

**FROM ADVERSARIES TO PARTNERS:
NATO AND UKRAINE IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA***

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the transformation of the relationship between the former republics of the Soviet Union, now independent states, and NATO from that consistent with a distrustful, military rivalry to one in which joint military exercises and peacekeeping operations have been carried out, membership is sought or unique partnership arrangements are achieved. In doing so, it proposes an explanation based on the framework of strategic culture. More specifically, the research considers that to understand the process by which former adversaries become partners, it is important to examine the transference of values and beliefs about the use of force from one entity to the other in order to create a cultural foundation on which that partnership can function. In other words, the reliability and significance of any partnership between NATO and the states of the former Warsaw Pact depends on the diffusion of a common strategic culture. The research examines the process by which the strategic culture is diffused to the states of the former Soviet Union through the institutions established by NATO and which reinforced and influenced the states' viability and desirability as partners of the alliance. The paper presented will concentrate on the NATO-Ukraine relationship and the diffusion of NATO's strategic culture to this post-Soviet state.

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last fifteen years, the numerous geo-strategic changes witnessed by the world have been of such significance and magnitude that collectively they have marked a distinctively new era in global politics: the post-Cold War. Of these changes, perhaps none defines the post-Cold War era more succinctly and more permanently than the changed relationship between the Cold War military alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact and their respective memberships from that of adversaries to one of partners and in some cases even members. Indeed, after a forty year long Cold War during which time these two highly and dangerously equipped alliances tensely faced each other across an iron curtain that divided Europe and were fully prepared to engage in war to defend their respective and opposing political, economic and social systems, countries who had once belonged to the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet Union - the unchallenged marshal of the Warsaw Pact - are now full members if not aspiring candidates of NATO.¹ Moreover, Russia and Ukraine, having played leading and privileged roles in the structure of the Soviet Union's domestic and foreign (including military) policies, have emerged from the ruins of the USSR and individually have established unique partnerships with NATO of such depth that they can be argued to fall just short of full membership.

Given the magnitude of such a transformation and its consequences for international stability in general and European stability in particular, it is not surprising that these developments captured the attention of so many security analysts and policy-makers who sought to understand them and their multifaceted dimensions. For instance, one portion of this body of work has concentrated on the addition of new members from both a policy and practical perspective and, in the early days, even on the wisdom of such a route for NATO and for the individual countries concerned in terms of the consequences for European security. Another portion focused on the changes in the character of the relationship between NATO and Russia as well as NATO and Ukraine and the newly established institutions that emerged. Still others have considered the institutional changes NATO was undertaking internally and externally in an effort to cope with the changing environment. Other studies have engaged the theoretical dimension of these issues, considering them from the realist, inter-state, power-based perspective, emphasising capabilities and material conditions, or from an institutional perspective, concentrating on the persistence of NATO and its reconfiguration despite the end of the Cold War, the collapse of its adversary and the vanishing of the Warsaw Pact. Still others have studied these developments in terms of rational choices on the part of the actors involved at the different levels: domestic, state, institutional and international.²

¹ The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were first of the former members of the Warsaw Pact to join NATO as full members in April 1999; Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia are expected to join in the second round of enlargement expected to take place by 2004. Also in the second round, Slovenia will be the first of the former republics of Yugoslavia to join and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania the first of the former Soviet Union.

² Representative of these studies include Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye, and Stanley Hoffman, eds., *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Gunther Hellman and Reinhard Wolf, "Neorealism, Neoliberal Institutionalism, and the Future of NATO," *Security Studies* 3:1 (August 1993); Charles Glaser, "Why NATO is Still Best: Future Security Arrangements for Europe," *International Security* 18:1 (Summer 1993); David G. Haglund, ed., *Will NATO Go East? The Debate Over Enlarging the Atlantic Alliance* (Kingston: Centre for International

For the most part this body of work has contributed to our understanding of the changing relationship between NATO and its former adversaries. However, our understanding remains incomplete and limited to inter-state, materialist and rational explanations at the expense of more fundamental pieces of the puzzle. Included among these missing pieces is a more intense understanding of how former adversaries become partners, suggesting a need to attend to issues of identity, ideas, and institutions. In this respect, a more comprehensive understanding of the changing relationship between NATO and its former adversaries would be achieved by considering the arguments of social constructivism whereby the focus is on ideas and values as an explanation for state behaviour, leading to the formation of appropriate identities and institutions that reinforce these identities and behaviours. Rather than take such concepts as ‘capabilities’, ‘threats’ and ‘security’ for granted, social constructivism instead seeks to understand the social processes that constitute these concepts. Thus, it is concerned with sociological issues of identity and interest formation and their impact on institutions, ultimately finding that these concepts are ‘mutually constitutive.’

As a result, social constructivism can be expected to advance our knowledge and understanding of the changing relationship between NATO and its former adversaries since the end of the Cold War by broadening our focus beyond simply power interests, institutional persistence, and rational choice to include as well changing values, ideas, behaviour and institutions that precede power interests, etc. More specifically, the relationship between former adversaries of NATO and the states of the Warsaw Pact has transformed into one characterised by partnership and even membership because of the changing values, ideas, behaviour and institutions. At the same time these changing values, ideas, behaviour and institutions serve to reinforce the changing relationship away from an adversarial one towards that of a partnership.

There are many facets of social constructivism that would have useful application to the issue at hand, but one that bears particular relevance is that of ‘strategic culture.’ Briefly, strategic culture has a focussed concern with the ideas and values and attitudes relevant to the threat or use of force for political purposes. Given the strategic component to the changing relationship between NATO and its former adversaries of the Warsaw Pact and the former Soviet Union, it follows that a more rewarding explanation of this relationship would result from a consideration of it within the framework of strategic culture that affords central attention to the role played by ideas, values and attitudes pertaining to the use of force. More directly, within the framework of strategic culture the transformation of adversaries into partners as is taking place between NATO and its former adversaries of the Warsaw Pact and the former Soviet Union can be understood more completely by taking into account changing values, ideas and institutions. At the same time, it is important to note that these values, ideas and institutions are not simply changing, but rather are being shared and held in common. As per the social constructivist approach in which the strategic culture perspective is grounded, the socialisation process by which the former adversaries of NATO are becoming in the post-Cold War era its partners and in some cases even members simultaneously has been promoting a shared, common strategic culture that serves as a vital foundation for the partnership. Accordingly, the former adversaries are becoming partners of

Relations, Queen’s University, 1996); Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO’s Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

NATO as countries of the Warsaw Pact and the former Soviet Union submit to the strategic culture of NATO.

Understood in this context, we arrive at another layer of understanding regarding the changing relationship between NATO and its former adversaries in addition to those that concentrate on power interests, institutional persistence and rational-choice. Thus, the primary purpose of this study is to promote the strategic culture framework and its emphasis on the role of values, ideas, and institutions pertaining to the use of force as a valuable and enriching framework that contributes to and complements our existing understanding of the changing relationship between NATO and its former adversaries. It will do so by looking more intently at the processes by which the strategic culture of NATO has come to be subscribed to by its former adversaries to such an extent that they have become strategic partners if not members of the same military alliance. In other words, the study offers an explanation of the process of how former adversaries become partners in general and of how NATO's strategic culture has come to be shared and held in common with its former adversaries. This process involves a change in the international environment, i.e. the end of the Cold War, as a crucial first step towards changing the perceptions of the adversaries and the institutionalisation of NATO's strategic culture in the interactions of NATO with its former adversaries.

At the same time, NATO's relationships with its former adversaries are not uniform. Thus, a further contribution of the strategic culture framework is to provide a framework for evaluating these variations that complements those offered by a power-based, institutional or rational-choice perspective. In other words, the depth of NATO's partnership with its former adversaries is conditioned on the extent to which NATO's strategic culture is subscribed to by the individual former adversary. One element of NATO's strategic culture that figures importantly in this respect and helps to illuminate the value of the strategic culture framework is that of democratic civil-military relations. The deeper the subscription to the strategic culture, i.e., the stronger the presence of a democratic system of control of the military, the stronger the identity with NATO and the more intense the partnership with it to the point of even full membership. And following the argument of social constructivism, these factors reinforce each other: the more intense the partnership, the stronger the identity with NATO and the deeper the subscription to its strategic culture.

To more fully appreciate the value of the strategic culture framework in evaluating NATO's changing relationship with its former adversaries in general and the process by which adversaries become partners, the secondary purpose of this study is to apply the analysis of the strategic culture framework to the context of NATO's changing relationship with Ukraine. Indeed, while any of NATO's relationships with its former adversaries would offer an interesting and unique study each in its own way, the case of NATO's relationship with Ukraine lends itself particularly well for several reasons when compared to either former members of the Warsaw Pact who are now members of NATO or are soon to become members, former republics of the Soviet Union who are soon to join NATO, former republics of the Soviet Union who maintain a superficial relationship with NATO or regional great powers who will likely continue to maintain a very unique relationship with NATO. First, Ukraine is uniquely and unenviably located at the crossroads of East and West, a position of tremendous geo-strategic importance to the stability of Europe and Eurasia. As a result, understanding its place and impact on European security is of particular strategic significance. Second, as part of the Soviet Union during which Ukraine had a privileged

military role second only to Russia, Ukraine is expected to have harboured the most hardened adversarial views of NATO and might be suspected of being among the most resistant to subscribing to NATO's strategic culture. Third, Ukraine is not Russia in terms of size as well as in the sense of carrying the burdens of being the successor to one of the vanguards of the Cold War and (falsely or not) maintaining a sense of pride and station commensurate with being a great power, thereby being less constrained by such aspects in changing its relationship with NATO. Finally, while since 1992 the relationship between Ukraine and NATO has grown and developed at a steady pace, Ukraine only in May 2002 expressed an interest in pursuing membership in NATO.

Thus, the case of Ukraine and the nature of its relationship with NATO offers much to demonstrate the value of the strategic culture framework in better evaluating the transformation of this relationship. Most importantly, the application of the strategic culture framework suggests that with the end of the Cold War Ukraine's relationship with NATO has changed because of changes to the ideas, values and institutions concerning NATO and that the ideas, values and institutions of NATO's strategic culture are increasingly being shared and subscribed to by Ukraine. The process thus becomes reinforcing: as Ukraine increasingly shares and subscribes to NATO's strategic culture and in particular to democratic civil-military relations, its ideas, values and institutions concerning NATO will be transformed accordingly. Thus, the value of the strategic culture framework becomes evident whereby the case of Ukraine and its shortcomings in democratic civil-military relations demonstrate clearly that there are degrees by which the strategic culture of NATO is shared among its former adversaries. Furthermore, the extent to which Ukraine does share NATO's strategic culture is reflected in the limits of its relationship with NATO.

The study is laid out in the following way. The first section presents the theoretical framework of strategic culture that informs this research. The study then attends to an application of the strategic culture framework to NATO in the post-Cold War era before turning to an examination of the institutionalisation of NATO's strategic culture and democratic civil-military relations in its changing relationship with Ukraine that served to reinforce the change in identity from an adversary to a partner. The final section will consider more analytically the extent to which Ukraine has come to share NATO's strategic culture as an explanation for the limited partnership between them and the expected lengthy process by which Ukraine will join NATO.

II. STRATEGIC CULTURE: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Before introducing in general the concept of strategic culture and more specifically its features as an analytical framework, it is important to begin with the social constructivist approach to international relations to which the strategic culture framework belongs. Accordingly, social constructivism is among the more recent and emerging approaches of international relations.³ At its heart social constructivism emphasises the importance of understanding the social environment that influences and generates ideas, norms, values and

³ Among some scholars it has been linked *inter alia* with post-modernism, post-structuralism, critical theory, post-materialism, anti-positivism, relativism and structuration theory. Whether or not these sometimes conflicting links are valid or not is still in dispute, but suffice it to say that there is sufficient commonality among these different ways of thinking about social constructivism to present a cohesive body of work.

culture which form a structure that affect the behaviour and interests of agents who operate within and are constrained by these structures.⁴ This is not to deny the impact of materialist or rational structures, but to instead complement these structures by drawing attention to the social context in which these structures operate and which assign meaning to the behaviour and interests of the actors involved.⁵ As argued by Jeffrey Checkel, "... materialist structures ... are given meaning only by the social context through which they are interpreted."⁶

In emphasising the social nature of international relations, social constructivism contends 'intersubjectivity' between the structures and the actors operating within them. More specifically, structures of the system not only constrain the actors operating within it but also are affected by them. In this respect, actors of the system are as much a product of the system's structures as they frame that very structure by behaving and developing interests that shape and reinforce that structure. Thus, agents and structures are co-determined and interdependent. The more they interact, the more they reproduce each other. "Just as social structures are ontologically dependent upon and therefore constituted by the practices and self-understandings of agents, the causal powers and interests of those agents, in their own turn, are constituted and therefore explained by structures."⁷

In this way, the structure is constructed by the interactions of the states operating within its constraints, as well as the meaning of the behaviour of the actors themselves being constructed by the structure. In other words, the structure that constrains actor behaviour and which is simultaneously shaped by that actor behaviour comprises ideas, norms, values and culture which also assign meaning to that behaviour. And states will behave towards each other based on the meaning assigned to the other state, a meaning that is derived from the structure. "Meaningful behavior, or action, is possible only within an intersubjective social context. Actors develop their relations with, and understandings of, others through the media of norms and practices."⁸ Thus, the structure, the actors and the meanings of the behaviour carried out under these structures are mutually constitutive and intersubjective.

It follows that the identity of states are also socially constructed by way of interaction with the structure and with other states in that structure. And the nature and quality of that relationship itself is shaped by the ideational structure of the system, thus emphasising the

⁴ Among the signature works in social constructivism are included: Alexander Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41:3 (Summer 1987); Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23:1 (Summer 1987); Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989); Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46:2 (Spring 1992); Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner, 1996); Jeffrey Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵ Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (September 1997): 330.

⁶ Jeffrey Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 324-5.

⁷ Alexander Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41:3 (Summer 1987): 359.

⁸ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23:1 (Summer 1987): 173.

intersubjective nature of the entire structure and the agents once again. In addition, the more frequent the interactions, the more reinforced are the identities and the structure and actions, and behaviour becomes an important means for identifying other actors in the system. “Constitutive norms define an identity by specifying actions that will cause Others to recognise that identity and respond to it appropriately.”⁹ As a result, some states will become identified as ‘others’ or ‘them’, thereby being excluded from a particular identity for behaving differently while others will be included and be identified as part of ‘us’ for behaving the same way. And if they behave the same way, they are more likely to be constrained by the same set of norms and values of the structure.¹⁰ In this way, the world is organised and states are categorised into ‘us’ and ‘them’ according to how their behaviour is constrained by the ideational structure and the meaning that the structure assigns to their behaviour.¹¹ Thus, assigning identities to ourselves and to Others serves a vital purpose in ordering our environment into ‘us’ and ‘them’ and facilitating predictability.¹²

In this respect, identities are congealed reputations, that is, the closest one can get in social life to being able to confidently expect the same actions from another actor time after time. Identities subsume reputation; being a particular identity is sufficient to provide necessary diagnostic information about a state’s likely actions with respect to other states in particular domains.¹³

And the more that states behave accordingly, the more the structure and identities become legitimated and reinforced.¹⁴ More specifically, the practices and behaviour that sustain the interaction and identities reinforce the nature of that interaction. Thus, identities cannot be understood without a simultaneous account of the normative, cultural and institutional context.¹⁵ “A state understands others according to the identity it attributes to them, while simultaneously reproducing its own identity through daily social practice.”¹⁶

Thus, institutions emerge from stable identities. As per the social emphasis in understanding international relations from this perspective, institutions are mutually constituted with the actors and structures comprised of ideas, norms, values and culture. More specifically, the institutions and their meanings are constructed based on interactions with the actors and the structure of the system at the same time that, as the institutions operate reflecting the values of the structure and the identities of the actors, they serve to reinforce and shape them, assigning meaning to them as much as they themselves derive meaning from the other elements. At the same time, these institutions reinforce the predictability of the structure and the behaviour of the actors affected:

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Simon Dalby, *Creating the Second Cold War* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,” 174, 175.

¹³ Ibid., 190.

¹⁴ Dalby, *Creating the Second Cold War*.

¹⁵ Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,” footnote 10, 174.

¹⁶ Ibid., 175.

social practices not only reproduce actors through identity, but also reproduce an intersubjective social structure through social practice. A most important power of practice is its capacity to produce predictability and so, order. Social practices greatly reduce uncertainty among actors within a socially structured community, thereby increasing confidence that what actions one takes will be followed by certain consequences and responses from others.¹⁷

Thus, institutions of the structure can be argued to persist because they reinforce and reproduce identities of the actors, at the same time that state identities - shaped by state interactions whose meaning is derived from the ideas, values and beliefs of the structure - serve to shape and inform the institution.

Ultimately, agents are formed by their structures; and structures are formed by their agents. Both are inter-subjective and mutually constitutive, neither being exogenous from the other or having an objective meaning. Therefore, social constructivism offers an understanding of change in international relations unlike other approaches.¹⁸ In essence, as ideas that inform the structure that constrain the behaviour of states and other actors change, so will state behaviour change as well as the institutions and identities that are derived accordingly. By way of interacting according to meanings derived from the structure, the identities states derive from these interactions and that also are reinforced by the institutions will be reflective of the ideas and values of that particular time. Thus, as the environment changes, so will the ideas informing the structure, the meanings assigned to state interaction, as well as the identities and institutions. The impact of the change itself, however, is not immediate but instead gradual. "Constructivism's conceptualization of the relationship between agency and structure grounds its view that social change is both possible and difficult."¹⁹ In this respect, ideas informing the structure that shapes state behaviour and identities and institutions can only change slowly due to their reinforced and intersubjective nature.

Strategic Culture

Following in line with the social constructivist framework which can be argued to be its parent framework, the strategic culture framework is concerned with how social structures comprised of ideas, values, norms and beliefs shape security and military policy.²⁰ In its application as a framework, strategic culture broadens our understanding of security and

¹⁷ Ibid., 178.

¹⁸ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46:2 (Spring 1992).

¹⁹ Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," 181.

²⁰ Peter Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," in Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 5. The body of work studying strategic culture is small and only emerging but notable contributions include: Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995); Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies," *International Security* 23:1 (Spring 1998); Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Colin Gray, "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Studies* 25 (1999).

military issues beyond traditional components to include as well the role played by norms, identity and culture.²¹ Strategic culture itself refers to the persistent ideas, beliefs, traditions, habits of mind and attitudes relevant to the threat or use of force for political purpose.²² While there are many dimensions to a state's strategy in using or threatening the use of force for political purposes, the identification of adversaries and allies is certainly a significant one.²³ Accordingly, which states are identified as adversaries and allies or partners becomes part of the strategic culture and anchored in its ideas, beliefs, values and norms.

Thus, the strategic culture framework contends that the meaning assigned to the strategic culture results from the interaction between and among the structure and agents of the structure. In this respect, it is the product of a social and intersubjective process and is intimately connected with and shaped by the environment which it reflects as well as simultaneously informs. Accordingly, what states are identified as adversaries and allies will result from the interactions between those states and the meanings assigned to them by the structure that shapes them in the first place. At the same time, the structure and its values and ideas themselves will be reinforced by the interactions among the states, whether they are adversarial or amicable.

It follows that as these interactions and structures reinforce each other, identities relevant to the strategic culture emerge which reflect and reinforce the meanings assigned. "The identities of states emerge from their interactions with different social environments, both domestic and international."²⁴ Thus, whether a state is an ally or an enemy is a result of ideational factors operating at the international level.²⁵ More specifically, states that interact with each other based on adversarial meanings assigned to that interaction due to the structure in place will come to identify each other as adversaries. Likewise, states that interact with each other in less threatening ways, such as as partners or allies, will assign appropriate meaning to that interaction and develop, if not reinforce, a partner-based identity with the other state. The more the states interact according to their identities, the greater likelihood that norms will emerge or be strengthened that reinforce those identities and that interaction. In this respect, norms and identities have constitutive properties, causing states to recognise each other based on their compliance or not with norms reflective of that strategic culture.²⁶ Thus, the identity of the state in a strategic context will depend on its social relationships.

²¹ Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," 5.

²² Colin Gray, "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Studies* 25 (1999), 51.

²³ Gray categorises the three dimensions of strategic culture as including: *people / politics* (people, society, culture, politics, ethics); *preparation for war* (economics/logistics; organisation [defence, force and war planning]; military preparation and administration [recruitment, training, armaments]; information and intelligence, strategic theory/doctrine; technology); and *war proper* (military operations, political command, military command, geography, chance, uncertainty, adversary and time). Gray, "Strategic Culture as Context," 53.

²⁴ Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," 24.

²⁵ Ronald Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security," in Peter Katzenstein, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 34.

²⁶ Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," 5.

From these stable identities pertaining to the use or threat of force for political purposes emerge institutions that anchor and reinforce the ideas and values of the strategic culture and the identities of the agents affected by it. To emphasise, therefore, as these institutions are mutually constituted with the ideas and actors and identities, the strategic culture and the identities forthcoming serve to create or construct the security institutions.²⁷ Thus, the states who are members of such institutions are signalling their subscription to the strategic culture embodied by that institution and, in the process, constitute their identities. “Cultural-institutional contexts do not merely constrain actors by changing the incentives that shape their behaviour. They do not simply regulate behaviour. They also help to constitute the very actors whose conduct they seek to regulate.”²⁸ These institutions can emerge as informal security regimes or as formal security organisations, such as NATO. As much as such institutions may reflect an abstract idea or strategic culture, it is important to note that the strategic culture is made real, and ultimately even made, by the people who populate these institutions. “Strategic culture is not only ‘out there,’ also it is within us; we, our institutions, and our behaviour, are the context.”²⁹ In this respect, security institutions and their officials internalise the culture as they operate according to it at the same time that they build the culture by their interpretation of it. “Everything a security community does, if not a manifestation of strategic culture, is at least an example of behaviour effected by culturally shaped, or encultured, people, organisations, procedures and weapons.”³⁰ Thus, an important part of the strategic culture framework is to evaluate “how states seek to enact or institutionalize their identities (potentially shifting or multiple ones) in interstate normative structures, including regimes and security communities.”³¹

As security institutions such as NATO comprise several actors, the more these members interact with each other according to the strategic culture and norms reflected in the institution, the more that the identities reinforce each other and become fused together, resulting in the emergence of a collective identity based on what it means to be a member of NATO or a subscriber to the strategic culture of NATO. Thus, remembering the mutually constitutive and intersubjective nature of the strategic culture, agents, interactions, identities and institutions, security institutions such as NATO can be argued to persist based on the extent to which members or subscribers to the strategic culture of that institution embody the strategic norms that reinforce their collective identity. At the same time, the persistence of that collective identity serves to reinforce the value of the ideas and beliefs of the strategic culture and the institution in question. “[C]ultural and institutional structures cannot be divorced analytically from the processes by which they are continuously produced and reproduced and changed.”³² Thus, these mutually reinforcing security relations and social interactions intensify to such an extent that a common strategic culture, or values and norms concerning the use of force, develops among the actors. In turn, this shared strategic culture reinforces perceptions of like-mindedness and positive relations, leading to a shared

²⁷ Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein, “Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security,” 33.

²⁸ Katzenstein, “Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,” 22.

²⁹ Gray, “Strategic Culture as Context,” 53.

³⁰ Ibid., footnote 23, 55.

³¹ Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein, “Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security,” 62.

³² Ibid., 63.

collective identity. In other words, with the emergence of a strategic culture based on these social interactions, interests among the actors become predictable, uncertainty is reduced, the interaction becomes mutually reinforcing and a high degree of mutual responsiveness develops, fostering in the process trust, confidence and a shared collective identity.

At the same time, it is important to remember the impact of the dichotomous nature of identities in the context of strategic culture. In this respect, as identities involve a strong element of collective distinctiveness, it is by way of sharing in the strategic culture that constitutes the collective identity of a particular security institution that boundaries between 'us' and 'them' are unavoidably generated. The collective identity promoted by the strategic culture separates those who share that identity and subscribe to its values and beliefs from those who do not. Moreover, such divisions are reinforced by the similar and explicit behaviour informed by the strategic culture that is shared among 'us.' Indeed, since behaviour is inferred from the values and norms which constrain policies regarding the use or threat of force, if 'they' behave like 'us,' 'we' will see 'them' as 'us.' In other words, under the constraints and opportunities imposed by the strategic culture, states will behave accordingly to those who are like 'us' and who share the same strategic culture and 'them' who do not share the same values and beliefs. And 'us' in this context refers to an ally or a partner; and 'them' refers to an adversary. Thus, those who share our strategic culture are allies or partners; and those who do not share our strategic culture are identified as adversaries. The interactions that reflect these identifications at the same time reinforce them as well as reinforce the strategic culture, its ideas and institutions. Ultimately, with the establishment of a collective identity and a shared strategic culture, boundaries are erected between us and them, between partners and adversaries.

Moreover, as per social constructivism, changes to the environment which shape the strategic culture will lead to changes to the values, ideas, norms and beliefs about the use of force for political purposes. Depending on what changes occur to the environment, such changes to the strategic culture may include who will be identified as an adversary or an ally. Echoing social constructivism, the specifics of what constitutes strategic culture will be historically specific and will change as the environment changes; in other words, who is considered to be an adversary will be specific to a particular historical structure.³³ "History is a process of change that leaves an imprint on state identity."³⁴ While there are many different ways in which the elements of a strategic culture can change, and specifically the extent to which one subscribes to the strategic culture and is identified as either a partner or an adversary according, one way that bears particular relevance for the purpose of this study is the transference of a dominant strategic culture on other groups, either voluntarily or involuntarily. The transference can occur by way of manipulation and/or the recipients being convinced that these dominant cultural forms are in fact their own forms.³⁵ This of course does not preclude simultaneous changes to the dominant strategic culture as part of the effort to attract new subscribers and partners. At the same time, it is important to remember that such changes are carried out slowly, lagging behind changes in the 'objective' conditions that spawn the strategic culture in the first place.³⁶

³³ Gray, "Strategic Culture as Context," 57.

³⁴ Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," 23.

³⁵ Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995): 44.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

III. NATO AND THE STRATEGIC CULTURE FRAMEWORK

From the perspective of the strategic culture framework, we see European security relations in a different light and from the perspective of the influence of ideas, beliefs, traditions, habits of mind and attitudes relevant to the threat or use of force. For forty years or so, the Cold War held the world captive, imposing ideological and political divisions through continents, countries and populations as the West, heralding the virtues of liberal democratic market societies faced off against the East which promoted the superiority of communism and command economies. While the Cold War was carried out on a global scale, Europe was considered the potential battleground for a ‘hot war’ between the ideologically-driven military alliances that represented the two sides: NATO and the Warsaw Pact. As they faced each other across the iron curtain in defence of their political and economic systems, each alliance had detailed military strategies to be used against the adversary in the event of an armed confrontation. But as central as the planning of military operations was, its successful application and the cohesiveness of the alliance relied on beliefs and values commonly held and nurtured among the members of the alliance about the use of force and the adversary against whom the alliance was preparing to wage war. These shared values and beliefs subsequently informed and were informed by the institutional structures that took shape to realise and reinforce the mission of each alliance. Indeed, the ideological intensity of the confrontation, the high stakes involved regarding a war between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, potentially involving nuclear weapons, served to intensify the perception of threat posed by the other alliance, direct the development of the most advanced and strongest military preparations the world has ever seen and, ultimately, harden the adversarial perceptions each alliance held of the other. Indeed, so hardened were these perceptions that any end to this confrontation, if it should end, was not expected to occur quickly or without warning.

In this context, we can better appreciate NATO as a security institution, the collective identity of whose members are embodied in and reinforced by its strategic culture and the interaction of these actors according to the values and ideas of that strategic culture. Thus, relations among those who share a strategic culture are premised on social interactions which reinforce feel-good relations with others who share that culture and reinforce perceptions of like-mindedness. Moreover, the interactions according to the strategic culture and expectations concomitant with the sharing of the strategic culture in terms of partnership behaviour become mutually reinforcing and a high degree of mutual responsiveness develops regarding sympathy and loyalty, trust and confidence, as well as commonality of interests, ideas and identity.

In other words, those states that share in the strategic culture are less likely to consider each other as adversaries because of the reinforcing impact on their interactions of shared norms and values pertaining to the use of force and are more likely to see each other as partners if not allies. As NATO’s collective identity is reinforced by the sharing of that strategic culture, boundaries around that collective identity - around those that are considered partners if not allies because of the quality of interaction as influenced by a common strategic culture - are simultaneously reinforced.

However, in 1989 the iron curtain – as firm a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ as there ever was one – unexpectedly and dramatically was torn down. In a matter of weeks, communism and command economies were discredited in the countries that made up the

Warsaw Pact. Sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, the countries of the Eastern bloc began pursuing political and economic reforms that would transform them from communist systems into democratic market economic societies. Equally dramatic, the anti-communist revolution spread to the Soviet Union, the centrepiece and vanguard of the communist world, and joined the anti-Union sentiment building up at the time. In 1991 these processes together led to the demise of the Soviet Union as a country and an idea as one after another the fifteen republics that comprised it declared their sovereignty and independence and sought to redirect their systems onto a democratic, market economic path. On 31 December 1991 the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Thus, the basis for the Cold War, for the highly militarised standoff between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, vanished.

As a result of these fundamental changes, the nature of the relationship between NATO and the Warsaw Pact began to change as well. In effect, the end of the Cold War, the demise of communism and the collapse of the Soviet Union removed the ideological barriers that generated animosity and distrust between NATO and the newly independent states which earlier had prevented the development of a partnership. In this way, the perception of the other as an adversary began to soften.

Thus, in this changing environment of the post-Cold War era, the features of NATO's strategic culture sharpened and become more defined. More specifically, the end of the Cold War forced NATO to re-evaluate what it meant to share in the collective identity of NATO and to find a new meaning behind that identity. Thus, various communiqués from NATO summits and ministerials as well as other key documents since the end of the Cold War have reflected an inventory of the meaning behind NATO's identity and in the process have shaped NATO's strategic culture as the states interact according to these meanings and ideas.³⁷ Such an inventory includes the following: transparency of defence and military policies; respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; rejection of the use of force; peaceful settlement of disputes; cooperation, consultation, mutual consideration and consensus in decision-making; and democratic patterns of civilian control of the military.³⁸

Most importantly from the perspective of this study, democratic control of the military is a prominent feature of NATO's strategic culture and which distinguishes among its various subscribers. In particular, it attends to a particular mode of organizing and structuring legitimate authority governing the use of force.³⁹ In effect, democratic civil-

³⁷ According to one interlocutor, the summits and ministerials were significant in terms of advancing the changing relationship with former adversaries given NATO is an organisation of independent, sovereign states who take decisions collectively; the bureaucratic structure of NATO does not have the competence, structure or speed for making decisions, never mind such profound decisions as were made during this time. Interview NATO official No. 5, NATO, Brussels, 12 June 2003.

³⁸ See for instance consistent reference to these values in various NATO documents, including the 7-8 June 1990 Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council, the 1990 London Declaration, the 1991 Rome Declaration, the 1995 Study on NATO Enlargement, the 1999 Strategic Concept, and the 1999 Washington Declaration, among others. That these principles are likely to be held by other institutions does not take away from their utility in identifying NATO's strategic culture. Indeed, an argument can be made that NATO and its strategic culture are simply one component of a larger institution, for instance the Euro-Atlantic security community which incorporates as well the OSCE, for instance.

³⁹ Whereas civilian control of the military is one of many dimensions of this expansive field of inquiry regarding the political, social and economic relationship between civilian and military institutions, the democratic model of civil-military relations refers to a particular model of control. Other civilian-control models include authoritarian, military-dominant and communist models. It is crucial to refer specifically to

military relations is based on the subordination of the military to civilian authority by way of an institutionalized expression of the popular will.⁴⁰ In this respect, elected civilian government officials exercise control over the military on behalf of the people who elected them to office according to the democratic process of free, fair, and open multi-party elections at the same time that they remain accountable to that popular will for the effectiveness of the military institution.⁴¹ As a result, a democratic civil-military structure requires competent and knowledgeable civilians in parliament, the civil service, research institutions and free media, in addition to military officials who accept and internalized the norm of subordination to civilian structures. Furthermore, it requires transparency in order to realize the process of accountability. While the specifics and practice of democratic civilian control of the military differ among the allied and partner countries of NATO, there is sufficient commonality of its core values and beliefs to serve as an important marker of the boundaries of NATO's collective identity and strategic culture, thus distinguishing 'us' from 'them' and transforming adversaries into partners.

As per the strategic culture framework, these features of NATO's strategic culture then facilitate the process by which its partners can be identified, i.e. by compliance with these norms. Moreover, NATO partners are *expected* to comply with these norms as part of their interaction with one another. And the more they interact accordingly, the more stable and reinforced are these interactions carried out on the basis of partnerships. At the same time, NATO itself as an institution and the strategic culture that embodies it are also reinforced.

In this context, the transformation of NATO's relations with its former adversaries can be analysed in terms of how 'they' are becoming like 'us' not simply by way of joining NATO and entering into partnership arrangements. On a more fundamental level, NATO's former adversaries are becoming NATO's partners by subscribing to NATO's strategic culture and reforming their civil-military systems. Indeed, for many of the former adversaries this transformation occurred and is occurring as a function of the institutionalisation of their changing interaction with NATO and of NATO's strategic culture.⁴² Accordingly, additional institutions reflective of NATO's strategic culture have been established either multilaterally or bilaterally in an effort to not only manage the new security relationship with former adversaries, but also to instruct them in the principles and norms of acceptable behaviour regarding the threat or use of force, all in an effort to diffuse the strategic culture and, thereby, promote regional stability and security.

democratic models of civilian control since, because authoritarian and communist models may also be directed by civilians, civilian control does not necessarily mean democratic control.

⁴⁰ That the subordination of the military should be a concern stems from the belief that military control of the political process would undermine the larger national, political and societal interests. Not only does the military lack the skills to make decisions about non-military issues and policy, but its intervention into politics runs the risk of an inappropriate and self-serving distribution of resources in society to its own benefit and at the expense of other interested domestic actors. Thus, with the desire of avoiding military interventions in domestic politics, or the most extreme form of military intervention, coups, militaries must be controlled by civilian institutions.

⁴¹ Richard Kohn, "How Democracies Control the Military," *Journal of Democracy* 8:4 (1997): 145.

⁴² One interlocutor noted that NATO and its changing relationship with its former adversaries benefitted from a visionary leadership in Manfred Woerner who initiated the process of reaching out and integrating the former Warsaw Pact countries, then institutionalising and normalising the processes. Interview with NATO official No. 5, NATO, Brussels, 12 June 2003.

Since 1992, NATO's strategic culture has come to be institutionalised in a variety of ways. For instance, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) – re-named the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in May 1997 – was established in 1991 as a forum for cooperation and dialogue between NATO and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the newly independent states of the Soviet Union. The NACC/EAPC process was instrumental in carrying out regular, monthly consultations with the former adversaries about security and political matters as well as setting work plans on various topics, which essentially reflected the values and ideas of NATO's strategic culture: defence planning and defence reform, crisis management, transparency, and regional cooperation among others.

In another respect, the Partnership for Peace program (PfP) ranks as among NATO's most successful initiatives involving its changing relationship with former adversaries.⁴³ Initiated in 1994, PfP provides a bilateral forum by which former adversaries pursue targeted activities pertaining to defence and military cooperation with NATO, including set military exercises as well as training seminars about democratic civil-military relations and transparency in defence-planning. Most importantly, under the related Individual Partnership Program, specific activities are selected and carried out according to the interests and needs of the partner in question while preserving the integrity of NATO's strategic culture. Further exposure and enculturation to NATO's strategic culture is promoted through the International Coordination Centre at SHAPE that provides on-site coordination facilities for non-NATO countries participating in NATO operations, such as peacekeeping missions. In this respect, the former adversaries were becoming increasingly immersed in the operationalisation of democratic civilian control of the military.

The Membership Action Plan (MAP) was initiated at the 1999 Washington Summit to respond to the growing need of preparing in a more directed fashion potential candidates for membership in NATO beyond the preparations provided by PfP. Thus, unlike PfP, MAP targets potential NATO members and serves to enculturate them more directly to NATO's strategic culture depending on their unique requirements in order to facilitate the transition to membership and meet important goals to this effect concerning political and economic issues, as well as defence/military ones, including democratic civil-military reforms. Most importantly, MAP provides a vital feedback mechanism by which the MAP country's progress is monitored by NATO.⁴⁴

⁴³ PfP is largely considered to have substantiated the initial process of reaching out to the former adversaries by way of NACC in an attempt to throw a lifeline and link these countries to NATO, thereby making it more difficult for the process to reverse itself. In other words, the former adversaries were being given a stake into the institutions by being integrated into it and coming to share in the strategic culture of NATO. Thus, PfP helped to move the relationship with former adversaries much more decisively in a particular direction than other early initiatives although the earlier ones were not any less significant for their time. Interview with NATO official No. 1, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2003.

⁴⁴ The institutionalisation process was noted to have served an important role in also reassuring both NATO and the countries of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union as could be done at that early time in the transformation of their changed relationship. It is also interesting to note that according to one interlocutor, the idea of institutionalising interactions with the former adversaries outside of NATO formally is rooted in the Cold War and arms control and disarmament negotiations with the USSR which were impossible to do within NATO's framework even though NATO had a stake in these negotiations. Thus, this was not an entirely new or original development. Interview with NATO official No. 1, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2003. Even so, it is surprising to note that according to one view, NATO underwent an institutionalisation process more profound and more quickly than the OSCE during the same period. Interview with NATO official No. 5, NATO, Brussels, 12 June 2003.

As the environment has changed and the institutional framework of the strategic culture was adapted to these changes, the boundaries of the strategic culture's subscribers have shifted. More specifically, there has been an increase in the number of states subscribing, or aspiring to subscribe, to the principles and norms of NATO's strategic culture. Most notably, the transition states of the former Soviet bloc have been abandoning their former, Soviet-defined strategic culture in favour of the Euro-Atlantic values and beliefs surrounding the use of force, as manifested formally in their applications to join NATO or informally by way of partnership arrangements with NATO. Although the degree to which these values and beliefs are embraced and espoused varies across the individual states, ultimately this has resulted in significant changes to who is identified as 'us' and 'them.' In other words, by pursuing partnership arrangements with NATO, and in some cases even membership, former adversaries have been interacting in a way that has changed the perceptions of how others saw them and how others interacted with them, i.e. less as adversaries and more like partners or future allies, processes which were mutually reinforcing. "Power of social practices lies in their capacity to reproduce the intersubjective meanings that constitute social structures and actors alike."⁴⁵

Thus, the effect has been dual: as the former adversaries joined various institutions of NATO, they came to be exposed to and enculturated into NATO's strategic culture. As the process deepened and stabilised, the institution itself was reinforced as was their changing identity. Perhaps no other marker of NATO's strategic culture and the division between 'us' and 'them' has gained more relevance in this respect than democratic civil-military relations. That this specific component gained new prominence is not surprising given the stark contrast between this component and the practice of authoritarian civil-military relations under the Soviet system, thereby providing a visible measure of the transition progress. Indeed, that democratic civil-military relations has become a criteria for formal membership in NATO, if not a partial acknowledgement of having become one of 'us', is a testament to its relevance in the new environment and to NATO's post-Cold War collective identity.

At the same time, as noted in previous pages, changes to identity, interactions and institutions that are mutually constitutive occur gradually. Indeed, as the atmosphere changed in the late 1980s and 1990s, the relationship developed incrementally and for a period of time, the 'other' was still regarded as an adversary, a perception that was reinforced by the uncertainty and potential risks of the situation that dominated the environment at the time. In other words, the changed environment was at that early period never perceived as irreversible; thus, NATO is argued to have needed to be realistic about the process and to keep its guard in the context of a changing environment and to be prepared for the unexpected.⁴⁶ Moreover, as one interlocutor noted, events of this time outpaced the old attitudes and took over the institutional perception towards the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that was lagging behind and was becoming more and more outdated.⁴⁷ Thus, the transformation of adversaries into partners, and particularly the adoption and implementation of the norms associated with democratic civil-military relations, could only occur gradually and painstakingly slowly.

⁴⁵ Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," 178.

⁴⁶ Interview with NATO Official No. 1, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2003.

⁴⁷ Interview with NATO Official No. 5, NATO, Brussels, 12 June 2003.

The ‘peopled’ dimension of strategic culture at this point warrants particular mention. In this respect, changes in who was an adversary did not originate at the inter-governmental level but on the streets. For instance, changes in attitudes towards the former adversaries was especially influenced by the ex-patriot lobbies in the member countries of NATO. Indeed, during the 1992 and 1996 presidential elections in the United States, for example, NATO enlargement became a domestic political issue. Moreover, in response to what was perceived to be a reluctance on the part of NATO to proceed deliberately on the issue, democratically minded groups in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, specifically the Baltic states, were prompted to take control of the process itself.⁴⁸

The ‘peopled’ dimension of the reciprocal effect of the transmission of the strategic culture on changing identities also becomes apparent in the changing values and attitudes among individuals from the former Warsaw Pact states after visiting NATO Headquarters in Brussels.⁴⁹ During such visits, the consultation mechanism of NATO not only engaged the former adversaries but also presented them with a firm understanding of the values of the alliance as an open forum of mutual consultations and one that is open to change and to being inclusive.⁵⁰ Indeed, bringing individuals from the former adversarial countries into the NATO compound and its buildings went a long way to indoctrinating and enculturating them into NATO’s culture and into a common culture, much more than seminars held elsewhere, because of daily exposure to the culture and its operationalisation.⁵¹

IV. NATO AND UKRAINE

In this context, the strategic culture framework helps us to analyse the changes in NATO-Ukraine relations and its transformation from an adversarial relationship by virtue of Ukraine having been part of the Soviet Union to one characterised by a partnership. In the first instance, post-Cold War environmental changes dramatically removed the adversarial characteristic of Ukraine’s interactions with NATO.⁵² Indeed, in Ukraine’s 1990 declaration of sovereignty, it declared itself to be a country that would not belong to any military bloc.⁵³

⁴⁸ Interview with NATO Official No. 5, NATO, Brussels, 12 June 2003.

⁴⁹ Interview with NATO Official No. 1, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2003.

⁵⁰ Interview with NATO Official No. 1, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2003.

⁵¹ As one interlocutor noted, the delegations would initially feel out of place and awkward, but after six months they would already be part of the system. However, while the people at HQ would be enculturated, the people back home would not yet be and so NATO had to ensure a rotation in such visitations so that others - including those officials beyond the ministries of defence and foreign affairs, would also have a chance to be exposed. Interview with NATO Official No. 5, NATO, Brussels, 12 June 2003.

⁵² Interview with Volodymyr Belashov, Deputy Head, Mission of Ukraine to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002.

⁵³ Interviews with Representative of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002; Analyst No. 1 from the National Institute of Strategic Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine, 18 June 2002; Official in the Ministry of Defence, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002; Official in the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002; Official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002. This is not to say that in the early years of Ukrainian independence there remained a residual anti-NATO perception in Ukraine to a degree because of the Soviet legacy having been so entrenched and because of the continued

As the interactions between NATO and Ukraine developed and intensified, they prompted corresponding changes in the security relationship, reinforcing the non-adversarial nature and leading to unprecedented institutional features of the dynamic with Ukraine joining several NATO institutions,⁵⁴ such as NACC/ EAPC. And when Ukraine joined PfP in February 1994, it was among the first of the former Soviet republics to do so.

Notwithstanding the interactions between NATO and Ukraine in these fora which enculturated Ukraine to NATO's strategic culture, the highlight of the changed relationship is unquestionably the 1997 Ukraine-NATO Charter on a Distinctive Partnership. Indeed, one interlocutor noted that the NATO-Ukraine relationship entered a promising new phase after these developments in 1997 and offered unprecedented opportunities to give substance to the relationship.⁵⁵ Significantly, the Charter lays out the principles of their interaction that reflect the strategic culture of NATO, including the peaceful settlement of disputes and democratic civilian control of the military. It also identifies areas of cooperation between NATO and Ukraine, such as consultations on a variety of common security concerns, and the means by which that cooperation would be operationalised, such as by way of joint seminars and working groups as well as by way of a new institution, the NATO-Ukraine Commission. In addition, NATO opened a NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Kyiv to serve as a distribution centre for NATO-related information and to better inform the Ukrainian public and policy-makers about NATO. Moreover, in 1998, a Joint Working Group on Defence Reform was established to provide more focused attention to defence-related issues in the NATO-Ukraine partnership. Following on these themes and objectives, in 1999 a NATO Liaison Office in Ukraine was established to concentrate on areas of direct military cooperation and to facilitate such activities as peacekeeping operations. The Liaison Office serves essentially as NATO's representation within the General Staff; its primary purpose is to facilitate the NATO-Ukraine/military relationship and interoperability in the context of PfP, peacekeeping and other matters such as defense and security sector reform. In this respect, the NATO Liaison Office has served as a critical indication of NATO's widening activities with Ukraine.⁵⁶

In May 2002, Leonid Kuchma, president of Ukraine, served notice of Ukraine's interest in formally joining NATO. While an accession process has not yet been agreed to, and despite Ukraine's preference for a Membership Action Plan, NATO and Ukraine agreed to an Action Plan in November 2002 at the Prague Summit, an important signal of the commitment of both sides to moving the relationship forward made all the more significant in light of the scandals surrounding the Ukrainian administration at the time.⁵⁷ Most

presence of the old guard who kept such perceptions. Interview with NATO Official No. 7, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002.

⁵⁴ The change in perception of NATO as an enemy by way of the deepening and institutionalisation of Ukraine's interactions with NATO was confirmed by several officials interviewed. Interview with Representative of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002; Interview with Official in the National Security and Defence Council, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002.

⁵⁵ Interview with NATO Official No. 4, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003.

⁵⁶ Interviews with Official of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002; NATO official No. 7, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002.

⁵⁷ At the time, scandal surrounded Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma over his mistreatment of several journalists in Ukrainian and violating the norm of freedom of the press, in addition to the discovery of some

importantly, as with the other fora for interaction between NATO and Ukraine that reflect NATO's strategic culture, the Action Plan serves as another means by which Ukraine is exposed to the ideas and values of NATO. Of particular significance is that democratic civil-military reforms again appear as an issue to be addressed in their interaction. In any event, since May 2002, NATO membership stands as a goal of Ukraine, underlining not only the distance travelled in terms of adversarial attitudes of the Cold War but also that a simple partnership arrangement was no longer satisfactory.⁵⁸

Thus, as per the strategic culture framework and social constructivism, the institutionalisation of Ukraine's post-Cold War interactions with NATO informed and was shaped by the changes to Ukraine's own strategic culture. Indeed, the values and beliefs informing the threat or use of force espoused by NATO have appeared in Ukraine as challenging alternatives to and replacements for those of the authoritarian Soviet era. Nowhere is this more suggestive or apparent than in the area of civil-military relations. Since 1991, Ukraine has made great strides in replacing its authoritarian, communist form of authority over the military with a fully-functioning democratic, civilian model, particularly regarding the political and institutional framework for democratic control of the AFU. Thus, as Ukraine's interactions with NATO become more institutionalised and characteristic of a partnership, the more Ukraine is exposed to NATO's strategic culture, which simultaneously reinforces the other processes taking place. In other words, the extent to which Ukraine is able to establish successfully the structures of democratic control of the military and to implement these structures serves as a critical measurement of its relationship with NATO and even the prospects for its membership.

The end of the Soviet Union meant that the communist system of control over the military also ended and had to be replaced with another. In this respect, the depoliticization of the military in Ukraine ranks among the highest achievements of the country's post-Soviet experience.⁵⁹ More specifically, the guiding influence of any one political party, never mind the Communist Party, over the military was removed and activities on behalf of and membership in any political party by active military personnel is now prohibited by law.⁶⁰ The AFU is now to be subordinate to an impersonal, apolitical and democratic civilian structure.

However, as Ukraine lacked even the basic independent institutional structures to control its military, since the country had been previously integrated into the larger Soviet system, another fundamental accomplishment in the area of civil-military reforms was the creation of a democratic structure for civilian control that includes the president, the National Security and Defense Council (NSDC), the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the minister of

possible links between the Ukrainian government and the sale of a Kolchuga radar system to Iraq. Interview with NATO Official No. 2, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003.

⁵⁸ Interview with Representative of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002.

⁵⁹ Leonid Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations," paper presented to the conference, *Taking Stock on Civil-Military Relations*, The Hague, The Netherlands, May 2001.

⁶⁰ Oleg Strekal, "Civil Control over the National Security Policy Making Process in Ukraine," NATO Democratic Institutions Fellowship (1995-1997) Research Paper, (Kyiv, Ukraine, 1997).

defense, and parliament (*Verkhovna Rada*).⁶¹ In this respect, Ukraine has now in place the fundamental structure for democratic civil-military relations.⁶²

Indeed, the strong bond at the defence and military level of cooperation between NATO and Ukraine provide strong testimony of the extent to which the relationship has changed and which, according to the strategic culture framework, have a reciprocal effect on reinforcing the bonds of cooperation.⁶³ According to one interlocutor, there is a level of honesty and transparency at this level of interaction that was not there in previous years.⁶⁴ In this respect, the programs and activities organised under PfP on military reform and joint exercises (numbering as many as 800 in 2002) have had a 90% success rate in terms of implementation, a dramatic improvement from 50%.⁶⁵ The substance of the NATO-Ukraine relationship on the military level is also evident in Ukraine's participation in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and in Kosovo.⁶⁶ As one interlocutor noted, attitudes toward NATO were easier to change and were in stronger evidence at the military level because of the emphasis on interactions on such activities, whereby military personnel were able to see first hand what NATO was about.⁶⁷ Indeed, another noted that most interaction between Ukraine and NATO is carried out at the military level, more than in terms of political or economic issues.⁶⁸ As a result, there is very strong support among the military for NATO membership, especially among the middle ranks, because of their exposure to what it is

⁶¹ Colonel Oleksander Savin, "Principal Lines of Civilian Control of the Armed Forces of Ukraine," unpublished notes for a speech, Main Personnel Directorate, Ministry of Defense, Kyiv, Ukraine, 1998; Grytsenko, "Civil-Military Relations in Ukraine," 5.

⁶² For studies analysing civil-military relations in Ukraine, see instance Valeriy Izmalkov, "Ukraine and Her Armed Forces: The Conditions and Process for Their Creation, Character, Structure and Military Doctrine," *European Security* 2:2 (Summer 1993); Bohdan Pyskir, "The Silent Coup: The Building of Ukraine's Military," *European Security* 2:1 (Spring 1993); Taras Kuzio, "Civil-Military Relations in Ukraine: 1989-1991," *Armed Forces and Society* 22:1 (Fall 1995); John Jaworsky, "Ukraine's Armed Forces and Military Policy," in *Ukraine in the World: Studies in the International Relations and Security Structure of a Newly Independent State*, ed. Lubomyr Hajda (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Anatoliy Grytsenko, "Civil-Military Relations in Ukraine: A System Emerging from Chaos," Centre for European Security Studies, Harmonie Paper, no. 1 (Groningen, The Netherlands, 1997); Grigoriy Perepelitsa, "The Development of Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine," in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds, and Anthony Forster (New York: Palgrave, 2002); Taras Kuzio, "The Non-Military Security Forces of Ukraine," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 13:4 (December 2000); Natalie Mychajlyszyn, "Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Implications for Domestic and Regional Stability," *Armed Forces and Society* 28:3 (Spring 2002).

⁶³ Interview with Official in the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002.

⁶⁴ Interview with NATO Official No. 4, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003.

⁶⁵ Interview with Representative of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002; Interview with NATO Official No. 2, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003; Interview with NATO Official No. 9, Kyiv, Ukraine, 3 June 2003.

⁶⁶ Interview with NATO Official No. 9, Kyiv, Ukraine, 3 June 2003. In part, these activities also serve to signal rather strongly a shared commitment to peacekeeping and conflict management.

⁶⁷ Interview with Official in the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002; Interview with NATO Official No. 7, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002.

⁶⁸ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Defence, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002.

NATO does and experience gained from participation in peacekeeping operations and PFP and joint exercises.⁶⁹

These developments are reinforced by changes in Ukraine's domestic political situation reflecting a growing consensus at various levels regarding the pursuit of a closer relationship with NATO and even growing support for NATO membership. As one interlocutor noted, particularly telling of how the attitude toward NATO has changed towards more consensus is the absence of any reaction to the May 2002 announcement of Ukraine pursuing membership in NATO and with the past divisiveness and opposition towards NATO having been replaced with an attitude of 'why not NATO?' among elites and, although more slowly, among certain segments in society.⁷⁰ In this respect, among the most dramatic changes has been the change in attitude not only among the political elite but also in parliament since the March 2002 elections with all major blocs, including previous opponents such as the communist and the socialist parties, supporting NATO membership, a level of support that previously did not exist.⁷¹ Indeed, in October 2002 the *Verkhovna Rada* agreed to create a new committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, the process of which requires substantive agreement among the national deputies and factions in order to succeed.⁷² Thus, the new parliament has brought in a new positive quality to the future direction of the NATO-Ukraine relationship and even is holding hearings on NATO integration and with the participation of three times more deputies than before, a change that can be analysed according to the strategic culture framework.⁷³ According to Borys Tarasiuk, former foreign affairs minister of Ukraine and current Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, the result of the *Verkhovna Rada's* outward support for NATO means that the Ukrainian leadership can no longer blame parliament for any delays in strengthening the relationship between NATO and Ukraine.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Interview with Analyst No. 1, National Institute of Strategic Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine, 18 June 2002.

⁷⁰ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002.

⁷¹ Interview with Representative of Mission of Ukraine to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002; Interview with NATO Official No. 6, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 13 June 2002; Interview with Analyst No. 1 National Institute of Strategic Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine, 18 June 2002; Interview with Official in the Ministry of Defence, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002; Interview with Borys Tarasiuk, National People's Deputy of Ukraine and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 5 June 2003.

⁷² In this case, the creation of the committee was passed with 266 of 450 votes in parliament. Interview with Borys Tarasiuk, National People's Deputy of Ukraine and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 5 June 2003.

⁷³ This more positive role by parliament may in part be the realisation of the hard work and commitment of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Kyiv which had developed close relations with the Foreign Affairs committee and other parliamentarians in an effort to better inform them about NATO and its activities. Interview with NATO Official No. 2, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003. In this respect, the Centre has maintained an open door with the Ukrainian government and fostered an informal and later formal relationship with parliamentarians, reflected in a NATO-Ukraine parliamentary group, for instance, and parliamentary visits to NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Interview with NATO Official No. 8, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002; Interview with NATO Official No. 9, Kyiv, Ukraine, 3 June 2003.

⁷⁴ Interview with Borys Tarasiuk, National People's Deputy of Ukraine and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 5 June 2003.

Thus, on the basis of this stronger, institutionalised interaction and mutual understanding on the basis of the sharing of a common strategic culture, the NATO-Ukraine relationship survived with relatively little damage one of the more critical tests of its post-Cold War relationship: the 1999 Kosovo campaign. In contrast to the NATO-Russia relationship which suffered tremendous setbacks, the Ukrainian government maintained interactions with NATO and allowed the NATO Information and Documentation Centre to continue to operate. While public opinion polls during this period saw a decline in the level of support for NATO and a return to the perception of NATO as an aggressive military organisation, these opinions have in recent years changed once again.⁷⁵

V. FROM ADVERSARIES TO PARTNERS: ANALYSIS OF THE NATO-UKRAINE RELATIONSHIP

In applying the strategic culture framework to the NATO Ukraine relationship in order to better evaluate how identities change and former adversaries become partners, we can now understand that as Ukraine's post-Cold War relationship with NATO became institutionalised, it was exposed to the strategic culture of NATO and in particular to the norm of democratic civil-military relations. Thus, markers that defined each other as adversaries slowly were falling away the more they interacted with each other and built around them institutions reflective of a common strategic culture that reinforced their mutual perceptions as partners.

The value of the strategic culture framework also becomes apparent in understanding the limits to the NATO Ukraine partnership. In this respect, strategic culture can not be absolutely shared and as a result there are implications to a weak subscription or sharing of a strategic culture. While neither Ukraine nor NATO regard each other as adversaries given the beginnings of a fusion of strategic culture in their interactions as evident in Ukraine's reforms of its civil-military system and defense structure, these reforms remain incomplete and, thus, bear particular impact on the future direction and depth of the Ukraine NATO relationship in light of Ukraine's May 2002 announcement of wanting now to pursue NATO membership. More specifically, while its first ten years of independence has seen Ukraine make tremendous progress in establishing the political and institutional framework for democratic control of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU), significant weaknesses remain apparent and of concern. Thus, incomplete adoption and subscription to NATO's strategic culture, in particular incomplete democratic civil-military relations, raises important questions at this time about when Ukraine will be ready, or perceived to be ready, to advance its relationship with NATO beyond a partnership arrangement to full membership.

Evidence of these weaknesses of democratic control over the military in Ukraine is found in several aspects of its structure.⁷⁶ First, the president has emerged as the dominant actor in the structure of civilian control at the expense of the other civilian actors. In this

⁷⁵ Interview with NATO Official No. 2, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003.

⁷⁶ These weaknesses by no means suggest that civil-military systems in other members and partners of NATO are faultless. The point being made here is that the weaknesses in the case of Ukraine are of sufficient scope and concern that, in the context of the strategic culture framework, they raise questions about the limits to the partnership between Ukraine and NATO and potentially weaken the extent to which Ukraine can be identified as 'us.'

respect, the formulation and direction of military and security policy has become the prerogative of the president and his administration. With the establishment of the NSDC and the implementation of civilian control that favors the president, the office has emerged with stronger levers of control over defense and security policy than parliament or the minister of defense, suggesting that rather than being shared, civilian authority is instead concentrated in the office of the president.⁷⁷

Secondly, extant tensions between civilians and military personnel in the MOD are another area of weakness in the implementation of democratic civilian control in Ukraine.⁷⁸ In effect, the military does not view civilians as having an adequate knowledge of military and defense matters in order to competently set defense and security policy.⁷⁹ This negative perception of civilian competence is reinforced by most civilians at the MOD being holdovers from the Soviet era and maintaining the Soviet work ethic of incompetence.⁸⁰ It is also reinforced by a poor understanding of democratic civil-military relations among military officials, particularly among higher ranking officers, and the priorities necessary to advance defence reform.⁸¹ The problem and impact on its operationalization emerges whereby these higher ranking officials are the most influential in the overall structure, and advances in democratic civil-military relations therefore cannot proceed very quickly.

In addition, inadequate representation of civilians in key positions within the military establishment betrays a correspondingly weak application of democratic civil-military relations.⁸² While civilians can be found at the MOD and with the deputy chief of the General Staff, the majority of them serve in low level, mostly administrative, positions which lack influence in policy-making.⁸³ The highest ranking civilian at one time served as the deputy minister for procurement, a position with little if any influence in policy-making. No other civilian has been located at comparably high levels, not even as a political military advisor. In contrast, key policy positions are held by military personnel, essentially creating a situation where the military governs itself.⁸⁴ It is also revealing that Valeriy Shmarov, as Ukraine's first civilian defense minister, brought in only two civilians to improve high-level

⁷⁷ Leonid Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations," paper presented to the conference, *Taking Stock on Civil-Military Relations*, The Hague, The Netherlands, May 2001.

⁷⁸ As one commentator has noted, "The relationships along the civilian-military axis are still far from optimal in Ukraine." Anatoliy Grytsenko, "Civil-Military Relations in Ukraine: A System Emerging from Chaos," Centre for European Security Studies, Harmonie Paper, no. 1 (Groningen, The Netherlands, 1997), 1.

⁷⁹ Proceedings of the seminar, *Armed Forces, Society and the State*, organized by the University of Lancaster Center for Defense and International Security Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine, June 2000, <http://www.cdiss.org/kyivreport.htm>.

⁸⁰ It was also reinforced by the failed experiment with Shmarov as the first civilian Minister of Defense, whom the military criticized for lacking a fundamental understanding of military and defense issues. Grytsenko, "Civil-Military Relations in Ukraine: A System Emerging From Chaos."

⁸¹ Interview with officials in the Presidential Administration, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998; Interview with NATO Official No. 9, Kyiv, Ukraine, 3 June 2003.

⁸² Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations." Interview with Official in the Ministry of Defence, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002.

⁸³ It is particularly telling that civilians make up only 33% of the Ministry of Defense. *National Security and Defense* No. 11 (2000): 7.

⁸⁴ Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations."

civilian representation in the MOD.⁸⁵ Moreover, most of the civilians at the MOD are retired military officers who, in holding negative perceptions of civilians and their potential contribution to and role in democratic civil-military relations, inject a further obstructive quality to advancement in democratic civilian control reforms.⁸⁶ While the proportion of civilians at the MOD has increased since 1998, these increases have occurred mainly in the personnel, medical, financial, economic, educational and administrative departments and for the most part represent retired military personnel.⁸⁷

Part of the problem in insufficient civilian representation in Ukraine's military institutions lies with the country's lack of financial resources and inadequate defense and state budgets.⁸⁸ In some respects, this situation has prevented an extensive and genuine civilianization of the MOD given that the low salaries and poor pensions (in contrast to those obtained by military personnel) have dissuaded experienced civilians from joining the department in greater numbers.⁸⁹ In addition, poor resources have prevented the installation of education programs to strengthen civilian competency of military issues, structure and defense policy and the military's comfortability with and support of democratic civil-military relations.⁹⁰ If effective and adequately supported financially, such education programs could go a long way to improving the relationship between military personnel and civilians as well as facilitate reforms in civil-military relations.

Finally, parliament's influence over defense and military issues has declined considerably since the initial period of reforms when it played a prominent and active role in propelling and establishing an independent Ukrainian military force and its supportive structures.⁹¹ While the comparison may be dismissed because of the context of the earlier period of having to put in place the necessary legislation, this could only go so far as a satisfactory explanation. More specifically, parliament today plays a limited role in the overall democratic civilian structure of control over the Ukrainian military and has become marginalized from the process of formulating defense policy. This marginalization is evident in the weak co-operation on military and security matters between parliament and other elements of the civil-military structure, especially the executive, and in its being superseded by the growing influence and decision-making powers of these other elements.⁹² Indeed, the

⁸⁵ These were Anatoliy Dovgopoly as Deputy Defense Minister (Armaments) and Olexandr Urban as Head of the Foreign Relations Department in the General Staff (who was replaced with a military official in early 1997). Grytsenko, "Civil-Military Relations in Ukraine: A System Emerging From Chaos," 30.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸⁷ "Ukraine and Its Armed Forces: A New Actor on the European Stage," NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Defense and Security Committee (November 1999); Interviews with experts in Ukrainian research institutions, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998.

⁸⁸ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Defence, Kyiv, Ukraine, 19 June 2002; Interview with NATO Official No. 9, Kyiv, Ukraine, 3 June 2003; Interview with NATO Official No. 4, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003.

⁸⁹ Interviews with officials in the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998.

⁹⁰ Interviews with experts in Ukrainian research institutions, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998.

⁹¹ Interview with NATO Official No. 9, Kyiv, Ukraine, 3 June 2003.

⁹² Interviews with members of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and Defense, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998.

president at times has issued decrees, taken initiatives and set policies, including Ukraine's participation in NATO's PfP and the diversion of funds from the AFU to Special Forces, despite strong opposition in the *Verkhovna Rada*.⁹³ More recently, parliament was not consulted on its views regarding the 2005 State Program for Reforming and Developing the AFU, a key document that was unilaterally approved instead by presidential decree.⁹⁴ Some parliamentarians in fact note that the 1996 constitution reduced the functions of the parliamentary committees, thus the role and input of parliament overall.⁹⁵

This marginalization of parliament from the democratic civil-military structure is reinforced by the perception among other actors in the structure that parliamentarians do not have the capacity to contribute to military policy- and decision-making as they lack a fundamental understanding of and interest in defense and security matters.⁹⁶ In this respect, few parliamentarians are considered to have a sufficient military background and few military personnel are even elected to parliament.⁹⁷ It is also reinforced by the weak system of rule of law in Ukraine that undermines any effective role by parliament in the larger political process, not just regarding military and security issues.⁹⁸ Still others see parliament as an unlikely realistic supporter of military matters and agenda even if it did have influence in the process given that military issues are perceived to be part of the government's agenda, and, in the context of conflictual relations between government and parliament, the latter is put in a political position of opposing the government's security and military policies.⁹⁹

As a result of parliament's declining influence, the transparency so vital to the implementation of democratic civil-military reforms in Ukraine has been lacking. Parliament's inability to effect transparency has been especially evident in the budgetary approval process. In particular, its access to detailed information that is required for it to undertake the budgetary approval process has been known to be uneven and difficult.¹⁰⁰

⁹³ In the parliamentarians' view, as they were not consulted, such policies are illegitimate and undermine the democratic foundation of civil-military relations in post-Soviet Ukraine. Interviews with members of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and Defense, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998; "Ukraine and Its Armed Forces: A New Actor on the European Stage," NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Defense and Security Committee (November 1999).

⁹⁴ Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations."

⁹⁵ Interviews with members of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and Defense, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998; Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations."

⁹⁶ Interviews with officials in the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998; proceedings of the seminar, *Armed Forces, Society and the State*. Other reasons for the marginalization include the deep ideological and political cleavages that are manifested in parliament. As a result, it is unable to act as a cohesive unit and challenge the executive, providing thereby the opportunity for the executive to control the process.

⁹⁷ While military personnel are not prohibited from running for parliament, they would need to stand down from active service if they take a seat in parliament. Grigoriy Perepelitsa, "The Development of Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine," in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds, and Anthony Forster (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 243; proceedings of the seminar, *Armed Forces, Society and the State*.

⁹⁸ Interviews with officials in the Presidential Administration, Kyiv, Ukraine, December 1998.

⁹⁹ Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations."

¹⁰⁰ Oleg Strekal, "Civil Control over the National Security Policy Making Process in Ukraine," NATO Democratic Institutions Fellowship (1995-1997) Research Paper, (Kyiv, Ukraine, 1997).

Moreover, efforts to improve and strengthen the oversight capacity of parliament have been resisted by the president, government and the military.¹⁰¹

Notwithstanding these weaknesses, the strategic culture framework helps us to understand that they can be overcome as Ukraine's interaction and institutionalisation with NATO continue, as is already evident with the 2002 Action Plan signed in Prague. Indeed, the situation has eased somewhat in certain areas and the process is showing signs of improvement. For instance, there has been some progress in increasing consultation and involvement on the part of the non-presidential civilian components of the structure in key aspects of military and defense policy. In this respect, the process for preparing a new military doctrine to replace the 1993 version is more consultative and inclusive of input from key elements of the civil-military structure, including the presidential administration and parliament, in contrast to the earlier and more exclusive process that was directed primarily by the Ministry of Defense.¹⁰² Parliament also has raised more actively its concerns about the state of the military and has increased its participation in the process.¹⁰³ In addition, reflective of the need to overcome obstacles in the operationalisation of democratic civil-military relations, in November 2000 the president directed the National Institute of Strategic Studies to prepare a strategy for improving civilian control over the military.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, a decision allowing civilians to enter the National Defense Academy was recently taken, although it may be some time before it is implemented.¹⁰⁵ Most recently and potentially significant, on 26 June 2003, President Kuchma appointed a civilian, Evhen Marchuk, as defence minister, only the second time that Ukraine has had a civilian defence minister.¹⁰⁶

The shortcomings in Ukraine's democratic civil-military reforms also reinforce the length of time required for ideas and values to change and for a strategic culture to be adopted. Indeed, some analysts argue that Ukraine is unlikely to be ready to join NATO for another 20-30 years, others say five to ten years, and others comment that it is unlikely to occur under Ukraine's current leadership whose quasi-authoritarian values are incompatible with those of NATO.¹⁰⁷ At the very least, however, momentum appears to be on the side of sooner rather than later.

One factor that may affect the momentum is NATO's response to Ukraine's initiatives. Indeed, drawing from the strategic culture framework, the length of time it has taken the NATO-Ukraine relationship to get to the point at which it is today may be considered in terms of the reciprocal influence that Ukraine's attitudes towards NATO in the past have affected NATO's willingness to interact with Ukraine and institutionalise these interactions. For instance, based on Ukraine's poor record of matching words with deeds, it is not surprising that rather than complete a Membership Action Plan, which was Ukraine's preferred course for pursuing a targeted program of preparation for NATO membership, NATO instead encouraged an Action Plan. In this way, NATO may be signalling its position

¹⁰¹ Perepelytsia, "The Development of Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine," 240.

¹⁰² Polyakov, "Ukrainian Experience in Civil-Military Relations."

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Proceedings of the seminar, *Armed Forces, Society and the State*.

¹⁰⁶ *Den'*, No.109, 26 June 2003.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Official from the National Security and Defence Council, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002.

on how it sees its relationship with Ukraine, i.e. not in terms of membership in the near future.¹⁰⁸ Such a reluctance on the part of NATO may also result from the image problems surrounding President Kuchma and his leadership. In this respect, NATO may be reluctant to encourage a stronger relationship at this time for fear of risking the legitimization of President Kuchma who has been plagued by scandal and accusations of falling short on commitments to advance democracy in Ukraine.

Final Conclusions

Thus, in applying the strategic culture framework to the NATO Ukraine relationship, Ukraine's schizophrenic orientation in its foreign and security policies appears to emerge more prominently. Indeed, the persistence of a Soviet influence in Ukraine's values about the threat or use of force as evident in the shortcomings in its democratic civil-military reforms may explain the restraint in applying more coherently NATO's strategic culture. That the previous culture persists should not be surprising since Ukraine did not establish a post-Soviet military from scratch, but rather based it on the remnants of the Soviet armed forces. Indeed, Ukrainian military personnel, especially at the higher ranks, are still considered to be "largely Soviet in spirit," maintaining in the process old Soviet traditions rather than promoting or generating Ukrainian traditions. As a result, civilian input and military subordination, not to mention reforms in this direction, are resisted by the military establishment.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Ukraine simply rationalized the Soviet military structure, ensuring that its legacy and elements of its culture perpetuated and remained to challenge the adoption of a Euro-Atlantic strategic culture.¹¹⁰

Ultimately, there is sufficient agreement in Kyiv and Brussels that much more work is required on both sides in order to prepare for Ukraine's membership. In Ukraine, this work is especially required on a societal level as well as in terms of financial support.¹¹¹ From NATO, it is required on an institutional level in terms of providing the relationship the focussed attention that would signal its level of importance.¹¹²

According to the strategic culture framework, the transformed relationship between NATO and Ukraine as witnessed over the course of the last decade can be better understood as being a process of changing ideas and attitudes regarding the use of force for political purposes. In this respect, the limit to the relationship can be explained by the shortcomings

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Borys Tarasiuk, National People's Deputy of Ukraine and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 5 June 2003; Interview with NATO Official No. 2, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003; Interview with NATO Official No. 7, Kyiv, Ukraine, 20 June 2002;

¹⁰⁹ Perepelytsia, "The Development of Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine," 246.

¹¹⁰ Proceedings of the seminar, *Armed Forces, Society and the State*.

¹¹¹ Interview with Borys Tarasiuk, National People's Deputy of Ukraine and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Euro-Atlantic Integration, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 5 June 2003.

¹¹² According to one interlocutor, Ukraine is not taken seriously enough or attended to as strongly as it perhaps should in the context of NATO's post-Cold War transformation. In this respect, there is a surprising level of ignorance about Ukraine at NATO. While there may be a level of understanding of what Ukraine's problems are, this is not balanced with actual pressure on Kyiv to correct these problems. Moreover, the file is considered to be so difficult that being responsible for it does not enhance one's career. Ultimately, NATO needs to strengthen its organisational and human resource capacity where Ukraine is concerned. Interview with NATO Official No. 3, NATO, Brussels, Belgium, 11 June 2003.

in Ukraine's adherence to the strategic culture of NATO, in particular with regard to the democratic control of the military. At the same time, in the process of being institutionalised, the ideas about and interactions with each other serve to reinforce the institutions created and perhaps have set the relationship on an irreversible course. When that course will reach membership as its final destination, however, has yet to be determined. At the very least, however, the strategic culture framework will have facilitated our understanding of the route travelled.