

A Presentation of Emanuel Adler's Concepts of Integration

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The main target of the brainwork on security community formation within international relations theorizing is to prevent violence between nation states. In order to do so, the realist idea of systemic anarchy, wherein nation's survival constitutes the interest of the actors and self-help becomes the ultimate means, shall be overcome. The problem with self-help in the presence of universal mistrust and the absence of coordination is, it may lead to provident violence in the instant of uncertainty. Most critical are situations of systemic change.

The ideal is to transform the realist image into an alternative model of reality, built on the idea of community, where the rationale for the individual state in pursuing its own interest of security is to cooperate, at least to coordinate with others. From this redefinition of social reality there should follow the development of mutual dependent expectation of peaceful change, i.e. the mutual assured deployment of peaceful – coordinative and cooperative - instead of violent means in pursuit of the individual (i.e. the national) interest. That in turn is leading to a highly increased probability of absence of interstate violence in case of change within the international order, the place where it is feared the most.

This is one approach to designing security community formation as a means to peaceful change shortly drafted. Many others do exist. In this paper I will take a look at

the conceptions that are contributed by Emanuel Adler concerning the issue of security community building. He made an ongoing attempt to develop a stylized description of the processes and factors leading to deep integration, security community suchlike understood, which in turn is the base for the dependable expectation of peaceful change. My aim is to track his stream of thinking in order to get a roadmap on the development and evolution of deep integration to provide an outline of his work. For this purpose I will present and compare three models he developed in works from the years 1997 to 2001. They stand in sequence and are built upon each other. The argument he made in 1997 takes the second place after his presentation in union with Michael Barnett from 1998. This is intended, as the state of the argument was chosen as ordering principle and not the chronological termination of publishing.

1. Presentation and placement of the debate about security communities

When Deutsch 1957 presented his work 'Political Community and the North Atlantic Area'¹ he submitted a quite idealistic concept to pit against the then dominating realism within the debates on international relations theories (even if still applying realist core assumptions). His aim was to avoid war by sketching a roadmap that shows the way out of a purist realist paradigm. The argument was, states could leave the security trap of anarchy simply by integration.

The idea is simple and understood: To end the ongoing game of mutual mistrust within the anarchic international system, states had to transform the system of anarchy by building mutually binding norms for peaceful ways of competition. Self-interested actors would not give up their interests, but socialize themselves respectively each other to non-violent mode of conduct. He distinguished between pluralistic and amalgamated security communities. The first meaning the mutual self-restrictive binding of states by

constructing some kind of common institutions, the second signifying even deeper integration, standing in analogy to a state of states.

The terms of conduct would be transformed from autonomous self-defence to competing interests bound by the norm of observing non-violence. But how this transformation of the international system could be achieved? Deutsch offers two answers: One approach aimed at a pluralistic security community and starts with intensification of communication and cooperation. By that, states would initiate a dynamic process of social learning and begin to form a set of shared norms. The second step demands that states had to subdue to some kind of supranational body that would bind all of them and thus provide predictability necessary for the dependable expectation of peaceful change. The amalgamated community in analogy to the nation state confers decision making power from the multilateral to the supranational level.

Both approaches realized would transform an international structure that bars the units from peace and security. The notion on 'dependable expectations of peaceful change refers to the expectation of peace between states – elites and their peoples – for the present 'and the future even in the face of power shifts or systemic changes. Only mutual reliance on this expectation can provide individual fall back on precautionary violence.

2. Adler und Barnett, a framework for the study of security communities

Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett in their 1998 joint publication on security communities criticise the Deutschean concept to the effect, that it was fuzzy and badly defined². His behaviouralistic approach could quite well capture transnational movements i.e. interactions which would point out to increasing interdependence between states. That again would for one indicate interstate convergence and, secondly,

growing stimulus for further integration, inherent in processual and systemic change. But, by deploying a sheer materialistic approach Deutsch could not, simply by methodological constrains, explain the growing sense of cohesion stemming from the development of a collectively shared identity and community as cognitive and psychological phenomenon. Thus, the indicators for community - which according to Adler and Barnett is defined by common identity, shared values and norms and mutual responsibility³ – are barely named nor measured by a behaviouralistic approach.

Adler and Barnett are trying with regards to terms of constructivism a new way to the same target. They aim at explaining the development of security communities as a phenomenon of socialization, a path dependent constructive process. In order to conceptualize Deutschs outline of security community enlarged by constructivist assumptions, they develop a multi-fold model of the integration process. It is meant to cover material change like interstate political coordinative interaction as well as social change like the formation of a common identity. That is to say, it embraces processual as well as structural change. Both spheres are understood as being essential for community building: „Community is defined by three characteristics. First, ... shared identities, values and meanings. ... Secondly, ... many-sided and direct relations; ... Thirdly, communities exhibit a certain kind of reciprocity that expresses some degree of long-term interest.“⁴

I will put most emphasis on this first model because it describes in detail the mechanisms by which states are able to transform the system of international anarchy. Within the context of Adlers argumentation it ranks as the first step on the path to integration.

3. Presentation of concept I

As the model describes **three phases**⁵ of the integrative process it is able to picture dynamic change. Each phase - named ascendant, nascent and mature - leads to a new level of integration. These sequential levels are distinguished by means of certain indicatory sets.

Additionally, to better capture the process of integration, the singled out indicators are filed within **three tiers**. The distinction is made according to their place within the process of change, if they are to be localized where change is started, taking place or showing its effects.

The first tier is that of precipitating conditions, that is to say the push or pull factors fostering integration. As examples of push-factors, one can think of developments in technology, economics etc. that empower human capabilities, shared affection by internal threats and, finally, changes in the international surroundings that produce external common threats. The second kind refers to situations where security coordination is rather one further voluntary step in the name of progress, e.g. reinterpretations of social realities that motivate social change, like the idea of capitalizing on international division of labour or the idea of a shared future deriving in regions with a high degree of homogeneity in cultural, political or ideological terms. Deep homogeneity and the idea a shared future may be derived from on a common, more integrated, past. Thus, this may be seen as a non pure case in terms of the model where the states are considered alienated foregoing to security integration. It is not clear, where else an idea of a shared future should stem from. In any case, the whole model is aimed at explaining just this. (This second category of precipitating factors may be considered very cautiously in order not to tap into a tautological trap. I would

prefer at least not to put cognitive change at the beginning of a process which is to explain cognitive change. It seems sensible to confine to push-factors, understood as any kind of *crises* as precipitating factor within this phase.)

Within the second tier the conducive factors of social action and interaction, driving the process of integration, are described. It encompasses the processual elements of transactions and organization building and social learning. Further, it points to where and how international structure is changed in order to adapt to the ongoing process. Structural change is reflected in distribution, availability and content of power and knowledge. This in turn is pushing the process of integration further on. Both of them – processual and structural factors - are positive reciprocal, i.e. mutually re-enforcing and regenerative.

The third tier finally implies the psychological changes, effects of the learning process fostered by integration. They themselves are necessary conditions for „dependable expectations of peaceful change“. Here, the elements of trust and collective identity are to be found.

Subsumed, tier one presents the material and normative incentives for change in international relations, tier two shows where action possibly takes place in the name of change and points out to the targets for transformative action and tier three shows the desired social outcomes of the process.

The tiers are ordered by sequence, the former always causal for the next one. The three tiers should not be confused with the three phases noted above. Whereas the factors presented within the three tiers are constitutive for progress, the process as a whole is split up in the three sequences (phases). Thus, one ordering principle in fact overlays the other. In theory they can be arranged vertically to each other in order to

create a more presentable figure. Adler and Barnett do go in this direction with their figure presenting the three tiers. All of the tiers and phases include the interstate, the national and the societal realm.

Figure 1

Mature			Common identity, trust
nascent		Processual and structural change	
ascendant	Precipitating factors		

Figure 1: Here, the tiers are signified each one for the phase where their relevance is prominently expressed.

As Adler and Barnett analyze and describe the three tiers for every phase of the integration process, this will be shortly resumed in the following.

At the nascent phase of integration, states find themselves settled in a formally anarchic environment, where all the presumptions of realism hold on. For the first tier, there have to be some precipitating elements to promote reorientation. According to the model, these triggering factors induce a shift of orientation at the state level towards each other and towards policy coordination with the promise of mutual advantage e.g. through lower transaction costs. As push- factor one could practically think of global threats like demographic growth or environmental risks that need coordination in order to retain security or shifts in distribution of power. This point is only mentioned here, but much more fully elaborated on in the latter work of Emanuel Adler⁶. Mentioned as pull-factors are developments in technical terms facilitating transaction or new interpretations of social reality, e.g. by enhanced possibility in

communications or/ and newly available knowledge, even the idea of a shared future.

Within the second tier the integration process starts at the at the foreign policy level. It takes place through diplomatic consultations, face-to-face contacts and possibly so called search missions, which are employed to evaluate the possibility of cooperative action. Next challenge is posed as getting from the multiple bilateral consultations to truly multilateral ones. Here, the problem of first action is crucial. The task is to overcome the problem of collective action associated with interdependent choice, inherent in the paradigm of realism with it's logic of mutual mistrust⁷. Considered, not much common definition on possible or desired benefits from cooperation has been established yet, the fear of being tricked is always lurking around. There has to be at least one actor who is willing to bare in terms of security and take the first step in the integrative direction. That may be the most powerful or/ and motivated one within the existing system, according to Deutsch: "the larger, stronger, more... advanced units were found to form the cores of strength around which the in most cases the integrative process developed"⁸.

His role is complex: he may facilitate further deliberative action by making sure that he is able to sanctionise violations of the process. For a while, this actor is likely to become resp. stay core of strength, by providing leadership and care for stability⁹.

Additionally, he may put the incentives for cooperation on an open agenda, provide secure space where it can be discussed and its viability being explored. In short, he is the one to bring the possibility of coordinated change resp. coordination into the open by in its name creating a common forum, kind of midwife.

To stay in accordance with the intended outcome of the integrational path, the whole must lead to the development of interstate organizations, which is synonymous to

the democratization of multilateral intergovernmental interaction. The creation international organizations in itself is a common act of states, virtually an act of community. Community can be even said to find its first materialization in shared institutions. Their practical purpose is to host and record the deliberative process, and probably a little later then, to store the outcomes - sets of agreement, norms - and in this manner settle the achieved approachment. Beyond, the function of these organizations is to control and watch over their observance. In order to provide backing on the further track, they may be even given the power to sanctionise..

Finally there is even something happening within the third tier yet, where the effects of integration are measured in terms of trust and identity. Left to mention that the discursive process is leading to a common working out of shared features (interests and ideas) and dissociating ones. As fundamental for the nurturing of the integrational process, common ideas of material progress and security have to be found and common goals set. Here again one or another leading state may be having its role in providing positive images for common development, being point of reference for orientation.)

The second, the ascendant stage, witnesses the transformation of anarchy.

States and societies have already developed multiple forms of social interaction. As the transformative process has begun, the structural context wherein the interactions are embedded has to be changed accordingly.

At the first tier now the formerly established organizations themselves are to be found. They take up advocacy for further integration. At the other hand they loose their function as monitoring institution and communication forum. As well, ideas of material progress and security that were defined as common, are now increasingly understood as common goods, in the sense of being guaranteed by and found within the cooperation

among members. This can be seen as indicative for a fundamental cognitive shift, like will be discussed more intensely in the next section¹⁰.

Looking at the second tier, an intensification of interactions at all levels, like the intergovernmental, the economic sphere and the private can be detected. Indeed, these interactions are attended by advocacy for further integration at all levels, “governments, security and other intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, epistemic communities, social movements, and even by imaginative individuals.”¹¹. Transnational networks become increasingly dense, the emergence of new shared social institutions and organizations very likely. A characteristic interaction mode of diffuse reciprocity evolves. That means all members of the community participate in many-sided and indiscreet exchanges. The members conduct the pursuit of self-interest within communities in differentiation to associations: “Although actors will come to identify with each other and derive many of their interests and beliefs from the social fabric of the group, they also will continue to harbour distinct interests, interests can generate competitive behaviour can and competition lead to conflict. ... communities have diffuse reciprocity; and ... the actors interests are interchangeable with those of the group. Therefore, while states within a security community are likely to exhibit rivalry ... they no longer fear the use of violence as a means of statecraft”. It is based on the assumption, that the community binds its members and guarantees fair conduct, i.e. directly (through sanctions) and to ever higher degree indirectly (by promising benefits for commitment).

The key indicator for increasing integration is found within the realm of hard security. Hard security denotes the military complex in differentiation to soft security, which refers to non violent problem solving and coordination means and strategies.

Military decisions are getting reflexive, which leads to mutually dependent disarmament. States do begin to coordinate their intelligences. Here as well bureaucratic structures do change, given that a parallel but separate process of integration within the military realm has created them. Their monitoring function will lose importance with respect to the ongoing deepening of cooperation. The third tier at this phase displays the development of shared ideas, homogeneous cognitive structures and common perceptions of social realities.

Multilevel multisided interaction feeds social learning processes. By actively compromising on “purposes and intentions” (within the deliberative fora as well in all kind of interaction) cognitive structures are subject to change. Cognitive structures are understood as the set of ideas, the applied whole of images of the world which are serving as interpretations with the aim to describe and explain reality. Within the process of cognitive change, actors mutually get to know their interpretations of economics, politics and society, will try to adapt and to come closer. Deriving from now common knowledge is the formation of shared ideas. This is preceding cognitive homogenization which will be the final cause and base for trust, it also over time accumulates into a collective identity. Since, common normative standards (especially in terms of peaceful conflict resolution) may be deployed which will be obliged in action and referred to within the national debates. The existence of collective identity shows up in language when the use of “we” referring to the community gets common¹².

The final phase brings about the mature state: Here, the possibility for a common institutionalized governance system is given.

Indicators for a mature security community are to be found at the processual and the structural level.

Firstly, multilateralism up to a informal common governance is taking place, deploying a high probability of consensus, the probability of conflict escalation is low and differentiation between inside and outside regarding the security is made prior to the inner differentiation.

This must not be directly observable as consensus is to be found for each topic concerning shared underlying assumptions. It does not eliminate argumentation within the governing process. Inner borders are getting “soft” (in contrast to militarily fortified), changes are to be found within the military planning (e.g. there should be no worst case scenarios for internal conflicts anymore) and a common definition of „threat“ exists, which is (in military terms) now attributed to the non-members, the external surrounding. „Self-identification frequently has a corresponding „other“, that represents the threat to the community.”

Adler and Barnett furthermore distinguish between loosely and tightly coupled security communities, the latter defined by a higher level of military integration, maybe the pooling of resources. As well, policy integration - coordinated law and shared practices of public policies - and the free movement of populations are indicators. Policy coordination against internal threat is mentioned here, it is as well possibly constitutive for community formation.

Concerning hard security respecting military decision making power and legitimacy after integration, some strange kind of collectivism is uttered: “The institutional context for exercise of power changes; the right to use force shifts from the units to the collectivity of sovereign states and becomes legitimate only against external threats or against members that defect from the core norms of community.” It seems notable that nothing is said about the decision making body or procedures attributed to

“collectivity of sovereign states”. Does it imply unanimity between heads of member governments? If so, disunity must be discriminated from cases of defection and clarified under which circumstances they would be specified as such. Here, the concept remains metaphysical.

Last, the third tier features are said essential for the dependable expectation of peaceful change: trust is established and a collective identity formed. Trust means belief in the cooperative conduct of all member states. It has developed from the notion of assured or probable obligation over time. Now, the reliance on it is independent of institutional backing, instead more likely to rest on common knowledge of peaceful means of conflict resolution. Collective identity formation means the positive identification with each other and the pursuit of a common „way of life“, which relies on the shared interpretations of economy, politics and society. Adler and Barnett here speak of not only prosecution but “propagation”. Still it is not made clear why a common practices or beliefs should have to be disposed to be an ingredient of the community.

Crucial, the point of concern within the conception is how to overcome mistrust (as to interpret the notion of dependable expectations of peaceful change). That should lead to gradual degrading of means of defence or a general shift of resources from hard security to soft security facilities. Because if, in the end, integration sticks in terms of military community, that would be to leave aside a common culture maintaining peaceful change. So if one only referred to some kind of partial or regional military community, integration would just witness the shift of (perceived) threat from the interstate to the now common external relations, the problem of anarchy would not be solved.

As was meant to be shown, the notion of **trust** lies at the bottom of the argument within its first theorizing about security community construction: inherently defined as an intuitive, affective commitment and direction towards each other, some kind of magic glue binding to the logic of idealism. Trust emanates under certain circumstantial conditions from the integrative process at the individual level, gives proof of structural change and serves as foundation pillar (preventing a backlash) for a lasting transformation of the system towards a body of collective identity. So, it is critical in transforming the individual relying on self interested action into an altruistic member of community. As far as the observation holds true, it is synonymous with the change of interest and consequentially of identity.

It is notable that learning processes are to be found within the causes producing trust. So, for the further tracking of integration, it maybe well-advised to take an ideational approach and the content of cognition into consideration. Knowledge indeed is understood as constitutive part of the international structure, and so are **cognitive structures, that is shared sets of meanings and understandings**: “In other words, part of what constitutes and constrains state action is the knowledge that represents categories of practical action and legitimate activity.” A hint is given when Adler and Barnett refer to the security community as a **cognitive region**¹³, even if the cognitive within a cognitive region was not yet defined further than that.

4. Presentation of concept II

E. Adler addresses this in his article „Imagined (Security) Communities“¹⁴. Here, he puts a stronger focus on the notion of the cognitive region and takes common identity and intersubjective knowledge as indicators of integration. This intersubjective knowledge is transcending common knowledge, indeed it merges the former notions of

shared ideas and common identities.

The integrational dynamic runs like this: Homogeneity of states in their *constitutions* and policies is assumed, which leads to accommodation and amalgamation on part of the societies. A strong civic culture supports the formation of a meta-community – the cognitive region.

„Furthermore, liberal democracies and their civic cultures encourage the creation of strong civil societies – and of transnational networks and processes – that promote community bonds and a common identity through the relatively free interpenetration of societies, particularly with regard to the movement and exchange of people, goods and ideas.“¹⁵

This approach differs in comparison to the first concept of integration in respect to assumption and aims. The former wants to depict a process evolving from and changing the international structure of anarchy. It assumes self-interested states that have to modify their perceptions and modes of interaction in order to overcome mutual mistrust and threat and get to cooperation. The latter does not directly deal with decreasing mutual threat (even if it is not neglected) it allows but does not depend on mutual exchange and interaction. Instead it refers to images, interpretations and norms to explain behavioural change, cognitive structures that are changing interests and practices. „Cognitive regions ... [are] cognitive structures that help constitute the interests and practices of their members, whose meanings, understandings, and identities help keep the region in place“¹⁶. Thus, it looks at structure as accountable for change in processes, instead of the other way round.

It should be noted that this argument rests on the premise that there already is some security community or cognitive region. It does not address the need to bring up

community from anarchy. There is community in the sense of existing shared understandings and ideas as well as the knowledge about peaceful conflict resolution. Instead, it has to be explained, how and why that cognitive structure of integration works as determining dependable expectation of peaceful change.

Worth to mention, a cognitive region is not dependable on geographic proximity. That is evident as it does not need to look at transactions or presume spatial closeness. It is well limited by three-dimensional space in terms of the location of its members and, as these are considered to be states, it could be mapped as well as any other region. But it does not have to show up as uniform and consistent space in place¹⁷.

States belonging to a certain community define themselves as members by behaviour and/ or self-constitution (Adler refers to liberal democracies) and are in turn identified by them. Norms define identity¹⁸, obligation to certain sets of norms is constitutive for being a member of community. Identity here is understood in a strong sense as self-definition, not just identification in the meaning of orientation: “it [is possible to] distinguish whether applicants are making instrumental choices or are adopting the shared identity”¹⁹. Thus, common identity can provide more than shared knowledge: As states accept common identities they are thought to adapt to norms, which provides the base for states to know each other. That is, community is no longer a matter of affection but definition: “Mutual responsiveness develops from knowing who am I and who the other is”. The point is: here that is the same.

If that argument sounds quite circular, you are close: “Constitutive structures – like games whose constitutive rules give meaning to the move – constitute identities, interests, and behaviour, but are, in turn, also constituted by them.”²⁰. The second was addressed within the first concept, where the argument ran the other way round.

Common identity was understood as having to be built up by means of communication and mutual approximation of knowledge. Identity rested on accumulated experience of mutually maintained trust and collectively formed common understandings, ideas and orientations.

Constitutive for cognitive regions is the “image of the communion”²¹. This image not as much refers to the scope of the cognitive region (e.g. in terms of the number of members) but to the homogeneity of cognitive structures itself, comparable to some kind of regional language in terms of Chomskys notion of universal grammar. That is to say, ideas and interpretations of social reality are shared and it is *known* that they are. All members of community refer to the same ideas and images, that is the firm ground. The knowledge of others does not depend on interactions but may rest on identity thus superseding communicative reassurance. In the whole, Adler here comes quite close to democratic peace theory. He makes the same assumptions but does not put the weight solely on democracy being structural cause for individual states conduct, instead the self-referential labelling of a state as democracy makes him reliable and trustworthy. For the next part, I will call this the state of deep integration.

5. Presentation of concept III

Within the first draft the expectation of peaceful change was dependable on trust and identity, which were to be constructed (thus it can be labelled the constructive approach). Within the second version trust was replaced by inter-subjective knowledge, based on the idea of a strong identity, bound by structure (cognitive approach). Within this third approach, Emanuel Adler addresses the processual and social interdependent character of the constructive process itself. The change of the „mechanism of change“²² is analysed. Mechanism of change refers to the process of collective construction of

reality. This concept is not to be understood without the preceding models, but comprises them and builds upon them.

Social learning practice as constitutive for peaceful change marks this third chapter within the conceptualizations on security communities and their realization on part of Emanuel Adler. Now, it is not anymore behaviour that is looked at as the emanation of decision, which was addressed in the first concept. It is as well not the setting of decision, the cognitive framing, referred to in the second argument. Now the mode of decision-making itself is addressed.

Thus, the willingness to practice social learning is the underlying habit characterizing security communities: „[Security communities] are transnational territorial ‘cognitive regions’ where peaceful change is practiced.“²³.

Social learning takes the place of peaceful conflict resolution and coordination in the presence of social change. It is defined as the „active process of re-definition or reinterpretation of reality – what people consider real, possible and desirable – on the basis of new causal and normative knowledge“²⁴. First, it can deal with multiple interpretations of social reality as it signifies the active search for consensus. Second, it implies the collective adaptation of consensual ideas and – consequentially – the transformation (or manipulation) of social constructions according to the new images. Commonly gained new knowledge inspires the interactive process of integration and inflicts intentional change of the structure. After being consensual this change again is subject to the search for consensus.

„Power transitions, which are managed by a learning process, rely on agents actively involved in „thick“ social interaction and communication processes, the aim of which is not just to persuade each other but,

*primarily, to institutionalize the practice of peaceful change... as a result [of social learning] they constitute the social structures that give meaning to their social life in different ways than in the past, and thus they perpetuate, in fact they institutionalize, that which was learned.”*²⁵

As is to see, the main focus of attention is the establishment of a different idea of the mode of conflict solving. That does not explain itself, it must be referred to the existence of a preliminary created deep integration. Different to the cognitive region approach, liberal domestic structures alone do now seem to be „insufficient to explain peaceful power transition“. Instead, the processual is being restated, communication and interaction brought back in. This is meant to relax a quite static concept of deep integration, which was not good able to evolve. This concept is to bring back volition into the process. With it comes the problem of motivation, which again is solved by establishing a leading state as a magnet or core of power. Sure, this time it refers to another level of integration.

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⁴ Adler and Barnett, 'A Framework for the Study of Security Communities', p. 31.

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- ¹⁰ Adler and Barnett, 'A Framework for the Study of Security Communities', p. 53.
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- ²² Adler, 'The change of change', p. 148.
- ²³ Adler, 'The change of change', p. 152.
- ²⁴ Adler, 'The change of change', p. 148.
- ²⁵ Adler, 'The change of change', p. 149.