

Lost in Self-Identification? In Search of NATO's Identity

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Abstract

The main purpose of the research is to analyze how NATO's identity is constructed through the discourses from three NATO Summits – Lisbon, Chicago and Wales. The research is based on post-structuralistic theoretical background which emphasizes the role of identity in the context of security policies. To study identity means to analyze discourse. Therefore, the research is based on discourse analysis searching for the meanings relevant to identity construction. The main representations of NATO's identity discussed include the role of Western values, partnership, threats and challenges, the role in global politics and community building. The research has revealed that an existence of NATO's self-identification relies on complexity and multidimensionality. One of the main reasons affecting the interaction among different aspects is related with fluster between modern and postmodern security logics. Thus, issues in international area and more or less real threats affect how these representations interact and dominate against each other.

Key Words:

Discourse, Identity, NATO, Post-Structuralism, Summit, Self – Other.

Introduction

NATO is usually understood as the Western military Alliance established in 1949 in order to deflect potential threats and contain the Soviet Union. An official web page suggests that NATO's purpose today is 'to safeguard the freedom and security of its members through political and military means' ('What is NATO' n.d.). Two elements can be seen – political and military. The first one means that 'NATO promotes democratic values and encourages consultation and cooperation on defence and security issues' ('What is NATO' n.d.). The second one – 'if diplomatic efforts fail, NATO has the military capacity needed to undertake crisis-management operations' ('What is NATO' n.d.). Do these definitions and combination of the two elements describe what NATO today is?

At the end of the Cold War many predicted that NATO would not last. Because of the loss of the main enemy, the purpose of the organization – to stay allied together in front of the common potential threat – was also gone (Helene Sjursen 2004: 687). But despite the discussion that NATO's survival after the Cold War 'remains something of an anomaly' ('What is NATO' n.d.), the Alliance has not withered away, but remained as the biggest and oldest military alliance in modern times ('NATO Summits tries to tackle' 2010) up until these days. However, the new international order has immersed the Alliance into a deep identity crisis described in terms of inter-alliance strife, messy operations and inaction (Thomas D. Armstrong 2013). Therefore, this situation has raised new challenges – to define what NATO's place in the world order today is ('NATO Summits tries to tackle' 2010), who is protecting whom against whom and by what means (Matthias Gebauer, Hans-Jürgen Schlamp 2008). How to describe NATO's identity today? Is it the world's policeman now? (Matthias Gebauer, Hans-Jürgen Schlamp 2008). Does intense cooperation among members and partners in terms of economic and material help correspond to a vision of NATO?

The main purpose of this paper, therefore, is to analyze how NATO's identity is constructed through the discourses from three NATO Summits. In order to attain this goal, speeches and statements of the main leading heads from the three NATO's Summits (Lisbon Summit, Chicago Summit and Wales Summit) have been analyzed. The analysis of period 2010-2014 should reveal tendencies of self-identification and possible alternation through a few years. Changeable international order, crisis in Ukraine, ISIL threat and

potential security challenges to the member-states in Eastern and Central Europe inevitably requires knowledge and understanding of how NATO is understood by its internal actors and what direction they bring the Alliance to. This analysis should also support or contradict to other research analyzing and arguing about NATO's identity after the Cold War and supplement existing scientific web about this issue. Post-structuralism is used as a theoretical background emphasizing the role of identity in the analysis of security policies. Due to a fact that the main material of the research is texts, discourse analysis has been chosen as a methodological tool.

The main tasks: 1) to formulate and explain the main theoretical and methodological principles relevant for this research; 2) to collect necessary material and analyze it; 3) to present the main interpretations according to results.

Structure of the research: 1) Endeavours to define post-Cold War NATO's identity – existing research briefly discussed; 2) Identity, security policy and discourse – the main theoretical and methodological ideas and assumptions introduced; 3) Searching for NATO's identity – the main interpretations presented.

Endeavors to Define Post-Cold War NATO's Identity

Discussion about NATO's identity and its place in international politics is not very new. Mostly constructivists undertook to explain 'anomaly survival' and highlight the role of identity in International Relations. The common idea suggests that NATO's survival was not an anomaly (as realists and neo-realists say), instead, norms, principles and identity should be taken into account in order to explain the persistence of NATO (Helene Sjursen 2004: 701). The main debate is probably composed from two parts: 1) whether NATO has solved the identity crisis and has come into a new one; 2) if yes, then whether the idea about NATO as 'an organization of values and norms' (Frank Schimmelfennig 2007: 201) explains its role and self-identification in the international area today.

In 1990 researchers were talking about 'the absence of plausible threat to Western military security' (Bradley S. Klein 1990: 320). The division between West as 'us' and East as 'them' became unimportant. Thus, at that time researchers mostly fixated the loss of existential threat. Of course, one of the main questions was how NATO would solve this loss in

terms of identity, but searches for an answer were left for the future. However, clear answer has not yet emerged. Both approvals ('NATO was relatively successful in establishing a new identity' (Trine Flockhart 2014: 76)) or disagreements are found within the research.

Some of them suggest that the loss of enemy from East has been replaced with an establishment of the boundaries between 'the West' and 'the rest'. Being a part of the West provides its members with a common identity in a specific place and related norms and values (Andreas Behnke 2013: 2). Thus, this logic would suggest that Other became unnecessary to NATO. But how then to make a division between Self and 'the rest'? The answer could be that NATO as security community before the Cold War has transformed into political community after the Cold War acting together to preserve both security and common interests (Veronica M. Kitchen 2009: 97). This transformation could serve as an explanation of how NATO described itself and constructed dominant identity without having a clear enemy.

However, there is no agreement about this among the researchers. For example, there are disputes that NATO could not be defined as a democratic community because it is not governed in a democratic way. This does not deny a fact that the Alliance can promote and support democratic values and its spread in the world, but it is not based on democratic principles (Helene Sjursen 2004: 702). A question is whether an internal structure of the organization prevents it from constructing such kind of identity in international politics. For example, Veronica M. Kitchen claims that Atlantic community is both security and political community. Common identity also exists and allies identify Alliance with the same terms because their interest is to not destroy their community (Veronika M. Kitchen 2009: 112). However, willingness to sustain the Alliance could not be considered as clear evidence of comprehensively accepted identity.

Others suggest that enlargements are a clear and sufficient argument to acknowledge the importance of values and norms in the context of NATO's identity. Discourse about the enlargement in 2004 shows that the post-Soviet countries sought to 'return to Western world' with a strong identification with the Western values as well as the Western international community (Frank Schimmelfennig 1998: 2016). Thus, NATO is identified

with these narratives by others and the enlargement in Central and Eastern Europe is understood as a perfect example how NATO entrenched itself as a promoter of democratic values in the world.

Furthermore, NATO has had preference to enlarge democratic CEE countries ever since the end of the Cold War in order to expand liberal values and the Western world. This idea supports the argument about NATO as Western community and its promotion. However, Frank Schimmelfennig argues that enlargement was instrumental and selective, it was not the implementation of a 'grand strategy' (Frank Schimmelfennig 2007: 233). Enlargements are also seen as a damaging practice which can undermine and diminish NATO's cultural and civilizational basis (Peter Van Ham 2001: 404). Why have the enlargements been done? Michael C. Williams and Iver B. Neumann explored that institutions were a power for constructing democratic security community and identity related with it despite disagreements among member-states (Michael C. Williams, Iver B. Neumann 2000: 385). According to this, the answer about existing identity could be fixed.

However, motivation of CEE countries is also questionable. Alexandra I. Gheciu claims the Czech Republic and Romania did not share the vision of liberal democracy put forward by NATO (Alexandra I. Gheciu 2006). Despite the fact that NATO political actors sought to educate CEE states according to the norms of Western style democracy, the Alliance was understood as a military power and a guarantor of security from the perspective of CEE countries (Alexandra I. Gheciu 2006). Thus, do the 'new' and the 'old' member-states disagree about NATO? This possible division can illustrate different opinions within NATO, different understandings and expectations of what NATO should be.

This review shows that there is no agreement among scholars about NATO's identity. Different perspectives analyzing more-or-less the same issue does not give a clear answer, but just illustrate the possible complexity of different representations. It is worth noting that the studies discussed come from the years before 2010. Therefore, it is expected that this research analyzing first years of the second decade could supplement or even enlighten one of the controversial claims from the earlier works and at the same time let disassociate from the disputes on identity in the context of enlargements.

Identity, Security Policy and Discourse

Identity can be described as a cognition, who you are and whom you identify yourself with (Misheva Vessela 2008: 35). There are no objective or stable identities (Lene Hansen 2006: 5), but they vary and transform through political practices (Merje Kuus 2007: 97). David Campbell, one of the most influential post-structuralists in the field of International Relations, explains the construction of identity as a distinction between Self and Other, where the latter is radically threatening (Lene Hansen 2006: 6), and the threat is a condition for a state's existence (David Campbell 1992: 12) (other post-structuralists reject the necessity of radical Other⁷⁵). This point is especially relevant in the NATO's case – as the Soviet Union has collapsed, does NATO have any threat proving its liveliness through the concept of identity? Is it relevant to talk about NATO's identity without a presence of a radical Other?

First of all, can a question about an organization's identity be raised? Post-structuralists analyze the relationship between identity and state, its security policy. What about transnational entities such as NATO? Is NATO's identity autonomous, not just a derivative from its member-states and their national identities? This paper holds that if an alliance is understood as an autonomous organism with its institutions and policy practices, then discussions about its autonomous identity are relevant and grounded. Of course, there is no denial that the national states affect and influence NATO. However, the research by Williams and Neumann proves that despite disagreements among the states, identity can be powered and constructed by institutions (Michael C. Williams, Iver B. Neumann 2000: 385).

Post-structuralists would say that the process of mutual constitution exists. No one party (neither member-states, nor NATO) can claim priority, as both are a product of constitutive relationship (Andreas Behnke 2013: 30). Thus, common values, meanings and collective understanding who Other is or who friends are ground the idea about NATO as a sovereign entity and its relatively independent identity. The relationship between identity and security is also constitutive (Lene Hansen 2006: 2). The main idea is that identity is not

⁷⁵ Self – Other distinction can be constructed through differences in civilizational, political or geographical differences (Lene Hansen 2006: 6), contrast between present and past incidents (Sybille Reinke de Buitrago, 2012, p. XIV.).

above security policies, rather it forms and reveals through practices (Lene Hansen 2006: XIV). Hence, security policies are related with reproduction of identity (David Campbell 1992: 76). The practice of security policy is implemented through a construction of borders which also justify the borders of identity.

Going further, identities are constructed through the discourse. Therefore, to study identity means to analyze discourse. The concept can be described in many ways, but in this research discourse is understood as written and spoken texts constructing meanings and social knowledge⁷⁶ (Rawi Abdelal et al. 2006: 14). The concept of intertextuality describes relation among texts. It means that texts 'are situated within and against other texts, <...> they build authority by reading and citing that of others' (Lene Hansen 2006: 49). Therefore, political statements, speeches or interviews are 'located within a larger textual web' (Lene Hansen 2006: 49) and participate in the process of construction and articulation of identity. Intertextuality makes identity intersubjective and constituted from different meanings and interpretations in discursive, relational, changeable entity (Rawi Abdelal et al. 2006: 12).

Lene Hansen suggests a structure for research design, when one has to choose: whether one or multiple Selves are examined (the number of states, nations or other subjects studied), whether a study is based on a particular moment or a longer historical period, and finally, whether one or multiple events are analysed (Lene Hansen 2006: 67). The present research chooses one Self – NATO, and concrete events in concrete time – Lisbon Summit on 19-20 November 2010, Chicago Summit on 20-21 May 2012, and Wales Summit on 4-5 September 2014. These Summits are chosen as they signify the start of the new decade following the enlargements of the first decade of the 21st century. Due to changeable international area and security situation, it is important to research whether changes have affected the process of constructing identity or the key meanings have remained the same. The main material is speeches, statements of the main heads of NATO during the three Summits. While reading those texts, attention is paid to a direct reference to what NATO is, its purpose, biggest threats, etc.

⁷⁶ post-structuralists also consider movies, TV, photography, caricatures or even computer games as a discursive material (Lene Hansen 2006: 55)

The research is based on discourse analysis as a methodological instrument. It could be described in three ways: analysis of ideology, study of social changes and social constructivism (Inga Vinogradnaite 2006: 33). The third one is chosen as a way to identify socially constructed reality within different actors and formulate unique but at the same time intersubjective understanding of the world (Inga Vinogradnaite 2006: 40). This allows to answer how the world is understood and what meanings the texts construct (Inga Vinogradnaite 2006: 33). The main instrument for this method is interpretation. However, at the same time it is one of the biggest weaknesses, as research is based on subjective interpretation (Mark Neufeld 1993: 43).

Doing discourse analysis, based on repetitive meanings within texts, the main categories have been distinguished (i. e. NATO's purpose, important values, threats, partners). As Jennifer Milliken notes, unlimited categorization of texts is possible. Categories can be formulated individually according to the need (Jennifer Milliken 1999: 17). Then different categories are filled with corresponding texts. Then they are compared with each other for finding common meanings. Later interpretation is employed⁷⁷. While interpreting and seeking to find unique outcomes, the principles of induction are taken into consideration. When presenting results, interpretations are separated from actors, attention is paid to meanings only. This strategy corresponds to the main principles of post-structuralism which hold that attention is paid to texts, language and how meanings are constructed.

In Search for NATO's Identity

In order to better understand the meanings it is important to conceive which context they unfold in. Despite the fact that the chosen Summits are situated in quite a short period, they are related with different situations in international area. Changes, processes and crisis inevitably affect the agenda of all Summits. Both Lisbon and Wales Summits have been described as 'the most important in decades' ('NATO Review' 2010) or 'in the history of our alliance' ('Doorstep statement' 2014). During Lisbon Summit the main topics have been the new Strategic Concept, an agreement to establish a missile defence shield in CEE and the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan. This Summit has been especially exclusive because of a partnership agreement with Russia and nuclear reduction. Chicago Summit

⁷⁷ Different meanings and different results can be found reading the same texts. It depends on questions of research – other questions require corresponding interpretation of other meanings.

has not been somehow unusual, but has also had its own agenda. Priorities of Chicago Summit have been exit strategy for the war in Afghanistan, enhanced global network of partners and NATO capabilities (smart defence concept) in the context of the age of austerity. Wales Summit has been held in a dramatically different security situation compared to the previous Summits. The Ukraine crisis and the threat of 'Islamic State' has been considered as real security issues and dangers for NATO's member-states. They together with NATO's mission in Afghanistan have been the main topics during this Summit.

This diversity shows how in such a short period of time the issues and the context of agenda have changed. However, the context is important only for understanding what possibly formulates and affects NATO's self-identification and vicissitude. Concrete issues or decisions made are out of the scope of this research. The focus of the research remains on meanings and representations of identity through speeches and statements. Interpretations are presented as results and divided according to the main dimensions of NATO's identity found in the discourse.

Does NATO Have Future?

One of the main keynotes in many statements and speeches are how strong NATO is and where its future lies. Therefore, this part discusses two main aspects: a) NATO's existence and perspectives for the future; b) an importance of community for surviving.

Liveliness of NATO is stressed during all the Summits with pretty much the same vocabulary. Phrases such as 'the strongest and most successful alliance that the world has ever known', 'the times may have changed, the fundamental reason of our alliance has not' ('Press Briefing' 2012), 'this is an Alliance that is strong and united' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014) supports the idea that despite the changeable international arena and agenda, NATO sustains its role in the world.

Similarly, NATO's importance in the future is unquestionable: 'at this summit [Lisbon] we also agreed on radical reforms to make NATO fit for the security challenges of the 21st century ('NATO Summit press conference' 2010); <...> we will take decisions which will frame the future of our Alliance ('Statement by the NATO Secretary general' 2010), '<...>

capable of dealing with the security challenges of the future' ('Remarks' 2012). These claims show that next to the present issues the Summits pay a lot of attention to what NATO will be in the future and how it should adapt itself. The repetitive assertion about NATO's vitality and strength in the future seems like a self-persuasion: NATO remains strong, ready, robust, and responsive to meet the present and future challenges from wherever they come ('Press Conference', 2014). Constant attempts to define the NATO's role for the future reveals problems of self-confidence and uncertainty. At the same time, the future itself becomes an aim to surpass the present and prove that NATO can remain important: 'today NATO is as vital to our future as it has ever been in our past' ('Strengthening the NATO alliance' 2014).

Understanding the fears for the future, community is strongly articulated as the foundation for the Alliance: 'the NATO Allies represent a unique and essential community of nations' ('Opening remarks' 2010). But what does community mean? Is it something more than just a bunch of member-states gathered in order to guarantee security? Is it relevant to claim that 'the Atlantic community is more than just security community' (Veronica M. Kitchen 209: 111)?

NATO is strong only when community is tight and coherent: 'we have done this for over 60 years by <...> getting ready to face the next challenge together' ('Press Conference' 2012); '<...> an Alliance which is committed to transatlantic solidarity and cooperation' ('Remarks' 2012). Only such community which is based on solidarity can survive and exist, being together is a prerequisite for NATO ('together we can face the future with confidence, whatever it holds' ('Opening Remarks' 2012)). Constant repetition of words 'together', 'future' expresses a strong belief in solidarity and assertion that it is the only way to keep NATO alive.

The importance of community and commitments between the allies has especially been stressed at Wales Summit ('no-one will leave here with any doubt that our collective security in NATO is as strong as it has ever been' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014)). This is of course related with a situation in international area. Community building and cohesion is constructed through reassurance of commitments such as Article V and defence of Allies ('Article 5 enshrines our solemn duty to each other. This is a binding, treaty obligation. It

is non-negotiable. And here in Wales, we've left absolutely no doubt -- we will defend every Ally' ('Remarks by President Obama' 2014)). While Lisbon and Chicago Summits have stressed community as a way to face abstract and uncertain future, Wales returns to the primary NATO's tasks, purpose and roots, that of security community ('we have already taken immediate steps to enhance our defence'; NATO protects all Allies, at all times ('Press conference' 2014)). Thus, when faced with real and actual threats NATO builds the community up through coherent defence and security demand ('we have already taken immediate steps to enhance our defence' ('Press conference' 2014)).

Thus, community building within NATO is based on the need for security: 'we gathered to reaffirm our commitment to freedom and security' ('Opening remarks' 2012), NATO's primary responsibility is to keep our people safe and our nations secure' ('Press conference' 2012). Thus, NATO is understood as a strong and powerful alliance seeking and warranting security to its member states. Although security has also been relevant in Lisbon and Chicago Summits, it has been emphasized during the Wales Summit in particular: 'yet today the protection and security that NATO provides is as vital to our future' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014). In this context the phrase 'we need to keep our people safe' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014) perfectly illustrates how security and community are combined as a mean to legitimize the existence of NATO. Attention should also be paid to the fact that a clear definition what security is or what it means to 'keep people safe' is not provided. It could be broadly interpreted-- from purely military security to security of shared values, welfare, etc.

Thus, abstract challenges directed towards the future suggest that NATO should be ready to tackle all possible threats. However, at the same time constant encouragements to develop community as a basis for NATO's existence shows a lack of confidence and uncertainty about the future. What could be said about identity? If the division between Self and Other should be applied, one of the plausible Others could be regarded as having no identity in the present world. Therefore, community is intensively articulated to stress the necessity to survive and have appropriate platform to face future challenges.

Does NATO Face Any Threats?

According to the theory, definition of Self is concurrent from defining the Other. One of the main reasons why NATO's post Cold War identity has been described in terms of crisis is that NATO member-states had no common enemy ('NATO Summits tries to tackle' 2010). Therefore, I am going to focus here on whether NATO has crystalized Other as yet and if so, how it is being described.

Definition what a threat to NATO is reveals the dynamic and changeable context. Firstly, during the Lisbon Summit identifiable threats have been 'terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the spread of missiles that can hit our territory even today, and piracy' ('Closing press conference' 2010). Any threatening state or organization has not been mentioned. These threats show global attitude towards the world's issues. However, abstract threats demonstrate uncertainty towards how to deal with it and what a role of NATO is: 'NATO's security discourse in the age of terrorism no longer re-presents the West as a significant and relevant political space' (Andreas Behnke 2013:18). No clear distinctions can be seen. There are claims that 'we face new threats and new challenges' ('Press Conference' 2010), 'we will step up our cooperation across the board to meet all these challenges' ('Closing press conference' 2010); 'we will gear up to deal with the new threats' ('NATO Summit press conference' 2010). These claims demonstrate to a large extent orientation and action to the future without a clear understanding how and why threats really affect NATO, and how it constructs the division between Self and Other.

As Stephen M. Walt wrote, Until the Ukraine crisis arose, NATO looked like a nearly extinct dodo that had somehow managed to last into the 21st century (Stephen M. Walt 2014). Thus, Ukraine crisis and ISIL bring forth such a phrase in the Wales as 'the NATO Alliance is clear about the threat that we face' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014). The claim that 'we see the greatest number of crises since the end of the Cold War' ('Secretary General' 2014) reveals that the situation in international area is really understood as dangerous to NATO and requires protection of the member-states. The need for protection serves as means to glue community once again. The two main threats ('we face new and evolving dangers. To the East, Russia <...> to the South, <...> from North Africa to the Middle East' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014)) make NATO shift from abstract considerations about potential threats to the real issues the Alliance faces and has to react to ('a climate of chaos

beyond our borders which could have direct implications for us at home' ('Secretary General' 2014)). Knowing clear and concrete threats allows NATO to redefine itself again and to identify its borders that need to be protected. Thus, security once again reappears as the main value produced by NATO's existence ('Nato's core function is still territorial defence of our populations and our member states' (Paul Reynolds 2010)). Clearly fixing Others defines NATO as security organization and returns the purpose to save allies from those who are on the other side of Self borders.

Different risks and threats mentioned during the different Summits show that NATO does not have universally recognized and permanent enemy, therefore understanding what is threatening depends on changeable international area. Lisbon and Chicago Summits have focused on abstract potential challenges while Wales Summit has named concrete threats and risks. Every analyzed Summit reveals efforts to name what the threat is and what the main Other to NATO is. Therefore, NATO cannot identify, characterize itself without knowing what challenges it confronts. This tendency proves the theoretical idea that self-identification is impossible without the distinction between Self and Other.

Western Values and Global Activity

Another important issue that has been observed by other researchers as well is NATO's representation as an active protector's of the Western values in the global world. Therefore, two main aspects are analyzed: a) Western values as bedrock of contemporary NATO's identity; b) NATO as active global actor.

NATO's commitment to the Western values and norms ('united by shared values and a shared purpose' ('Opening remarks' 2012) have been underlined during the Lisbon and Chicago Summits. What are the main values of NATO? Those found in the discourse include: freedom ('determination to defend our freedom' ('Opening remarks' 2012) 'our alliance has been the bedrock of our freedom' ('Message from President Obama' 2012)), prosperity, democracy ('<...> that freedom, democracy, and prosperity that our generation has enjoyed be passed down to the next' ('Opening remarks' 2012)), cultural diversity ('NATO brings together many cultures, it is built upon diversity' ('Remarks' 2012)), peace and security ('NATO is an unparalleled community of freedom, peace, security and shared values' ('NATO adopts new Strategic Concept' 2010)). Hence, a spectrum of the

mentioned values shows that the Alliance is understood not only as a military organization, but also as a political entity, 'bound together by solidarity' ('Opening remarks' 2010).

Freedom, democracy, respect to diversity and protection of those shared values symbolize a broad definition of NATO. Thus, the continuation of NATO is contingent upon the Alliance's capacity to construct and maintain a cultural space called 'the West' which provides its member-states with a common identity (Andreas Behnke 2013: 155). The Alliance becomes responsible for security of the Western world which is described not only in military, but also in political and cultural terms. This insight refers to the new identity tendencies calling NATO as a political and security organization. The aforementioned commitments to individual liberty, democracy or human rights (Frank Schimmelfennig 2007: 2014) extend the purposes and roles that are traditionally assigned to NATO. However, the discourse of Wales Summit shows somewhat a return from the extended spectrum of values to the ones that are more related with security situation and division between the Western values, 'rules-based security architecture' in Europe and broad agreement on that' ('Press conference' 2014) and 'barbaric and despicable acts' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014). A position about further enlargements ('NATO's door remains open. Each country will continue to be judged on its merits' ('Press conference' 2014)) perfectly reveals the division between Self and Other in terms of values: those whose values correspond or admit to the NATO's values, have a chance to become a part of Self.

A broad self-definition involves not only the protection of the Western values, but also concentration on global politics. Next to dealing with the issues in transatlantic area, NATO is also understood as a global actor actively participating in international processes throughout the world: 'we will continue to play our full part in a world for safety and more security' ('Active engagement' 2012). These claims disclose a few important aspects. One is related with idea that NATO is an open organization. Its actions should not be understood in modern logic just as protection of its borders ('<...> make sure it is ready to tackle the threats that may lie outside its territory' ('PM's closing remarks' 2012); 'threats are no longer confined within national borders' ('Opening remarks' 2012). Despite a definite number of the member states, the Alliance is open to be a reference point in dealing with the issues in the world politics (leaders come together to address global challenges that demand global solutions' ('Press conference' 2012). According to this perspective, NATO

is seen as a global power that is interested in global challenges, rather than placing its focus on the threats for the Western world. Activeness is still based on security to a large extent ('interest of our shared security'; 'allies and partners, share common security concerns' ('Opening remarks' 2012)). Security as well as importance of shared values, no matter in which way it might be defined, is the main purpose of NATO's participation in the global world.

Thus, it seems that by building an image of a political organization based on a spectrum of values NATO seeks to strengthen the ties among the member-states and to improve common actions, whereas in the global arena NATO is still perceived as a globally acting military alliance focused on security issues. Nevertheless, the representation of identity emphasizing the Western values is really very vivid. It could be discussed, whether it is related with an absence of a clear role, but an articulation of the importance of the Western values remains consistent throughout the three Summits. Thus, NATO's identity as a promoter's or a defender's of the Western values is one of the key representations within the discourses. Of course, further question could be raised on whether it means a shift from a military to a more political community, but the role of values in grounding the arguments about NATO existence is essential.

Building Partnership around the World

During the three Summits, an idea about partnership should also be analyzed as one of the key concepts describing NATO as it is today. How does the articulation of networks of partnerships provide insights about the tendencies of NATO's identity? Arguments about partnership and its impact on NATO's representation are analyzed in this part of the paper.

Lisbon Summit has been special because of 'a fundamentally new phase in relations between NATO nations and Russia' ('Closing press conference' 2010). As it has been said, Lisbon Summit was the first time after the Cold War when partnership with Russia was clearly established: 'we help not only bury the ghosts of the past <...> we exorcise them' ('Closing press conference' 2010). Thus, the main Other (and threat?) from East during the Cold War became a partner and a friend: 'NATO nations and Russia will be cooperating to defend themselves' ('Closing press conference' 2010). This break totally overthrown

theretofore existed logic and converted NATO into an ephemeral entity open to the whole world without any mental borders in space.

Generally Lisbon and Chicago Summits have been very much oriented to escalating an importance of partnership and cooperation between NATO and other states ('we will reach out to partners around the globe') ('Opening remarks' 2010). However, explanations what partnership to NATO means, why it is so important, and finally, what the content of being a partner with many different countries is, has been described in quite abstract ways: 'we will offer our partners around the globe more dialogue and more cooperation with NATO than ever before because our partnerships are proving to make a clear, concrete contribution to international peace and security' ('Press conference' 2010). According to the discourse, partnership should basically be based on prevention of possible threats around the world: 'NATO agreed to deepen its cooperation with partners <...>, make sure it is ready to tackle the threats that may lie outside its territory' ('PM's closing remarks' 2012); '<...> we will make our partnerships deeper, broader, and stronger' ('Opening remarks' 2012); '<...> we met with countries <...> strengthen our growing network of partnerships in the interest of our shared security' ('Press conference' 2012). Consequently, such a network including Russia shows that NATO does not confront with any state or organization, but connect with them for tackling global and borderless threats. Of course, a question arises how partners are chosen, but a possible answer has not been detected in the discourse. In this context NATO can be regarded as a common space for discussions and partnership.

Wales Summit has also stressed the need for partnership. It has been assured that 'we must extend our partnerships and build a more effective security network that fosters stability around the world' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014). But this time partnership has not been described as a common good, necessary for both NATO and partners and serving for making NATO a 'sounding board' between the member-states and partners (Andreas Behnke 2013: 18). Faced with real threats and insecurity, NATO feels responsible for others and for global stability this time: 'we agreed to expand the partnership that makes NATO the hub of global security'; '<...> a long-term commitment to help our friends and allies around the world' ('Remarks by President Obama' 2014). The world is not seen as a borderless space, instead a clearer division emerges between those who need help as

partners and those who threaten them. In addition to this, a few concrete measures and examples are proposed over how these relations between NATO and partners will work: 'we can agree to use our expertise to provide training and mentoring of forces in Jordan and Georgia' ('NATO Summit 2014' 2014); 'NATO has agreed to play a role in providing security and humanitarian assistance to those who are on the front lines' ('Remarks by President Obama' 2014). From common and equal cooperation with partners, Wales Summit has changed the rhetoric and NATO's position. It might be that due to the concrete threats, NATO is described as a global policeman, helping its partners and seeking to control situation by keeping it stable and secure.

All in all, what does talking about partnership tell about identity? It shows that NATO is not defined according to its borders or its feeling of concern for its member-states. Partnership and its importance to NATO confirm that NATO is a global actor which creates global network and feels responsible for security all over the world. Other possible interpretation is that making partnership around the world is a way to legitimize interventions where NATO feels the joint of security of its member states is at risk (Paul Reynolds 2010). Wales Summit demonstrates that borders exist and NATO takes responsibility to secure the weaker or more vulnerable partners. Thus, NATO could be described as a global policeman rather than just an open global actor.

Conclusion

Using the main principles of post-structuralism and discourse analysis in International Relations, the main aim of this research has been to analyze NATO's identity and its construction through the speeches and statements taken from the three – Lisbon, Chicago and Wales – Summits. The results of the analysis have been reported by presenting different perspectives on a basis of the dominant meanings and their interpretations. The main findings show that there is no possibility to clearly define what NATO's identity is or what it is not. As it has been suggested, NATO's self-identification is complex and multidimensional. All the tendencies and dimensions discussed constitute the core of NATO's identity.

- 1) Community is understood as a basis for NATO's further existence. Despite the claims that NATO is alive and strong, the uncertainty and concern about the future calls

NATO's readiness to face any possible challenges in the future into question. Therefore, the future becomes the aim by itself – to survive, but not as a wishy-washy entity, but as a self-defined community.

- 2) Nailing down threats or risks is a key in determining what characterizes Self. During Lisbon and Chicago Summits threats have been defined in a broad way, while during the Wales Summit concrete issues raising the need for protection and security have emerged. Thus, in this context two paradigms – modern and postmodern – compete in terms of security. This is probably the key reason why NATO's identity sometimes seems blurred and lacking clear self-understanding.
- 3) Attention to values and partnership is indeed one of the main characteristics of NATO. Of course, questions about instrumentality using the argument about partnership, protection or spread of the Western values exist. However, these concepts show that NATO defines itself as a global actor that tends to be not only a hub for discussions about present issues, but also a policeman helping and tackling security issues in the world.

As it has been mentioned when describing the concept of identity in post-structuralistic background, identity is not a given and stable subject - it varies according to political practices and situation in international area. Different security situation in Lisbon and Chicago Summits on one side and in Wales Summit on the other side let to unveil how the main concepts such as partnership, global action, the role of values, definition of threats diversely connects, differs and varies in terms and identity. The main distinction still exists between a global actor, pretending to be more political, spreading its influence and normative power in the world and an actor, seeking to protect and secure its member states and borders, to build strong community and partnership in order to tackle risks or threats. Which image dominates depends on whether any real or imagined threat exists and how it is defined. However, it is impossible to define an integral and united identity. Those who hold that NATO has an identity, have to pay attention and evaluate all the variety of this puzzle.

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