Making Mice Roar

Strategic Cultures in NATO Northern Europe 1989-2011

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MA Thesis in History – Political Culture & National Identities

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Introduction

"*Turning to the NATO operation over Libya, it has become painfully clear that similar shortcomings – in capability and will –have the potential to jeopardise the alliance's ability to conduct an integrated, effective and sustained air-sea campaign*"[1]

It is necessary here, as all history does, to begin at the end - and the above excerpt from a speech by then US Defence Secretary brings us to end of a remarkable period in the history of the North Atlantic Alliance. Remarkable because in a shade over 20 years it had seen more action than in the previous 40; remarkable because it had almost doubled in size, with the addition of states to which it had previously held plans to atomise; and remarkable because this 20 years of action had taken place without the existence of a single, solid threat that had been its very reason for existence. Secretary Gates' words in Brussels were very much a new arrangement of an old song, but there was a new riff which unnerved many.

"*Indeed, if current trends in the decline of European defence capabilities are not halted and reversed, Future U.S. political leaders– those for whom the Cold War was not the formative experience that it was for me – may not consider the return on America's investment in NATO worth the cost*."[2]

Possibly the most remarkable aspect of these last two decades, has been the fact that all these previously noted remarkable events had taken place with a backdrop of plummeting defence spending throughout Europe. As NATO had moved out 'out of area', US priorities had moved out of Europe too. This return to more familiar Mediterranean shores had made the new NATO look more akin to the beautiful but desolate ruins of Leptis Magna - although some of the statistics used by Gates to underline his point also could speak as a testament to the organisation's success.

That the alliance now had 28 members to vote in support of the operation was a result of the hand extended by NATO to the post-communist states of Europe - an offer which resulted in another offer to bring most of these states into the EU, just as NATO membership had provided a foundation for European integration in the 1950s. Furthermore, that this Libya intervention had happened at all, and with such unanimous support spoke to the furtherance of the transformation of the Alliance and its objectives, when it could have simply packed up and gone home after the end of the Cold War.

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[1] Gates, Robert M. *The Security and Defense Agenda (Future of NATO)* Speech given in Brussels, Belgium 10/06/2011

[2] Ibid

Gates was introduced that day by former Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer[3], a Dutchman who many believe was elected as a result of his country's efforts in the Kosovo conflict that closed the chapter on the immediate post-Cold War era. His successor was a Danish Prime Minister who many believe had been elected himself as a result of his country's foreign policy transformation, culminating in its role in some of the toughest fighting in the Afghan conflict.

There were of course other, less poetic reasons for the elections of these two very capable men, but their prominence cannot hide the fact that in classically realist foreign policy terms, they should not be there at all. For the fundamental shift in the thinking & operations of NATO as a whole had also presented an opportunity for its smaller members to sail off the end of the flat-earth realist map.

The traditional 'small state dilemma' gave them two options in a lawless global system: hide or bind. The former option had proven useful for most, staying out of the way of the 'Great Powers' from the days of Napoleon until many were invaded by Wehrmacht in the Second World War. Thereafter, most chose the latter option, with an American 'Empire by Invitation'[4] or a somewhat less cordial place in the Soviet Bloc almost an inevitability. The emergence of a more rules-based system from the 1950s onwards, and particularly after 1989 has allowed this assumption to be questioned, with concepts like 'activist foreign policy, 'norm entrepreneurship' or 'smart state strategy' allowing the smaller states of Europe more latitude.

Indeed, when Gates spoke of a 'two tier NATO'[5], the two tiers were understood differently than they would have been in the Cold War. Small states like Denmark, Netherlands and Norway were undoubtedly in the top tier, given their efforts over the previous two decades, whereas larger states like Italy or even Germany, who were previously on the front line, were unsure of what tier they would fall into. Denmark and Norway are explicitly mentioned in the Gates speech as having struck around 1/3 of the targets (to that point) despite providing 'only' about 1/8th of the aircraft.

That states whose combined population is still smaller than the small state which separates them could provide such a high proportion of aircraft to such a broad-based international mission is could be seen as a mere statistical aberration, but we shall see over the course of this research that it is a result of a concerted, long term effort by these states to make themselves relevant in international affairs. That Denmark, Netherlands and Norway are still relatively weak has not changed, but the way in which they have used the little power they have is important - and while their contributions may not have been vital in NATO operations over the last 20 years, they have certainly been noticed.

These 'mice' may not be invading a superpower in the manner of the fictional Duchy of Grand Fenwick in the 1959 Peter Sellers comedy The Mouse that Roared, but they have undoubtedly

[3] Ibid

[4] Lundestad (2010), passim

[5] Gates (2011)

made their voices heard in international affairs - and it is the purpose of this paper to examine precisely the strategies they have pursued in order to do so.

While national histories of individual small states have obviously been written, there has been precious little Historical collective study of how small states act in international institutions. As a result, most of the concepts for this study will be borrowed from International Relations or Political Science – though History does provide us with the genesis of the term: even if it was in opposition to the 'Great Powers' style of Political History which grew up after the Congress of Vienna. These powers felt their various non-core accoutrements distinguished them sufficiently from 'Middle' powers, who in turn needed to distinguish themselves from those deemed to be entirely inconsequential: these became the 'small states'.[6]

The Age of Empires necessarily ensured that small states rarely survived, the systematic shocks of the two World Wars broke these Great Powers apart and scattered their remnants around in the form of small states which drew the interests of the new Empires. Beginning from the late 1950s (in English[7]), with Annette Baker Fox's The Power of Small States, IR theorists began to tentatively examine these states which the dominant theories of their discipline had no time for. Such studies often focused intensely on the very powerlessness of the 'system-ineffective' states before the power of the 'system-determining' ones[8].

The 1960s and 70s 'heyday' of small states studies was gradually replaced by an increased indifference[9] as it became clear even the instability caused by such a proliferation of weak states would do little to disrupt a system anchored so firmly in two places. This changed, however, with the fall of the Soviet Empire, precipitated, in part by its invasion of a small state. Afghanistan itself is a good example of respecting Baker-Fox's observation that '*what is impressive is the variety of circumstances under which the power of a small state…turns out to be greater than any inventory of its internal resources would suggest*'[10].

The fall of a great power before a seemingly insignificant one is almost historical cliché, and so it was maybe the rash of newly enabled states after 1989, with only Poland and Ukraine among them not (what most consider) small, that brought renewed interest in small state studies. First, as small states like Rwanda and Yugoslavia drew the world's attention as they descended into genocidal violence; then as a result of a new, constructivist, realisation that certain small states were thriving in the international system almost because of their smallness[11]. Nevertheless, it

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[6] Neumann & Gstöhl *Lilliputians in Gulliver's World? Small States in International Relations* in Ingebritsen, Neumann, Gstöhl & Beyer (eds) (2006), p4

[7] In their footnotes, Neumann & Gstöhl posit the existence of two distinct schools of small states studies: the (realist) Anglophone and the European (or German/Scandanavian), which sought to redress the balance.

[8] Keohane

[9] Neumann & Gstöhl, passim

[10] Baker-Fox, p.8

[11] Neumann & Gstöhl, p.14

remains something of a niche topic, with the only global institute for the study of small states located, appropriately, at the University of Iceland in Reykjavik[12].

While all these academics agree on the usefulness of small state studies, they don't agree on what makes a small state. Many papers on the topic begin with a long debate on what actually constitutes smallness, but while Robert Keohane's initial assertion in Lilliputian's Dilemas that 'it is clearly inadequate to describe them [small states] merely in terms of being less powerful' was good for the 1960s, Mouritzen & Wivel's definition of a small state as the 'weak part in an asymmetric relationship'[13] is better suited to an increasingly polycentric world: allowing for states to be strong in some relationships, but weak in others. Thus, Albania may have 'relational power'[14] when dealing with Kosovo, but 'relational weakness' when dealing with Greece– and more pertinently for this study: Denmark can almost consider itself a 'great power' when dealing Latvia, but small one when dealing with Russia. Using this definition of what constitutes a small state will allow us to better understand how our states function in the system.

Even in a strictly realist, hard-power based-reading, all but 20 or so states are small, with the US still light years ahead in military terms[15]. What a realist reading of history does not shed light on, however, is how small states, together and separately, have worked towards creating an international system which is more liveable for them. Whether it be Malta pushing for the creation of the ICLS at the UN in the 1960s[16], or the role of Norway in facilitating the Oslo Peace Accords of 1993, small states can, and have, made a big difference. In her 2002 article Norm Entrepreneurs: Scandinavia's Role in World Politics, Christine Ingebritsen finds many significant accomplishments and an optimising of influence that confounds conventional power-based analyses.

From the creation of the OSCE through the Helsinki process, to the foundation of the modern development aid system, or the concept of sustainable development and environmental management, the Scandinavian nations have been fundamental in establishing, sustaining and institutionalising global norms which have brought a certain order to an anarchic global system[17]. While classical small state notions of hiding or binding may have encouraged a passive foreign policy, these states have pursued 'social power', and furthermore '*this reputation is consciously cultivated and deepened as a cornerstone of Scandinavian diplomatic relations*'[18]. It is hoped over the course of this research to understand how 'norm entrepreneurship', often

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[12] http://english.hi.is/school_of_social_sciences/faculty_of_political_science/small_state_studies

[13] Steinmetz & Wivel, p.6

[14] Rostoks, Toms *Small States, Power, International Change and the Impact of Uncertainty* in Ingebritsen, Neumann, Gstöhl & Beyer (eds) (2006) p106

[15] International Institute for Strategic Studies (2013)

[16] Pardo, Arvid *Speech to the United Nations General Assembly* 01/11/1967 http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/pardo_ga1967.pdf

[17] Ingebritsen (2006) , passim

[18] Ingebritsen (2002), p13

understood in the context of the UN[19] or EU[20], can be extended into a more explicitly security-oriented institution like NATO.

This is the most interesting concept in the formation of this paper: 'militarily weak, economically dependent'[21] small states may not have the resources to form a broad based foreign policy, but what they can do is use the means available to them (mainly through institutions) to find innovative ways out of the small state dilemma. Anders Wivel (2010) has described this as a 'smart state' strategy: by using the characteristics of an institution (in this case the EU), presenting initiatives with an emphasis on the general good, and using weakness as strength through being an 'honest broker', small states can get things done.

Central to this strategy is being highly focused and knowledgeable of the system[22], and again in this respect small states (and Scandinavian ones in particular) are at a certain advantage. A smaller group of foreign policy makers, and a tradition of consensus politics[23] allows for a consistent and studied pursuit of foreign policy goals. The pursuit of these soft power objectives does not come without a hard power price, however, and even 'norm entrepreneurs' need an iron fist inside their spotless velvet gloves – these Scandinavian states have 'punched above their weight' in arms exports too, with neutral Sweden the world's 9th largest exporter of arms in 2011[24][25] - selling fast jets to EU allies[26], and assorted other weaponry to regimes who seem somewhat less interested in human rights or the environment[27].

This is where the research in this project will attempt to explore areas often neglected by small state studies: while there have been studies of small states in the UN or the EU, there has been little examination of small states' hard power contributions to the Western security structure after the Cold War - despite, as noted earlier, new developments that call into question traditional interpretations of the influence/autonomy dilemma.

There have also been studies of small states within the ESDP but this aspect of Western security is neither fully trusted or even tested, either by the small states or the 'great' European powers. There have also be certain ad-hoc coalitions constructed, most notably in Iraq, which have had significant small state support: but the gap between what others expect of small states, and what

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[19] Neumann & Gstöhl

[20] Steinmetz & Wivel

[21] Ingebritsen (2002), p13

[22] Wivel (2010)

[23] Ingebritsen (2002), p18

[24] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/html/export_toplist.php

[25] Netherlands was 10th, Norway 17th and Denmark 27th largest – despite being (in population terms) 63rd, 112th and 118th largest respectively.

[26] SAAB Press Release 15/02/2013 http://www.saabgroup.com/en/About-Saab/Newsroom/Press-releases--News/2013---2/Saab-signs-agreement-for-the-next-generation-fighter-aircraft-Gripen-E-and-receives-development-order/

[27] 'Sweden in secret Saudi arms factory project' BBC News 06/03/2012 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17271596

they hope to gain in such an arrangement is much harder to measure than with institutions. NATO has remained, despite the existential angst, the clichéd 'cornerstone' of Western foreign policy - for all creatures great and small, and with the building of a billion-dollar headquarters in Brussels[28], that probably won't change.

The angst though, has been well-founded - and that is why it is imperative to study those states who have always been able to do more with less. These should be acting in NATO as they would in EU, for the furtherance of their own national interest, and so it should also follow that the same opportunities (as well as the same pitfalls) will exist. Furthermore, NATO is an organisation, unlike the EU with its qualified majorities and weighted voting, which relies on consensus and the equality of each of its members.
Besides examining how these states maximise their influence with NATO, I would also like to discover if maximising influence can lead to any real ability to shape policy, and if this influence in NATO is seen as integral to the more well-known aspects of 'norm entrepreneurship'. Strategic culture is central to this, as a 'tool kit'[29] which states use to further their foreign policy aims - and by examining the practices of these three states it will be possible to understand how useful they consider this tool kit to be: if indeed 'culture is practice'[30] then examining the practice will allow us to better understand the culture.

If the role of NATO has changed, first by moving to a more offensive posture, then moving out of area, then it must also follow that the strategic cultures of its members have too. As we will see, some have reacted faster to the new opportunities afforded to members in the post-Cold War era, but all have changed nonetheless. How have our states changed their security policies in the modern era? Has this given them an institutional advantage in NATO? And does it reflect somehow on their own individual strategic cultures?

Choosing the Northern European states to analyse was based on three points: membership of NATO; a history of 'norm entrepreneurship'; and recognition of 'smallness'. For the last point, while for the purposes of this paper 'small' is about asymmetric relationships, the UK, Germany, and to a lesser extent, Poland are still considered to be middle or large powers. A short, turbulent post-communist history has meant that the three Baltic States have been unable to develop a FP strategy which would qualify as 'norm entrepreneurship', although they will feature as recipients of (particularly Danish) influence. The first criteria was the most arbitrary, and discounted Ireland, Finland and Sweden – with the latter being particularly arbitrarily ignored as Swedish non-membership may not last long, and its levels of cooperation with NATO being extremely high[31]. Finally, Iceland, which fulfilled all of the criteria, was

[28] 'NATO Builds $1 billion HQ as Allies Cut Military Spending Reuters 13/11/2013 http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/13/us-nato-hq-idUSBRE9AC0ST20131113

[29] Rasmussen, M.V. (2005), p71

[30] Ibid, p.71

[31] Rasmussen, A.F (2012)

discounted for being perhaps too 'system ineffective': it would be hard to imagine the UK government using anti-terrorism legislation to seize bank assets[32] from larger NATO allies.

Of the three remaining states, Norway and Denmark fit easily into all three boxes, with Netherlands fitting less easily into the last one because of its size, and not being considered previously as a 'norm entrepreneur'. While it was previously a Great Power, still has extra-European territories and is a trading nation on a world level thanks to its highly developed infrastructure, in NATO terms it is happy to see itself as 'the biggest of the small ones'[33] – indeed it is generally accepted that the Netherlands is the upper limit for states which were traditionally considered small[34]. In terms of its reputation as a 'norm entrepreneur', while its government has not always had a reputation for being the greenest in Europe, it is the 7th largest foreign development aid donor, and the 5th per capita[35], just behind Denmark and Norway. Finally, Article 90 of the Dutch Constitution states that it 'shall promote the development of the international legal order' a sentiment which has generally been followed in Dutch Foreign Policy - with these things considered it must be considered strange that the Netherlands has not been considered alongside the Scandinavian states previously, with one notable exception from the Cold War[36]. Particularly in the context of NATO and security, as we shall see, the Netherlands also has much in common with its northern neighbours, underlined by a strong and longstanding commitment to the Atlantic partnership, and a wish to balance the established European powers to avoid marginalisation.

In order to best understand the ways in which sought influence in NATO, we will examine three areas which best fit the resources available. Starting with 'capabilities', and the role of NATO in setting the agenda for its member states, mainly through the various strategic concepts agreed upon since the 1991 Rome Summit, where, in the midst of unrest and speculation in a Soviet Bloc that had not yet quite breathed its last, a radical plan was released that would allow the alliance to move towards the 21st century. Each of the three states will then be examined in alphabetical order, along with the internal dynamics and reactions to this new strategic situation that meant some states would adapt faster than others. This will also be the only time all three states are examined individually: this is not intended to be comparative history, and the research is not seeking to judge how each state has dealt with this change - it should be most interesting to understand what these states have done on a whole with their relatively similar 'tool kits'- noting, when appropriate, the 'best-practice' models which could also be useful in a broader NATO context.

As we go on to examine 'Conflicts', we will see that, at different conflicts brought differing levels of engagement from the three states, often dependent on the internal political situation.

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[32] U.K. Used Anti-Terrorism Law to Seize Icelandic Bank Assets" Bloomberg News 09/10/2008 http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aXjIA5NzyM5c

[33] Rood, p.121

[34] Neumann & Gstöhl, p.81

[35] OECD

[36] Flynn (1985)

Starting with the mess of Bosnia, it will be noted that Kosovo provided a watershed moment for NATO and each of the states as they made a firm commitment to the alliance's new direction. The conflict in Afghanistan was obviously remarkable following after the first invocation of Article V, but it will be considered that the most significant aspect of the conflict was the solidifying of the 'War of Choice' idea which brought updated older concepts of a multi-tiered alliance, and had very different outcomes for each of our states. The intervention in Libya, itself as relatively uncomplicated and as the aftermath is complex and fractious, will be considered last.

Finally, it is hoped that through the process of enlargement, beginning as it did from the restatement of the Article X obligations in the 'Message from Turnberry' of June 1990, will provide the clearest example of how small states can influence NATO policy – particularly with reference to the Baltic States, which were somewhat nurtured into post-communist life by Denmark, and to a lesser extent, Norway. Firstly, considering the events leading up to the Madrid summit of 1997, where the 'Visegrad' group were accepted, a decision that particularly disappointed two of the states examined, for entirely different reasons. The next two rounds of enlargement were relatively straightforward, even if they did bring in states that had previously been in indirect conflict with the alliance, and this is a process which will contrast sharply with the third and final section that will examine the more recent questions around how far NATO membership can actually be extended. Throughout this final chapter, it will be important to understand the 'value added' that small states can bring to the alliance, in a diplomatic sense, and how they make the most of changing circumstances that bring their own self-interests more broadly in line with those of NATO as a whole.

NATO enlargement is potentially the biggest test of the 'norm entrepreneur' aspects of the foreign policy of these small states. As Thomas Risse Kappen noted in 1995 'NATO *constitutes a community of liberal democracies that has deeply affected the collective identity of all members, including the United States*[37]. If there are to be any 'soft' benefits to the 'hard' commitments made by these states, then retaining the democratic nature of the alliance should be central to how Denmark, Netherlands and Norway interact with it.

[37] Risse Kappen, Thomas (1995) p.4

Chapter 1 : Capabilities

After considering the institutional backdrop, we will consider each of the three states individually, the only time that this will be done. While this study specifically considers the post-Cold War period, it is important to begin with a brief historical outline of each state, before and during the Cold War, before moving on to discuss their hard-power capabilities. This is history, and not defence studies, so it is important not to spend too much time discussing financial figures or force structure diagrams – nonetheless these capabilities, and more fundamentally why the states have them, and what they intend to use them for, are crucial for understanding the central question about how these small states carry themselves internationally.

The lesson from the Cold War, according to Ringsmose (2009), is that small states and capabilities do not fit established realist models, especially when it comes to the 'threat hypothesis' – the balance of power theory whereby states in an alliance cooperate and strengthen their capabilities in the face of perceived threats from an external actor. This is because 'Whether small allied states spend 2%, 5%, 10% or 15% of their GDP on defensive military measures only makes a diminutive difference in terms of security' – military spending is in many ways a 'waste of resources' especially when faced with a much larger power. Instead, their security lay in the alliance, and in the capabilities of the larger states in that alliance – what Ringsmose calls the 'security guarantee hypothesis', and during the Cold War small NATO states consistently spent less on defence than their larger allies, and only increased that spending when they came under pressure from their allies, particularly the United States.

However, if the end of the Cold War brought the end of that balance of power, it must also hold that Cold War balance of power theories would also need to be re-thought. And indeed, the end of the Cold War has resulted in a great opening of the 'action space' available to some small states in particular. As vague 'risks' replace the concrete 'threats'[38] of the Cold War, as 'Wars of choice' replace 'Wars of necessity'[39], and most importantly for this study, capability 'outputs' gain importance with regard to simple financial 'inputs'[40], the opportunity emerges for small states to use their own strategic cultures to exploit the new system. The NATO strategic concepts studied in the previous section present a roadmap, which each state must decide to use in the way which best suits them, and many have, to great effect, and many small states would find themselves in the top half of a 'two-tier' NATO, were it to exist: something which

[38] Rickli, p.307

[39] Lindsey French & Tjepkema, p.7

[40] Petersson & Saxi, p.775

has been noticed by Jean-Marc Rickli in his study of small states' military policies after the Cold War - his 'niche' capabilities are a physical 'smart state' strategy.

In considering the 'capabilities' of these small states, it is from Rickli that will borrow concepts: he divides 'military policy' four ways: the military aspects of security policy; military doctrines; force structure; and operational deployments. The final aspect will be considered in the next chapter, but the first three will be examined here. Treating these three elements, and examining them alongside general trends in military policy, with the various reviews, reforms, Acts of Parliament and spending budgets will allow us insight into how these small states approach something that they may previously have considered a 'waste of resources'. The capabilities of all states, large and small, have fundamentally changed over this period, and some better than others, so it is therefore important to discover where the three states in this study lie: Have they tailored their capabilities towards maximising influence? How have they done this? And, to bring it back to the central question of this study, how do these capabilities-based decisions reflect on each state's strategic culture?

As was remarked upon during the general introduction, the most remarkable thing about NATO's transformation from a static, defensive formation into a flexible, expeditionary one is that it came at a time when defence spending among most of the states had been falling consistently. This is not necessarily sustainable, and so it is important to find examples of best practice, especially if NATO does indeed continue to 'go further, fight harder, stand tougher and stay longer'[41].

NATO

Beginning an examination of our three states with a brief examination of the three NATO strategic concepts is a good introduction not only to the evolution of the alliance and the states with regards to military capabilities: it also acts as a good introduction to the constantly evolving strategic environment of the post-Cold War era, and allows for some examination. Not only because three is the magic number, the three Strategic Concepts will be examined in three ways: in the evolving strategic context that NATO found itself to be in; the objectives which it sets itself and its members; and finally the defence guidelines issued.

The 1991 Strategic Concept[42], launched at the summit in Rome, was principally remarkable for being the first one to be made public - even as the Soviet Bloc still stood (technically) intact. It must also be commended that a document written with the backdrop of such sustained seismic strategic activity, as this Bloc crumbled almost unexpectedly, could be so sure of itself - and not entirely wrong, even with the benefit of hindsight.

While it was glad to announce that 'the threat of a simultaneous, full-scale attack on all of NATO's European fronts has effectively been removed and thus no longer provides the focus for

[41] Lindley-French (2004), from Rickli, p.316

[42] NATO (1991)

Allied strategy', this change in European order had brought about new 'multi-faceted', 'multidirectional' (although notably unnamed) threats - there were obvious opportunities as well. 'The opportunities for achieving Alliance objectives through political means are greater than ever before' it trumpeted - but the focus had also switched geographically as well, which would be of interest to our three states. 'Ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes', alongside the challenge of ensuring the success of these nascent democracies was shifting the focus of NATO attention away from more northerly areas, firmly into Central and Eastern Europe, which is mentioned various times in the document. This brings about with it a 'greater risk of different crises arising': yet despite these changes, it was happy to announce that 'NATO's essential purpose', and the thrust of the Washington Treaty 'remains unchanged'.

Borrowing the principle of 'One Europe, Whole and Free' from the Charter of Paris signed the previous year, the alliance sought to build on that type of dialogue, not only with the CSCE which had drawn up the charter, but also the WEU, and the EU, whose Common Security and Defence Policy would be unveiled the following year in Maastricht. Organisations such as these, which shared common values with NATO, would be vital the second big objective of the 1991 document: crisis prevention. '*The potential of dialogue and co-operation within all of Europe must be fully developed in order to help to defuse crises and to prevent conflicts*', a noble aim that was realised rather too late for some in the former Yugoslavia.

Dialogue with the EU, and the potential of ESDP, was obviously a factor in stating that '*the European members of the Alliance will assume a greater degree of the responsibility for the defence of Europe*', an understandable aim that continues to be a bone of contention in the Atlantic alliance. This was a precursor to the admission that the new, favourable strategic context meant an inevitable reduction in the size and readiness of the forces bases in Europe - although '*to ensure that at this reduced level the Allies' forces can play an effective role both in managing crises and in countering aggression against any Ally, they will require enhanced flexibility and mobility*': a flexibility and mobility that would become a buzz-word in the new NATO.

The eight years which passed between the 1991 and 99[43] strategic concepts could be seen as something of a high point for NATO: the eventual resolution of the Bosnian question had seen an organisation previously unsure of its continuing role justify its legitimacy: and as the second publically-available concept was unveiled at a 50th-anniversary conference in Washington, NATO was in the middle of a largely successful campaign to resolve the conflict in Kosovo - the very place where it can be argued that Slobodan Milosević had allowed the first rocks to be thrown in the breakup of Yugoslavia[44].
That the Yugoslav wars were the only real bloodletting after 1989 is also testament to a successful initial phase of post-Communist transition, to which NATO can claim to have played some part: a new European order was emerging, one which saw the Atlantic alliance as the only real alternative to the emergent democracies - their former guarantor, Russia, was still struggling with its own transition, and even it could talk of nothing more than partnership and dialogue with its erstwhile foe, an uncharacteristically meek position that would reach its low point the following summer when Russia was forced to seek the aid of NATO states, including Norway and the Netherlands, to raise the wreck of the Kursk. There may have been Russian grumblings about the four 'Visegrad' states who joined NATO at the same Washington conference, but there was no alternative: '*A new Europe of greater integration is emerging, and a Euro-Atlantic security structure is evolving in which NATO plays a central part*'

[43] NATO (1999)

[44] Glenny, Loc. 12769

The eastwards expansion and the continuing of the ESDP process had changed European defence, and made many feel safer, but it was also noted that this did not mean all threats were eliminated : the Kosovo crisis was one indicator of 'regional crises at the periphery of the Alliance, which could evolve rapidly', with the levelling of Grozny another lesson that post-communist transition also meant in some parts the settling of grievances that most in the West didn't even know existed. Another threat was technology: as the threat of nuclear war on the Indian subcontinent loomed large, it was now clear that the power to alter world events did not lie solely in the hands of the five UN Security Council members: and threats like these did not come only from states. Unlike in previous SC, 'terrorism, sabotage and organised crime' were added to the list of 'known knowns'.

Nonetheless, this was a time of plenty, and we are now given a real sense of how the objectives of the alliance had changed from a purely defensive posture towards one built on shared security through shared values. Expansion was to continue, and 'no European democratic country whose admission would fulfil the objectives of the Treaty will be excluded from consideration', with Ukraine mentioned explicitly as being eligible. While there was some mention of 'common values' in the previous SC, phrases such as this and 'common commitment to democracy' spelt out that NATO was not simply an iron fist - even short of membership, there was a commitment to 'deepen partnerships' with, amongst other states and institutions, Russia. This was not to say that this was simply a manifesto with institutional aims: the previous commitment to develop crisis-management capabilities had developed, with an acknowledgement of the Bosnia inspired 1994 Brussels offer to consider this and also conflict prevention assistance on a 'case-by-case' basis. Such non-Article V missions could be in conjunction with other organisations, such as the UN or with PfP partners, if needs be, and for the first time the tantalising prospect of out-of-area missions is raised - as the concept argues for forces that are able to respond quickly to '*conduct crisis response operations...distant from their home stations, including beyond the Allies' territory*'.

The shift towards these types of operations had had an effect on the size, distribution and mix of forces deployed, as predicted in 1991. While numbers had decreased, and would continue to do so, it was seen as important to state that 'The Alliance will maintain the necessary military capabilities to accomplish the full range of NATO's missions' - and the key to this was seen as making sure it was a collective effort. Whether it be 'training and exercises, interoperability, civil-military relations, concept and doctrine development, defence planning, crisis management, proliferation issues, armaments cooperation as well as participation in operational planning and operations' the very existence of NATO offered an economy of scale from which member states could make savings. These savings were possible because 'the overall size of the Allies' forces will be kept at the lowest levels consistent with the requirements of collective defence and other Alliance missions', although developments in the years between this SC and the next one may indicate that this was advice followed rather too closely by many.

While absolute numbers were dropping, the composition would have find an 'optimum balance' between the more familiar, static defensive forces, and the newer style flexible response type of formations that would be capable of undertaking these new types of missions. Such kinetic missions require a 'high degree of deployability, mobility and flexibility' which would see a new NATO 'rely increasingly on multinational forces'. This would continue on the template of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) that would allow smaller member states, and also those less willing ones, a chance to contribute.

It would be eleven tumultuous, and probably less uniformly successful, years before NATO would publish the next strategic concept[45]. The tumult had many stayed out of the home area

[45] NATO (2010)

though, as the report was happy to announce that 'the Euro-Atlantic area is at peace and the threat of a conventional attack against NATO territory is low. That is an historic success for the policies of robust defence, Euro-Atlantic integration and active partnership'. This back-slapping did not mean that threats didn't exist: '*All countries are increasingly reliant on the vital communication, transport and transit routes on which international trade, energy security and prosperity depend*.' and the disruption of these networks posed a principle threat to all states in an interdependent, polycentric structure. More conventional threats, such as the proliferation of ballistic missiles outside the Euro Atlantic area, echoing the prediction from the previous SC that weapons capabilities and technologies were spreading, were not to be ignored. And there was also the return of a Russia: 'NATO poses no threat to Russia' - a statement that, along with pleas for greater transparency and cooperation from Moscow indicated that NATO was itself beginning to feel threatened by Russia, especially in the wake of the South Ossetian conflict.

NATO did seem distinctly more at ease with itself and its remit however: the 2010 SC '*commits the Alliance to prevent crises, manage conflicts and stabilise post-conflict situations*' in the third paragraph, a slick distillation of ideas which had been only vaguely present in 1991 - the alliance had moved far beyond simple Collective Defence. These crisis management skills, honed over 20 years of conflicts in and out-of-area, were further broken down: '*The lessons learned from NATO operations, in particular in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans, make it clear that a comprehensive political, civilian and military approach is necessary for effective crisis management*.' Later in the report we are given a breakdown of how NATO should organise the non-military aspects of this objective, an approach which is light years ahead of the casual references to such capabilities in previous concepts - and even though the evidence of more contemporary missions would indicate that it is still a work in progress, civilian and political planning is now firmly embedded in the NATO psyche.

Such realisations that conflicts are not won by military means alone seeped into other objectives from 2011. Partnerships with Ukraine and Georgia, and the final integration of Western Balkan states into the Euro-Atlantic structure 'with the aim to ensure lasting peace and stability based on democratic values' are proposed, and it is these values that are seen as key. The 2011 SC finishes with '*Our Alliance thrives as a source of hope because it is based on common values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law*', a fitting conclusion to a text which was awash with many lofty statements on the values which allowed a Cold War defensive formation persist into the 21st century. That did not mean that the military message was diluted however: again we see a more refined message, bringing together previously disparate aims to form a more coherent narrative. NATO, it states, should '*maintain the ability to sustain concurrent major joint operations and several smaller operations for collective defence and crisis response, including at strategic distance*'. The message was succinct - but the key word was at the start of the sentence , for just as the objectives of the 2011 SC saw values come to the fore, so did maintenance of capabilities in the defence guidelines.

The anticipation that spending would decline in 1991 had been replaced by concern about just how far that would go. We will see later in this chapter how it affected individual states, but such a decline in defence spending was not ideal for maintaining the stated aim of conducting concurrent operations - never mind while continuing to modernise and reform the forces which would carry them out. As in the previous SC, it was stated that the Alliance sought the lowest possible level of forces for these missions, but that is obviously an ongoing and tricky calculation to make, especially when there are new demands being made for force evolution, for example in the case of cyber warfare.

There is even mention of taxpayer value in the document - an idea that would probably not have existed in the days of classified Strategic Concepts, and existential threats from the Soviet Union, and one which would eventually evolve into a more solid concept known as ‘smart

defence'– whereby allies would cooperate in developing, acquiring, operating and maintaining capabilities[46]. Such a change allows us to consider the evolution of NATO policy over the post-Cold War period: 1991's commitment to the original values of the Washington Treaty has been upheld, the states party to it increased; yet timid acceptance that the alliance may have to move beyond non article V mission into 'crisis prevention' in 1991 had evolved into 'case-by-case' conflict managements by 1999, and finally a confident, fully formed, ready-to-lead objective by 2010.

Acceptance of NATO as a defensive grouping had evolved in military terms into an expeditionary one, and its values too were for export: again initially timidly, but by the end of the period in a confidently stated manner - 'Our Alliance thrives as a source of hope because it is based on common values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law'. This was the face NATO was wanting the world to see - how its member states would interpret that is of course something else.

Denmark: From Footnote to Impeccable Ally

Prominent Danish Political Scientist Hans Mouritzen has a theory about history and its implications for foreign and security policy: 'foreign and security policy is mainly conditioned by 'present and past geopolitics', i.e. contemporary geopolitical circumstances and historical geopolitical lessons (war or occupation in particular). Its main assumption is that present geopolitics has primacy in relation to that of the past, but that past geopolitics may play a role, when present geopolitics allows a favourable action space.'[47] Denmark may be the state that proves this theory, in that it may be difficult to find another (non-Post-Communist) European state which has used a present favourable action space alongside its own geopolitical history to forge such a striking geopolitical path.

To find Denmark on such a sure geostrategic footing, it is necessary to go as far back as 1720, and the treaty of Fredricksborg signed with Sweden, ending the Great Northern War, and with it Swedish designs on the Baltic[48]. This ushered in a period of peace and prosperity which was abruptly ended by the disastrous decision to align with the wrong side in the Napoleonic Wars - Norway was lost to Sweden, and a rot set in that would see what had once been an Empire on four continents slowly break up[49]. Worse was to follow: the answer to the famously intractable Schleswig-Holstein question was Denmark losing another chunk of territory to an ascendant neighbour, in this case Prussia. This gave birth to the '1864 syndrome'[50], and the belief that Denmark no longer drew any water on the international stage.

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[46] NATO website http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_84268.htm

[47] Mouritzen, p.155

[48] Reiker, p.124

[49] Ibid,

[50] Jakobsen (2000) p.61

This retreat into 'defenceless neutrality' was best described by a much quoted phrase in the literature - 'What's the Use of It? '[51] asked a Liberal Danish statesman with regard to Danish Armed Forces. In this period, Denmark did its very best to adopt a classic 'hiding' strategy, successfully avoiding entanglement in the Great War by mining the approaches to the Baltic to persuade both sides that there was no strategic benefit to invasion[52]. In common with its Nordic neighbours, it was an enthusiastic member of the League of Nations, but the failure of that organisation prefaced the ultimate failure of Danish neutrality, and a German invasion it had trying to avoid for almost 80 years - although it continued its own official neutrality even through the occupation[53].

NATO membership was not as simple a proposition in Denmark as elsewhere, and a mooted Scandinavian Defence Association was the preferred option until a mixture of Swedish non-alignment, communist coups in Czechoslovakia, increasing pressure on Finland and the 'never another 9th of April' sentiment forced the Danes to accept the lesser of two evils. It adopted a policy of 'adaption and screening'[54], integrating into the military structures where necessary, but also making themselves awkward almost immediately through a series of disagreements over Greek and Turkish entry, spending and nuclear policy - and they also managed to obtain minor concessions to allow West German entry in 1955[55].

The 'Danish problem' of the early NATO period was probably best encapsulated in the fact that it was the only allied state not to send military support for the Korean War - deciding to send only a hospital ship[56] - but the Danes were convinced that their 'Greenland card' should count as a NATO 'input'[57], as the 1956 agreement gave the United States affective carte blanche over the territory, in contrast to list of caveats on NATO activity on continental Denmark. This somewhat detached membership made Ostpolitik a perfect fit, and it was in this role that they made some peace with NATO membership around the 1969 20th anniversary - Denmark authored (with Norway) the early drafts of the Harmel Doctrine[58], and was active, from the start, in groups like the CSCE and the 'Group of 10', a collection of smaller NATO and Warsaw Pact states which preceded it. Further favour was found with EC membership in 1973, and a commitment to buy F16s in 1976, in the face of heightened tension with Baltic neighbours[59].

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[51] Rasmussen, M.V. (2005) p.67

[52] Branner, p.140

[53] Reiker, p126

[54] Pettersson & Saxi, p764

[55] Villaume, p.32

[56] Ibid, p.35

[57] Ringsmose (2009), p.85

[58] Honkanen, p.26

[59] Villaume, p.41

The relative calm did not last the decade though - around the time his Government was making a formal reservation about a requested 3% rise in defence expenditure, Prime Minister Anker Jørgenson was describing the neutron bomb as 'the devil's work'[60]. This was a prescript into the most difficult period of Denmark's NATO membership. The following year, a Danish 'wait-a-moment' request to postpone the Dual-Track process was snubbed by the other member states[61], and the US Secretary of Defence began to talk of the dangers of the spread of this 'Denmarkisation'. Most damagingly, the tradition of consensus on foreign policy matters in the Folketing was torn asunder, as the leftist parties broke away to form an 'alternative majority'. While also seeking to strengthen ties with other social democratic parties in neighbouring states through the so-called 'Scandilux' network[62], this 'alternative majority' most damagingly forced the incumbent government to register reservations, or 'footnotes' in a total of 23 NATO agreements[63], an undermining which was tolerated until it could finally be confident of winning an election, which it did in 1988.

It is in this long context of 'reluctant alliance'[64] that makes the decision to send a Danish corvette[65] to assist the coalition efforts in the first Gulf War all the more remarkable. The disintegration of the communist system had radically changed Denmark's outlook – it was now in a position of 'unprecedented security'[66], and there was genuine hope that the UN would be empowered as Copenhagen's policy makers had long wished. This systemic change, and the attendant new action space was acknowledged from the very start in Government documents, mirroring the NATO Strategic Concepts – and there was more to come. Defeat, by the slimmest of margins (0.7%) in a referendum on the Maastricht treaty[67] forced the government to withdraw from the European Common Foreign and Security Policy – pushing it towards NATO as the sole outlet for security. Obviously this could not have been at a more important time, as experiences with the UN in Bosnia, where a Danish unit fought a tank battle with Serb forces[68], was changing Danish attitudes to security policy – force was becoming useful for maybe the first time in 150 years. It became apparent over the period that the hitherto mentioned change from 'threats' to 'risks' and the switch from territorial defence to expeditionary capacity was fundamentally altering the nature of combat, even as Denmark began to acquire 'enemies'[69] at the turn of the century.

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[60] Ibid, p.42

[61] Doeser, p.227

[62] Ibid

[63] Ibid, p.228

[64] Reiker, p.126

[65] Holm (1997) p.54

[66] Wivel (2005b) p.418

[67] http://www.eu-oplysningen.dk/dkeu/dk/afstemninger/afstemning/1992/

[68] Jakobsen & Møller, p.107

[69] Jakobsen (1999)

This new policy was 'active internationalism'[70], taking 'norm entrepreneurship' onto a new level, was pioneered by a cross party group of policy-makers who were keen to 'restore Denmark's ruined credibility as an ally and partner in international cooperation[71]', in the words of Liberal Foreign Minister Uffe Elleman-Jansen. While it may seem to be a sea-change from Cold War positions, it can also be viewed as a more subtle binding of previously divergent strands of Danish policy: strands which had been 'compartmentalised[72]' in the Cold War, meaning different expectations of cooperation in foreign affairs with Scandinavia, Europe, NATO or the UN. Now Denmark could reasonably consider bringing its values to the world – and while 'active internationalism' was a principally humanitarian concept, the military aspect was implicit: Denmark was now willing to act: *'If we are not ready actively to defend these values, we undermine our own security in the long run. War and peace are no longer a question of defending Denmark's borders. If stability in Europe is to be made secure – and that goes without saying – we have to do our part'*[73]. So spoke FM Jensen before committing troops to the UN mission in the Balkans in 1992. In the security context, Maastricht exemptions had pushed Denmark down a 'mainstream Atlanticist' route in NATO, but from these tentative beginnings in the early 90s, a 'super Atlanticism[74]' would evolve, as we will see in the next chapter.

At this early stage of the post-Cold War era, Denmark was actively supporting projects like the Partnership for Peace (PfP), and being an enthusiastic supporter of the Petersburg tasks. It was also willing to support its rhetoric with actions, for example suspending PfP cooperation with Russia in 1993 over the conflict in Chechnya[75]. From 1988, and its first use by Jensen, until the present day, 'active internationalism' has defined Danish strategic culture, and it will into the future, with the 2008 Danish Defence Review predicting 'long term military operations in the future will be the rule rather than the exception', a situation it sees continuing until at least 2025.

The literature on Danish security policy is awash with references to the change in tack, with journal papers titled 'Paradise to Power' or 'Venus to Mars' typical – it is now also possible to talk of the 'Danish Way of War'. This doctrine, according to Jakobsen & Møller, is based on five principle: Firstly, the most important outcome in a Danish intervention may not always be victory, but the perception that Denmark is seen as a 'good ally'. Logic dictates that a state the size of Denmark cannot hope to lead major operations, so they are deployed with a minimum of caveats and told to cooperate with their superiors, following 'plug and play' principles[76]. Secondly, as befitting a 'norm entrepreneur', promoting UN norms and principles is at the forefront of any deployment, preferably with a mandate – something which was originally an imperative before being removed at the time of the Kosovo conflict. The third principle was alluded to in the introduction in the form of parliamentary consensus, a long-standing principle

[70] Holm (1997) passim

[71] Pettersson & Saxi, p768

[72] Holm (2002) p.24

[73] Jakobsen & Møller

[74] Mouritzen, p.155

[75] Holm, (1997) p.61

[76] Jakobsen & Møller, p.109

which had been lost in the 'footnotes' period – and was pushed to the limit again around the time of the controversial Iraq War, although a 2011 Social Democratic amendment now means a two-thirds majority is now needed[77].

A uniquely Danish doctrine is the 'clean hands' approach, which obligates Danish forces to avoid actions which may breach International Law, and necessitates allowing apprehension or interrogation of prisoners to be handled by local authorities or other alliance members – a policy consistent with the concessions noted in the first principle, but which may seem naïve. Finally, while NATO, as previously noted, adopted ideas of a 'comprehensive approach' into its later Strategic Concepts, Denmark has been following its own version for much longer. Eventually codified in the 2004 Defence Agreement as the Concerted Planning and Action, or CPA[78], it sought to pursue a liberal, democratic transition through a close military and civilian cooperation. Such commitments, and the close proximity to NATO policy, led to Denmark being mooted as the smallest lead nation in a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan, and although financial and personnel limitations meant this had to be refused, it shows the high regard in which this 'Danish Way of War' was held.

A final note on the Danish military doctrine concerns the close attention paid to the welfare of active personnel: again, from the earliest post-Cold War Defence reviews, to the most recent, to where an entire chapter[79] was devoted to education, support and training for soldiers before deployment, during it and into retirement – an emphasis on special capabilities which fits well into Rickli's 'niche' thesis.

The structure these well-trained and supported troops would be serving in can be seen as something of a new NATO model army. As early as 1994, a Danish International Brigade (DIB), had been formed to provide a fully-professional, rapidly-deployable 'dual-assignment' (UN and/or NATO) expeditionary capacity of 4,500 troops, at a time when most of its allies could have seen to be simply ignoring the recommendations of the 1991 SC. From that moment on, there has been an unerring commitment to force modernisation, with even the DIB being seen as obsolete and replaced after the 2004 Danish Defence Agreement. Interoperability was always also seen as key in such a force, with the formation of the Multinational Corps-Northeast, alongside Germany and Poland in 1999 – even if certain aspects of common security taken up by the EU now suffer post-Maastricht.

This 2004 agreement was the final recognition of that move from 'Venus to Mars', and gave the solid, capabilities commitments that made it a 'role model within NATO[80]'. The headline focus was on 'deployability' and anti-terrorism operations, with a noticeable commitment to maintain 1,500 troops continuously deployed, while generously supported and regularly rotated – with a maximum projection of up to 5,000 troops for shorter periods[81]. There was no direct replacement for the DIB, but was an universal force commitment for external, expeditionary

[77] Ibid, p.110

[78] NATO Review: 'Improving civil-military cooperation the Danish way' http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2005/issue2/english/special.html

[79] Danish Department of Defence (2008)

[80] Ringsmose & Rynning, p.60

[81] Danish Department of Defence (2004), p.8

operations, with the only territorial, Cold War hangover coming in the shape of a not yet fully professional Home Guard[82].

Such a commitment to a relatively new type of expeditionary warfare of unpredictable durability, with such an ambitious personnel target would inevitably lead to 'wear-and-tear' factors emerging – as was acknowledged[83]. But the temptation to exploit this new-found focus on output factors was too much, especially as the example set by the Strategic Concepts, or the Brussels and Riga summits was not being widely copied. An example of this would be the NATO 'usability target' for allied states, agreed at the 2004 Istanbul summit[84], in which states would have 40% of their total force strength would be 'structured, prepared and equipped' on NATO lines, and that 8% of the total be deployed or immediately ready for deployment at any given moment[85]. Denmark saw this '40/8' target and placed its own '60/10'[86] marker ahead of it – meaning the majority of Danish force strength be dedicated to NATO tasks, and 10% of it would be deployed at any given time. Such ambitions often run into a brick wall, and so it would happen in the Danish case – as it was forced to delay commitments to ISAF in Afghanistan while troops were redeployed from other operations in Kosovo and Iraq.

This increasingly thin state of the Danish Armed Forces, spread over 70-odd conflicts that it had involved itself in since 1989, was a major theme of the 2008 Defence Commission. It started with a financial warning that 'balancing the books…is not sustainable indefinitely', and that the 'long-term, periodically high-intensive' operations that were now the norm had put an unprecedented strain on equipment budgets, an fact that was supported by the 2010 SC. Despite, or maybe because of this, there was another evolution in the forces concept, with the emphasis on flexible, deployable, and now sturdy forces, capable of undertaking a new type of multi-layered deployment. Now as many as 2,000 continually deployed troops would be capable of undertaking a diverse range of tasks encompassing counter insurgency, armed conflict, stabilisation and policing[87] - a remarkable figure considering Germany could only deploy around 7,000 troops, with a much larger population[88] This commitment to highly-trained, specialised forces, capable of doing 'hard work[89]'fits the template provided by Rickli of a state with 'high strategic ambition', pursuing 'role specialisation', and is consistent with a 'smart state' strategy. The benefits flowing to Denmark from such ambitious commitments are uncertain, even for Danish political scientists and historians, but it does underline a conscious and long standing commitment to maximise influence within NATO.

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[82] Ibid

[83] Ibid, p.4

[84] Ringsmose & Rynning, p.61

[85] Ibid

[86] Ibid

[87] Danish Department of Defence (2008), passim

[88] The Economist *'At Ease'* 15/07/2010

[89] Branner, p.146

By 2008, Denmark was the second highest per-capita contributor to NATO missions[90] - an amazing turnaround in two decades that saw some, rather enthusiastically, offer it as an 'impeccable ally'[91]. Astonishingly, this had happened as Danish defence spending had fallen well below expectations, and sat at only 1.4% of GDP in 2011[92]. While previously, this may have been taken as par for the course, the new post-Cold War focus on outputs over inputs had presented an opportunity to blend a strategic culture based on active internationalism' with a tireless search for the models and structures that could really deliver 'more for less'. This relied heavily on political will being matched by a favourable action space, in complete contrast to what had gone before, but it remains nonetheless remarkable.

Of course, 'Denmark had to reorient its foreign policy one way or the other'[93] in order to avoid 'influence marginalisation'[94] brought on by the loss of the 'Greenland Card', and the Maastricht opt-outs only pushed it further towards NATO, but 20 years of this hard work, and the emergence of capabilities that have allowed Denmark to re-emerge as a strategic actor, have seen the 'footnotes' become a footnote and see Denmark emerge as a model for a new, more flexible, more sustainable and sturdier NATO – and an example to even its larger neighbours.

Netherlands – One step forward, one step back

There is a Napoleon quote which says that 'a country's foreign policy is dictated by its geography'[95], which serves as a good introduction to the Netherlands, for two reasons: firstly, as it was Napoleon who invaded and finally disabused the Dutch of their Great Power aspirations; and secondly because it is the lack of both natural resources or frontiers, and a famously flat landscape which have defined the Netherlands' relationship with world, particularly the three Great Powers which encircle it.

Belgian revolution and separation pushed the new Kingdom of the Netherlands into a peculiar neutrality in the 19th and early 20th centuries - *'By oscillating amongst the British, French and Germans, the Dutch hoped to keep their national independence'*[96] - and keep it they did: even if the definition would be stretched during the First World War, all while maintaining an Empire in East Asia and the Caribbean. This exercise in diplomatic plate-spinning could not hope to survive Nazi aggression, and the years of occupation, with their small triumphs and dark secrets, was to prove transformational for Dutch neutrality.

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[90] Danish Department of Defence (2008), p.19

[91] Ringsmose & Rynning, passim

[92] NATO (2012)

[93] Branner, p.144

[94] Mouritzen, p.158

[95] Steinmetz & Wivel , p.xi

[96] Van Staden, p.41

It was quickly understood that there was only really one option for Dutch foreign policy: 'Dutch politicians displayed a remarkable readiness to leave the major responsibility for the defence of Western Europe to the USA and to trust the US President blindly'[97]. And barring a minor hiccup around the independence of the Dutch East Indies, they stayed true to this - happily bearing the attendant defence costs. The logic was that the US would act as an external balance to the continental powers, particularly France, with the upswing of an accommodating Netherlands gaining favourable status in Washington, and avoiding relegation to the 'third class' of states[98].

A neat 'division of labour' emerged between a European Union serving its economic interests, and NATO serving to ensure that it could continue with a sort of modified version of the pre-War neutrality[99], still oscillating, but assured of its independence. This was a studied policy, not simply dictated by realist expediencies, as a less Atlanticist, more conciliatory approach to the Soviet Union as practiced by its neighbour Germany may well have served better Dutch interests[100] - so it was a choice acknowledged and appreciated in Washington.

This loyalty was demonstrated in Dutch nuclear policy: from the advent of the Multi-Lateral Force (MLF), which was 'developed to provide Germany, and to some extent Italy, with a sense of equality with [the] atomic powers'[101], the Dutch held their nerve, and put alliance stability ahead of self-interest and decided not to veto a plan what could see a certain diminution of Dutch influence - although the MLF never actually came to fruition[102]. There was also a Dutch nuclear industry of economic and strategic advantage, which underlined an ambiguous nuclear policy in general, but this would soon change. The 1970s saw a 'domestication' of Dutch politics, as civil society organisations had sought to redress the post war 'blind' Atlanticism, particularly around nuclear weapons. However, while there were brief fears of 'Hollanditis' taking root, political will remained strong and 'strategic confidence' in the US rode out the Cold War[103].

And so, the end of the Cold War, while removing the threat of invasion over the North European Plain, did not present as massively changed 'action space' for Dutch foreign policy makers. The 'frantic weeks' of January 1990 also carried the unsettling thought of German unification upsetting Dutch attempts to 'anchor' its sometime nemesis in the Euro Atlantic project[104]. There were other peculiarly Dutch problems: the larger Kingdom of the Netherlands still meant the Dutch security space, and its resources, extended to the Caribbean[105], a place where US security interests could be guaranteed, unlike in Europe. This Dutch 'influence

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[97] Ibid, p.40

[98] Ibid, p.42

[99] Siccama, p.22

[100] Van Staden, p.41

[101] Lundestad, p.105

[102] Van der Peet, p.24

[103] Ibid, p.26

[104] Siccama, p.23

[105] Clingendael (2013) p.26

dilemma' emerged as cracks were showing in the 'division of labour' between NATO and the EU, hitherto handled by different government departments[106], and as competencies began to slowly crossover in the new security climate, so did wires. Politically too, cracks emerged between a security-minded school of Dutch FSP, and a development-minded one, broadly (but not entirely) corresponding to right and left wing parties respectively.

However, early prophesies from the frantic weeks, months and years of the Post-Cold War did not emerge, and the new order proved most convivial for a state with the 'legalistic' and 'consensual' traditions of the Netherlands[107]. Its action space is still dictated by geography, that lack of resources still turning the Dutch to the sea and to trade: it is among the world's top ten exporting countries[108], and 70% of its GDP is based on international commerce[109]. These traditions make the pursuit of 'active multilateralism' a natural aim of Dutch FSP, maintaining influence and continuing 500 years of 'mundialism'[110]. 'The Netherlands is capable of generating a big strategic picture, and a contribution to the allied effort'[111], abilities which they have applied in the 22 years we are studying - a fact that has not been lost on its most important ally, the United States[112].

A natural affinity with the Post-Cold War structure did not translate directly into a coherent doctrine, however. There emerged a general confusion over the exact direction of travel, with the armed forces torn between the demands of its allies, squabbling government departments, and the famous 'polder model' of politics which may be laudable in many respects, but is decidedly risk-averse[113]. As previously noted European CDSP wasn't fully trusted, and politicians and policy makers in The Hague were unsure of a more 'political' NATO[114].

Finally, the introduction of Article 100 of the constitution in 2000 saw a de facto need for parliamentary approval for troops on peacekeeping and peace-building operations[115]. While the increased democratic oversight is obviously desirable, it has manifested itself less desirably, as political expediences[116], populist parties, and bandwagons have sapped the previously strong will of Dutch governments. Additionally, this has had knock on effects for the rules of

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[106] Siccama, p.22

[107] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p4

[108] AIV (2012 p.6

[109] AIV (2010c) p.3

[110] Siccama, p.21

[111] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p.5

[112] Wikileaks

[113] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p.5

[114] AIV (2010a)

[115] AIV (2007) p.10

[116] AIV (2006) p.14

engagement for Dutch forces abroad, and issues have emerged over the deployability needed for a modern, flexible force, and expectations of partners in new multinational formations[117].

Despite this confusion, a 'Dutch approach' of sorts has developed. Beginning with the 1995 Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MinBuZa) memo, a policy known as '3D' (Defence, Diplomacy and Development) took shape[118]. Drawing on Dutch strengths, and the emerging concepts around human security[119], the approach is best encapsulated a government catchphrase: 'as civilian as possible, as military as necessary'[120]. Here was an attempt to focus the various arms of Dutch FSP into working together towards common goals, with the added bonus of learning new, transferrable skills.

The initial application of the policy was in the Dutch Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the Uruzgan province of Southern Afghanistan, (which we shall study later) and understandably it had some teething problems. It is a truism to say that the 'Ds' had 'different time horizons, different capacities and speeds, different directions and so on',[121] and were often hard to manage as a cogent whole - but it maintained broad support, with even more critical voices (of which there were many) accepting that the principle remained sound, even an exact definition was 'difficult to pin down'. Not only does '3D' connect core Dutch strengths, both hard and soft, it provided the model for a continuing ability to provide 'framework' status in international operation, as it did in Uruzgan, or in UN operations in Eritrea[122].

The Dutch PRT in Uruzgan may be seen in coming years as something of a watershed in Dutch strategic culture. 3D was an example of modern, comprehensive defence planning that was mirrored in the structure of the Dutch forces that were deployed on the ground. The appearance of a modern force did not hide the strains on capabilities and equipment budgets for these forces, and it is these shortcomings that resonate most strongly: no matter how well the Ministry of Defence had played a bad hand, creating a ‘benchmark’ structure for NATO states according to some[123], the scale of the defence cuts since 1991 was still most newsworthy.

In 2008, the defence budget was the same in actual terms as that of 1990, and by 2011, the Netherlands had the 2nd smallest per capita defence budget in NATO: was this trend to continue, they was on course to spend less than 1% of GDP on defence by the middle of the decade[124]. A general decline in economic terms, coupled with the attendant loss in capabilities and morale, was of course a problem shared by many NATO states, but there were also peculiarly Dutch problems: the additional strain of the €378 million annual budget of the Koninklijke Marechaussee[125], a gendarmerie-style unit mainly responsible for airports and other

[117] AIV (2007) p.37

[118] Clingendael (2011) passim

[119] AIV (2010a) p.69

[120] Clingendael (2011) p.32

[121] Ibid, p.6

[122] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p.23

[123] de Wijk, p.121

[124] AIV (2012) p.6

[125] Lindley French and Tjepkema, p.35

domestic security matters; or the continuing tensions between branches of the conventional armed forces, hindered rather than helped by the continuation of the '1:2:1 rule' which keeps investment in the navy, army and air force within set ratios[126].

The long term nature of military planning and budgets does not sit well with political short termism, and the defence budget has often been easy meat for Finance Ministers – the arbitrary nature of the Dutch defence investment model has only thus exacerbated this, as long term projects, like the Joint Strike Fighter program to replace the F16 fighter jet have been caught up in a budget lag which has tripped up most who have tried to become involved[127]. More general problems, such as the 'planning paradox' which sees civil servants preparing for 'fast in, fast out' operations that are extended indefinitely, with the consequent shortfalls in equipment and materiel having to be made up by the MoD itself, made a defence budget like the one of 2008 the 'most brutal'[128], with the irreversible loss of certain capabilities, such as a tank division – the most prominent government advisory body on foreign and security matters described the continuation of such cuts as 'irresponsible', adding 'no sensible person would respond to financial difficulties by cancelling his fire insurance'[129].

The acknowledgement that these cuts may now have gone too far has led to many accentuating the negative, but the force transformation has been broadly successful. That the Netherlands is the 'biggest of the small powers' has been touched on in the introduction, but its unusual size left the 1990s Dutch armed forces with a toolbox that was 'wide and shallow'[130], with a range of capabilities befitting a much larger power. The desire to keep some of these capabilities has pushed the Dutch into cooperation, with Belgium in naval matters, and with Germany, through the German/Dutch Corps, an initiative that dates back to 1993 – putting Dutch efforts in the vanguard of the new NATO, particularly in a 'smart defence' context, and going a long way to squaring the 'Deployability vs Downsizing' circle[131] .

The cuts, and the transformation began with the 1991 Defence White Paper, the motto of 'flexibility and mobility' pointing in a modern direction, and the content laying foundations for a leaner, but tougher structure. The next major MoD contribution was the 1993 'Priorities Memo', with threat-based planning replaced by a modern capabilities-based focus, a commitment to out of area operations, and an end to conscription[132]– and the transformation was completed with the 2000 White Paper which established the Armed Forces' expeditionary character, and consigned the Cold War structure to history. The Dutch have also proved adept at strengthening the armed forces on an individual level, consistent with Rickli's thesis: documents like the 2006 Militair-Strategische Verkenning provided a foundation for better-trained, supported and deployed soldiers, allowing the Dutch Armed Forces not only to participate in, but also to lead medium-scale operations: a 'national ambition' strengthened by the

[126] Ibid, p.20

[127] Scott-Smith & Smeets, passim

[128] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p.14

[129] AIV (2012) p.9

[130] de Wijk, p.125

[131] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p.11

[132] Ibid

commission in 2007 of the HNLMS Johan de Wit, an amphibious landing vessel essential for 'command and control' abilities[133].

Of course, each of the documents mentioned above also contained a variety of cuts[134], and it is these 'tensions between ambition and capability'[135] that reveal the paradox in contemporary Dutch strategic culture. Political short-termism, inter-service and inter-departmental rivalry, along with prevailing economic conditions have given the Dutch much reason to be pessimistic, but this often masks the strong foundations that have, almost against the odds, been built since 1991. These problems have ensured that the future Dutch role remains uncertain, but there are also indications, such as with '3D', that the possibilities for increased 'jointery', and continued cooperation with fellow NATO states, exist – and while even this most outward looking and international of states may have to resist the temptation to keep its 'head down' in foreign policy terms, its own history gives much reason for renewed strategic confidence.

Norway: Slowly but Surely

The timeline for understanding the practice of Norwegian strategic culture is obviously somewhat shorter, given that it only achieved independence from more than 500 years of Danish, and then Swedish rule in 1905. It would be no surprise that neutrality would be a natural starting point for an independent Norway, whose first Foreign Minister described the two principle aims of Norwegian Foreign Policy as 'to defend Norwegian economic interests, and to keep the country out of war between European powers.'[136] As with almost all neutral states, the Second World War was not kind to that neutrality, with the Wehrmacht invasion of April 1940 just narrowly ahead of a British attempt to secure a vital beachhead into the Baltic.

As elsewhere in Europe, the experiences of that conflict were paramount in choosing a way forward, and while Norway was interested in principle in a Scandinavian defence agreement, it was also adamant that this should include the United States, a position that was eventually shared by Denmark and Iceland[137]. Some saw Norwegian entry as 'NATO á la Carte'[138], as it reacted to Russian concerns by having caveats in its NATO policy regarding an absence of foreign bases on Norwegian territory, restrictions on exercises or bases in sensitive regions close to the Russian border, and eventually a complete ban on nuclear weapons[139]. While this may seem like a strange manifestation of alliance solidarity, it was just an example of 'integration and shielding'[140], the tactic of concomitantly dissuading Russian interference, while reassuring Moscow that its intentions were peaceful: on closer examination there were caveats to the

[133] Lindley-French & Tjepkema, p.23

[134] AIV (2012) passim

[135] Lindley French & Tjepkema, p.23

[136] Reiker, p.152

[137] Lundestad, p.31

[138] Honkanen, p.41

[139] Lodegaard , p.210

[140] Reiker, p.153

Norwegian caveats, whereby all of these restrictions only applied in peacetime, with the obvious corollary that plans existed to change this posture if needs be - leading us to conclude that 'Norwegian policy, with all its stated restraints, probably [fitted] US requirements quite well'[141].

The United States certainly found Norway to be strategically useful because of its favourable location, and there was extensive intelligence cooperation throughout the Cold War[142], a relationship that was probably smoothed by significant military aid, (until 1965 40% of Norwegian defence expenditures were effectively bankrolled by the US)[143] but Oslo was happy to be part of this 'alliance within an alliance'[144] which was of great reassurance for a state geographically and politically on the European periphery. It was a cooperative member, chastising Denmark for low defence spending in the 1950s[145], and choosing to opt out of EC membership in the 1970s[146], but also a 'loyal critic'[147], sharing its neighbour's reservations on many issues, though only registering one 'official reservation', around the Strategic Defence Initiative in 1986.

In such a favourable context, in the Post-Cold War, Norway was almost inevitably going to be disadvantaged. With a 'doorstep' that was entirely unchanged, it could be argued that instability in the new Russia would actually prove to be disadvantageous to the new Norwegian action space. Concerns were plentiful: Norway no longer seemed to have a 'free ticket'[148] to the NATO inner circle, as a shift of focus from the High North towards the emergent states of Central and Eastern Europe led to the threat of marginalisation. As public support for NATO and Norway's Atlantic identity actually rose in the early 1990s[149], and the European Union was rejected for the second time, (although somewhat counter-intuitively, Norway takes part in EU CDSP formations that Denmark is constitutionally unable to) Norway's greatest strategic interest became the need to keep Cold War NATO infrastructure and investment in Norway[150], resulting in slowed reaction to the emerging structure. Additionally, while public support remained strong, amongst policy makers there emerged fears that American disengagement could render the vital security guarantee provided by Article V useless[151].

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[141] Lodegaard, p.218

[142] Lundestad, p.79

[143] Ibid, p.50

[144] Reiker, p.153

[145] Petersson & Saxi, p.766

[146] Reiker, p.153

[147] Petersson & Saxi, p.762

[148] Rottem, p.627

[149] Reiker, p.158

[150] Petersson & Saxi, p.158

[151] Rottem, p.630

Such attitudes persisted until relatively late into our period of study, but change did come. As fears of US disengagement failed to materialise, and the United Nations failed to develop as the strategic actor many Norwegians would have liked it to, the way it perceived this new security environment also changed. The emergence of the 'wars of choice' of the new millennium made them potential tools for those who chose to use them[152], something which was given even more resonance as the economic crisis of 2008 removed the ability for many European states to make that choice. Additionally, increased Russian assertiveness brought the issue of the High North back to a degree of prominence, as previously ignored Norwegian concerns[153] began to gain traction. While there were increased tensions with Moscow, the two states were able to reach an agreement over the hitherto intractable problem of the Barents Sea area, with its huge oil and gas potential[154]. Almost as if it has come full-circle, Norway has again been able to assert its credentials as a reliable, and useful, ally, and 'transatlantic bridge-builder'[155].

The Norway of 2011, in the aftermath of its contribution to the Libyan campaign had eventually come round to adopting a more proactive version of mainstream NATO military doctrine, something that had led to praise from the US, as we saw in the introduction, and a general feeling that Norway had joined Denmark in the 'top tier'. This conversion to the NATO way of war was achieved without any real attempt to find a uniquely Norwegian doctrine, beyond general 'human security' concepts, although there was a brief attempt to push Arctic-trained Norwegian troops as perfectly suited to the rigours of the Afghan winter[156]. What was more significant was the idea that Norwegian 'defence identity' could be a useful tool for foreign and security policy itself, and that there was not necessarily any conflict between the humanitarian aspects of Norwegian policy, and the more self-interested need to be seen as a good ally - although tensions between the two still exist=.

This was a stark contrast to what had happened before. It would be as late as the turn of the century when Norway finally abandoned its Cold War ideas of territorial defence, and begin moving towards a modern, expeditionary force[157]. There were other reasons behind this, besides the previously noted security environment. Norwegian regard for the UN as a security actor was slow to wane, which spoke much to a deep-seated wish to be seen as a peace-loving nation with a high sense of moral purpose – 'we are a peaceful and cooperative people'[158]. The Norwegian Armed Forces were seen as a sort of extension of this, and through conscription achieved the status as a 'nation building'[159] force which was in 'no rush' to change[160].

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[152] Græger (forthcoming) p.15

[153] Rottem, p.630

[154] '*Russia and Norway agree deal over oil-rich Barents Sea*' BBC News 07/06/2011 http://www.bbc.com/news/business-13686049

[155] Rottem, p.620

[156] Græger (2011) p.9

[157] Græger & Leira, p.57

[158] Rottem, p.620

[159] Græger (2011) p.12

[160] Ibid, p.5

It was also in no rush to change a force structure which was almost entirely territorial, with planning for a full-frontal Russian assault featuring in defence concepts until as late as 1998[161]. While as early as 1993, the expeditionary 'Telemark' battalion had been formed[162], this was still very much with UN operations in mind. As noted above, the 'nation building' instinct of the Armed Forces was strong, and it also had a physical dimension, as resources and manpower were evenly spread over the vast Norwegian territory in a deliberate attempt to use the military as tool of government 'district policy' aimed at supporting rural communities[163]. Inevitably, downsizing was met with considerable opposition from those unconvinced that the shift from 'quantity to quality' was really in their interest[164]. It would take the failure of the outdated structure to deliver results in Kosovo for change to be instigated.

This break from 50 years of 'people's defence' from 2000 onwards has created a mainstream, modern and flexible force[165], albeit one that is far from the top of the class. There is one thing which distinguishes Norway however: 'Nervos belli, pecuniam infinitam' reads the Cicero quote, and Norway's oil and gas reserves, and its control of the world's largest sovereign wealth fund[166], have bequeathed an ability to make procurement decisions that are the envy of other European states. Twice as large as that of Denmark or Finland, and significantly larger than neighbouring Sweden[167] Norway's defence budget even took advantage of the economic crisis, rising in 2009[168],as most others were being slashed drastically. This has given the Ministry of Defence the ability to make procurement decisions, like the purchase of the five Fridtjof Nansen-class frigates between 2004-11, that go against NATO counsel[169], because they would be significantly underused; or go through the project proposal for the new F35 Joint Strike Fighter, which caused so much controversy elsewhere, with a minimum of fuss. Even if Norwegian defence expenditure still falls (just) short of the 2% target, Norwegian Kroners will continue to go further than non petro-currencies for the foreseeable future.

The general shift from threat to risk-based capabilities planning did not necessarily apply to Norway, and for a time it appeared to be left behind on NATO's 'forgotten flank'[170]. For much of the period Norwegian behaviour could be seen to be that of an 'ambivalent ally'[171], unsure

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[161] Græger (2011) p.5

[162] Reiker, p.156

[163] Græger (2011) p.8

[164] Græger & Leira, p.63

[165] Græger (2011) p.6

[166] '*Citi wins Norway fund business from JPMorgan*' Financial Times 04/05/2014 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d3b8f83a-d224-11e3-8b5b-00144feabdc0.html

[167] NATO (2011)

[168] Græger (2011)

[169] Rottem, p.628

[170] Ibid

[171] Ibid passim

of what the 21st century NATO could offer it. But eventually, the deep seated Atlanticist worldview reasserted itself it seems as if Norway has found a place for itself again.

'*The evolving nature of conflict presents opportunities for Davids to fight alongside Goliaths, if they bring the right slingshot.*' [172] Winning the natural resource lottery has given Norway the ability to acquire a variety of slingshots, and the possibility of joining coalitions of the willing (and able) with less risk of economic sacrifice[173] having to be made domestically. Finally, aligning its alliance responsibilities with traditional Norwegian regard for its moral obligations has given rise to an idea that Norway is quietly happy to measure the influence its wields through the esteem in which its allies hold it[174].

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Analysing a state's capabilities, first by considering its security environment, then the force structures and doctrines it adopts in relation to that, are the most reliable method of understanding where it sees itself in the world. States with low, or limited, strategic ambitions would not have made the same choices as the three states we are studying: all have – to a strikingly similar degree, albeit at different speeds – tailored their military capabilities towards a NATO ideal, seeking to maximise their influence, and refuting Ringsmose's hypothesis about small state military spending being a 'waste of resources', as Military Policy becomes very much part of a broader Foreign Policy, and becomes part of a broader strategic culture.

In line with Rickli too, their modern, flexible and well-trained troops are able to provide a useful niche for NATO missions, something we shall examine in more detail in the next chapter, and particularly in the case of Denmark and the Netherlands, their increasingly sophisticated military doctrines allow more fundamental, national values around human security and liberal democracy to be applied, and even exported in a classic norm entrepreneur fashion, as we will see in the last two chapters.

How was this achieved? While Norway proved initially resistant, Denmark and the Netherlands embraced the new Post-Cold War security environment to totally restructure a principally territorial force into a model NATO, expeditionary one. As we have seen, there have been challenges - shared by all, principally around materiel and procurement budgets – but the Netherlands led the way in joint procurement with neighbours, and Denmark pushed NATO targets to the limit, and even passed them, with the 60/10 commitment.

In doing so, they provide a valuable template for NATO states, small and large, looking to square the circle of increasing 'outputs' in the face of declining 'inputs', and moving towards 'smart defence' principles. An early example of a state copying this was of course Norway, which finally modified the Cold War 'nation building' culture of its own armed forces to mirror

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[172] '*Who's Afraid of Norway*?' New York Times 24/08/2003

[173] Græger (forthcoming) passim

[174] Ibid, p.22

the new template, a decision which allowed for more influence in NATO, as we will see later o n.

As NATO became more sure of itself towards the end of our period, so did Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway. Each has, in an individual way, had to adapt, and make difficult choices about how its strategic interests are best served – particularly in regards to the decline of the UN as a security actor – but each has found an enhanced role in the new NATO. Whether it be the Dutch ability to provide a 'big picture', or the Danish epiphany over 'active internationalism' being well served through the aegis of NATO, these smart states, and their much larger allies have found the relationship to be mutually beneficial.

Chapter 2 : Conflict

And so we move on to analyse the final aspect of these small states' military doctrines, as per Rickli: that of operational deployments. In the introduction, we defined 'smallness' in a relational context and in the first chapter then discovered that the capabilities these small states possess are not always insignificant. In this second chapter, we will examine the power these states exercise. Armed force is an acknowledged and much-studied instrument of foreign and security policy for large states, but one which remains almost as unknown from the small state perspective as a decade ago, when de Wijk (2004) tried to put that perspective into a broader NATO context.

That broader NATO context is one which has evolved somewhat during our period, as the 'wars of necessity', framed in the context of avoiding humanitarian catastrophe in the 1990s, have been replaced by the 'wars of choice' that came after, a concept best articulated by Richard Haass' 2009 book 'War of Necessity, War of Choice', although this was resolutely form the large state perspective. Backlighting this more expeditionary NATO has been the decline of the United Nations as a security actor, although it has continued to be the legitimiser for states which put a premium on their obedience to International Law.

But this also applies to small states, and they have also begun to view armed force as just another 'tool' in their own strategic culture 'toolbox'[175], an idea that has been examined from an individual perspective, but rarely from more general small state point of view. Over the period, they have realised the power they exercise, while rarely being key to the success of an individual operation, can be in the national political interest, and give tangible benefits to their perception. Especially in the context of 'two-tier' alliance, small states can impress by doing things that much larger, more capable states won't. This 'willingness'[176] to do the heavy lifting for NATO can even be seen to be an integral part of the strategic culture of these states[177], and a tangible effort to compensate for what Rickli called 'power deficit' - and is an obvious example of a 'smart state' strategy in their FSP.

In this chapter, unlike the previous, we will consider Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway collectively, through four prominent NATO operations, starting in Bosnia and ending in Libya, to try an determine what general trends can be determined from small states over this period. Looking at the most relevant deployments; the perceptions and performances on that deployment; and finally the perceived benefits or problems that these deployments brought, will allow us to get a better idea as to what motivates these states to go to war, risking the lives of their citizens, when their participation in that conflict will not necessarily be the difference between success and failure (such as success and failure can be measured in the new asymmetric and ill-defined forms of conflict).

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[175] Rasmussen (2005) p.71

[176] Interview with author

[177] Wivel (2005b) p.418

The theoretical basis will come again from Rickli, as it is important to understand how these states brought the niche capabilities they had developed to bear on their contribution to foreign deployments. In addition, to understand the perceptions and outcomes of these deployments, we will borrow from Ringsmose & Børgesen, who saw that niche capabilities were not the only determining factor in a successful mission: 'military capabilities and political resolve are the two fundamental ingredients in any combatant's war-fighting potential.'[178]

Persuading publics unused to foreign intervention, who often had distinctly non-interventionist ideas of what constituted security policy, required governments to create strategic narratives that justified their actions. Quoting Morgenthau 'that public opinion is not a static thing to be discovered and classified by public opinion polls as plants are by botanists, but that it is a dynamic , ever changing entity to be continuously created and recreated'[179] - especially in the face of potential human costs. To succeed, governments would have to find something that resonated with core values of their electorates - even if that meant blurring the lines of what constituted promoting a peaceful world order; they would have to be clear in their aims, even if what constituted victory was not itself clear; and the would also have to be consistent, as the emergence of opposition and counter-narratives would not be kind to governments who could not justify the risks they were taking.

Bosnia: Transformational Impotence

To consider the events around the end of the Cold War from 1989-91, it is often easy to forget that there were other geo-political issues to be dealt with. One such was the first Gulf War, a conflict which took much of the attention of the larger NATO allies, and as we saw even Denmark contributed to the naval coalition, assisted by a smaller Norwegian coastguard vessel[180]. Possibly because of the events in the Gulf, the first rumblings of discord in the Western Balkans were largely ignored, even if the warnings were apocalyptic: we heard from the BBC that 'The leaders of Yugoslavia are stirring a cauldron of blood that would soon boil over'[181].

As the warnings intensified, and the first shots were fired, NATO was indecisive, pulled in different directions, and unsure as to what role, if any, the United States should play in solving a European problem[182]. Early solutions offered by the international community were simply sticking plasters in place of real, considered action in a region that had vexed Western policy makers since time immemorial, and NATO problems were intensified by the fact that members like Greece or Germany were compromised somewhat by their actions towards belligerents in the rapidly fragmenting Yugoslavia[183].

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[178] Ringsmose & Børgesen, p.505

[179] Ibid, p.512

[180] Petersson and Saxi, p.769

[181] Glenny, Loc. 13017

[182] Ibid, Loc. 13143

[183] Ibid, Loc. 13115

The biggest plaster was UNPROFOR, created in February 1992 in order to create conditions for peace talks in both Croatia and Bosnia, but which was unable to do what many had hoped, from the start. 'Outgunned, demoralised and subjected to the most inflexible bureaucracy in military history, this force became a convenient scapegoat for everybody'[184]. UNPROFOR was supported wholeheartedly by all of our states, all three hitherto active peacekeepers, all three hopeful, to differing degrees, that it was in conflicts like the one in Yugoslavia that the UN could make itself useful as a security actor in the Post-Cold War era – and it was through two key events during this deployment that the states began to realise that this might not be possible. While not connected directly to later NATO operations, the two examples are both key to understanding the evolution of strategic culture in both the Denmark and the Netherlands.

Firstly, in April 1994, Danish forces close to Tuzla came under attack from Bosnian Serb positions[185]. Despite the restrictive rules of engagement, the Danish commander retaliated, with the first and only tank battle in Danish history, and the seventy-two rounds he fired were the first fired in anger since 1864[186].The battle was won, but despite this, and other attacks from Bosnian Serb units, the UN was either unwilling, or unable to change its stance, leading the battle commander to subsequently accuse the UN of endangering his men's lives[187]. The result was an enthusiastic public response, the commander becoming a media star, and the utility of force, for almost the first time, becoming clear to Danish policy makers[188].

Just over a year later, probably the darkest moment of the whole conflict occurred in the town of Srebrenica, at the time under the nominal control of a small Dutch force of peacekeepers. It was one of six such towns[189] which provided the only real UN guarantee towards the Bosniak population, but as with the mission in general, this guarantee was not up to scratch. The facts, as they are, show that the Bosnian Serb forces entered Srebrenica on the 13th of July and methodically murdered 8,000 unarmed civilians over a period of days, before continuing the offensive with an attack on another safe haven[190]. While the arguments over the conduct of the Dutch command and forces in Srebrenica have been the subject of heated debate[191], they were undoubtedly outnumbered by the Bosnian Serb forces, and repeated requests for assistance were turned down[192]. The consequences for Dutch military policy were immediate and sustained: causing ripples which brought down a government in 2002[193], and as late as July 2014, Dutch courts were still trying to apportion blame. It also had ramifications for future Dutch deployments, and force structures, as in future missions air support for Dutch troops

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[184] Ibid

[185] '*In Bosnia, UN Troops Finally go to War*' The Washington Post 05/05/1994

[186] Saxi, p.38

[187] '*NATO Commander Asks Arms-Free Zone at Bosnia City*' New York Times 21/05/1994 http://www.nytimes.com/1994/05/21/world/nato-commander-askes-arms-free-zone-at-bosnia-city.html?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3Aw

[188] Jakobsen (1999)

[189] Glenny, Loc. 13315

[190] Ibid

[191] '*Dutch Government quits over* Srebrenica' BBC News 16/04/2002 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1933144.stm

[192] '*Serb forces Fight Dutch UN Troops in Eastern Bosnia*' New York Times 12/07/1995

[193] '*Dutch Government quits over* Srebrenica' BBC News 16/04/2002 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1933144.stm

would be provided by the Dutch Air Force – a commitment that would require sustained investment in that area[194].
More immediately, the horror of Srebrenica proved a galvanising force in NATO finally taking decisive action in the conflict. An involvement that had started with a naval blockade on the Adriatic, had, despite the realities on the ground, only progressed as far as Operation 'Deny Flight' by July 1995, enforcing a no-fly zone above Bosnia, and providing limited air to ground strikes when needed: it had not even been able to provide assistance to the Dutch forces in Srebrenica, despite the presence of Dutch F16s. Danish and Norwegian F16s had also participated, as they would in 'Deliberate Force', the NATO response to the continuing atrocities, which in only 12 days in August and September of that year persuaded the Bosnian Serb leadership to pursue a negotiated settlement[195]. 'Deliberate Force' represented both an American commitment to the overall mission in the former Yugoslavia, and a determination to find a solution, despite the differences which remained between the UK and France on one hand, and Germany on the other[196]. The Royal Netherlands Air Force, in particular, also distinguished itself, flying almost 200 sorties over these 12 days, the highest number outside the three Security Council members - a welcome reassurance that Dutch security policy could make positive contributions to collective security.

It would takes some months of negotiations before the signing of the Dayton agreement in Paris on the 14th of December, but as the 60,000 NATO troops in IFOR deployed soon after, it would at least prove to be the necessary response that civilians in Bosnia had waited almost five years for – from 1996 onwards, no Bosnian died in military conflict. This was a robust 'peace enforcement' operation, with a humanitarian aspect which made it relatively uncontroversial for the small Northern European allies, and had the advantage of significant continuity with UNPROFOR: the Dutch forces, consisting of a mechanised combat battalion, and a logistics squadron, would be serving under British command in Northwestern Bosnia, and the Scandinavian detachment would serve in a joint Nordic-Polish battalion, under American command in the North of the country.

A glance at the small print, however brought some small, but significant differences: While the Dutch and Danes sent their forces with relatively uncomplicated rules of engagement, and were happy to serve on the front line, the Norwegian contingent was initially sent primarily in a 'support' capacity, with medical and logistics companies serving 'in the rear with the gear'[197] as their Danish and Polish colleagues took the risks further forward. Fortunately, they did so in a much-improved theatre of operations, as all sides mostly kept to the peace agreement. IFOR's mission would only last one year, before it was replaced by the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in December 1996. Here Norway did choose to commit combat troops, with the 'Telemark' expeditionary battalion used for the first time since its formation[198] - a move that it was hoped would bring some visibility to the Norwegian contribution, to go along with considerable financial contributions.

SFOR would be the last major NATO operation in Bosnia, but it did last until 2003. The success of IFOR in stabilising Bosnia, canton by canton, allowing free elections to be held, meant that SFOR, and its Danish, Dutch and Norwegian components, would begin sending forces home from mid-1997 onwards. The successes were not generally on the field of battle - apprehending

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[194] Scott-Smith & Smeets, p.54

[195] '*Peace support operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina*' NATO website http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52122.htm?selectedLocale=en

[196] Glenny, Loc. 13286

[197] Saxi p.1

[198] Ibid p.39

war criminals, releasing hostages, protecting civil functions - but they were a step up from all the peacekeeping operation that had gone before, and served as an introduction to a new style of overseas deployment – these experiences on the ground were to serve as a template for later experiences further from home. NATO may have failed to live up to the 1991 Strategic Concept's idea 'increased opportunities for the successful resolution of crises at an early stage', but the impotence of the initial stages contrasted with the effectiveness of the 12 day campaign that brought the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table, and a clearer vision would emerge in future: the age of military interventions had begun.

Kosovo: War at Last!

The unravelling of Yugoslavia into its national constituencies had begun in Kosovo, and there it would also end. The attacks against the Serbian population in the province began in early 1996, as IFOR was still pacifying Bosnia: Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) leaders felt that their plight was being forgotten as the eyes of the world were on Bosnia, and drastic action was needed. This drastic action did not immediately gain the desired traction however, as a certain Western war-weariness, and the need for the cooperation with Belgrade in Bosnia meant few wanted to be involved. This would change.

Instability in neighbouring Albania, with its obvious kinship ties to Kosovars, and political tensions in Macedonia, with a large Albanian minority, concentrated on the border, led Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic into a cack-handed attempt to manipulate the fragile region. 'Kicking the hornet's nest' in Kosovo provoked a conflict that threatened to spill over into the wider Balkans, as around 230,000 refugees left, mainly to neighbouring states already on the risk of collapse, but Milosevic could also sense that NATO, and the US in particular, may not have the stomach to stop him. As the cycle of KLA attacks and Serbian reprisals worsened, the pressure on NATO to act became stronger. In the autumn of 1998, it began to apply pressure, putting states on high alert, though a last-minute ceasefire, with the attendant need for OSCE monitors, and the withdrawal of Serbian forces was signed.

It predictably lasted only a matter of weeks, and peace talks were scheduled for February. Fearing arrest by the IWCT in the Hague, Milosevic did not attend in person, and despite an agreement in principle to end the conflict, was unwilling to accept foreign peacekeepers in Kosovo – calling NATO's bluff on threatened reprisals. Finally, the Americans were convinced of the need to take action, but many were not. Serbia itself was still stable, and a major regional economic and transport hub, so many were wary of destabilising it too. Additionally, there was no real endgame for a bombing campaign, and critics were lining up. 'The only alternative to shooting yourself in the foot, is not shooting yourself in the foot' Carl Bildt, former UN envoy to Bosnia was reported to have said – but NATO did not want to lose face, and so the bombing began.

As the bombing inevitably went on, Serbia refused to capitulate, and as the list of targets became more controversial, the search for a solution remained evasive: and although the tough talk of Tony Blair in particular sought to force a solution, it was the soft words of Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari into the ear of his Russian counterpart that persuaded Moscow to withdraw guarantees to Milosevic, and tip the balance in favour of a ground operation.

Although the scope of any such operation was similarly vague to the bombing campaign, it nonetheless succeeded in stabilising Kosovo, even if that stabilisation was at the price of ethnic cohabitation.

In the build up to the bombing campaign, Denmark and Norway had been particularly wary of going ahead without a UN Security Council resolution – though first Denmark, and then Norway relented when it became clear that there was a general NATO consensus. The Dutch government, while mindful of the legal implications, were more mindful of the fact that they had unfinished business with Milosevic.

And while all three contributed aircraft, the Netherlands' twenty F16s[199] were by far the largest per capita contribution, something they were able to do from the very first day of strikes, with Dutch fighters assisting in the initial wave of attacks aiming to disable Yugoslav air defences[200], even shooting down a Yugoslav MiG-29 fighter in the process[201]. The Royal Dutch Air Force truly distinguished itself in the aerial campaign, and was happy with the perception that it had found itself elevated to NATO's 'A-team'[202], with particular credit given to the 'swing role' capacity they developed, whereby Dutch F16s deployed on combat missions could quickly be reconfigured for reconnaissance missions. Flexibility and deployability had been the motifs used in describing the land force transformation of the previous decade, so it was a welcome to see that the Air Force could do the same – the Dutch had found themselves a useful niche.

Danish and Norwegian contributions to the air campaign had proven somewhat less useful, although their participation was welcome, and acknowledged. Denmark's eight F16s had been deployed without crucial 'laser pods' which would have allowed them to use targeted ordinance, a crucial attribute in a campaign that was explicit in its aim of avoiding civilian casualties – though they were still permitted to function in an air-to-ground capacity[203]. Norway deployed 6 F16s, but was the most critical of all the small allies min the nature of the bombing, with civilian targets coming under specific scrutiny: a stance which could be seen as a continuation of its Cold War 'loyal critic' role, as Norway was available when called upon, although only in a surveillance capacity[204].

Many aspects of the Kosovo campaign were unsatisfactory from a Norwegian perspective, and the government did not share the satisfaction of its Danish and Dutch equivalents' about it. The deployment of the Norwegian ground troops for their KFOR role took three months, almost twice as long as for their Danish counterparts, reputedly prompting the NATO commander, Lt

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[199] Dutch MoD 'Operation Allied Force' (2009)

[200] '*Early Attacks Focus on Web Of Air Defense*' New York Times 25/03/1999

http://www.nytimes.com/1999/03/25/world/conflict-in-the-balkans-the-attack-early-attacks-focus-on-web-of-air-defense.html

[201] '*Mig 29 als trofee op F-16*' Trouw 29/03/1999 http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/5009/Archief/archief/article/detail/2738514/1999/03/26/Mig-29-als-trofee-op-F-16.dhtml

[202] Scott-Smith & Smeets, p.51

[203] Petersson & Saxi, p771

[204] Ibid

Gen Sir Mike Jackson to comment 'What took you so long? Have you been walking?'[205]. As we saw in the previous chapter this would prompt a wholesale review of the force structure of the Norwegian forces – but that laggard battalion was not the first Norwegian ground deployment of the campaign. Government modesty, or secrecy, had led to Norwegian participation in the tense initial stages of the campaign being left unreported. It was a Norwegian Forsvarets Spesialkommando unit that was serving beside the British SAS as KFOR Special Forces entered the Kosovar capital Pristina, and was involved in the incident with Russian forces occupying the city's airport which became one of the most famous moments in the campaign[206]. A pattern was emerging whereby Norway sought to do its work quietly and effectively, and would seek influence through reliability.

For Denmark, the intervention was undertaken with an unprecedented level of public and political support, in what was its first real war since 1864. Even though the government had initially been wary of how such a use of force would be received, this was reflected in its unease about declaring that it was indeed 'at war'. It needn't have worried, as a Gallup poll in May, just before the deployment of ground troops, found the Danish public to be the most supportive of the mission among 12 European states. The parties themselves picked up on this, with even diverse groups like the sometime-pacifist Socialist People's Party, or the isolationist Danish People's Party voting to support KFOR when they had previously voted against the air war. As other European allies prevaricated, Danish support was solid, a 'logical, even predictable continuation of the foreign policy Denmark pursued in the 1990s' – Denmark 'never questioned the Alliance policy and accepted the tough line adopted by the United States', a sign of how things would develop through the next decade.

The most significant aspect of the Kosovo intervention was the lack of a UN mandate - indicating that all three of our states had lost faith in that institution and now so a general NATO consensus as being adequate for a foreign intervention. The overall success of the mission, despite the initial, and widespread opposition, also underlined the utility of force, even for the smallest states.

It was also the conflict that illustrated how useful niche capabilities could be - as we saw with the Royal Netherlands Air Force and their 'swing role' capability, and how a lack of such a capability, as Denmark witnessed, could lead to a more negative outcome. For Norway in particular, a certain niche capability, its Special Forces, was able to contribute, when a more conventional but outdated force proved entirely inadequate. This would not happen again.

Afghanistan: Blood Prices and Caveats

The Afghan conflict is one of extremes, just as the country has itself been mythologised as a land of extremes. In the contemporary popular imagination, as it tapers to a protracted end it is enlightening to be reminded of certain pertinent facts, from a NATO context. The Al Qaeda attacks which provoked the conflict, also brought the first invocation of Article V, something

[205] Jakobsen (2012)

[206] Græger (forthcoming) p.13

which had originally been conceived to protect Western Europe, and not the continental United States[207]. While the European response was 'swift and firm'[208], and the rhetoric 'Nous sommes tous américains', the evolution of the American response, from 'axis of evil' to 'war on terror' and beyond precipitated the biggest crisis in Atlantic relations since the end of the Cold War. Militarily, while European allies had strengthened their supportive rhetoric with concrete support in a number of fields, and declared itself willing to do more, it was not to NATO that the US turned for in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), but to an ad-hoc Anglophone coalition consisting of its most trusted allies, with European partners appearing only later.

In addition, the history of the Afghan War cannot be separated from that which began two years later in Iraq. While this was not a NATO mission, each of our states participated to a greater or lesser extent, against a backdrop of considerable public and political opposition, which led eventually in each case to withdrawal. Most prominent was the Dutch contribution of a battle group in Al-Muthanna province[209], under British command, an impressive commitment that masked an unease with the whole operation which is symbolised by a bungled, pre-invasion press conference in which a junior Dutch officer seemed to endorse the coalition by his presence, causing the government to backtrack frantically.

The Danish government was more full-blooded in its support, from the outset – distinguishing itself alongside the UK and Poland as the only European contributors to the initial operation. Newly-elected Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was keen to stress his 'Super Atlanticist' credentials, even if it meant fall out at home, and compromising Denmark's election campaign for the Security Council, which had stressed its peacekeeping and international law credentials[210].

Norwegian support for the Iraq debacle had been tepid and short, but in contrast their involvement in Afghanistan was sustained. The F16s deployed in October 2002 fired the first rounds in anger of any Norwegian forces since World War II, and another break with Norwegian security culture, the Special Forces deployed in various areas alongside American and British units were given publicity by the government in Oslo. This, as we saw in the last chapter, was the first real test of the modernised force structures that Norway had taken so long to implement, and allied confidence was shown when Norway accepted an offer to run a PRT in the Northern Fayrab province, bordering Turkmenistan.

In many ways, this was a low-risk assignment, but one which would, nevertheless cause problems for a governing coalition which contained the anti-NATO Socialist Left party. As we have seen previously, Norway had not traditionally seen itself as a country which waged war, and so the mission was couched primarily in humanitarian terms – the Foreign Minister at the time, Jonas Gahr Støre described Norway's involvement thus: 'We are not there to make war, but to help a state that is impoverished and broken down by war and violence to start up on the difficult path towards peace and development.'[211]

This narrative was to be expected, and so the attempt by ISAF partners to encourage Norway to redeploy into the more volatile southern provinces was a non-starter, even if it did cause some displeasure. A new Norwegian strategic narrative was emerging, whereby it would take on

[207] Lundestad, p273

[208] Ibid

[209] Zaalberg, p.877

[210] Mourtizen, p.160

[211] Ibid, p.11

responsibilities that were not necessarily at the highest level of strategic ambition, but on which they knew they could see out, and fulfil to the best of their abilities. In a conflict that was marked by the caveats and withdrawals of other states, Norway's commitment was appreciated, and the unwillingness to go further south soon forgotten – some have even argued that such commitment even contributed to keeping common NATO installations marked for closure in Norway open, a sign that this new posture could deliver.

While it too had sent an F16 detachment to the initial stages of OEF, Dutch participation in the Afghan conflict was limited until it was offered a PRT at the end of 2005. While it was a sign of confidence in the Netherlands' ability to be a framework nation (a role which it had recently played in a UN peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia[212]) the Dutch public, and many politicians, were sceptical when the plan was presented to the lower house in December. Symbolically introduced by the ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development, the emphasis was on reconstruction and fighting terrorism, with the risks to Dutch life seen as 'acceptable'[213] – and while the aforementioned article 100 of the constitution would be used to denote a peacekeeping mission, article 96 would not – the Netherlands was resolutely not at war.

The forces would be deployed to Uruzgan province, a tough deployment that was nonetheless a sign of confidence that the 'Dutch Approach' could work even in the birthplace of Taliban leader Mullah Omar. Significant outside pressure was applied – from NATO leaders, including the Dutch Secretary General, from Washington, and even from the UN[214], and by February 2006 a broad (enough) consensus had been reached. Task Force Uruzgan (TFU) would be distinct from OEF, because it would be Dutch – it would have a level-headed, 'population-centric' approach, distinct from the American 'enemy-centric'[215] one which concerned many in The Hague. This was rhetoric employed across the coalition, though it would soon be forgotten, Peter-like, by many of its proponents.

The first 1200 members of TFU were deployed in August of that year, to the 'ink-spots' of Tarin Kowt and Deh Rawod, from where they would slowly spread out and reconstruct the province. There was initial success, with lower casualties than British or Canadian forces in neighbouring provinces[216], but as 2007 progressed, the Taliban crept back into areas previously 'cleared' – a phenomenon best captured by the first TFU commander: 'It's like water: if you don't stay, it streams back'[217]. As casualties mounted, the softly-softly Dutch Approach began to look naïve, and cracks began to form in the coalition. Even the MinBuZa and MoD began to distance themselves from previous positions, and tensions between the military-oriented outcomes of the TFU, and the civilian-oriented outcomes of the PRT emerged[218]. At home, the political debate turned towards the idea that Dutch forces were engaged in a 'combat' mission, and not one

[212] de Wijk (2004) p.121

[213] Dimitriu & de Graaf, p.431

[214] Kaarbo & Cantir, p.476

[215] Zaalberg, p883

[216] Ringsmose & Børgesen, p.509

[217] Dimitriu & de Graaf

[218] Zaalberg, p889

based on reconstruction – '*Dutch soldiers were supposed to build schools, promote women's emancipation and invest in local government – and rather not fight too much*[219]'.

Dutch navel-gazing, however, masked the fact that that 2007/08 was a bad year for all concerned in ISAF. The 'Dutch Approach' would be remixed and re-released as '3D', and, while the politicians in the Hague were wringing their hands, TFU and the PRT were learning and adapting their methods on the ground[220], coming a long way towards implementing what they had initially set out to do. Indeed, by early 2009, Uruzgan could even be talked about as a 'flicker of light'[221] in the Afghan darkness. Marines patrolling on bicycles[222], and the development outcomes at the heart of the Dutch model had even caught the eye of the new administration in the White House, which gave a Dutch example towards the effectiveness of its new Afghan strategy. After a meeting with Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, President Obama announced that: '*The Dutch military has been one of the most outstanding militaries there, has shown extraordinary not only military capacity, but also insight into the local culture and the local politics. The review that we conducted in Afghanistan that emphasised the 3Ds of development, diplomacy, as well our ability to deploy troops effectively - that really was adopted from some strategies that had already been pursued effectively by the Netherlands*.'[223]

This was not a one off - Secretary of State Clinton, and articles in the American press[224] saw Uruzgan as the go-to good news story in an increasingly aimless and intractable conflict. But Balkenende would not get to return to the White House. While the mission had been extended for a further year, these good news stories had not been enough to turn the tide of opinion at home, and in February 2010, the government collapsed when its junior partner, the Labour party, withdrew its support for a further extension – although the publication of a government commission into Dutch involvement in the Iraq War a month previously may have also contributed to their decision.

As TFU and the Government collapsed in ignominy, it exposed not a military failure, but what Dutch military historian Chris Klep has described as an 'expectation gap': one between the 'Dutch Approach'/ '3D' and the reality on the ground in Uruzgan; between capabilities and outcomes; and between politicians and the electorate. The 'Dutch Approach' always so vague and catch-all, that any attempts to attribute it to the initial successes of the mission were storing up trouble, as the PRT only actually had two civilian members during this time[225]. The switch, under pressure, to '3D' presented a false alternative that only confused the aims of the mission in the eyes of the public: even as it proved á la mode in the Obama administration, some[226] have posited this as the result of US State Department attempts to force an American strategic change of tack.

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[219] de Graaf

[220] Ibid

[221] '*The Dutch Model - The flower-strewers partly vindicated*' The Economist 12/03/2009

[222] Magnier, Mark '*Dutch troops' method offers lesson : In an Afghan province, they've long followed practices at the heart of a new U.S. mantra*' Los Angeles Times 13/11/2009

[223] '*Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Balkenende of the Netherlands after Meeting*' The White House 14/07/2009

[224] Solomon, Jay '*U.S. Takes Dutch Military as Role Model in Afghan Operation*' Wall Street Journal 04/05/2009

[225] Zaalberg, p.889

[226] Ibid, p890

Domestically, the 'combat or reconstruction' dichotomy was simplistic and misleading, but this debate over military intervention somewhat ironically came to the government fighting an opposition on a battlefield that was not of their choosing, even before TFU had started its first rotation. The initial stages were a huge missed opportunity to sell the mission correctly, with a distinct unwillingness to even mention the Counter-Insurgency (COIN) aspects that were vital to the success of such a mission[227]. A certain post-colonial squeamishness[228] at using such terminology may have been understandable, but it just served to underline a lack of communication between the administration, its civil service and the military – and was a strong indicator of a lack of resolve in the coalition that implemented it. This only served to make the job harder for TFU, even if senior commanders always knew what had to be done, even from the start: 'We must also be prepared, in certain places where we cannot construct, to fight in order to achieve that security'.[229]

TFU was only composed of a maximum of 500 infantry soldiers to cover a large region with 400,000 inhabitants. They fought hard, in a textbook COIN manner[230], losing 24 lives[231]in the process, and while the 'Dutch Approach' may have proven less cuddly than it initially set out to, even critics accept that TFU troops were more culturally aware than other ISAF colleagues[232]. Civilian participation in the PRT had increased significantly over the four years, as doctrinal crinkles were smoothed over, and by 2009 50 NGOs were active in Uruzgan Province, an undeniable improvement from what had gone before. But there was also the knock-on effect of such a tough campaign in such an out-of-the-way location on military budgets, as the MoD had to find funds to keep fighting from its own budget, in the face of the cuts we discussed in Chapter 1. What was, in some ways, another indication of the collapse of political support for the military, came at a time when real, tangible benefits to the Dutch national interest, beyond the kind words of President Obama, had begun to show. It subsequently emerged[233] that, as a direct result of their actions in Uruzgan, the Dutch had been invited into the hallowed 'five eyes' circle of intelligence sharing between the US and its closest allies, an arrangement that didn't last much longer than TFU.

There was significantly less drama in the Danish intervention in Afghanistan. While ongoing commitments in Kosovo and Iraq prevented them from making a significant contribution in the early stages, Danish Special Forces had been intermittently active in diverse parts of the country[234]. In 2006, the decision was taken to deploy a Danish contingent to Helmand province, bordering Uruzgan, and a year later the final withdrawal of Danish troops from Iraq allowed them to increase their contribution to a full battlegroup[235]. There would be plenty 'hard

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[227] Dimitriu & de Graaf, p433

[228] Ibid

[229] De Graaf (2010)

[230] Ibid

[231] '*Dutch troops end Afghanistan deployment*' BBC News 01/08/2010

[232] Zaalberg, p887

[233] '*Nauwe banden NSA en Nederlandse diensten dankzij Uruzgan*' NRC Handelsblad 23/11/2013

[234] Ringsmose & Børgesen, p521

[235] Dommersnes, p.18

work' to do, but the troops were deployed with no caveats, the only instructions being, it seemed to 'respect the laws of war and cooperate closely with your British commander'[236].

They paid a great price – with the 40 deaths of Danish troops in Helmand the highest per capita loss of the ISAF nations. Unlike in the Dutch case, however, the coalition that authorised the deployment stayed together, and indeed the only opposition in parliament came from 2 smaller, hard-left parties. Additionally, the government cooperated closely with the military to ensure that the narrative was one of success in meeting objectives, a view which was also shared by the majority of policy makers, and by media and public opinion[237]. The case was consistently and straightforwardly made that 'Denmark is in Afghanistan to defend Denmark'[238], and while, as we saw earlier, there was an attempt to apply the principles of the new CPA, expectations were more realistic. The more explicitly moral aspect of the mission was the new, more muscular version of the 90s doctrine – what some have called 'international activism'[239], as the administration of Anders Fogh Rasmussen moved beyond the advances of the previous decade.

Danish success in Helmand, and the solidity of the support at home, led to pressure being put on the Danes to lead a PRT of their own[240], in the Nimruz province bordering Iranian and Pakistani Balochistan. This was to prove the most significant disappointment of the deployment, as a lack of funds meant that they would have to turn the opportunity down. Danish willingness to contribute positively had, until this point, covered for certain shortages that would inevitably exist with declining military budgets, and whatever gargantuan efforts were made to deploy so many fighting men to Helmand, the civilian imprint needed for a successful PRT was lacking, with less than 10 diplomats on the ground at any time[241].

The conflict in Afghanistan was significant for NATO in so many ways. Not only the first invocation of article IV, it has continued to resonate even as that decade of interventions has ended. It also underlines the importance of strategic narratives in foreign policy, an idea also picked up on by the Dutch foreign policy advisory body, the AIV. The Dutch narrative started strongly, with the successes of its Air Force in Kosovo meaning it was seen as an ideal initial partner in OEF, and being given a PRT in such a critical area could only be seen as vote of confidence in Dutch military capability. As we saw, praise on the conduct and philosophy of TFU bookended that encouraging start, but somehow the Balkenende administration contrived to fluff their lines, and the withdrawal of TFU could stay with Dutch foreign policy for some time.

Denmark, and to a lesser extent, Norway, had a lower level of strategic ambition, but they stuck to what they knew they could deliver, and they did it well. The narrative which was created was one of success, and they could stick to it with confidence – even when casualties mounted. This was because they did not shy away from the grittier aspects of the mission: 'Denmark's military operation in Afghanistan is highlighted and described candidly to the domestic audience'[242].

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[236] Jakobsen & Møller, p.109

[237] MacDonald, Alastair '*Denmark Rallies Public Behind Afghan War*' Wall Street Journal 24/02/2010

[238] Ringsmose & Børgesen, p.521

[239] Pedersen, p.336

[240] Ringsmose & Rynning, p.77

[241] Ibid, p.78

[242] Dommersnes, p.20

The unforgiving nature of Afghanistan, environmentally and to the hopes of those outsiders who meddle in its affairs, has become cliché. The Dutch were not alone in under-performing: the Canadian forces in next-door Kandahar withdrew in similar circumstances a year later[243], and it has been convincingly argued that the whole ISAF mission suffered from a lack of clear purpose after the fall of the Taliban in 2001[244]. However, this did little to assuage the damage done to Dutch strategic confidence, which it had worked hard to rebuild after Srebrenica. Six months before the final withdrawal of TFU, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, whose appointment had meant so much at the time, was replaced as Secretary General. That his successor was Danish Prime Minister Ander Fogh Rasmussen was symbolic, at least in the context of this study.

Libya: Easy for Some

Looked at from a certain angle, the NATO intervention in the Libyan Civil War could be seen as a perfect example of the sort of intervention that symbolised a NATO secure in its new Post-Cold War self: initially French-led, a broad base of support, and none of the diplomatic semantics that delayed the first intervention of the period in Bosnia. Yet, as the conflict progressed, the old demons re-emerged. The United States took on a larger share of duties than it had originally intended, the European allies were embarrassingly under-equipped, and the enthusiasm of some allies could not disguise the bandwagoning of others – hard facts which inspired Secretary Gates' speech mentioned in the introduction.

Yet, speaking strictly of the mission itself, rather than its consequences, it can be considered a broad success. The reaction to the crisis was quick and effective, and Atlantic states put themselves into the reformist camp of the 'Arab Spring' the machinations of which they had been slow to respond to - If only all targets had been as soft and as loathsome as Muammar al-Gaddafi's Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and all interventions as simple as the air campaign which toppled it.

Events in the wider region had brought renewed vigour to the disparate, tribal-oriented opposition to Gaddafi's state, and an armed insurrection, made up of these diverse groups, unified only in their opposition , had succeeded in gaining control of several cities, including the strategic port city of Benghazi. The regime pushed back in its usual brutal fashion, and as reports emerged of war crimes being perpetrated, reached the outskirts of Benghazi in early March 2011. Fearing what would happen should the regime's superior firepower prevail, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1973, imposing a no-fly zone over Libya, and French jets began the enforcement, soon to be joined by a broad coalition.

That coalition would eventually include the Netherlands, but only after much post-Uruzgan angst and squabbling. Their lukewarm support for the mission placed them in a somewhat unfamiliar position, as the recipient of explicit criticism from Secretary Gates[245], alongside iterant bandwagoneers Germany, Spain and Turkey. While they did not abstain like the

[243] Ringsmose & Børgesen, p.509

[244] Stewart, Rory '*Afghanistan - What could work*' New York Review of Books 14/01/2010

[245] Spiegel, Peter '*Gates criticises five allies over Libya*' Financial Times 08/06/2011

Germans, it was difficult to tell the difference – 'participation' consisted of a group of minesweepers that happened to already be in the vicinity, and six F16s that were unable to take part in high-intensity operations[246].

Dutch intervention started disastrously with a bizarre attempt to extricate a Dutch national from Gaddafi's home town of Sirte in late February[247] – lacking permission from the embattled government, the three navy rescuers and their helicopter were held hostage for over a week before being returned. This succeeded in tying an already confused Tweede Kamer into further knots, coming at a time when deep defence cuts were about to be announced which would see even the minesweepers participating in the Mediterranean off Libya scrapped. The newly elected, nominally pro-military and resolutely Atlanticist VVD was finding government a little harder than opposition, and its choice of the populist, isolationist PVV as a partner would be questioned more than once.

A perfect illustration of the changing fortunes of Dutch foreign policy was the decision in June of that year to provide the Danish Air Force with unused Dutch ordnance[248]. For the Danes, and the Norwegians, Libya would be seen in an almost entirely positive light – emerging from the campaign with American endorsements such as 'best in class'[249] (Norway) and 'the rock stars of the campaign'[250] (Denmark) ringing in their ears. They flew more missions per capita than any of the other allies[251], and combined dropped as much ordinance as the United Kingdom[252]. In what was a textbook 'War of Choice' of the new century, made up of a 'Coalition of the Willing', both states underscored the fact that it was also a 'Coalition of the willing and able'[253]: in this, post-2008 economic crisis conflict, two small states, relatively unaffected by Eurozone or debt crises, were able to exploit this opportunity to become trusted and strategically useful members of the coalition. Although, in acknowledging this aspect of their contribution, it must be noted that the air-to-ground nature of the operation was a fortunate aspect for two states whose contributions elsewhere would have precluded them from participating in a ground campaign.

For the Danes, the almost unanimous[254] decision of the Folketing to deploy F16s to intervene was presented as 'good news' by Foreign Minister Lene Espersen[255]. Libya, following on from Afghanistan, was another chance to 'do the right thing', support the Arab spring, topple a

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246 Hinke, Bart '*Hillen wil missie Libië verlengen*' NRC Handelsblad 26/05/2011

247 '*TV Libië beschuldigt Nederland van spionage*' De Volkskrant 05/03/2011

248 '*Denen willen Nederlandse bommen voor strijd in Libië*' De Volkskrant 03/06/2011

249 Græger (2014) p.20

250 Jakobsen & Møller, p.114

251 Guardian Datablog

252 Guardian Datablog

253 Græger (2014) p.12

254 Jakobsen & Møller, p.106

255 Ibid

universally loathed dictator, and again stand up for 'Danish values' – a mindset so removed from the one in the Netherlands, or elsewhere in Europe, that there was even a far-left party calling for 'boots on the ground'[256]. Such was the desire to 'make a difference' that the six Danish F16s, deployed, as ever without caveats, arrived in Sicily only 57 hours after UNSC 1973, before the coalition had even had time to formulate a plan: something that led to the head of the Norwegian Air Force to phone his Danish counterpart to enquire 'how on earth could the planes deploy so fast?'[257].

The Norwegians were not so far behind, with six of their own F16s deploying to Crete soon after – also without caveats; ready to play a role on the frontline: something of a first for Post-Cold War Norwegian security policy. The existence of the UN mandate obviously helped, but it was also a final step in completing the transformation from 'the last Cold Warrior' to a member of NATO's top-tier. It also provided a further example of the Norwegian ambition to seek 'status through reliability', focusing on what it can do, and staying away from the unsustainable grand geste.

Initially, the Operation Odyssey Dawn (OED) command seemed unwilling to allow much Norwegian participation, but as the mission progressed, their willingness and consistency meant they were trusted with increasingly sensitive missions – culminating in the strike against the convoy carrying Gaddafi himself, which ultimately brought the mission to an end. The very fact that a small state like Norway was trusted in such a way was apparently seen as succour enough for politicians and opinion formers at home[258] - Norway was maybe small, but it could be 'as good as' other European allies.

It is still unsure what the ultimate consequences of OED will be, but it certainly succeeded in a military sense. For NATO, this is a mixed blessing: the alliance is certainly still effective, but the fact that only six out of the twenty six European allies participated fully in the operation gave the Gates speech undoubted salience. Two of the six contributors, Denmark and Norway, were thus able to exercise enormous influence in relation to their size, which may be seen as the fortunate confluence of relative economic strength and mission suitability – but an analysis of the general trends of Danish and Norwegian strategic culture over the previous two decades indicates that it is the culmination of a concerted search for status through force contribution.

Both states filled a gap, demonstrating that their niches could extended beyond special forces contributions, as they had in Kosovo and Afghanistan. While it is too early to understand what benefits this brought to them in terms of top-table influence, studies[259] of the aftermath of Danish contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan indicate that 'hard work' can facilitate access to policy makers and government officials in Washington that would previously not been possible.

There is no evidence to suggest that Denmark sought to exploit its new-found status, preferring, like Norway, to let this status add sheen to a broader foreign policy strategy. There is certainly an ongoing debate over how such a robust contribution to security-related matters fits with their

[256] Interview with author

[257] Jakobsen & Møller, p.114

[258] Græger (2014) passim

[259] Henrikson & Ringsmose, passim`

traditional role as peace-promoters, with even figures like the former Norwegian Foreign Minister, Jonas Gahr Støre acknowledging the tensions inherent in a 'peace nation' pursuing these goals using less-than-peaceful methods[260] - but praise from across the Atlantic may have smoothed that wrinkle.

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Traditional analyses of small states sees them being peripheral in European and World affairs – this study of Post-Cold War conflicts shows that to be somewhat changed. At the beginning of our period, all of our states saw the UN as being central to the new security reality, and all of them saw how inadequate it would prove to be – using force would sometimes be necessary, and small states could find that use of force to be useful in their broader 'activist' foreign policy outlook.

In Bosnia, it was the rigorous and unglamorous work of SFOR, and then IFOR which brought peace, and so when a UN mandate for action in Kosovo was lacking, NATO became a preferred option. In these two conflicts, the Netherlands, and the Royal Netherlands Air Force in particular, had stood out as a small state willing to make a large contribution: Denmark too, to a lesser extent, showed how use of force was a valid option for small states able to contribute, and how public opinion could be could be won. Norway would undoubtedly have seen this as good reason to renew its force structure and orientation in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict.

Norway was not the only state to learn from these conflicts: as NATO moved 'out of area' into Afghanistan, Danish and Dutch doctrines evolved through a process of trial and error, but there is evidence, particularly in the American appreciation of '3D', that 'norm entrepreneurship' could extend to security policy.

This conflict also showed the importance of narrative building, and the importance of placing foreign policy objectives into the context of a deeper strategic culture: Dutch problems in Uruzgan were in many ways peculiarly Dutch, but also contain lessons for all NATO states, as we saw. Afghanistan showed the limits of the new ambitious, more expeditionary Atlantic alliance, as Denmark was initially unable to contribute because of commitments elsewhere: although Norway could be pleased with how a new approach had allowed it to contribute.

This was a general theme of the later part of our period: as the 'War of Choice' concept emerged, small states could gain certain advantages, especially if they were 'willing and able'. Because Norway and Denmark were more able, the NATO intervention in Libya was a more straightforward affair than it was for an embattled Dutch armed forces. As we saw, a more intensive contribution may have been beyond them, but an air campaign allowed them to build on an impressive record of reliability and usefulness in a NATO context, while concomitantly pursuing broader foreign policy objectives in upholding International Law, and promoting human rights: a perfect example of an 'activist', 'smart state' strategy.

[260] Græger (2014) p.21

Chapter 3: Enlargement

As the myth of Eastern Bloc power began to crumble around the events of 1989, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze visited the NATO HQ in Brussels – the first time the holder of that office had done such a thing. He had, in his own words 'been to the mouth of the volcano...and it wasn't too bad'[261]. It is an appropriate metaphor for a time when the streets of Communist Eastern Europe were aflame, and change was flowing, sometimes slowly, often fast, like molten lava that would eventually cool, and leave the geopolitical landscape of Europe forever altered.

By 2011, all of the former non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members would find themselves in NATO, alongside the ex-Soviet Baltic States - something that would have been utterly inconceivable when Shevardnadze visited Brussels in 1989. The modern Russian Federation may feel a certain injustice, and certainly feels encircled, but any debate about whether the US and Atlantic partners broke promises of non-interference in the new East are entirely academic: the NATO 'empire by invitation'[262] was also expanded, enthusiastically, by invitation.
'Those who wonder why the east Europeans became so obsessed with NATO membership should search through the annals of the Yugoslav saga'[263] – the topic of enlargement is closely related to the previous two chapters, and the trends are the same. As per the Eyal quote, not only had NATO found its role in the Bosnian conflict, as an institution, alongside, of course, the EU, it was an symbol of the values that the new governments strove towards and (mostly) wanted to implement. Also in terms of capabilities, the trends inherent in the enlargement process are often shared.

For our smaller states too, enlargement presented opportunities, and some challenges. From an idealistic perspective, it obviously appealed – and brining these other (mostly small) states into a consensus organisation such as NATO was also important for the values and outlook that we have seen. But there was also an undeniable strain of self interest involved – either in agitating for the inclusion of certain states, or in trying to avoid it.

Understanding how small states pursue this self-interest is essential to the purposes of this study in general, and will become particularly pertinent in this final chapter, where ideas of common structures, as in capabilities, or common problems, as in conflicts as less evident, and greater differences of opinion appear. So it is important to examine these interests, through the policies pursued by the governments over this period – and then by trying to understand if they were able to pursue this self interest and influence NATO policies towards enlargement. It will also be interesting to examine whether small state 'niches' could also extend to diplomatic capabilities – could our states be useful to the alliance at the negotiating table too?

Shevardnadze was rare for a senior Soviet politician, in that he was also a 'nationality' – he then went on to become a pro-Western President of Georgia, whose tenure nonetheless

[261] NATO website http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1989/summarye.htm

[262] Lundestad, passim

[263] Eyal, p701

collapsed under the weight of corruption and vote-rigging allegations in 2003. As a result of the democratic reforms enacted by his successor, Georgia became a candidate for NATO membership, with an individual Membership Action Plan (MAP). By that point, after two successful enlargements, it would seem like an organised process – it was anything but. For most states though, the journey would prove to be just as important as the arrival.

The Road and The Miles to Madrid (1989-97)

At the beginning of our period, even as the Soviet monolith began to totter, few would predict an Atlantic future for most of the Eastern Bloc. But it seemed for these few years around the start of the new decade that time had sped up, and a number of developments served to change that perception very quickly. First came the London Agreement of July 1990, as 'the hand of friendship' was extended by NATO states to their former adversaries. Just over a year later, at the Rome Summit which also gave us a new Strategic Concept, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was launched as a 'necessary prevarication'[264] to allow a better plan to be formulated.

Containing as it did all of the Post-Soviet and Communist states, including those in Central Asia, in a vague and ultimately toothless body, this was never going to be the most suitable of security fora, but it was not until January 1994 that the Partnership for Peace (PfP) was launched at the Brussels Summit and aspiring members were finally given a roadmap. Not only did this provide the mechanisms for the armed forces of the two blocs to finally get a chance to work together, the PfP was based upon the principle of 'Self Differentiation', whereby it would be the choice of each individual state to prove, through their actions, that they could be a suitable candidate for NATO accession. In 1995, the 'Study of Enlargement' was published, that set forth for the first time a list of the terms and conditions that aspiring countries would need to meet. It was from this point on that enlargement became inevitable, and the question changed to 'who and how'[265]. A remarkable turnaround from 1989 perhaps, but 'the story is one of a serious and correct decision arrived at through halting diplomatic discussions and haphazard, last minute decision making'[266].

It was German unification that had muddied the waters most. While the Post-Communist states of Central and Eastern Europe were, in the main, united in their goal of gaining entry to NATO (especially after mess of the Yugoslav break-up), the United States, United Kingdom and France were all on slightly different pages on how to deal with Russia. Germany, most of all, wanted to reassure Moscow that its 'loss' would not be translated immediately into a Western 'gain' – a view which was shared in Washington.

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[264] Eyal, p.701

[265] Ibid, p703

[266] Ibid, p.695

So it was that the larger NATO states were slow to accept the benefits of Central European membership – and any expansion beyond that, such as into the Baltic States, would hurt Moscow most of all: the still had troops based there until August 1994. The alternative, however, was a return to the ad hoc, inter war system which had turned the region into the 'bloodlands', something which even Russia seemed to acknowledge, and so it dropped its opposition to expansion, in return for a permanent NATO-Russia forum in Paris in May 1997. Even in letting its former satellites go, however, it could not resist the urge to negotiate with NATO directly, over the heads of the aspirant members[267]. This was the last significant hurdle to be cleared before the three 'Visegrad' states; the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland were invited to join at the Madrid summit later that year.

The Netherlands' attitudes towards expansion are a good example of fairly mainstream thinking within the alliance. As during the Cold War, their principle aim was to keep Germany firmly within Western security structures, and so initial policy was made with the successful conclusion of the unification process in mind. There was support for the PfP - indeed the first joint exercise of NATO and former WP troops, 'Competitive Spirit', was held on Dutch soil in October 1994[268] - but the government preference was for the 'Royal Way'[269], in which NATO membership would follow membership of the EU. There was enough dissent, however, to make this a far from unanimous policy – firstly, from those wishing to speed up the process, and secondly, from a more self-interestedly liberal direction that did not wish to damage relations with Russia. It would be the former opinion that would win out, however, as the 'Purple coalition' government, containing both these elements of Dutch opinion, decided to support the Visegrad accession[270].

Denmark was also preoccupied with what German unification would mean for the future of NATO, but came from a different perspective, and went in a different direction. As we noted in Chapter 1, the radically changed Danish 'action space' placed it no longer on the front line[271], and the strategic possibilities were huge. It was therefore in Denmark's interest to keep its 'strategic distance' as much as possible from the new Russia, something which the accession of the three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, into NATO would ensure. Additionally, as a non-member of the WEU, German influence in that body, particularly in Central Europe, would have to be countered, and so three new small members on the Northern flank would fit that 'dependency spreading'[272] role perfectly. Finally, in the context of Denmark's new 'active internationalism', these three states, with their significant historical and cultural ties to Scandinavia, could ease their democratic transition with the help of a supportive Denmark - norm entrepreneurs need to export their values too.

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[267] Ibid, p.717

[268] Wolthers, p.17

[269] Siccama, p.25

[270] Boxhoorn, p.720

[271] Wivel (2005b) p.418

[272] Villaume, p.48

The necessities of non-interference in domestic Soviet politics precluded governmental involvement in the area until after independence, but there were extensive contacts made below that level nonetheless[273]. Denmark was, after Iceland, the second state to recognise Baltic sovereignty, and the previous 'Russia first' policy was quickly abandoned to facilitate Danish involvement in the region[274]. They benefitted from the ability of the two contemporary Defence Ministers, Uffe Elleman-Jensen, and Hans Hækkerup, to understand the importance that these states played in the big picture[275] of Danish strategic culture, and they became a 'high priority' in Danish foreign policy.

Denmark saw itself as a 'pioneer' in a region that was not well understood by other NATO allies. By 1993, it had signed individual defence agreements with all three states, with Danish advisors permanently based with the respective Ministries of Defence, and Denmark was an early and consistent supporter, both economically and structurally, of the BALTBAT initiative that provided a forum for military cooperation between the three states, support that continued as that structure widened into naval and air force cooperation. Danish officers provided vital training, particularly in peacekeeping formations, which the Baltic states would use as their main security tool in NATO operations, and equipment[276].

'*Danish policymakers viewed military and institutional activism as basically two sides of the same coin, because both served as a means to the same end: a stable, rule-governed and highly institutionalised international environment protecting Danish security interests*'[277]. As a member of all the relevant bodies in the region, NATO, the EU and the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), Denmark could also offer the Baltic States something more than the other Scandinavian states interested in the region[278]. The map they gave them towards integration into the Atlantic Community was a Danish one, with NATO providing the security and hard power, and the EU the soft, economic power[279]. The fact that the Baltic States were never really considered seriously for the first expansion was accepted in Copenhagen[280], because they knew that the explicit acknowledgement of their eligibility for the next round[281] was recognition enough.

While the Maastricht opt-out also bequeathed a 'strategic distance' to Denmark in Central Europe, Poland was still very much in Denmark's neighbourhood. While the Cold War

[273] Archer (1999), p.49

[274] Ibid

[275] Ibid, p.65

[276] Honkanen

[277] Wivel (2005b) p.419

[278] Archer (1999), p.66

[279] Ibid, p.51

[280] Eyal, p.707

[281] Honkanen p.66

relationship was marked by Polish touchiness over military exercises around the Baltic island of Bornholm, there was a rapid thawing of relations after 1989. Danish support may have been less significant than in the states to the North, both as a result of Poland being larger, and more of a cause célèbre, but Danish military and institutional support of Poland was also consistent, as witnessed in bilateral preparations for NATO memberships, and also trilateral cooperation with Germany[282] – an idea best embodied after enlargement as the Multinational Corps Northeast, based in Szczecin, and containing forces from all three states, became one of NATO's first multinational formations[283].

The final pertinent fact surrounding Danish involvement in the Baltic surrounds the extent to which they acted as a US proxy. While initial US unwillingness to consider any expansion that would displease Moscow was at odds with Denmark's enthusiastic engagement in the region, subsequent developments brought an alignment in their interests. While American, and German, involvement with the Baltic States had to potential to be far more significant, it could also cause irreparable damage to a sensitive process[284]. And so, Denmark would provide an early example of niche capabilities not being confined to the battlefield, as their involvement, principally among the Nordic states, supplied the 'motor'[285] for Baltic integration into these common structures, as acknowledged by US Secretary of State Madeline Albright[286]. Denmark was a useful ally to have[287].

Norway, as in the previous two chapters, was slow on enlargement. It had obvious, specific reasons for non-engagement, like its position on the European periphery, far from Central and Eastern Europe, and of course its border with Russia, which had not changed. Norway's principle priority during this period, and after, was the Barents Sea area it shared with Russia, and so it was certainly the least engaged of the Nordic states in Baltic affairs. This did change slightly with the rejection of EU membership in a 1994 referendum, which strategically left Norway at risk of being marginalised, and so engagement in bodies like the CBSS became attractive. Nevertheless, it remained resolutely opposed to Baltic accession in 1997, even if it had softened its stance towards the Visegrad three.

Peeling back the iron curtain had led to an inevitable recalibration of policies towards the new states of Central and Eastern Europe, and as we have seen, circumstances dictated that this was not always done in a considered way. While the Dutch could afford to follow the crowd, Danish and Norwegian strategic interest was best served by policies that sat at opposite ends of the spectrum, and both were comfortably outside the mainstream. In this case, the advantage lay with Denmark's more radical policy as NATO became the ante-chamber for the EU, rather

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[282] Ibid, p.69

[283] NATO website

[284] Archer (1999), p.61

[285] Honkanen p65

[286] Ibid

[287] '*Club or be Clubbed*' The Economist 15/01/1998

than the other way around, with that body extending its own hand of friendship to the region soon after the Madrid summit. Again, a clear, concentrated foreign policy interest had proven to be more durable than one left to the mercy of events.

Largely thanks to the activism of Denmark (although non-NATO Sweden and Finland did play their part) this first enlargement would not be the singular event some would have liked. While the Visegrad three were alone in being invited to join at the Madrid summit, the terms put forward in the Study of Enlargement indicated that they would not remain the only Post-Communist members for long. While other members, such as France with Romania, or Italy with Slovenia, had lobbied for their own candidates[288], the Baltic States were a radical direction for NATO to go in, and one which could potentially destabilise the whole process. The larger NATO states acknowledged this, and so it would be that, as Europe was realigning, even the small states could find a way to influence the proceedings.

Filling in the Blanks (1997-2008)

The 50th anniversary NATO summit in Washington in April 1999 should have been an entirely celebratory affair: not only the significant milestone being passed, but a new Strategic Concept for a new era, and the accession of three Post-Communist states into a new Atlantic security structure. Conversely, it was of course filled with the slide into hostilities with Milosevic's Serbia, a conflict that threw the haphazard and last minute enlargement process into sharp relief: one of the accession states, Hungary, had close historical and kinship ties to Northern Serbia – ties that some feared could either make them a less reliable ally, and additionally, highlighted the presence of large Hungarian populations in the wider Balkans that could be a cause of instability in themselves.

Yet despite, or maybe even because of, the new problems that membership posed to the newly democratic states of the Post-Communist space, the queue for NATO membership continued to grow. The Membership Action Plan (MAP) process was introduced in Washington[289], allowing a clear path to membership to emerge for the first time. The second Post-Cold War intake, and the fifth overall, comprised of seven states, including the Baltic states, and meant that almost three quarters of former Warsaw Pact successor states were now NATO members. A further enlargement took place in 2008, as Croatia and Albania, who had both formerly attracted NATO ire, brought the alliance firmly into the Western Balkans.

For the most part, these enlargements were uncontentious. NATO had found its role as the 'Global Policeman', and these new states participated in the missions in Kosovo, Macedonia and Afghanistan. The end of the 1990s were the real nadir of Russian power, economically and militarily: any fear of what consequences pushing further into Moscow's former zone of influence had been almost forgotten. But that would not last for ling, and the period would be marked by a slow return to Russian assertiveness, culminating in the 2008 conflict in Georgia, a MAP participant.

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[288] Eyal, p.705

[289] NATO website: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_37356.htm

This was the culmination of much diplomatic effort in Copenhagen, as we saw in the last chapter, and Denmark continued to pursue its interest in an expanded NATO, holding a conference on enlargement in Copenhagen in 2002, and sustaining cooperation agreements and aid to new member states. The 1999 SC had allowed for cooperation between PfP states and NATO for the first time, giving NATO a vital role in European security – allowing Denmark to participate in ways which its Maastricht exemptions meant it could not under the aegis of the EU. There was obviously a further advantage to Danish interests in increasing the number of small states in a consensus-based organisation like NATO, as opposed to seeing them in the EU, with its qualified majority voting, and Denmark increasingly unable to exert the influence it had previously[290].

For the Netherlands, happy to go with mainstream opinion, although always mindful of Russia, this period of enlargement presented few problems. For Norway, while the initial doubts remained, there was acceptance that the consensus was very much in favour of continuing the process. In some ways this was a crisis for NATO-Norway relations: NATO had always been its 'insurance policy'[291], and now was acting in ways that were detrimental to Norwegian security. Throughout the 1990s, there had been a steadily decreasing interest in the High North, which had previously made Norway an extremely important strategic partner for NATO, and been its 'free ticket' to the top table- it became increasingly clear that this was no longer the case[292].

However, as we have seen elsewhere, the turn of the century also marked a change in overall Norwegian Security Policy, away from territorial defence and onto a more mainstream NATO footing – the evidence also points towards the skeptical attitude to enlargement fading too, especially as it echoed deeply held beliefs of Norway as an idealistic actor[293], although there may have also been a degree of 'Nordic rivalry'[294] in ensuring that they would not be the only one of their neighbours left out of the enlargement party.

The period of these two enlargements began with the tragedy around the sinking of the Russian nuclear submarine 'Kursk' in the Barents Sea in 1999. It works well as a demonstration of Russian impotence in the late 1990s, as a serious of incompetent cover-ups, and obstinate refusals of outside help ended with an (unsuccessful) Anglo-Norwegian rescue operation, and a Dutch salvage mission. The ending of this period was also marked by Russian submersibles in the Barents Sea – but this time they were planting a Russian flag on the seabed, an entirely symbolic act that nonetheless demonstrated a new assertiveness that would make any future expansion very difficult.

The End of the Road? (2008-11)

[290] Wivel (2010) passim

[291] Rottem, p.623

[292] Ibid

[293] Ibid, p.626

[294] Archer (1999), p.64

Events throughout 2008 were vital in shaping the future debate into enlargement. It began in February with a Kosovar declaration of independence, which certain NATO states, in common with Serbia and Russia, refuse to acknowledge. The August conflict over two states seceding from Georgia, yet recognised only by Russia, was presented as further proof of Russian intransigence, supported by the evidence of an increase in overflights of NATO neighbours, including Norway. After the furore had subsided, it emerged that Georgia had provoked the confrontation as an ill-conceived attempt to hurry along membership negotiations, but despite this, Russia was back in the Atlantic consciousness.

While the last enlargement, bringing in Croatia and Albania was not especially damaging for the Russian ego, Serbia signing a PfP agreement at the same time, with the possibility of membership, could be – and the beginning of a new round of bilateral NATO-Russia talks that year was dominated by enlargement. Suddenly, Georgian and Ukrainian MAPs were put on hold, and while they were both mentioned specifically in the 2010 SC, the emphasis was on cooperation, not membership – elsewhere, the emphasis on future membership had been put on democracy and shared values, something which Georgia and Ukraine had had trouble convincing NATO leaders of.

From the Dutch perspective, future enlargement risked provoking Russia, and with it the increase in bilateral trade and good diplomatic relations that the two countries had enjoyed. The position of the government towards Ukraine and Georgia was best described by the government advisory board on Foreign Relations, the AIV: 'the admission of Ukraine and Georgia would not be desirable at present since these countries do not fulfil the conditions laid down in the 1995 Study on NATO enlargement, and admission would not enhance stability in their region. '[295]

Denmark was still broadly in support of further enlargement, but would also have to accept that the moment had passed. Prime Minister, and future NATO SG, Anders Fogh Rasmussen had visited Georgia just after the conflict with Russia had ended, stressing restraint, but his visit was viewed very positively in Georgia. Additionally, over the period, Denmark sent some 15%, the largest tranche, of its Oversea Development Aid (ODA) budget to the Ukraine, seeking to build on previous success in the Post-Soviet space.

It was Norway though which found the events moving towards a greater alignment of Norwegian and NATO policies. Norway was a 'front-line' state again, witnessing a huge increase in Cold War-style overflights from Russian military aircraft, and in December 2009, the failed test of a new generation Russian submarine-launched missile was visible in the sky over northern Norway, causing public alarm[296]. New misgivings over the newest enlargement were aired, and for a change were listened to, at the highest levels.

The new Norwegian position was not entirely defensive, however. They also proved their ability to work effectively with Russia on a bilateral basis, with the September 2010 signing of a cooperation agreement in the Barents Sea, which fixed the long disputed maritime border between the two states, and allowed them both to press ahead with exploration of a region thought to be rich in natural gas and petroleum[297]. Russian President Medvedev called the agreement a 'constructive model' [298]of cooperation in the Arctic region, which was increasingly looming back into view. For Norway, this agreement could not have been more important.

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[295] AIV (2010) p.36

[296] http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/12/10/us-russia-missile-failure-idUSTRE5B92FI20091210

[297] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/sep/15/russia-norway-arctic-border-dispute

[298] Ibid

Economically, the benefits were clear, but it also showed again why Norway was a valuable NATO partner, especially at a time of increased tension with Russia.

As the abundance of natural resources, both in fish and petrochemical in the Arctic becomes increasingly apparent, the concomitant depletion of the polar ice cap has opened it up to the possibility of a sea route which would reduce the journey from Western Europe to East Asia by 40%. Norway, and to a lesser extent, Denmark, have an unmistakable strategic advantage in these developments, both for the economic opportunities, but also for the increased influence it will afford them in NATO. Norway has, in a 1950s manner, restated its policy of not allowing NATO bases on its soil in peacetime, while also finding that its ability to do business with the Kremlin can mitigate any disagreements with its allies.

The initial wave of NATO enlargement was principally pursued by Denmark, as it found strategic advantage could be found in doing so. The period ends with enlargement largely side lined, but with the possibilities for strategic advantage for each of our states moving into new areas. The High North is unique in that it brings together the interests, not just of large states such as the United States and Russia, but also smaller ones, in Canada, Denmark, Norway and even Iceland, together. The possibility of more cooperation in the area can even bring in geographically removed states like the Netherlands, with its status as a trading power, and potential entrepôt for Arctic resources.

Finally, the Arctic also points to a future where NATO may have to shift some of its attention to 'in area' responsibilities, bringing it, to some extent, full circle - Norway has found its niche again, as NATO's 'forgotten flank' seems less peripheral.

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In studying the policies of our states with regard to the enlargement of NATO, we see the first significant differences of opinion – but also an affirmation of the central thesis that, given the right circumstances, and smart leadership, small states can contribute, and become useful in the broader NATO context. The 'serious and correct' decision to extend NATO membership to the newly democratic states of Central and Eastern Europe was one which it will serve the strategic cultures of all three states, with regards to extending human rights and the rule of law – even if short term strategic calculations may have led to wariness from some in Norway, and to a lesser extent, the Netherlands.

Denmark is the perfect example – as its 'action space' was transformed, it pursued this interest as a 'pioneer' into the Baltic States, exporting its own institutional and military values – exploiting the power it had in the asymmetric relationship with the Balts, and in doing so, it acted also in NATO's interest, benefiting itself as the weaker party in that asymmetric relationship. By working informally as a proxy to do things which larger states could not do: demonstrating that niches were not confined to military capabilities and willingness to fight could also be matched by a willingness to talk – and talk effectively. And, even if the intentions could not be more different, Norway's diplomatic capabilities and insight have proven useful to how NATO approached enlargement in the latter period.

Conclusion

On the 28th of March 2014, former Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg was nominated to replace Anders Fogh Rasmussen as NATO Secretary General. It was a long time in the making: Norway had lobbied for the position in the past, and there had been Norwegians leading organisations like the UN before, but this was the first time one had led an organisation with such an explicitly security-minded outlook. It reflected a sea-change in Norwegian strategic Culture, going back some 15 years, and also meant that the last three Secretaries General would have come from the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway. While the office of Secretary General is obviously largely symbolic, the appointment entails much lobbying and campaigning behind the scenes, and as such requires a large degree of focus, but also goodwill – it could also provide the basis for an interesting study with a more diplomatic focus than this one, and with access to the relevant diplomatic and government sources. Nevertheless, it still allows as to wonder what the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway have done to secure this goodwill?

'Over the last fifty years the international community has created a gradually expanding multilateral structure of both formal and informal international institutions and treaties in order to organise relations and tackle problems.[299]' During the Cold War, this structure was ultimately bound by two solid Blocs, distrustful of each other, and eager to ensure that none of their mutual allies caused significant dissent. The revolutions of 1989-91, which swept away that system forever, democratising a number of small and medium-sized Central and Eastern European States, and also throwing open a positive action space for (most) small states in the rest of Europe. While a solid 'threat' requires uniformity and obedience from small states, the diverse 'risks' that replaced this threat allow them latitude in their strategic outlook, and the opportunity to find themselves a niche.

Anders Wivel (2005b) follows on from Robert Kagan's analysis of European FSP in general, and posits that small states, with Denmark as a perfect example, are 'moving beyond power politics, and making a virtue out of weakness; refusing to play by the rules of the Hobbesian world'. While before 1989, 'norm entrepreneurship' could be pursued in a number of 'soft' ways, only in the Post-Cold War could these states explore a more security-oriented direction, and they have done so with some gusto.

These three states have adapted their military and security policies to best serve their own, values based, strategic cultures. Through force structures - in most cases almost entirely removing any territorial defence element to their standing forces, and moving towards flexible, interoperable and rapidly deployable expeditionary units, when NATO needed them most; by finding niche capabilities, whether by doing things that other states cannot do - such as the

[299] AIV (2005) p.6

Royal Dutch Air Force in Kosovo - or by doing things that other states are not willing to do - as Denmark did in Afghanistan; and finally, by plotting a pioneering course through the stormy seas of the immediate Post-Soviet era to ensure that three Baltic States were successfully integrated into the Atlantic security architecture, and demonstrating that small states could find diplomatic niches in NATO too.

And these changes were made in a manner which focused on what NATO wanted, and would allow them to contribute in the most effective way by delivering the 'outputs' few other states could. While Denmark and the Netherlands started the transformation relatively quickly, Norway serves as the example of a state which began rather later – but was convinced of the utility of transformation by its inability to contribute effectively to missions that served its broader foreign policy interests.

Of course there was a natural affinity with the Atlantic world, something that had shaped attitudes to NATO to differing degrees during the Cold War, but these states went from being ones which relied on American protection to ones which could give America help. This can of course also be seen in a longer history of ensuring that that American influence balances the larger powers in Europe – and each of our states, through opt outs, political culture or by not being members of the European Union at all, were always going to be somewhat sceptical about the CSDP – something which underlines the observation, made in the introduction, that these three states have much in common, to an often overlooked degree. While the Netherlands and Norway have participated in common European structures, and in a time of unprecedented security, NATO is still seen as the best actor to ensure the extension of liberal peace and international law.

This was something that would not necessarily been anticipated in 1989. All three of our states started with the hope and expectation that the United Nations would finally be able to fulfil its role as a global arbiter, but events in the early 1990s, most pertinently around UNPROFOR in Bosnia, events showed that NATO was the only reliable and effective security institution, especially when force was necessary. The conflicts in Kosovo, and in Afghanistan, showed that these states could contribute with new, but deliberate, niche capabilities, and Libya lit up a path for those states both willing and able to contribute in ways which belied their relational weakness towards other NATO member states.

'*What you need to do as a small state is to make yourself usable, and also someone who is sometimes necessary to go to. It makes sense to break down necessary into both necessary in terms of special abilities...then on willingness - for instance if you look at Danish security policy over the last two decades - one really important factor has been the Danish willingness to go where it has been dangerous, its willingness to accept that soldiers would die in combat.*'[300]

Exploiting the opportunities of the Post-Cold War space has been no easy task for small states, as the example of the Netherlands in Uruzgan illustrates. The example of Norway and Denmark shows us how positive changes can be affected, and strategic cultures transformed, over a period of time. While both may have started from a low point - 'the last Cold Warrior' and 'Denmarkisation' respectively - a broad political and institutional consensus, allied with a focused and practical policy towards the system, can bring broad benefits to the relationship with NATO and NATO allies: a 'smart state' strategy which could also serve as a model for the

[300] Interview with the author

Netherlands, which quickly and effectively enacted the structural reforms required for such a policy, but failed to find a coherent vision of its own. While it may be slightly larger than the other two, it remains capable of generating the 'big picture' necessary, and adaptation has long been a feature of Dutch national, never mind strategic, culture: thinking smaller, but smarter, could increase the 'jointery' that has been hitherto lacking.

For both of our Nordic states, this is an era of unprecedented prominence - and is in complete contrast to the traditional concept of a small state 'hiding', as best illustrated by Danish pre-war Foreign Minister P. Munch: *'The first and last demand which we must make to Danish diplomacy is that it shall keep quiet and do its utmost to secure that we may live as unnoticed as possible*[301]'. Small states can now be assured that speaking out, should it be considered, timely and matched by deeds, can be an effective and valuable foreign policy tool. Through these deeds, and their reliability have made them useful and relevant as security actors, something which is seen as succour enough for states with no ambitions beyond that. And they don't even have to roar: what Robert Gates' speech in Brussels shows us is that, in this post-Hobbesian space, is that small states can make even the largest states listen.

It is tempting to see if there are lessons for more 'system effective' states, and for NATO in general from these findings. In the introduction we saw how small states do have a certain ability to adapt quickly and decisively that larger states may not – but nonetheless a template now exists for successful force transformation leading to increased engagement in NATO, which it would be foolish to ignore. If NATO as a whole is to become more effective, and reverse a downward trend in defence spending, it must have examples of how value can be obtained: and each increment towards 2% will have to be quantified – in a way, by pioneering 'smart defence' before it had a name, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway have each shown how more can be done with less, and more importantly, that all states, large and small, can positively contribute to the Atlantic community.

Studying small states is therefore a valuable opportunity to find examples of best practice – but also a useful endeavour in itself, not least because the millions of Europeans who live in such states have as much interest in the foreign policy as those who live in larger ones.

[301] Jakobsen (2000) p.61

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