineates them with reference to practices (answering the questions ‘what do we/they do and how do we/they do it?’).

Our chapter is structured as follows: We first clarify our understanding of overlap and of mechanisms of security governance and establish ‘balance of power’ and ‘security community’ as two distinct mechanisms based on different sets of practices. While the theoretical and conceptual literature has so far predominantly focused on the broad, ideal-typical, *variety* of security orders, the empirical literature on (regional) security, on the other hand, in effect (explicitly or implicitly) sometimes highlights *overlap*. We attempt to close this gap. We thus, second, conceptualise overlap of security mechanisms along four dimensions (temporal, functional, spatial, and relational). We provide some ideas as to how to understand overlap theoretically and give empirical illustrations along the way that show the effect of the overlap on regional dynamics. In addition, we stress the point that defining regions by the practices states use adds an important conceptual layer to our understanding of the nature of regions. Finally, we close with some thoughts on the added value of our conceptualisation for further research.

Overlap

In general terms, overlap means ‘occupying the same area in part’ or to ‘have something in common with’.¹⁰ Thus, rather than just denoting variety or coexistence, the notion of overlap of security systems, and of their related mechanisms and practices, highlights that actors’ dispositions and expectations may respond simultaneously to two distinct systems of rule, two different ways of conceiving power, two sets of practices – which may be distinguished, not only analytically, but also

¹⁰ See Merriam-Webster, (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/overlap>), accessed 30 April 2008.

normatively – and to two different ways of imagining space. Thus, for example, security dispositions and expectations, perhaps also security strategies in one specific region may originate and derive their meaning from different and even competing sets of security practices, mechanisms, rules, and processes. Some security practices, for example alliances and coalitions of the willing, may derive from the concept of balancing power, conceived as state capabilities and resources, which should be ‘compared’ and ‘weighted’ against the material capabilities and resources of other states. Yet simultaneously, other security practices may derive from conceiving a specific region as a mature or tightly-coupled security community where power is understood to create a core of strength which in fact may attract non-members of the community to join. Conceived this way, power refers not only to material but also to symbolic resources, for example normative resources that can not only serve regional objectives but also stabilise and pacify the extra-regional ‘near abroad’. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a good example of overlap: Having started as an alliance within a bipolar balance of power system between the US and the Soviet Union and their respective allies, it developed into the institutional representation of a security community in the North Atlantic area in the 1990s without abandoning its deterrent and balance of power functions and capabilities.

Our concern with *overlapping* systems of governance and their related mechanisms and practices takes us beyond what we might call the predominant ‘spectrum’ or ‘worlds’ view of security orders, which comes in three forms: First, in their seminal work on regional security complexes, Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, for example, devise a ‘spectrum’ that runs ‘from conflict formation through security regime to security community’ based on *patterns of amity and enmity*.¹¹ Second, David Lake suggests a continuum of security relations (alliance, protectorate, informal empire, empire) based on the degree of *anarchy/hierarchy*.¹² And, third, some dichotomise orders as *zones of peace vs zones of turmoil/war* or ‘two worlds’ (with a ‘core’ functioning according to the liberal logic and the ‘periphery’ functioning according to the realist logic).¹³ These important classificatory approaches to regional orders enable ideal-typical comparisons with reference to empirical and theoretical questions such as: how do specific orders emerge, why do we see certain orders in some regions but not in others, what effects do they have on war and peace?¹⁴

There are two main problems with the ‘spectrum’ or ‘worlds’ view, however: First, it leads to an implicit, maybe initially fruitful but ultimately limiting and misguided division of labour where realists deal with the realm of conflict while liberals and constructivists try to understand the realm of cooperation. With regard to Asia Andrew Hurrell notes, however, that ‘the most important lessons of the past decade of regionalist debates have been . . . that it is not helpful to draw an overly sharp

¹¹ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers. The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 53f.

¹² Lake, ‘Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations’.

¹³ Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order: Zones of Peace, Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham: Chatham House, 1993); Arie M. Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace in the Third World. South America and West Africa in Comparative Perspective* (New York: SUNY Press, 1998); James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, ‘A Tale of Two Worlds: Core and Periphery in the Post-Cold War Era’, *International Organization*, 46 (1992), pp. 467–91.

¹⁴ Etel Solingen, *Regional Orders at Century’s Dawn: Global and Domestic Influences on Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Etel Solingen, ‘Pax Asiatia versus Bella Levantina: The Foundations of War and Peace in East Asia and the Middle East’, *American Political Science Review*, 101 (2007), pp. 757–80.

distinction between power-based accounts of the region on the one hand and institutional and identity-based accounts on the other'.¹⁵ Second, while transitional movements, and even overlap, between orders are acknowledged in abstract and/or empirical terms,¹⁶ they do not enter the theoretical frameworks: Patrick Morgan, for example, explicitly suggests a transitional movement from balance of power to pluralistic security community (*via the particular route* of great power concert and collective security).¹⁷ He treats security orders 'as rungs on a ladder up which regional security complexes may climb as they pursue security management'.¹⁸ Neither the 'ladder up' nor the arrangement of the 'rungs' nor the 'climb' that regional security complexes might pursue are adequately theorised: Can they skip a rung, go up *and* down the ladder, or be at different places of the ladder at the same time? In our conceptualisation below, therefore, we try to marry insights from typologies of systems of security governance to theoretical arguments in order to make the step from ideal-typical *variety* of orders to *overlap* of systems and their underlying mechanisms and practices.

Security governance

We define security governance as a system of rule conceived by individual and corporate actors aiming at coordinating, managing, and regulating their collective existence in response to threats to their physical and ontological security. This system of rule relies primarily on the political authority of agreed-upon norms, practices, and institutions, as well as on the identities, rationalities, technologies, and spatial forms, around and across which international and transnational security activity takes place. In this article we will focus mostly on security practices and on the mechanisms these practices derive from.

Conceptually, realist scholars explain what they consider to be a very thin system of international security governance by means of power, hegemony, empire, or some combination thereof. Neo-liberal scholars usually refer to rationally designed functional, efficiency-building institutions, which, while created and dominated by states, sometimes have unintended consequences and lives of their own. Constructivist scholars explain the evolution of systems of rule in international security as a function of the role of ideas, especially norms, and learning, socialisation, and persuasion processes. Postmodern scholars, in turn, suggest scripts of power-based discursive practices and remote control systems, which, emanating from power/knowledge structures, create the reality actors perceive and act upon. Our theoretical constructivist approach conceives the possibility that security governance empirically embodies a combination of practices, some of which are thought to be 'realist', others

¹⁵ Andrew Hurrell, 'One World? Many Worlds? The Place of Regions in the Study of International Society', *International Affairs*, 83 (2007), pp. 127–46 at p. 143f.

¹⁶ Ikenberry and Tsuchiyama, 'Between Balance of Power and Community: The Future of Multilateral Security Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific'; Patrick M. Morgan, 'NATO and European Security: The Creative Use of an International Organization', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 26 (2003), pp. 49–74; David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan (eds), *Regional Orders. Building Security in a New World* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

¹⁷ Patrick M. Morgan, 'Regional Security Complexes and Regional Orders', in Lake and Morgan (eds), *Regional Orders. Building Security in a New World*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

which are thought to be ‘constructivist’, etc. From this perspective, realism, for example, should not have a monopoly on conceiving power and security.

A complicating factor with regard to the notion of security governance is that, while the concept is used both in domestic and international politics, it does not necessarily point to the same issues: Whereas in domestic politics it describes a movement ‘from government to governance’ – suggesting a process of fragmentation and ‘hollowing out of the state’¹⁹ – in international politics, the term can be seen to have emerged describing the move from (realist) ‘anarchy’ to ‘governance.’ The overlap between several systems of governance, however, shows that while overlap partly entails understanding the transition or evolution of a (traditionally ‘realist’, ‘anarchical’) balance of power system to a security community system of governance, or vice versa, there are other ways of conceiving overlap, such as functional and relational. Moreover, we follow the English School in taking the balance of power as an institution, thus as reflecting a minimal yet socially and reflexively based security governance system.²⁰ And we conceive of security community as a security system of governance in which states are not entirely hollowed out and may play important roles in keeping expectations of peaceful change dependable. Our understanding of (security) governance thus makes no strong claims regarding a hollowing out of the state (through subnational or transnational public and private actors) or a move away from anarchy towards world government (through the establishment of supranational authority). What primarily concerns us here is governance as an order-creating mechanism.

‘Balance of power’ and ‘security community’ as mechanisms of security governance

The balance of power and security community are two distinct mechanisms of security governance. They rest on different notions of power, different ideas on the role of war in creating order, and different views on alliances/alignments. Derived from this are different repertoires of practices.

Mechanisms of security governance are a more or less clearly delineated set of rules, norms, practices, and institutions that coordinate security relations between actors in the international system. The relationship between the actors and the rules and norms that underlie particular mechanisms of security governance is mutually constitutive and constantly re-enacted: Sovereign entities (states, city states) may through their practices constitute the mechanism of the balance of power; this mechanism at the same time constitutes these entities in a particular relationship to one another (one based on sovereign independence and deterrence).

Proposing the balance of power and security community as *mechanisms* of security governance thus differs (1) from seeing balance of power and security community only as alternative structural or systemic *outcomes* of state interaction and (2) from seeing them first and foremost as alternative analytical descriptors of particular unit-level state *policies* or *behaviour*. As *mechanisms* and sets of practices, balance of power and security community become represented in policies, determine outcomes,

¹⁹ R. A. W. Rhodes, ‘The New Governance: Governing without Government’, *Political Studies*, 44 (1996), pp. 652–67.

²⁰ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*.

and connect between them. At the unit level, thus, actors can and do draw on practices from different mechanisms. The systemic outcomes of state interaction might not add up to a balance of power or security community system in a particular region.

Practices are ‘competent performances’ that are recognised as such.²¹ The requirement of inter-subjective recognition makes practices ‘social’ activities endowed with meaning.²² Practices are thus not located outside of or apart from discourse.²³ The practice of state investment in military technology is endowed with meaning through a discourse (about a state’s foreign policy goals and the role of the military, for example) *and* through other practices: joint military exercises or the pooling of military resources under a joint command give the investment a different meaning than amassing troops at a state’s border, for example. At the same time, therefore, practices ‘objectify’ meaning and discourse.²⁴ What matters primarily is not the presence or absence of one particular practice (as is often suggested by the typological approaches to the variety of security orders), but the broader *repertoire* or *constellation of practices*. The diplomatic practice under the ever-present *possibility* of the use of force differs from diplomacy and ‘consultation’²⁵ in a security community with dependable expectations of peaceful change.²⁶ Similarly, ‘confidence building is vastly different in a traditional international system than in an emerging pluralistic security community – in one it eases tensions to facilitate modest cooperation among states that remain insecure, while in the latter it embodies an emerging sense of community and the disappearance of insecurity’.²⁷

Balance of power mechanism and repertoire of practices

Waltz’s claim that ‘if there is any distinctively political theory of international politics, balance-of-power theory is it’²⁸ notwithstanding, the meaning of the *balance of power* remains contested and elastic as a theoretical concept and in the political discourse. It can denote an equilibrium or a particular distribution of power, it can describe a particular policy towards arriving at such a distribution, it can call for such a policy, or it can make analytical and theoretical claims as to the occurrence of

²¹ Emanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot, ‘The Practice Turn in International Relations: Introduction and Framework’. Paper presented at the Conference on ‘The Practice Turn in International Relations’, Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto, 21–22 November 2008.

²² Vincent Pouliot, ‘The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities’, *International Organization*, 62 (2008), pp. 257–88; Emanuel Adler, *Communitarian International Relations: The Epistemic Foundations of International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

²³ Iver B. Neumann, ‘Returning Practice to the Linguistic Turn: The Case of Diplomacy’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 31 (2002), pp. 627–51.

²⁴ Emanuel Adler, ‘The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO’s Post-Cold War Transformation’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 14 (2008), pp. 195–230.

²⁵ On the ‘norm of consultation’ in the transatlantic security community, see Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

²⁶ Pouliot, ‘The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities’, p. 280.

²⁷ Morgan, ‘NATO and European Security: The Creative Use of an International Organization’, p. 53.

²⁸ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p. 117.

balances of power in the international system.²⁹ The core analytical statement and causal claim of the Waltzian ‘systemic’ view of balance of power theory is that ‘hegemonies do not form in multistate systems because perceived threats of hegemony over the system generate balancing behaviour by other leading states in the system’.³⁰

Our approach here is to probe into the specific practices that underlie the balance of power understood as a mechanism in order to juxtapose it with the mechanism of security community. The balance of power mechanism of security governance rests on the notion of the international system as being composed of competing centres of power that are arranged according to their relative capabilities and are, in the absence of an overarching authority, locked into the security dilemma³¹ which might generate prisoner-dilemma dynamics of arms races and wars.

The notion of power that underlies the balance of power mechanism is predominantly that of material and coercive power, denoting how ‘one state uses its material resources to compel another state to do something it does not want to do’.³² Material power is thus inherently threatening.³³

The balance of power mechanism of security governance is predicated on the availability of war (with the exception of system-wide war) as an order-sustaining or creating tool.³⁴ The classic tradition of balance of power thinking advocates ‘limited’ war from a practical, but also from a very pronounced moral standpoint: as a civilisational step beyond the ‘religious’ wars of the Middle Ages.³⁵ Particularly since the technological and political developments of modern mass society and the advent of the nuclear age gave war a new apocalyptic meaning, this idea of an order-sustaining/creating limited war has lost adherents. It remains, however, theoretically part of the balance of power mechanism of security governance.

In the context of the balance of power mechanism inter-state alliances are traditionally understood as formal though inherently unstable agreements between states for mutual support in case of war.³⁶ Morgenthau describes alliances as ‘[t]he historically most important manifestation of the balance of power’.³⁷ They are a matter of expediency, not principle. They are a response to the ‘external’ security dilemma (without being able to resolve it completely), yet also create an ‘internal’

²⁹ Ernst B. Haas, ‘The Balance of Power as a Guide to Policy-Making’, *The Journal of Politics*, 15 (1953), pp. 370–98; Kaufman, Little and Wohlforth (eds), *The Balance of Power in World History*.

³⁰ Jack Levy cited in Kaufman, Little and Wohlforth (eds), *The Balance of Power in World History*, p. 3.

³¹ Robert Jervis, ‘Cooperation under the Security Dilemma’, *World Politics*, 30 (1978), pp. 167–214; John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1951).

³² Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, ‘Power in International Politics’, *International Organization*, 59 (2005), pp. 39–75 at p. 40.

³³ For a refinement of balance of power into balance of threat theory, see Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

³⁴ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*.

³⁵ Per Maurseth, ‘Balance-of-Power Thinking From the Renaissance to the French Revolution’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 1 (1964), pp. 120–36. Especially Carl Schmitt has made arguments to that effect. See Louiza Odysseos and Fabio Petito (eds), *The International Political Thought of Carl Schmitt: Terror, Liberal War and the Crisis of Global Order* (London: Routledge, 2007).

³⁶ For a broader (almost all-encompassing) definition of an alliance as the ‘formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states’, see Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 1, fn. 1.

³⁷ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948), p. 197.

dilemma between the ‘fear of abandonment’ by allies (because of the existence of alliance alternatives) and ‘fear of entrapment’ (being dragged into a war over interests of the ally that one does not share).³⁸ Thus while alliance formation is an inherent practice of the balance of power mechanism of security governance, in the predominant view it does not fundamentally change the competitive power dynamics.

In general, a fully articulated notion of the balance of power owes its existence to the notions of a mechanical balance, of equilibrium and homeostasis. Metaphorically and historically speaking, however, we can – with Richard Little – distinguish between an adversarial dynamic of the balance of power (based on the image of weighing scales) and an associational dynamic (based on the image of an arch).³⁹ In contrast to the former, the latter makes room for the systematic management of great power relations based on notions of common interest and a ‘just equilibrium’. The main historical practice at the heart of the associational balance of power mechanism were major peace conferences (Utrecht 1713 onwards) that tried to settle territorial disputes between the great powers.

The pattern of behaviour associated with the adversarial balance of power perspective is balancing and/or bandwagoning.⁴⁰ As shown by the debate about whether or not states (will) balance against American power,⁴¹ however, it is not clear what balancing means and which ‘competent performances’ are actually recognised as balancing?⁴² ‘Hard’ balancing practices by states are traditionally understood as the aggregation of capabilities through alliance formation (‘external balancing’) or the investment in a state’s own capabilities (‘internal balancing’) aimed at checking a potential hegemon and/or threat.⁴³ The problem with this view is that the attribution of motives (and the timing⁴⁴) is crucial here, since alliance formation and investment in capabilities are potentially ubiquitous practices in international relations. In the end practices become *balancing* practices through the mutual, often implicit and habitual ascription of motives by the actors involved and through the constellation of practices in which they are embedded.⁴⁵

Examples of specific practices that are usually seen to undergird the balance of power mechanism are deterrence, military planning, which builds on ‘worst-case scenario’ development and procurement, as well as institutions that spend resources on the careful monitoring of the distribution of military capabilities. The balance of power mechanism creates order in the international system not through trust but

³⁸ Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

³⁹ Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 66–8.

⁴⁰ Our focus on patterns of behaviour and the underlying practices of the balance of power *mechanism* differs from the Waltzian systemic view of the balance of power as occurring automatically as a by-product of state behaviour. We thank an anonymous reviewer for encouraging us to clarify this point.

⁴¹ G. John Ikenberry (ed.), *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz and Michael Fortmann (eds), *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004).

⁴² Jack Levy in fact describes this as the Achilles heel of balance of power theory. See Jack S. Levy, ‘Balances and Balancing: Concepts, Propositions, and Research Design’, in John A. Vasquez and Colin Elman (eds), *Realism and the Balancing of Power. A New Debate* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003).

⁴³ See, for example, Kaufman, Little and Wohlforth (eds), *The Balance of Power in World History*, p. 9f.

⁴⁴ Levy, ‘Balances and Balancing: Concepts, Propositions, and Research Design’.

⁴⁵ We thank Vincent Pouliot for helping us see this point more clearly.

through ‘rational’ mistrust, that is the rational calculation against ‘taking risks on the behavior of others’.⁴⁶ Diplomacy may play an important role, but as Pouliot argues, whereas in security communities actors argue with diplomacy, in the balance of power they argue about diplomacy.⁴⁷

For some, ‘balancing requires that states target their military hardware at each other in preparation for a potential war’.⁴⁸ Others see the balance of power mechanism at work not only through ‘hard’ but also through ‘soft’ balancing,⁴⁹ defined as the use of ‘nonmilitary tools to delay, frustrate, and undermine’ unilateral policies of the superpower; specifically through the use of international institutions, economic statecraft, and diplomatic arrangements.⁵⁰ Including soft balancing practices in the repertoire of the balance of power mechanism, however, is contested because of the difficulty of distinguishing it from routine policy disputes.⁵¹ Since soft balancing denotes arguments among allies *within a political/institutional structure* about substantive and procedural questions concerning the alliance, it could be better construed as a practice in an associational balance of power or a security community; it is a practice that may be seen as indicative of the overlap we are describing here.

Security community mechanism and repertoire of practices

The security community framework has its roots in the system-level argument that there need not be one universal international order that defines state interaction, but that there might exist different ordering principles across space and time. That is, not all states populate the same international order of anarchic inter-state relations based on self-help and competitive balancing behaviour of states in the face of the threat of war. In their refinement of Karl Deutsch’s original framework, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett defined a security community as ‘a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change’ – where peaceful change means ‘neither the expectation of nor the preparation for organized violence as a means to settle interstate disputes’.⁵² Thus, security communities do not imply the absence of interstate disputes. The specific difference is rather the systematically peaceful resolution of these disputes. In a fundamental way a security community is the academic expression for the ‘social fact of interstate peace’⁵³ and the mechanisms that sustain dependable expectations of peaceful change.

⁴⁶ Aaron M. Hoffman, ‘A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 8 (2002), pp. 375–401.

⁴⁷ Pouliot, ‘The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities’.

⁴⁸ Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 9.

⁴⁹ Pape, ‘Soft Balancing against the United States’; Paul, Wirtz and Fortmann (eds), *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century*; Charles A. Kupchan, ‘The Atlantic Order in Transition: The Nature of Change in U.S.–European Relations’, in Jeffrey Anderson, G. John Ikenberry and Thomas Risse (eds), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).

⁵⁰ Pape, ‘Soft Balancing against the United States’, p. 10.

⁵¹ Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, ‘Hard Times for Soft Balancing’, *International Security*, 30 (2005), pp. 72–108; Keir A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, ‘Waiting for Balancing. Why the World Is Not Pushing Back’, *International Security*, 30 (2005), pp. 109–39.

⁵² Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*, pp. 30, 34.

⁵³ Vincent Pouliot, ‘“Subjectivism”: Toward a Constructivist Methodology’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 51 (2007), pp. 359–84 at p. 375.

Initially, the research programme focused on security communities as outcome: The main theoretical and empirical concern was explaining variance in the emergence of security communities. Distinctions between loosely and tightly-coupled pluralistic security communities, phases of emergence (nascent, ascendant, mature) and a three-tiered framework of precipitating conditions, conducive factors, and necessary conditions for dependable expectations of peaceful change to develop provided a heuristic framework applicable to a range of cases and regions.⁵⁴ More recently (not least of all triggered by developments in the transatlantic security community), questions about the inner dynamics,⁵⁵ the maintenance and decay or breakdown of security communities have come to the fore.⁵⁶

Seeing 'security community' as a mechanism of security governance can inform this more recent focus by providing a bridge to the earlier concerns about the overall outcome of dependable expectations of peaceful change: The maintenance as well as decay or breakdown of a security community is rooted in the mechanisms and practices that lie at the heart of dependable expectations of peaceful change.

The basic notion that underlies the security community mechanism is the organisation of interstate relations in concentric circles rather than competing centres of power.⁵⁷ This 'mental geography' is a clear depiction of the key point that power – in its various forms – is not transcended in a security community. But it is enacted differently: If the security community mechanism is at work, material power does not trigger balancing behavior; in fact it can have the opposite effect and 'attract'.⁵⁸ Power in security communities is not necessarily benign, however: Understood as the 'authority to determine shared meaning that constitutes practices . . . and the conditions [of] . . . access to the community' and the 'ability to nudge and occasionally coerce others to maintain a collective stance',⁵⁹ the power politics of identity replaces the threat or deployment of physical force with control of

⁵⁴ Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*.

⁵⁵ For an early concern with security community dynamics in the Atlantic alliance, see Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy*.

⁵⁶ Janice Bially Mattern, *Ordering International Politics. Identity, Crisis, and Representational Force* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Harald Mueller, 'A Theory of Decay of Security Communities with an Application to the Present State of the Atlantic Alliance'. Working Paper, Institute of European Studies, University of California, Berkeley (2006). URL (<http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1069&context=ies>), accessed 2 May 2008; Corneliu Bjola and Markus Kornprobst, 'Security communities and the habitus of restraint: Germany and the United States on Iraq', *Review of International Studies*, 33 (2007), pp. 285–305; Corneliu Bjola, 'Public Spheres and Legitimacy: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Conflict within Security Communities', Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Association, Vancouver, 4 June 2008; Thomas Risse, 'The Crisis of the Transatlantic Community'. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, 2 September 2004.

⁵⁷ Ole Wæver, 'Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity in the West European Non-War Community', in Emanuel Adler and Michael N. Barnett (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁵⁸ Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*. The power of attraction is not the same as bandwagoning: the latter is traditionally reserved for aligning with a rising power that presents a potential security threat. Schweller's redefinition of bandwagoning as a strategy driven by the 'opportunity for gain' is conceptually tied to alignment decisions in conflictual situations or wars. (Randall L. Schweller, 'Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In', *International Security*, 19 (1994), pp. 72–107.) Were we to decouple it from that, it would simply denote an interest-based strategy by states, which would render it too broad. Thus the power of attraction (in non-war, security community situations) remains distinct from 'bandwagoning for profit'. Both concepts can accommodate interest-based behaviour, though. The EU's power of attraction very much works through material factors (as well as ideational).

⁵⁹ Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*, p. 39.

dispositions and practices, which can have very tangible, material consequences. The threat of physical force may also be replaced by the threat of ‘representational force’ in security communities, i.e. by coercing states back into a ‘we-feeling’ through a narrative threat to their identity.⁶⁰

While power is not absent in a security community, war as an option of managing interstate relations is. A necessary, if not sufficient, condition for the security community mechanism is the absence of war between states in a security community. War thus signals the breakdown of the community. On the other hand, some scholars juxtapose the *internal* working of the security community mechanism (the acceptance of non-violent conflict resolution) with the *external* dynamic of balance of power where violent conflict remains a possibility.⁶¹ Yet by ‘overcoming the old Hobbesian world of wars . . . by creating a set of political arrangements that simply could not function according to the old-style power-political logic of traditional nation-states’,⁶² security communities do not simply fall back into balance of power dynamics externally, but also transform the security dynamics on their periphery.⁶³ In the context of the security community mechanism, alliances or alignments are rooted in mutual trust and collective identity (even if they might have been a matter of expediency in their origins); this quells the internal and external security dilemma for states within a security community. Yet this does not mean the end of conflict and bargaining over substantive or institutional questions; nor does it imply that the collective identity of the community is free of contestation.

Based on these alternative notions of power, war, and alliances/alignments, we can delineate a repertoire of practices that sustain the security community mechanism and are sustained by it in return.

First, dependable expectations of peaceful change are based on the practice of self-restraint: the abstention from the use of force.⁶⁴ Historically, self-restraint has arguably played an important role in balance of power thinking as well: To Bolingbroke ‘the essential elements in the balance of power doctrine [were] restraint and moderation – restraint in entering into armed conflicts, moderation in the formulation and pursuit of war aims’.⁶⁵ Yet, in now standard neorealist balance of power theory, restraint and moderation (in the name of stability or peace, for

⁶⁰ Janice Bially Mattern, ‘Taking Identity Seriously’, *Cooperation and Conflict*, 35 (2000), pp. 299–308 at p. 303. Such a threat was successfully employed in the Anglo-American security community during the Suez Crisis in 1956, and it worked according to Bially Mattern because large and important parts of both America’s and Britain’s narratives about their own identity were dependent upon the narrative of a joint Anglo-American international identity – ‘preserving the Self meant sustaining the narrative of the Special Relationship’. Bially Mattern, *Ordering International Politics. Identity, Crisis, and Representational Force*, p. 20.

⁶¹ M. J. Reese, ‘Destructive Double Standards: Great Powers and the Security Community Paradox’. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, San Diego, 22–25 March 2006.

⁶² Hurrell, ‘One World? Many Worlds? The Place of Regions in the Study of International Society’, p. 139.

⁶³ Alex J. Bellamy, *Security Communities and their Neighbours: Regional Fortresses or Global Integrators?* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Adler, ‘The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO’s Post-Cold War Transformation’; Emanuel Adler, ‘Condition(s) of Peace’, *Review of International Studies*, 24 (1998), pp. 165–91.

⁶⁴ Adler, ‘The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO’s Post-Cold War Transformation’.

⁶⁵ Cited in Maurseth, ‘Balance-of-Power Thinking From the Renaissance to the French Revolution’, p. 124.

example) are not political practices pursued by state leaders; restraint and moderation might occur, but only as the ‘by-products of the pursuit of narrow self-interest’.⁶⁶ As part of the security community mechanism, however, ‘self-restraint is not (only) a political choice for the moment, nor is it just a habit – even though it might start out like that – it is a disposition’.⁶⁷

Second, actors that constitute security communities align consciousness in the direction of common enterprises, projects, and partnerships, thus turning security community into the day-to-day practice of peace. Third, ‘cooperative security,’ which is indivisible and comprehensive is the ‘natural’ security practice of security communities. Fourth, diplomacy is the ‘normal’ or ‘natural’ practice, to the exclusion of violent ones,⁶⁸ and ‘norms of consultation’⁶⁹ and multilateral decision-making practices undergird the security community mechanism. They institutionalise reassurance as opposed to deterrence.

Fifth, the mechanism of security community includes a disposition towards spreading the community outward through explicit or implicit practices of socialisation or teaching.⁷⁰ These may include the creation of partnerships, transnational security dialogues, or the constitution of regions around a focal point, for example, the Mediterranean or Baltic Seas. Widening the community that practices peace may follow a ‘logic of securitization’ where sustaining the security mechanism is predicated on its spread (through formal or informal inclusion of the periphery). These practices may give security communities an ‘empire-like quality’.⁷¹

Finally, more specific practices would include changes in military planning and the implementation of confidence building measures (military cooperation, joint planning and exercises, intelligence exchanges, revision of army doctrines from traditional war-fighting to post-conflict reconstruction), policy coordination, and unfortified borders.⁷²

Conceptualising overlap of security mechanisms

There are four broad ways of thinking about security mechanism overlap: (1) temporal/evolutionary; (2) functional; (3) spatial; and (4) relational. We briefly elaborate on each in turn and note which theoretical mechanisms help us make the step from variety to overlap, that is, why and when we see security mechanisms overlap in each dimension.

⁶⁶ Robert Jervis, ‘A Political Science Perspective on the Balance of Power and the Concert’, *American Historical Review*, 97 (1992), pp. 716–724 at p. 717.

⁶⁷ Adler, ‘The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO’s Post-Cold War Transformation’.

⁶⁸ Pouliot, ‘The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities’.

⁶⁹ Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy*.

⁷⁰ Alexandra Ghenciu, *NATO in the ‘New Europe’: The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

⁷¹ Wæver, ‘Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity in the West European Non-War Community’; Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁷² Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*.

Notions of temporal/evolutionary variety and overlap

Security orders may vary across time: For example, whereas 18th and 19th century Europe is seen to have been dominated by balance of power and great power concert mechanisms, respectively,⁷³ today's Europe is usually seen to be governed through security community mechanisms.⁷⁴

What makes a 'variety' of security mechanisms turn into 'overlap' across time is the notion that change in (international) politics, even when discontinuous, is a process through which the past and the future intersect. Thus, one set of institutions, mechanisms, norms or ideas does not fully replace another in an instant; rather, they coexist. Old practices and mechanisms may still have not disappeared, but the future really has not entirely set in; new practices and mechanisms may still be experimented with, and may only be partly institutionalised. Theories that focus on institutionalisation, socialisation, learning and 'teaching' in international relations⁷⁵ implicitly highlight this temporal/evolutionary dimension of change. Yet, in the end, their focus is often on an unambiguous outcome, namely on the success or failure of socialisation, learning or teaching, and not on the temporal overlap. Inquiring into the often slow, ongoing, incomplete and idiosyncratic nature of institutionalisation, socialisation or learning processes could help us explain temporal/evolutionary overlap: 'People learn . . . new habits [and practices] slowly, as background conditions change'.⁷⁶ And they might learn different lessons and at variable pace. 'Mind-sets [and practices] may outlast the conditions that gave rise to them'.⁷⁷

Temporal overlap can be seen (1) in the process that brought the Cold War to an end and (2) in NATO's transformation towards cooperative security in the 1990s: The 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the Helsinki Final Act in retrospect can be seen as key elements in delegitimising Soviet domination in Eastern Europe. CSCE's community-building practices, including confidence-building measures, its promotion of human rights, and notions of European security being comprehensive, indivisible, and cooperative, empowered groups within Eastern and Central Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. CSCE's practices began to change the international order between 1975 and 1989 when the balance of power was still 'the only game in town'. When the Soviet empire

⁷³ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

⁷⁴ Wæver, 'Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity in the West European Non-War Community'; Adler, 'Condition(s) of Peace'; Adler, Bicchì, Crawford and Del Sarto (eds), *The Convergence of Civilizations: Constructing a Mediterranean Region*.

⁷⁵ Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework', *International Organization*, 59 (2005), pp. 801–26; Gheciu, *NATO in the 'New Europe': The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War*; Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Treating International Institutions as Social Environments', *International Studies Quarterly*, 45 (2001), pp. 487–515; Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Conclusions and Extensions: Toward Mid-Range Theorizing and Beyond Europe', *International Organization*, 59 (2005), pp. 1013–44.

⁷⁶ Adler, *Communitarian International Relations: The Epistemic Foundations of International Relations*, p. 215.

⁷⁷ Donald K. Emmerson, 'What Do the Blind-Sided See? Reapproaching Regionalism in Southeast Asia', *The Pacific Review*, 18 (2005), pp. 1–21 at p. 16.

finally crumbled, security-community practices were adopted by NATO,⁷⁸ and for at least half a decade, also by Russia.⁷⁹

Without shedding its defence alliance identity, NATO steadily moved into cooperative security in the 1990s. It partly evolved into a security-community-building institution.⁸⁰ Ciută notes the initial tension created by NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme for the still existing self-image of NATO as a military alliance: Such an alliance 'does not "normally" do cooperative partnerships'.⁸¹ Adler, in turn, highlights the limited experience of NATO leaders with cooperative security as opposed to balance of power practices.⁸² The enlargement policy NATO developed in the 1990s toward Eastern and Central Europe, while perhaps originally aimed at strengthening the Alliance's membership with former adversaries (a balance of power move par excellence), did consist of practices that, together with NATO's burgeoning security-community-building culture about promoting democracy and human rights in the East, did more than help ensure NATO's own post-Cold War institutional survival; these practices and this culture also supported the alliance's transformation into a security community-building institution.

Balance of power discourses and maybe even practices, however, did not disappear. They may be reappearing in the West's relations with Russia, which went back on its commitment to democratise, and with the Mediterranean area and the Middle East, where security-community practices and mechanisms encountered strong resistance. The return to or continued relevance of balance of power thinking and how it plays itself out in practice in each of these cases may be seen to be conditioned by the strength or weakness of the alternative security community mechanism (and vice versa): This is why even the more pessimistic accounts of the future of the transatlantic alliance do not expect a return to military balancing. Temporal overlap is thus never fully a return to the past since it occurs under present conditions.

If adherence to different security mechanisms/practices is rooted in experience during (politically) formative years, then temporal/evolutionary overlap might also have a generational aspect to it. According to this logic, one would hardly expect a resurgence of balance of power thinking and practice among governments in Western Europe that are now dominated by leaders that were politically socialised after WWII. This generational aspect might conflict with learning understood as adaptation to new situations, however; it might also be overlain by particularities in the history of individual countries or by political ideology: The resurgence of national-interest thinking among parts of the generation in German foreign policy that grew up with *Westintegration* and communitarian practices, for example, while hardly constituting a simple return to the past (with a heightened concern for competitive balance of power or geopolitical practices based on a revived German

⁷⁸ Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation'.

⁷⁹ Vincent Pouliot, 'Security Community in and through Practice: The Power Politics of Russia-NATO Diplomacy', Dissertation, University of Toronto (2008).

⁸⁰ Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation'.

⁸¹ Felix Ciută, 'The End(s) of NATO: Security, Strategic Action and Narrative Transformation', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 23 (2002), pp. 35–62 at p. 47.

⁸² Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation'.

Sonderweg), can be seen as an auto-critique of German semi-sovereign Cold War foreign policy.⁸³

When is the temporal/evolutionary overlap of security mechanisms and practices expected to be particularly pronounced and politically salient? Periods of ‘generation’ of and ‘experimentation’ with new practices are obvious candidates. So are periods when security orders become unstable or disintegrate. An example of the former is the development by the European Union of a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) as way of dealing with security threats and instability in the Maghreb and the Eastern Mediterranean. The EU began experimenting with the construction of a regional Mediterranean identity and, in order to do so, it went back to the repertoire of security tools that the CSCE had developed during the Cold War. Although the experiment has failed so far,⁸⁴ the EU continues to promote Mediterranean pluralistic integration⁸⁵ – albeit in conjunction with anti-terrorist measures, including preemptive ones,⁸⁶ and the development of a European military capability.

In sum, temporal/evolutionary overlap may be partly explained in ‘geological’ terms: denoting that knowledge-based layers of practices and institutions build upon, without necessarily replacing, the older stratum of practices and institutions. Depending on the circumstances and on historical and cultural contexts, all or some of these layers of institutions and practices may be relevant and have global, regional, or bilateral effects. This is not a linear evolutionary argument: States and other political actors may shuttle back and forth using existing governance systems, may create new hybrid systems, or sometimes create new practices. Rather than arguing about the thorny question of what ‘really’ constitutes fundamental change (and whether there is such a thing), the key point is that reserving the notion of meaningful change for fundamental gestalt switches is bound to miss important differences over time in the operation of regional security orders based on overlap.

Notions of functional variety and overlap

Second, security mechanisms may vary according to the functional environment: Functional variety can come in (at least) three different forms: a) across sectors or domains, b) across different parts of the (foreign) policy-making bureaucracies of states, and c) across issues.

First, mechanisms and practices can vary across sectors or domains: If we include the economic realm as well as the cultural/societal and the geopolitical/military realm in our definition of security, we can – following Nye’s notion of the three-dimensional chessboard⁸⁷ – expect a variety of security mechanisms at work. Nye

⁸³ Andreas Behnke, ‘Geopolitics and its Shadows. The Concept of Geopolitik in German Post-Unification Foreign Policy Discourse’. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, San Francisco, 26–29 March 2008; Helga Haftendorn, *Coming of Age: German Foreign Policy after 1945* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

⁸⁴ Adler, Bicchi, Crawford and Del Sarto (eds), *The Convergence of Civilizations: Constructing a Mediterranean Region*.

⁸⁵ The creation of a ‘Mediterranean Union’, an international body with 43 member nations, at a meeting in Paris in July 2008 is the most recent attempt.

⁸⁶ Marieke De Goede, ‘The Politics of Preemption and the War on Terror in Europe’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 14 (2008), pp. 161–85.

⁸⁷ Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go It Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

distinguishes between: (a) unipolarity on the military plane, (b) multipolarity on the economic plane, and (c) disorder on the cultural/societal plane. Polarity, however, remains indeterminate with regard to mechanisms: balance of power and security community mechanisms can be found in unipolarity and multipolarity – as well as most likely in ‘disorder’.

We can see this kind of functional overlap in South East Asia: Through the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Asian states have used multi-lateral community-building measures in the economic realm and have achieved remarkable economic prosperity, which, in time, spilled over to the security and political realms. It is not just scholars, such as Amitav Acharya,⁸⁸ but regional leaders themselves who argue that ASEAN countries are in the business of building a security community. In the security realm, ASEAN states have partly successfully used the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and similar community-building institutions and practices, to entice China away from balance of power practices and to adopt communitarian practices. As the strongest advocates of security community practices acknowledge, however, the balance of power still is critical for South East Asian security relations with the US, China, Japan, and North Korea.⁸⁹ Balancing practices are alive and well also with regard to minority and economic issues. Despite ASEAN’s use of multilateral communitarian measures through the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), minority issues and economic crises – the latter in particular during the Asian financial crisis at the end of the 1990s – exposed a background of hostile relations, for example, between Singapore and Malaysia, inconsistent with security community practices.

Second, we can expect to see variety in security thinking and practices across different parts of the (foreign) policy-making bureaucracies of states. All things being equal, we would, for example, expect to see balance of power thinking and practices to be more pronounced in ministries of defense and the military establishment than in ministries of foreign affairs, the diplomatic corps, or the part of the bureaucracy responsible for foreign economic relations.⁹⁰ This is very much an empirical question, of course. In some cases, states may have so deeply internalised security community discourse and practices as taken-for granted, that even the military and defense establishment can hardly be seen to adhere to balance of power thinking and practices in traditional terms, thus preferring to project ‘normative’ rather than military power.⁹¹ In these cases, capability aggregation becomes a matter of intra-community debate (rather than balancing concerns). Thus, since the 1990s, it was often the Americans who lobbied European governments to increase their

⁸⁸ Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*.

⁸⁹ David M. Jones and Michael L. R. Smith, ‘ASEAN’s Imitation Community’, *Orbis*, (2002), pp. 93–109.

⁹⁰ Taking a less state-centred view of this kind of functional overlap, one might expect and inquire into overlap in formal security institutions. We thank an anonymous reviewer for alerting us to this point.

⁹¹ This has been the argument of the ‘civilian power’ research programme on Germany, for example. See Knut Kirste and Hanns W. Maull, ‘Zivilmacht und Rollentheorie’, *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*, 3 (1996), pp. 283–312; Henning Tewes, *Germany, Civilian Power and the New Europe* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002); Thomas U. Berger, ‘Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan’, in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security. Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

defense spending and modernise their armies in light of the experiences with the interventions in the former Yugoslavia.

On the other hand, some have interpreted the development of an independent European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and an EU rapid deployment force as signifying limits to Euro-Atlantic security community practices: they see an attempt to stop US hegemony at Brussels' gates and to assert a European great power or superpower status that might ring in 'the end of the American era'.⁹² Other analysts tend to see the Euro-Atlantic security community in crisis and possibly transforming into a new kind of order, but not at the point of breakage with a return to competitive military balancing.⁹³ European forces, strategy, and defense policies, after all, are driven by peace-keeping and peace-building military practices; the repertoire or constellation of practices thus can be seen to make an important difference here. Even Charles Kupchan, who sees 'balance-of-threat thinking' making a comeback, notes that since it is not coupled with revisionism, the practical consequence of it is not traditional balancing of US power but 'soft' balancing of US behaviour.⁹⁴

A third kind of functional variety/overlap is a variation on the first: Mechanisms and practices cannot only be sector/domain-specific, but may be even issue-specific: Krahmman, for example notes that 'states as well as organizations like NATO, the CSCE/OSCE or the EU have expanded their security functions after the end of the Cold War'⁹⁵ and have devised mechanisms that go beyond the balance of power or security community mechanism: in particular she notes the trend, on both sides of the Atlantic, towards the use of 'coalitions of the willing' and/or an increasing utilisation of private actors for the management of new security threats. In a way this use of coalitions of the willing is a good example of the overlap of balance of power and security community practices: it combines the practices of highly flexible coalitions with those of collective management of a threat. The flexibility/unstablens of coalitions of the willing does not constitute a threat to those outside of the coalition since the practice of the coalitions of the willing is embedded in a broader security community where cooperation takes place in other institutions at the same time.⁹⁶

Obviously, functional overlap will be greater, the more contested security governance systems and practices are. Moreover, functional overlap may be to some extent dependent on temporal overlap. If regional security governance has not evolved so that it would become amenable to a new set of practices, then the overlap will not exist at all, or will exist only formally. This is what happened in the Middle East during the Oslo peace process when community-building practices were imported from Europe. Because the region has been engulfed in war, asymmetrical warfare, and state disintegration, and has not adapted culturally to entertain security-community practices, the latter never really found roots in bureaucracies or across

⁹² Charles A. Kupchan, *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Knopf, 2002); Kupchan, 'The Atlantic Order in Transition: The Nature of Change in U.S.–European Relations'.

⁹³ Risse, 'The Crisis of the Transatlantic Community'. See also the majority of the chapters in Anderson, Ikenberry and Risse (eds), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order*.

⁹⁴ Kupchan, 'The Atlantic Order in Transition: The Nature of Change in U.S.–European Relations'.

⁹⁵ Elke Krahmman, 'Conceptualizing Security Governance', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 38 (2003), pp. 5–26.

⁹⁶ Elke Krahmman, 'American Hegemony or Global Governance? Competing Visions of International Security', *International Studies Review*, 7 (2005), pp. 531–45 at p. 542.

sectors and party lines. Thus, if the balance of power may look anachronistic from the perspective of a united Europe, security community practices are tied to a mechanism of security governance whose time has not yet come in the Middle East. However, functional overlap is not entirely dependent on temporal overlap. We may have temporal overlap without much functional differentiation between practices, and we may have functional overlap when two mature sets of security governance systems compete for resources, attention, and policy agendas, even if there is no noticeable movement from one system to another.

Notions of spatial variety and overlap

The third and most traditional way of conceptualising the variety of international order is spatial: Different geographically defined regions exhibit different conceptions of security orders. This type of variety has received the most theoretical and empirical attention.⁹⁷ Spatial variety might also be found on the sub-regional level: Arguably, security community practices are more firmly institutionalised in Western than in Eastern Europe. Rather than just a function of the location of the East European sub-region (so close to its former hegemon who seems less and less willing to shed its balance of power practices), however, the reason for this might as well lie in temporal overlap and the fact that Eastern Europe has not been exposed to security community practices for the same amount of time as Western Europe.

The Western Hemisphere offers a typical example of spatial overlap. To the North, a pluralistic security community exists among the US, Canada and Mexico, which is partly institutionalised in NAFTA.⁹⁸ The southern cone of South America, including Argentina and Brazil, the two regional powers, has recently become a pluralistic security community.⁹⁹ Among the most outstanding practical changes from balancing to security community in the region were Argentina and Brazil's abandonment of a nuclear power race and these countries' replacement of economic competition with increasing economic integration through MERCOSUR. However, in spite of the fact that the Organization of American States (OAS) has moved in recent years from hegemonic, balancing, and liberal regime practices to security community building practices, unless we fail to distinguish between hegemony and security community, it would be a stretch of imagination to consider the entire Western hemisphere as a security community. It would be equally difficult to consider Latin America as a whole as a security community. As recently as 2008, Venezuela and Colombia came close to a state of war and Peru and Ecuador are still to develop dependable expectations of peaceful change. Although temporal and functional notions of overlap would be important for analysing the Western hemisphere, and in particular,

⁹⁷ Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers. The Structure of International Security*; Solingen, *Regional Orders at Century's Dawn: Global and Domestic Influences on Grand Strategy*.

⁹⁸ Guadalupe Gonzalez and Stephan Haggard, 'The United States and Mexico: A Pluralistic Security Community?', in Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*; Sean M. Shore, 'No Fences Make Good Neighbors: The Development of the US–Canadian Security Community, 1871–1940', in Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*.

⁹⁹ Andrew Hurrell, 'An Emerging Security Community in South America?', in Adler and Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*.

Latin America, it is clear that security governance in this case also, and primarily, exhibits spatial overlap.

One way to understand how and why a variety of orders may turn into spatial overlap is by focusing on 'interregional' relations, especially when regional powers, such as in the example above, are constitutive parts of security communities. In such cases, the key question is whether security communities can be expected theoretically and seen empirically to act externally in the same way that they do internally, or whether they simply replicate the security dilemma on a higher level. Reese argues that security communities with great powers in their midst are caught in the dilemma of facing an outside world in which dependable expectations of peaceful change are a chimera and will thus revert to non-security community practices when interacting with the outside.¹⁰⁰ Reese's point may be right only with regard to global powers; thus, the US's relations outside NAFTA may not be the same as within. Argentina and Brazil, however, do not seem to be caught in Reese's dilemma and behave toward the outside very much as they do toward the inside.

Notions of relational variety and overlap

Finally, a fourth notion of variety and overlap is related to these spatial notions, but the key variable for understanding variety here is not primarily the spatial location of actors, but their varied and overlapping security relations with one another.

An example of relational variety and overlap would be the Greek-Turkish relationship within the NATO alliance. The dyadic, balance of power relationship is nested in each of the states' security community relationships with the other NATO members: A key priority of Greek foreign policy since the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus has been to maintain an 'acceptable military balance between Greece and Turkey' and its military expenditures have explicitly been justified by reference to Turkish military capabilities.¹⁰¹ Nonetheless both countries have remained part of the larger security community (even though Greece briefly left NATO's integrated military structure in protest against perceived American indifference with regard to the Turkish invasion).

If NATO and EU expansion continue, we might expect to see more of this kind of relational variety and overlap in security mechanisms. This is what critics of enlargement fear when they warn of the 'import' of other countries unresolved foreign policy issues by granting them accession to NATO or the EU.¹⁰² The theoretical and empirical question surrounding this issue is which one of the alternative mechanisms can be expected to have the more pronounced socialising effect (if there is any such effect at all): this might be a function of (a) the maturity and institutional set-up of the community that incorporates new members with strong adherence to balance of power practices vis-à-vis one or more of its other

¹⁰⁰ Reese, 'Destructive Double Standards: Great Powers and the Security Community Paradox'.

¹⁰¹ Fotios Moustakis and Michael Sheehan, 'Democratic Peace and the European Security Community: The Paradox of Greece and Turkey', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 13 (2002), pp. 69–85.

¹⁰² Thomas Diez (ed.), *The EU and the Cyprus Conflict: Modern Conflict, Postmodern Union* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Thomas Diez and Nathalie Tocci (eds), *Cyprus: A Conflict at the Crossroads* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008).

members and (b) the nature and length of the actual conflicts that spur the balance of power dynamic in these relationships.

'Automatic' versus 'manual' overlap

The four above-mentioned notions of variety and overlap and the theoretical explanations given for them seem to be of an almost 'automatic' quality in the sense that Inis Claude used it when referring to the balance of power: Thus overlap 'may be produced or preserved without being actually *willed*'¹⁰³ by the actors involved, that is, actors might not consciously and deliberately pick and choose from the repertoire of practices with the *explicit intention* of picking a 'balance of power' practice, for example; it is derivative of other interactions. By contrast – and analogously to Claude's 'manual' balance of power that is 'contingent upon the motivations and skills of human agents' and requires state actors to direct their policies rationally towards the objective of a balance of power¹⁰⁴ – we can also think of overlap as deriving from conscious reflection and strategic choice; that is, not just as a by-product of actors' behaviour, perhaps due to the sediment-like accumulation of practices in a region, but also as an actual strategy. Goh makes the argument, for example, that 'omni-enmeshment' (including all major powers in the region's strategic affairs, that is 'superpower entrapment' of the US and 'constructive entanglement' of China) and a 'complex balance of influence' (beyond the military realm) represent distinct pathways and conscious choices of security management in Southeast Asia: Omni-enmeshment and complex balancing overlap in that 'major power competition and balancing are channeled to take place within the constraints of norms and institutions'.¹⁰⁵ This strategy of weakening the traditional military aspect of balancing (in a region that is self-consciously 'realist') through overlap lay at the heart of the ARF.¹⁰⁶

Empirically, in most cases we would expect to see a mixture of 'automatic' and 'manual' overlap. The agential/manual side can be expected to dominate at crucial junctures when an overall review of strategy is likely to take place, e.g. after major wars¹⁰⁷ or in situations of perceived major change and (epistemic and ontological) uncertainty like after 11 September, 2001. Everyday security policymaking is likely to involve less conscious grand strategising and more of the logic of habit and/or practicality.¹⁰⁸

Thinking about regions

We have already hinted that our argument about the overlap of different security mechanisms can also have implications for how we think about the boundaries of

¹⁰³ Inis L. Claude, *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 46.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁰⁵ Evelyn Goh, 'Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies', *International Security*, 32 (2007/2008), pp. 113–57 at p. 139.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory. Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

¹⁰⁸ Poulriot, 'The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities'.

regions: Although, in our view, regions are socially constructed, and thus collective cognitive entities as well as merely territorial ones,¹⁰⁹ we believe that introducing practice and security mechanism overlap may help spur a debate not only about specific regional boundaries, but also about how regions and their boundaries change. Our argument, in fact, is, first, that cognitive regions are permeated by *layers of 'practical regions'*. Second, we argue that the boundaries between regions are to a great extent determined not only by the values and norms member states of a region share, but also by the things they do, by what they practice. Finally, on this point, we argue that even in institutionalised security communities, such as the Euro-Atlantic security community, while states may not balance against material power and may not entertain expectations of organised violence, they nevertheless may balance against practices.

To begin with, the boundaries of practical 'regions' might coincide with those of territorial and/or cognitive regions, but they might also conflict: Thus, for example, we can see the Euro-Atlantic area as a cognitive region that encompasses different practical regions of 'doing' security. The fault lines between these practical regions can but do not always lie between the US and Europe: While there is a dividing line between the two when it comes to the role of international institutions in security governance, this has its roots in the way practices are interpreted. Thus, while the practice of multilateralism (while not always followed) is viewed in Europe as an 'end in itself', and almost works like a social norm there, it is seen more as a means to an end in the US.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, against the prevalent view, preemptive practices in the 'Global War on Terror' can be seen to straddle or 'collapse' the boundaries between Europe and the US.¹¹¹ Furthermore, boundaries of practical regions change: in the realm of military interventions, for example, we could see Germany's policy change at the end of the 1990s with regard to the use of the *Bundeswehr* in military operations abroad as a movement from one practical region to another – all within the European and transatlantic security community.

Second, regions may be differentiated as much as by what their members do as by what they value or believe. Actually, practices become the 'indicator' of values within a region and whether states may actually be part of 'us' or 'them'. The elaborate system that the EU and NATO created immediately after the Cold War to enlarge the security community toward the East consisted of practices that aspirants needed to internalise and institutionalise in order to become part of the security community.¹¹² Those states that reached a level of proficiency with regard to practices were deemed to be partners, whereas those states that had more or less fully adopted the practices were formally admitted to the EU and/or NATO. A few states, such as Ukraine, are still waiting 'outside' the region. The debate about whether Turkey should be part of the EU, for example, is not only about religion and values, but whether what Turkey

¹⁰⁹ Emanuel Adler, 'Imagined (Security) Communities: Cognitive Regions in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 26 (1997), pp. 249–77.

¹¹⁰ Daniel W. Drezner, 'Lost in Translation: The Transatlantic Divide Over Diplomacy', in Jeffrey Kopstein and Sven Steinmo (eds), *Growing Apart? America and Europe in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹¹¹ De Goede, 'The Politics of Preemption and the War on Terror in Europe'.

¹¹² Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation'; Gheciu, *NATO in the 'New Europe': The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War*.

does, both internally and externally, is consistent with EU practices, as defined by the ‘*acquis communautaire*’.

Third, a ‘balance of practice’¹¹³ within regions may be as important as balance of (material) power, or balance of interests.¹¹⁴ The balance of practice is particularly important in security communities, where power rests partly in the ability of members of a regional security community to impose their practices on other members. For example, at no point in the controversy regarding how to fight the war on terror and whether or not to go to war with Iraq did the US and Europe balance each other’s material capabilities. And it would be a stretch to argue that they balanced each other’s interests. To the contrary, the US and Europe shared many of the same interests. Where they strongly disagreed, however, was on what practices can and should ‘we’ use. Because what states and people practice is constitutive not just of states’ and people’s identities, but also of regional identities, a deep disagreement about practices can also become a disagreement about who ‘we’ are, thus prompting fears that the security community might be in danger. Empirical work should focus on thresholds, on where disagreement over practices turns into disagreement over interests, sometimes to the point when states start again to balance each other’s capabilities.

Finally, a focus on the boundaries of practical regions might also help illuminate whether, how, and why approaches to security governance can or cannot travel, and what happens when they do. Just as the interregional diffusion of norms involves processes of ‘localization’ and variation,¹¹⁵ security mechanisms and practices might be expected to be modified when transported across space. When and how this occurs are interesting questions for empirical research. One instance of modification might be the particular kind of balancing that Goh detects in Southeast Asia.¹¹⁶

Conclusion

In this article we introduced two novel notions about security orders. We first conceptualised both the balance of power and security communities as mechanisms of security governance, each with a set of more or less separate and distinctive practices. We then argued that while radically different politically and normatively, as a set of practices balance of power and security community may not be entirely mutually exclusive, and that, especially at the regional level, they can overlap and coexist. How the different practices relate and interact – what we called the repertoire or constellation of practices – might then be the key question for understanding regional security dynamics. We conceptualised overlap along four dimensions (temporal/evolutionary, functional, spatial, and relational), described the theoretical

¹¹³ Adler, Bicchi, Crawford and Del Sarto (eds), *The Convergence of Civilizations: Constructing a Mediterranean Region*.

¹¹⁴ Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

¹¹⁵ Amitav Acharya, ‘How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism’, *International Organization*, 58 (2004), pp. 239–75.

¹¹⁶ Goh, ‘Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies’.

mechanisms that could explain why and when we would expect to see a given kind of overlap, and provided some illustrations.

We conclude this article with some reflections on the theoretical and empirical implications of our argument: On the theoretical side, first, this chapter does not suggest any new theory of regional security orders, balance of power, or security community. This article shows, however, that as in the classic story of IR as an elephant being described by blind persons, competing theoretical camps may be looking at different parts of the same reality. But they may also be missing the nature of change between security orders. As our theoretical framework shows, change is nonlinear and dynamic; social orders evolve pushed by past practices and pulled by future practices. Second our theoretical framework is sensitive to different functional, spatial and relational ways of analysing regional security order. While the resulting picture may be more complex than that usually presented by individual IR camps regarding a particular region being ruled either by a balance of power or shared identity, this picture opens a plethora of new ways of studying regional security, for example, from a bureaucratic politics perspective, or by looking at sub-regions and whether they aggregate from a security governance perspective.

Third, our study is intended to generate debate and try to launch an analytical and normative agenda for studying security communities, not merely as zones of peace, or as the practice of peace at the regional level, but also as an alternative to, although not mutually exclusive mechanism with, the balance of power. We thus would like our readers to take away the notion that security communities rely not only on shared identity, but also on power, albeit defined much differently than in the case of the balance of power. From a normative perspective, however, the security community comes close to representing an improvement in the way security is attained at the regional level and, by extension, also in the human condition. Fourth, our theoretical framework also indicates that one may find the reasons for the success and failure of security communities in the overlap of practices. Thus, security communities may remain stable or decay due to the dynamic overlap and balance between different sets of practices at the regional level. Finally, our article opens a new way of conceptualising regions as practical layers that may deeply influence security orders and the way regions are differentiated.

Our chapter also suggests improved ways of doing empirical research on regional security orders. First, it helps theorise and formalise a debate that has taken place mainly with regard to South East Asia, but which is also applicable to other regions, including Europe, about the mutually exclusive nature, or parallel existence, of regional security governance mechanisms. Our contribution to this debate is mainly to show that scholars, instead of merely trying to prove each other wrong, may be able to attain progress if they only would join forces and add their theoretical 'comparative advantages' to study the overlap between security governance systems and practices. Second, our study suggests a new framework for the comparative empirical study of security orders based on the concepts of overlapping security governance mechanisms.

Third, regarding specific regions, our work raises interesting questions about the evolution of the Euro-Atlantic security community since 9/11 and the possibilities of its meltdown. Our conclusion is that we should be moderately optimistic on this count. Signs of balance of power showing its face in Europe can easily be explained away by the nature of the overlap, and thus a future convergence of practices cannot

be discounted. Understanding security community as a mechanism of security governance may also help shed light on the sturdiness of the EU, the sources of its power, and perhaps also the dynamic nature of its core of strength. Moving east, we may ask whether the overlap between balance of power and security community practices in South East Asia is temporal or functional/relational. Still much more work remains to be done, for example, on ASEAN and China, as security community practices become institutionalised in China's halls of government and begin competing for attention and resources with classic balance of power practices. With regard to the Western Hemisphere our spatial overlap perspective raises questions about whether episodic and sporadic spots of security community governance in the region can evolve into a security community that covers the entire region. What policy changes would it take to achieve this feat and is such a security community consistent with a diminished, though still existing regional US hegemony?

Finally, our study suggests empirical research on regional boundaries that focuses on practices and their overlap. For example, may a practice perspective make acceptance of Turkish EU membership seem easier or more difficult?

In sum, if our theoretical framework may help, albeit only partially, to define theoretical and empirical problems differently, thus arriving at new solutions, we may then consider that we have joined others in this volume in shedding new light to regional security orders.