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REFLEXIONES CONCEPTUALES EN TORNO AL ACCESO AL ÁMBITO EURO-ATLÁNTICO: LAS IMPLICACIONES DE LA AMPLIACIÓN DINÁMICA PARA LA SEGURIDAD

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RESUMEN:

La trayectoria de las relaciones internacionales después de la Guerra Fría ha resaltado la creciente influencia de las normas y de las reglas establecidas a escala internacional, así como el aumento de esas normas y de esas reglas. Ambos procesos han ido más allá de lo que tradicionalmente asume el régimen de la teoría de la operacionalización y constituyen un indicio del resurgimiento de la noción de comunidades de seguridad. El argumento, por tanto, consiste en que la interacción estatal entre los países que pertenecieron al bloque oriental y las organizaciones euro-atlánticas (principalmente la UE y la OTAN) lleva a estas últimas a propagar normas, que se convierten en prácticas aceptadas en países Europa oriental. Estos procesos de socialización pueden fomentar la cooperación interestatal entre los países candidatos, lo que puede estimular el desarrollo de una comunidad de seguridad regional.

PALABRAS CLAVE: ampliación, constructivismo neo-liberal, senda de dependencia, seguridad, comunidad de seguridad, socialización, estabilidad.

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CONCEPTUAL REFLECTIONS ON EURATLANTIC ACCESSION: THE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENLARGEMENT DYNAMIC

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ABSTRACT:

The post-Cold War international relations have emphasized an increase in the importance of internationally promoted norms and rules as well as an increased dynamic of their promotion. These processes have gone beyond the traditional understandings of regime theory operationalization and have suggested the revival of the notion of security communities. The argument, then, is that the state-interaction of the former Eastern Bloc countries with Euratlantic organizations (principally the EU and NATO) leads the latter to propagate norms on accepted practices to East European states. These processes of socialization, in turn, can encourage inter-state cooperation by the applicant states and this can encourage the development of a regional security community.

KEY WORDS: enlargement, neoliberal-constructivism, path dependence, security, security community, socialization, stability.

1. INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War emphasized a significant ideational and material disparity between the former rivals. Since the advantage was with the Euratlantic organizations (principally the EC/EU and NATO), the context of low-insecurity and low-ideological tension induced them to become involved in a process of promoting their framework of order in an attempt, on the one hand, to strengthen regional societies, minimize the likelihood of ethnic violence and put a stop to economic and political instability; and, on the other, to minimize the threat (as well as costs) from a new ideological and military confrontation in the continent. Thus, the East European elites found themselves in a position, in which they had to launch a process of interest-redefinition within the context of accession.

The basic argument of this study is that external agencies (i.e. the EU and NATO) are capable of having socialising affects on target elites. In effect, this is state socialisation as these elites are state elites. The suggestion is that Euro-Atlantic organizations are equipped to address the East European sources of conflict and encourage inter-state cooperation. The prospect and conditionality of membership provides them with significant influence in the region. This socialisation occurs in terms of altering domestic practices through compliance and learning, and in changing external behaviour. These processes, in turn facilitate regional cooperation and thus, the emergence of a nascent security community.

The study of this dynamic entails an examination of the role external actors play in the promotion of a security-community-relationship in Eastern Europe; as well as the domestic dynamic, which their involvement initiates. Their involvement through the enlargement dynamic initiates a process of transforming the post-Cold War order in the former Eastern Bloc to one that is less likely to recourse to violence for the solution of conflicting issues. Thus, the Euratlantic institutions are involved in a process of promoting (i.e. exporting) their West European framework of order to the region in an attempt to strengthen regional societies, minimize the likelihood of ethnic violence and put a stop to economic and political instability. The complex network of cooperation, which characterizes the Euratlantic community, based on liberal, pluralistic institutions, constitutes a type of order distinguished by 'altering or undermining the kinds of social, economic, political conditions within and between states that are likely to generate armed conflict' (Holsti, 1992: 10). The promotion of this distinct pattern of relationship to Eastern Europe engages them in the *international socialization* of regional actors to the 'characteristics and purposes' of *acceptable* behavior (McNeely, 1995: 33). In itself, this process attempts to introduce dependable expectations that the norms promoted by Euratlantic institutions would affect the inter- and intra-state practices in Eastern Europe, so that change would happen in a peaceful way. Thus, in itself, the international socialization of the region can be outlined as a process of developing *normative prohibitions* against the use (or preparation to use) violence in settling conflicts (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 35).

However, prior to delving into the enlargement dynamic, which this study interprets as socialization and the path dependence that it creates, some analytical considerations are on order.

2. NEOLIBERAL-CONSTRUCTIVIST' PERSPECTIVE ON ORDER

Conceptualisations of the Euratlantic accession of the former Eastern Bloc countries have traditionally been undertaken from one of the three dominant orthodoxies in the sociology of international relations: neo-realism, neo-liberalism, and constructivism. However, since neither of this seems to offer (single-handedly) a suggestion of enlargement dynamic that can be contextualised as a security community framework of relations, the present research combines interesting aspects from neo-realism and constructivism. Such approach allows for the application of normative theory to concrete case-studies and subsequently, evidence how externally promoted norms and rules affect decision-making and why policy-makers choose to follow them intra- and inter-state affairs.

Neoliberal constructivism (being an eclectic approach) combines in its understanding of international order rationalist (interest-based and power-based) and cognitive (knowledge-based) perspectives. Applying it to Eastern Europe involves foregrounding the aspects that hold the promise of establishing a stable and cooperative pattern of relations. The main aspects of neoliberal-constructivist order are: (a) institutions - based on mutual agreements, whose normative 'stickiness' and institutional autonomy proffer cooperation; and (b) interaction - the process of interest and identity formation, which develops experiential knowledge among actors and introduces positive identification and community building. Thus, neoliberalism provides the rules and procedures for institutional co-binding, while constructivism facilitates the learning of new practices and the establishment of trust among actors. Neoliberal constructivism allows not only for the recognition of constructivist ideation, but also for its deeper impact on policy-making through the framework of institutionalism. Hence, while it acknowledges the importance of material forces, it also emphasizes the determining role of ideation in the process of decision-taking, by proscribing certain policy options as inappropriate.

Establishing order in the former East European states entails the development of institutional networks that help develop positive intersubjective meanings among actors. The theoretical basis for such pattern can be elicited from the emphasis on the weakening position of state actors, followed by the diminishing relevance of military security in the context of 'complex interdependence'. The neoliberal notion of 'complex interdependence', emphasizes that '(1) states are not the only significant actors - transnational actors working across state boundaries are also major actors; (2) force is not the only significant instrument - economic manipulation and the use of international institutions is the dominant instrument; (3) security is not the dominant goal - welfare is the dominant goal' (Nye, 1993: 169). In this way, institutionalism stresses its pragmatic qualities for facilitating the establishment of closer cooperation among East European actors. Within the context of the 1997 Pact on Stability in Europe is understood as a tool for initiating regional actors into a process of working together. Thus, institutions can be helpful for creating expectations among actors that they would 'behave' in accepted (or agreed upon) way in particular situations.

However, what constructivism contributes to this process is the understanding that 'complex interdependence' translates into 'complex learning' (Wendt, 1999: 170) – identity- and interest-formation. Namely, the process of interaction

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makes actors learn about each other, which provides them with knowledge of what to expect from each other. Thus, within the context of neoliberal institutionalism they agree to work together, which initially affects only their behaviour. However, the continual practice (re-enactment of the norms, which initiated the process) prompts them to 'internalise' the rules and procedures, which subsequently affects their identities (how they perceive themselves and the other actors). In this way actors participate in the pattern of international relations according to the expectations that its rules (instituted through 'complex interdependence') have been established (and are beneficial).

Within such a framework, neoliberal constructivism should be understood as a 'common sense' pattern of international relations (Wendt, 1999: 296). It recognizes the potential of constructivism to promote 'other-help' as opposed to 'self-help' of neorealism; but it also is aware that this analytical transition could be implemented through the instruments and practices of neoliberal institutionalism. Wedding both approaches together makes explicit an 'assumed but unexplored step [of neoliberal institutionalism] which accounts for the *maintenance* of cooperation' (Sterling-Folker, 2000: 100. Emphasis original). Constructivism's contribution to institutionalism is the emphasis on ideas in the development of institutional frameworks for problem-solving. In other words, the promotion of institutional cooperation in Eastern Europe across areas of common concern can facilitate the dissemination of trust-developing ideation (which in the long run could transform the region into a security community). Neoliberal-constructivism recognizes the role of ideation (ideas and beliefs) on the policy-making process. In effect, it distinguishes a pattern in which *ideas affect policies through institutions*.

The implication of such 'institutional ideation' for the applicant countries is that the *idea* of cooperation can be introduced through an institutionalised dialogue of expert groups for solving de-territorialized issues (Yee, 1996: 86). The institutionalisation of such practice and the norms that it promotes can set the region on the course of creating a stable order. It is this context that allows developing a certain pattern of interdependence, based on shared norms and collective identity, which emphasizes order as a security community. Yet, the explanation of a security community suggests an elucidation of the concept of security.

3. SECURITY

The starting point for the understanding of security is an explanation of what international order encompasses (according to this study). This research presumes that order involves regulation (in the sense of self-sustaining continuity) of the exchange between the actors in the political realm; the manner in which they utilize their resources; the ends to which they exert their power; and the influence they have on the controlling function of the system, itself. In this sense, order is marked by negotiation, coercion and a restriction of the extent to which interactions are worked out in the political domain, while at the same time promoting a 'condition of justice and equality among states or nations' (Bull, 1977: 93).

Thus, order is understood to be a framework of predictability. Predictability (in the sense of self-sustaining continuity) is rationalized as a mechanism for

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maintaining a structure of power; and power stands for the exchange between different forms and sources of authority. In this way, a political order gives meaning to and makes sense of the relations and interactions in the international society. That is why, order is about control (in the sense of checks and balances): regulating the participants' resources, their use and distribution. It sets the framework within which they can be meaningfully utilized and the types of interactions that the members can have.

In such contextualization of international order, security is deemed as an aspect that reflects knowledge of order's ability to overcome successfully (without disintegration into violence) disruptions to its patterns of predictability. Security is a process of continuous sanction (in the sense of guarantee) that the system of order protects the participating actors from adverse contingencies. In an applied sense, security indicates 'a low probability of damage to acquired values' (Baldwin, 1997: 13). The values of order (already outlined as its regulatory aspect) derive from its pattern of predictability. The threats to order's security ensue from strategic, military, social, economic, etc. sources. As Baldwin indicates these contingencies indicate to different forms, but essentially the same concept of security. Therefore, 'security can be defined as the freedom to exercise certain values' (Mihalka, 2000: 34).

The concept of security intrinsically implies the stability aspect of international order. Stability derives from the system's ability to mediate the *special* interests of different actors, without incurring major structural instability. This does not imply that the durability (or self-reinforcing arrangement) of international order is indicated by 'slow, gradual and peaceful' (Herz, 1968: 115) changes, while the opposite necessarily indicates instability. Stability indicates an 'ability of political order to contain and overcome disturbances to order' (Ikenberry, 2001: 45). This is where the importance of the normative culture, among the actors in the international arena, becomes so important: because it constitutes a base that buttresses individual confidence in the potentiality of the mutual control over the system's checks and balances. In effect, the durability of order exemplifies that the 'international system is stable (i.e., in a state of equilibrium) if no state believes it is profitable to attempt to change the system' (Gilpin: 1981: 50).

The security paradigm of order, however, is very closely related to its solidarity aspect. Its success is based on the ability to maintain control (in the context of regulation) of international actors in 'an economically polarized and environmentally constrained world' (Rogers, 2000: 1). The way order copes with the volatility deriving from the disparity between its participants is vital to the stability of its structure. The radicalisation of the issue of uneven wealth distribution is one of the major threats to order. Thus, its value-base is confronted with the issue of intensifying sustainable development with the aim of reversing 'the global apartheid of 24 richer countries, a dozen rapidly developing countries and 140 that are growing slowly or not at all [which] becomes one of the major new threats to global security' (Cavanagh, 1997).

In this respect, the security aspect of order does not entail 'an unchanging preservation of the status quo' (Hyde-Price, 2000: 55). It reflects the constant development of the relationship between the actors as well as the modification within the very nature of these actors. Said otherwise, the constancy (in the sense of continual transition) of order should be able to accommodate the ever-evolving exchange between states in the international domain as well as the alteration in the state structure, itself. Thus, 'on the one hand, order requires a

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delicate balance of structural solidity, and flexibility on the other' (Hyde-Price, 2000: 55). The key aspect in the adaptation of such changes is the scope within which order can accomplish the accommodation without recourse to violence.

In other words, this reiterates the ability of a system of order to regulate the relationships between the different actors by establishing some common rules according to which they can utilize their resources. Such predictability is premised on a 'sense of a common future' (Mihalka, 2000: 29). The awareness of a shared destiny results from the intersubjective interaction between actors. It requires that actors deal together with the 'increasingly transnational' threats to international order from 'corruption, organized crime, migration, epidemic diseases, environmental catastrophes, and terrorism' (Mihalka, 2000: 63). In a pragmatic sense, this emphasizes the framework of order as a network for cooperative security, which has developed to sustain the values of its pattern of continuity. Thus, actors' interaction within the context of interdependence (based on shared values) is conducive to cooperation. It succeeds in 'creating the conditions of stability in which respect for human rights, consolidation of democratic reforms and economic patterns of trade and investment can flourish' (Javier Solana quoted in Mihalka, 2000: 55).

Such stable pattern of interaction between actors in the international arena, reinforced by cooperation, which further develops shared norms, which then creates interaction, in a positive feedback loop and emphasizes order as a security community. The security community indicates the importance of shared norms for giving meaning to the relations and interactions in the international society.

4. SECURITY COMMUNITY

A security community is an inter-actor relationship that maintains 'dependable expectations of peaceful change' (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 30). It represents a peaceful, non-violent international order that elicits the importance of non-national, collective identity. A security community arises from the process of interaction in which actors develop their knowledge of shared meanings and values. This knowledge (and pattern-predictability) allows them to redefine order among them as a security community. The self-sustaining continuity of security communities is the result from the institutional self-enforcing agreement among actors. Neoliberalism offers an opportunity to socialize the actors within the norms and rules of the security community. Institutions provide the framework for internalising the values, beliefs and practices consistent with their rules, which establish a political culture of legitimacy. In this context, actors' acquisition of the institutional rules helps overcome adversarial polarizations in their relations, which subsequently leads to developing stable expectation about each other (owing to the internalisation of institutional procedures). Thus, the legitimacy of the institutional basis of inter-actor relations within a security community ensures 'that the members of that community will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other way' (Deutsch, 1957: 5). Thus, the normative base of institutions has both 'regulatory' and 'constitutive' implication in such order.

Its authority derives from a normative scale of attraction and detraction of anticipated actor's actions. In a constructivist sense, this implies that actors accept the demands that the political culture makes on them through the

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institutional norms of legitimate behaviour. Then, the next step comes almost naturally: the practice of these rules leads actors to *enlarge* the meaning of legitimacy to include identification 'with each other, seeing each other's security not just as instrumentally related to their own, but as literally being their own... All refer to a shared, super-ordinate identity that overlays and has legitimate claims on separate body identities' (Wendt, 1999: 305). It is in this way that the establishment of common rules for involving actors in a relationship of complex interdependence allows them to begin developing collective interests and knowledge of each other. The foreseen negative effects from not taking part (i.e. violent conflict regulation) versus the positive ones (i.e. non-violent conflict management) are result not only of game's theory maximizing of gains and minimizing of losses. Being always in process, actors' interests and identities constantly relearn the benefits from developing positive meanings of each other. In this way, order regulates actors' relations through a normative scale of attraction and detraction of outcomes.

The analytical implications of combining institutionalism with interest and identity-interaction suggests a pattern of order based on the exchange between different forms and sources of authority, which regulate actors' resources (their use and distribution) in the environment of a security community. Prospective security communities rely (to a large extent) on a complex process of organizational emulation, initiated and maintained by third parties, which in the context of Eastern Europe are easily discernible as the Euratlantic organizations. Their presence initiates a dynamic of conditionality, compliance and internalisation that is broadly referred to as international socialization.

5. SOCIALIZATION

More formally, the international socialization of Eastern Europe through the process of Euratlantic accession is premised on the development of stable institutions deriving from a facilitating normative climate (Bjola, 2002: 2). In itself it is a *'process that is directed toward a state's internalization of the constitutive beliefs and practices institutionalized in its international environment'* (Shimmelfennig, 2000:111. Emphasis original). This makes international socialization a 'ubiquitous feature of interaction in terms of which all identities and interests get produced and reproduced' (Wendt, 1992: 403). In other words, it refers to a process through which institutions, practices, and norms are transmitted between international actors (Starr, 1991: 359). Basically, it emphasizes socialization as a learning process, through which norms and patterns of behavior accepted (and institutionalized) as legitimate are transmitted from one actor to another. Such diffusion of normative patterns of behavior (from the international arena onto the domestic one) affects state policy-making. East European socialization is a complex process, which encourages a redefinition of the pattern of regional relations on the basis of new causal and normative knowledge that introduces a dynamic of 'innovation, domestic and international diffusion, political selection and effective institutionalization that creates the intersubjective understanding on which the interests, practices and behavior of government are based' (Adler, 1991: 52). Thus, the international socialization of the former Eastern Bloc into prescribed (or ascribed) appropriate patterns of behavior reflects 'the complex linkages

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between national and international systems' (Rosenau, 1969: 3). It structures the practices and habits of accession-states around the norms and rules of legitimate behavior: i.e. their internalization and institutionalization within the domestic sphere. In this way, the process of international socialization can initiate an interaction of security community-building in the region through: (i) the promotion of collective learning; (ii) the transmission (by the extra-regional institutions) of common meanings, sustained by shared understandings; and (iii) the improvement of the overall condition of the state through the conditioning of regional actors by Euratlantic institutions (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 43-45). Thus, the socialization process emphasizes the possibilities of initiating a security community in the East European space in the context of accession. Its dynamic of domestic institutionalization of externally promoted norms can overcome the negative implications of 'unsettled periods' through the insistence on a normative consensus on 'who are we and how should we live' (Ann Swidler quoted in Barnett and Adler, 1998: 431. Emphasis added). In policy terms, this translates into the epistemic question for the socialization of the former communist countries: how to develop functional (and functioning) networks of interdependence in the process of accession to Euratlantic institutions?

The suggestion is that the socialization process can develop the enabling environment for initiating a security community-pattern of relationships in the region by: (a) promoting cooperation in the absence of trust (i.e. by *ensuring* transparency); (b) enabling Balkan states to find areas of mutual interest; (c) shaping state practices through defining legitimate behavior; and (d) encouraging Balkan states and societies to imagine themselves as belonging to a common region (Barnett and Adler, 1998: 419-21). In this way, the socialization dynamic of Euratlantic institutions changes the interest and practices of intra-regional behavior. The very involvement of extra-regional actors in the socialization of East European actors suggests a possibility for creating the necessary domestic conditions for the introduction of cooperative habits in the region. At 'the most intuitive level', the Euratlantic institutions facilitate and encourage transactions (that is, initiate trust-building) by: 'establishing norms of behavior, monitoring mechanisms, and sanctions to enforce these norms' (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 42). Said otherwise, the Euratlantic institutions *shape* state interactions through the socialization process. Its dynamic introduces the exogenous factors that lead to an endogenous process that can *orient* the domestic sphere of regional actors towards a coordinated practice with their neighbors.

Utilizing the methodology of neoliberal constructivism, the process of Balkan socialization emphasizes a double dynamic: (i) international 'norms constrain the behavior of states'; but, at the same time, (ii) international norms also 'constitute' the behavior of states (Checkel, 1999: 84). That is, the potential 'trigger mechanisms for a security community are likely to have material and normative bases' (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 51). Thus, on the one hand, the practices promoted by Euratlantic institutions proscribe some, while (at the same time) prescribing other patterns of decision-taking. On the other hand, however, they also reinforce the appropriateness of norm-compliance by granting legitimacy (as well as access to resources) to those actors who internalize the international standards of acceptable behavior within their domestic arena. In this way, 'international rules can become power resources,

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helping domestic actors to translate their preferences into policy' (Cortell and Davis, 1996: 457).

Thus, the *power of attraction* that the Euratlantic institutions have, allows them to become a legitimate authority for evaluating the degree to which such norms and rules have become integral part of (i.e. constitutive to) the decision-making practices of the East European states. The legitimacy of their involvement derives from the complex discourse on accession dynamics, in which 'actors regularly refer to the norm to describe and comment on their own behavior and that of others, *the validity claims of the norm are no longer controversial*, even if the actual behavior continues violating the rules' (Thomas Risse-Kappen quoted in Cortell and Davis, 1996: 456-57. Emphasis added). Thus, the practices promoted by the Euratlantic institutions become a point of reference framing (but also constituting) state behavior.

Said otherwise, the dynamic of accession emphasizes *logic of equifinality* – common policy endpoints – that can promote inter-actor relations that would be mutually beneficial (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 38-39). The practices of instrumental cooperation (maintained by the Euratlantic institutions) can alter states' decision-making by expanding the realm of their self-interest – in other words, by altering their value-orientations and policy preferences. The exogenous involvement in the post-Cold War developments of Eastern Europe assists in *adjusting* the *substantive beliefs* of regional actors in line with the principles underscoring the perception of an appropriate international order; that is, the socialization process emphasizes that norms (together with material incentives) help in shaping the 'beliefs about what set of policies will maximize short-term interests, and they therefore serve to guide state-behavior and shape the agenda from which the elites choose specific policies' (Ikenberry and Kupchan, 1990: 285). The socializing practice of Euratlantic institutions can create the facilitating conditions (through the enlargement dynamic) for the development of positive shared meanings and understandings, premised on the internalization of similar norms. That is, the international socialization of Eastern Europe introduces common normative denominators that could transform regional interactions to more cooperative ones. The promise of membership once the appropriate procedures have been domesticated (i.e. internalized) by the acceding states serves as a positive incentive that makes regional actors susceptible to international socialization.

The presence of the Euratlantic institutions creates favorable conditions that make it possible for the actors in the domestic political process (i) to internalize international norms and rules and (ii) to appropriate them 'to further their interests in the domestic political arena' (Cortell and Davis, 1996: 471). Thus, learning becomes a process of 'managed interdependence', where East European states are *induced* to question 'older beliefs and... to institutionalize new way of linking knowledge to the task the entity is supposed to carry out' (E. Haas, 1990: 37). Such socialization practice can direct the region towards a security community-pattern of relations through the embedding of its normative base within the constitutive features of accession states' interests and identities. Thus, the norms and rules promoted by Euratlantic structures can become the foundations of shared meanings, which derive from the intersubjective interaction within the accession process. In this way, intersubjective meanings give actors 'a common language to talk about social reality and a common understanding of certain norms', which can lead to the development of 'common

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actions, celebrations and feelings' (Taylor, 1979: 51). This implies that the regional interaction initiated by the socialization process highlights the instrumental benefits for candidate-states from cooperation and provides them with a common normative framework for their decision-making (whose internalization affects their perception of foreign policy issues).

Thus, socialization introduces a degree of reciprocity among East European actors, which can diffuse the fear from 'the use of violence as a means of statecraft and to settle their conflicts' (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 32). That is why the socialization process by the Euratlantic institutions helps to strengthen state practices and decrease the risks from inter-state cooperation. Their presence (i.e. the fact that they are there to monitor the socialization process), as well as their power of attraction facilitates the development of more cooperative relations despite uncertainties, by helping to mitigate problems of opportunism and suspicion in such interactions (Fearon and Laitin, 1996: 715). This creates the enabling environment for initiating security community-building in Eastern Europe in the absence of trust. The very socializing role of Euratlantic institutions makes it easier to overcome the risks 'resulting from our inability to monitor other's behavior, from our inability to have complete knowledge about other peoples' motivations and, generally, from the contingency of social reality. Consequently one's behavior is influenced by one's beliefs about the likelihood of others behaving or not behaving in a certain way rather than solely by a cognitive understanding or by a firm and certain calculation' (Mistzal, 1996: 19). Thus, the Euratlantic institutions become the 'third-party' facilitators that promote and sustain East European interaction. Their authority also substitutes for the absence of trust, by providing both push and pull factors for coordination. The Euratlantic institutions are the ones that (i) contain the norms and provide the mechanisms that make states accountable to each other; (ii) identify common interests and also attempt to create a binding set of interest; and (iii) institutionalize reciprocity by conveying a sense of purpose (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 52). In other words, they *ensure* that East European states evolve along a certain path: the development and internalization of institutions and norms that would allow them to become members of Euratlantic institutions (i.e. *become like them*).

Such degree of predictability (i.e. dependable expectations) is maintained through the stick and carrot approach of 'graded association': regional states are taught, and supposed not just to adopt and adapt to the external requirements, but to actually internalize them. Before moving from one grade to another there is evaluation based on continuous monitoring how successfully (unsuccessfully) the state has domesticated the external requirements (Shimmelfennig, 2000: 122). Internalization, itself, does not demand the absence of nonconforming preferences; nevertheless, there is the expectation that there would be effective '*internal* (rather than external) *sanctioning mechanisms*... prevent[ing] deviant preferences from becoming norm-violating actions' (Shimmelfennig, 2000: 112. Emphasis original). Thus moving up the ladder of 'graded association' ensures access to more benefits from the socializing agency. This socialization through conditioning the actors within the Euratlantic patterns and practices is premised on the level of effectiveness (degree of internalization) that the socialized parties have achieved. It suggests a potentiality for regional cooperation, through the instrumentalization of the extra-regional involvement in the socialization process, which creates the

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facilitating mechanisms for its initiation. They sustain a *reinforcing* environment on the practical benefits (through 'graded association') from developing workable initiatives for applicant-states' cooperation: '*integration with the EU is only possible if future members can demonstrate that they are willing and able to interact with their neighbors as EU Member States do*' (EC, 2002. Emphasis original).

In order for Euratlantic rules and procedures to be domesticated successfully by applicant states, there is a need for establishing efficient and effective governments. Institutions 'by themselves are merely intellectual constructs. They play a part in social life only to the extent that they are effective' (Bull, 1977: 55). That is why Euratlantic structures are involved in strengthening the structures of governance by involving East European states in transforming their Cold War apparatuses to the needs and requirements of the post-Cold War issues. In such context, regional socialization is to be understood as the promotion and maintenance (by Euratlantic structures) of 'persistent and connected sets of rules, formal and informal, that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity and shape expectations' (Ruggie, 1997: 109). In this context, the transition period emphasizes a practice of emulation in the candidate countries. The process of democratization, which was initiated in the post-Cold War period, reflects a trend towards more democratic forms of government. To a large extent this is a result of the increased volume of inter and intra-state interaction of the region. East European states adopted extra-regional (i.e. Euratlantic) models in order to demonstrate their belonging (as well as acquire a recognition of belonging) to the legitimate community of states. This, in turn, made them more susceptible to an external promotion of norms and rules of appropriate behavior 'cued by' the socializing Euratlantic institutions (Starr, 1991: 358). However, this change of governmentality is driven not only by external factors. There is a considerable amount of domestic demand to change the state apparatus (and the ways it performs its tasks) in line with internationally accepted practices. In this sense, there is also extant domestic (internal) recourse to international (external) norms, which facilitates the emulation of Euratlantic democratic models. Such analysis reflects the complex dynamic of the international socialization of the former Eastern Bloc. This suggests an understanding of regional states not as unitary actors, but as social entities. As such they comprise of a number of groups, whose socialization is a result not of hegemonic imposition; but derives from the intersubjective interaction within the process of norm-transmission (Finnemore, 1994: 593).

6. PATH DEPENDENCE

External agencies (particularly the EU and NATO) influence domestic policy by providing compelling principles for political action; however, their legitimacy (and effectiveness) derives from the consensus-building among the groups comprising the state. In this sense, the mere incorporation of internationally promoted rules and norms would not suffice to affect domestic policy-making in Eastern Europe, unless they are internalized by the entities that the state represents.

Thus, the path dependence initiated by extra-regional actors in the applicant states aims to establish a self-reinforcing process that narrows down the range of possible outcomes (North, 1990: 92-104). It is important to note that the

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socializing practices 'are "sticky"'. The further the process evolves along a particular path, the harder it becomes to shift to alternative paths, which eventually "locks in" one of the possible outcomes' (Arfi, 2000: 565). As it has been mentioned already, the socialization practice of the accession process is entrusted to emphasize the instrumental benefits from sustaining its framework of path-dependent patterns, 'characterized by self-reinforcing positive feedback' (Krasner, 1988: 83). In this way, the Euratlantic institutions introduce a reinforcing normative base that could *orient* the policy-making choices in Eastern Europe (towards cooperation). The expectation is that promoting institutions and practices similar to the ones of Euratlantic structures could lead to a path dependence that would *lock in* the development of stable (and peaceful) order.

Path dependence is based on predictability and assurance: both promoted and maintained by the Euratlantic institutions themselves (as well as the accession process). Predictability underscores expectations of consistent behavior, while assurance reduces the probability of deviant action (Väyrynen, 1999: 167). Extra-regional structures emphasize (in their transactions with former Eastern Bloc states) the importance of establishing good and effective governance. The cumbersome (and, more often than not, corrupt) government bureaucracies of the region have become part of the problem, rather than the solution. Moreover, some of the elites have vested interests in the inter- and intra-state instability, thus further compounding the problems of transition. However, the accession process introduces a transformative practice, socializing the governments of candidate-states within prescribed patterns of exchange. Thus, Euratlantic structures (through socialization) introduce an ethos and a behavior, in which a 'positive functional process' can contribute to the 'emergence of a security community' (Väyrynen, 1999: 173). The inference is that the development of a stable, transparent and accountable state bureaucracies (whose legitimacy derives from the recognition by Euratlantic structures) can contribute to the development of regional cooperation. Such conclusion derives from a logic of *maximum social utility*, according to which the peace and security of a society are functions of a practice of good (i.e. accountable and transparent) governance, that is characterized by: 'stability of possession', 'transference of consent', 'performance of promises' (David Hume quoted in Onuf, 2002: 215). Thus, the models, which extra-regional actors demonstrate and their socializing effects upon East European actors can (i) decrease the probability of unaccountable governmental practices; and (ii) increase 'the cognition of interdependence' (Starr, 1991: 360). The latter promotes domestic pressure for certain policy-decisions. The dynamic of 'cascading interdependence' reveals that 'citizens and leaders in all parts of the world are increasingly able to comprehend where they and their collective fit – *and should fit* – in the process of global politics' (Rosenau, 1988: 359. Emphasis added). Applicant states (as social entities) become increasingly aware of their position in the international arena, as well as the desired direction of their affiliation. The accession to the Euratlantic structures is a reflection of this dynamic. The socialization effects of extra-regional institutions transmit in Eastern Europe the norms and rules of appropriate decision-making practice.

Such relationship can introduce a condition of reciprocity, which can facilitate cooperation without the prior existence of trust, in spite of uncertainties (Väyrynen, 1999: 166). The legitimacy of East European states, resulting from

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their deepening socialization by/and within Euratlantic structures, raises the possibility for institutionalized cooperation in the region, because of the *expectations* (which this process creates) that they would behave in a certain, acceptable way. The perception that 'they are like us' (i.e. act according to the same norms and rules of acceptable behavior) offers a possibility for initiating cooperation as the first step towards building a regional security community. This allows for the possibility to introduce trust within such relationship. The placement of trust among East European actors within the accession process (i.e. that the other side is going to behave in a predictable way) is also an attempt to obtain safeguards against the cheating by the other side. It is: based on the maximization of the expected utility under risk. The notion of expected utility contains, in and of itself, the idea that the trustworthiness of the actor is limited, so that the potential risks are involved at least until the relationship becomes more fully institutionalized. (Väyrynen, 1999: 166)

7. CONCLUSION

The accession of East European states to Euratlantic organizations can exhibit a socializing effect, in which regional actors are encouraged to demonstrate a degree of adherence to externally-generated rules of legitimate behavior (i.e. conditionality). This aims to ensure that regional actors behave in a predictable way and thus to encourage trust between these actors. In this manner, international socialization can help 'underwrite the capacity of a system to function peacefully and to bond its members in agreements' (Kegley and Raymond, 1990: 248). It is noteworthy that it is the Euratlantic institutions that can promote such reciprocity, by socializing regional actors individually within their norms and rules of institutionalized behavior. Such a process introduces similar norms and similar patterns of expected behavior among Balkan states and thus a conditioning of East European actors through the accession process means that extra-regional structures can contribute to the initiation of a regional security community.

The argument, then, is that the state-interaction of the candidate countries with Euro-Atlantic organizations (principally the EU and NATO) leads the latter to propagate norms on accepted practices to East European states. These practices relate to domestic politics and also to inter-state relations. The rules and norms are propagated in a number of ways. These processes of socialization, in turn, can encourage inter-state cooperation by the applicant states (i.e. because they have adopted similar norms and thus types of practice) and this can encourage the development of a regional security community.

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