

NATO, DISCOURSE, COMMUNITY AND ENERGY SECURITY

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ABSTRACT: *This work analyses the relationship NATO has been constructing through its Strategic Concepts (1999 and 2010) between the military alliance and the “world-word” of energy security. Both NATO Strategic Concepts are viewed as meta-narratives which have been constructed to re-invent a role for NATO after the implosion of the USSR and with the aim to reinforce a sense of NATO community in a period of critical security threats. Despite NATO’s continuous use of the term “security,” without providing a clear definition, through the production of these meta-narratives, Energy Security emerges as one of the strong motivation in the construction of a “we-NATO-community” and the others. Energy Insecurity comes to appear as a “new ideology” to be fought with the military alliance claiming a right to intervene in non-NATO-areas to “secure” NATO countries. A reading of these meta-narratives through critical lenses, and with the use of a critical IPE approach, demonstrates the naïveté of the above NATO discourses in a world marked by continuous change.*

KEYWORDS: NATO, discourse, critical security discourse, geopolitical-narrative-framework, securitisation, energy security

INTRODUCTION

On 19 November 2010, during NATO’s Lisbon Summit, Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen presented a new version of NATO’s Strategic Concept which re-defined the purpose of this security alliance nineteen years after the Cold War. Reading the following extracts from NATO’s official documentation will help frame the methodology of this work, which is based on discourse analysis, and securitisation applied to the specific topic of energy security: a preoccupation which has been a constant presence in NATO discourse and that has apparently replaced the old enemy once represented by the now evaporated USSR.

The citizens of our countries rely on NATO to defend Allied nations, to deploy robust military forces where and when required for our security, and to help promote common security with our partners around the globe [...] NATO has a unique and robust set of political and military capabilities to address the full spectrum of crises – before, during and after conflicts. NATO will actively employ an appropriate mix of those political and military tools to help manage developing crises that have the potential to affect Alliance security, before they escalate into conflicts; to stop ongoing conflicts where they affect Alliance security; and to help consolidate stability in post-conflict situations where that contributes to Euro-Atlantic security.

The blueprint for a 21st century global expeditionary NATO also affirms that:

Crises and conflicts beyond NATO's borders can pose a direct threat to the security of Alliance territory and populations. NATO will therefore engage, where possible and when necessary, to prevent crises, manage crises, stabilize post-conflict situations and support reconstruction. Where conflict prevention proves unsuccessful, NATO will be prepared and capable to manage ongoing hostilities.¹

In theory, the evaporation of the Soviet enemy, which had supplied the main reason for the establishment of NATO, should have provoked the dissolution of the military bloc. In practice this did not happen and in order to survive the alliance has substituted its main *raison d'être*, specifically its defence (military and ideologically) from a unique enemy, with the 'ability to confront the existing and emerging 21st century security threats.'²

"Securing our future 1949–2009"³ was the motto chosen by NATO to condense its activities at its 60th anniversary, and the purpose of this work is to focus on the Alliance's recent narrative which has permitted the Organisation to reinvent itself; to define a new geopolitical context of interests and military operations, and then to proclaim its own production and interpretation of the concept of security in which energy security is of particular importance. Both NATO's 1999 and 2010 Strategic Concepts⁴ contributed to the construction of what I term a "geopolitical-narrative framework," which represents the "liquid" field of existence of the NATO concept of security.

METHODOLOGY: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, SECURITIZATION, AND "SECURITY"

The main reason to use discourse analysis as an interpretative tool in this work is based on two rationales:

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- the nature of the process of securitisation implemented by NATO;
- the etymological meaning of security.

This logic is necessary because NATO has moved from a "defence" to a "security" terminology in its discourses. Indeed, as Buzan, Waever and de Wilde note

"Security" is the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frame the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can thus be seen as a more extreme version of politicization. In theory, any public issue can be located on the spectrum ranging from non-politicised (meaning the state does not deal with it and it is not in any other way made an issue of public debate and decision) through politicised (meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) to securitised (meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying action outside the normal bounds of political procedure) [...] The process of securitization is what in language theory is called a speech act. It is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real; it is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done (like betting, giving a promise, naming a ship).⁵

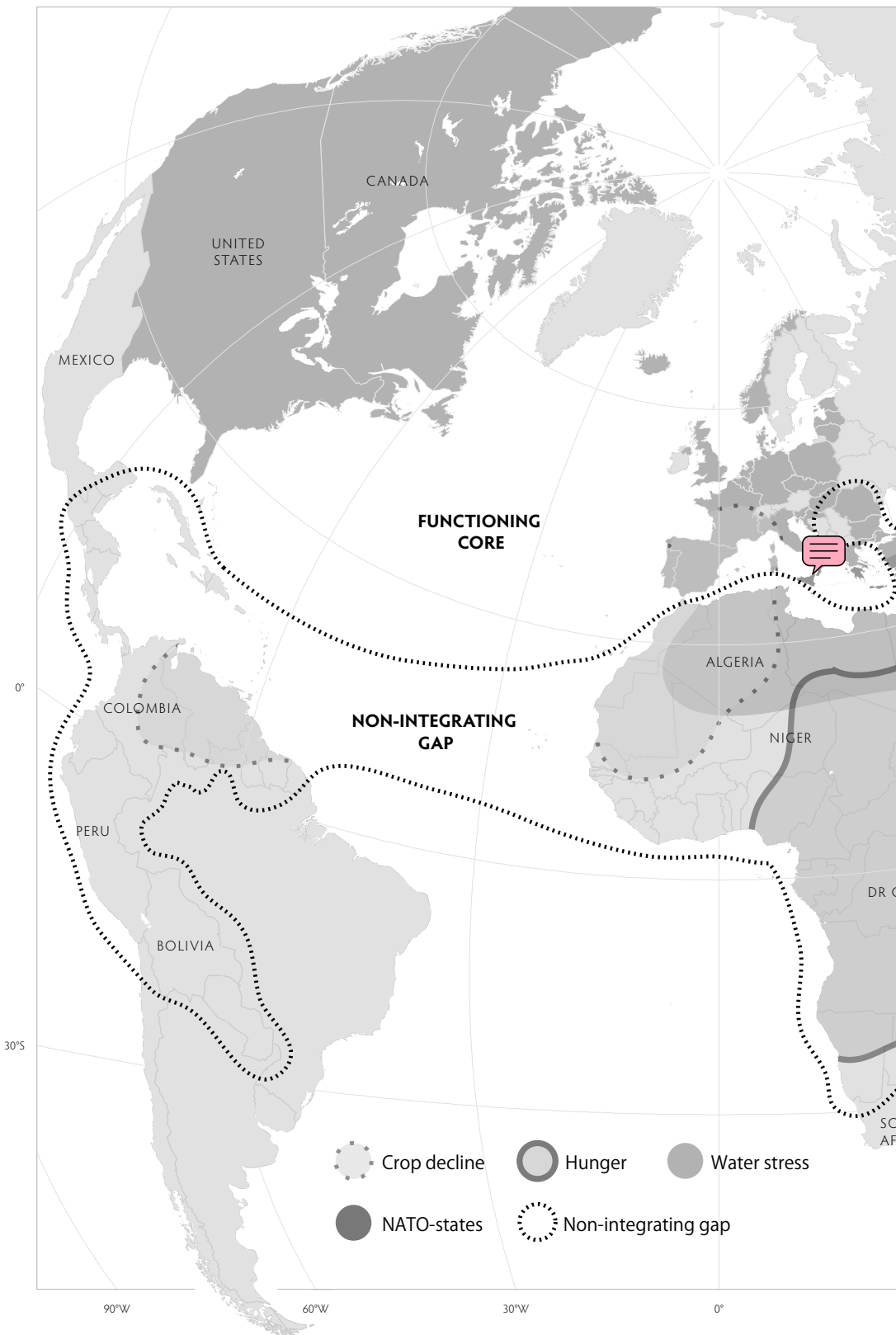
But whereas 'by saying the words, something is done,' in this specific case of "securitisation," when we use the word "security," something more is done: an emotional element has been added to the narrative.

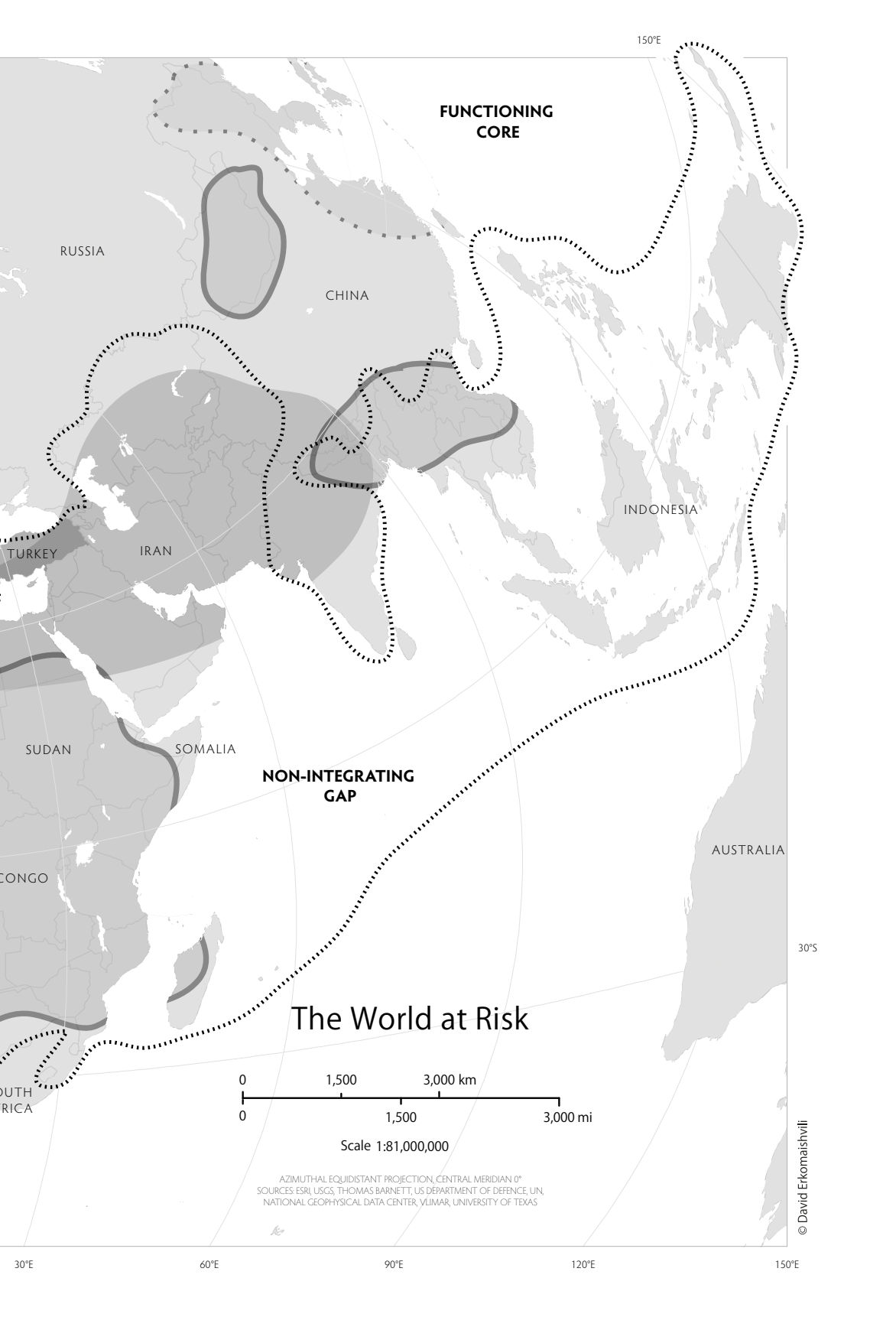
Our human condition is to be completely surrounded and immersed into stories; stories which are told to us through the use of a language, images and media. However, the story can be a language because 'language itself conditions, limits, and predetermines what we see. Thus, all reality is constructed through language, so that

150°W

180°

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**FUNCTIONING
CORE**

RUSSIA

CHINA

INDONESIA

TURKEY

IRAN

SUDAN

SOMALIA

**NON-INTEGRATING
GAP**

AUSTRALIA

The World at Risk

0 1,500 3,000 km
0 1,500 3,000 mi

Scale 1:81,000,000

AZIMUTHAL EQUIDISTANT PROJECTION, CENTRAL MERIDIAN 0°
SOURCES: ESRI, USGS, THOMAS BARNETT, US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE, UN,
NATIONAL GEOPHYSICAL DATA CENTER, VILMAR, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

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nothing is simply 'there' in an unproblematic way – everything is a linguistic/textual construct. Language does not record reality; it shapes and creates it, so that the whole of our universe is textual.⁶ Moreover, when we look at our capacity to memorise, neuroscience has proved that 'the brain has two memory systems; one for ordinary facts and one for emotionally charged ones.'⁷

According to Cassirer humankind, in order to mentally adjust itself to the immediate environment, and through its capacity to imagine, is capable of creating a new dimension of reality, defined as a symbolic system. 'He lives rather in the midst of imaginary emotions, in hopes and fears, in illusions and disillusion, in his fantasies and dreams.'⁸ The securitisation performance represents a very particular case because 'the labelling of an issue as a security problem by the government automatically legitimises the use of exceptional means.'⁹ Why do we arrive at this result? The explanation is in the fact that we are using an emotional word which has emotional consequences.

Here we come to the second rationale of my methodological approach: the etymological meaning of "security." NATO's new strategic concept (2010) is 'for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation,' then the word which is central to our study is security¹⁰ (freedom from danger, fear, anxiety, destitution, etc.), which in its etymological meaning bears strong emotions: it is derived from the Latin "securitas" then from 'sine' (= without) + 'cura' (= anxiety, worry).¹¹

However, there is a difference between anxiety and fear. While anxiety is a generalised mood condition that occurs without an identifiable triggering stimulus and is the result of threats that are perceived to be uncontrollable or unavoidable, on the contrary, fear occurs in the presence of an observed threat and is related to the specific behaviour of escape and avoidance. In the case of anxiety, this can be provoked by a stimulus without the presence of a real material threat. Therefore, there is a strong relationship between who triggers the stimulus, the receiver of the stimulus, and the space in which the stimulus is broadcast.

This space is what Cassirer¹² calls the 'symbolic space:' due to capacities to create signs and symbols which help people interact with reality, the humans then, no longer a positivist rational animal, becomes an 'animal symbolicum,' and, as such, lives in a symbolic

space, and this is a space which frames even his capacity of imagination. And it is the peculiarity of the construction of this symbolic space through the use of the media of mass communication that the nature of the 'animal symbolicum,' as producer and consumer of myths, evolve in the image of the 'homo videns.'

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With the publication of 'Homos Videns – Television and Post-Thinking,' Sartori sheds light argues that with the advent of the television we entered into a new political era characterised by what he calls post-thinking: the inability to think. It is the primacy of the image and the manipulation of public opinion through television which leads us to see and watch, but without being able to understand, that represent the new challenges democracy faces under the influence of the television and more, in general, of the media.

To sum up, 'homo videns' is an evolution/devolution of the 'animal symbolicum' of Cassirer, and Sartori is conscious of that. In it we should go back to the division between signal and symbol operated by Cassirer on the Pavlov's dog experiment.¹³ A division now difficult to sustain due to the very fact that the symbol can be interiorised as a signal, and has every signal produces conditioned reflex and a reflex behaviour.

It is in dealing with security issues and the importance that this topic has for the 'polis,' that the above process is linked to the political discourse and, more than ever, in our times where democracy has been defined as a government of public opinion.¹⁴ I call this space a "geopolitical-narrative framework," (GPNF) the space where the process of securitisation becomes a 'more extreme version of politicisation.'¹⁵ This means that a "geopolitical-narrative-framework" is a physical and intellectual-symbolic space (as a hermeneutical circle), in which emotions and perceptions are elaborated through a narrative (narrative is a re-presentation of real or invented events), in order to produce a particular image and meaning (the referential code¹⁶) to be attached to the word "security." It is a space in which the reader, "volente o nolente," willy-nilly, is part of it and where s/he is called to play an active emotional/interpretative role. As a result, the emotional state of the reader depends on the opinion-narrative of others.

THE “GEOPOLITICAL-NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK:”
AN INTERPRETATIVE DIMENSION

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The GPNF is essentially this representation of space, time, and emotions as they are produced and spread by NATO to its readers (the model reader, and the non-model reader), with the aim of assembling a cultural artefact ‘a cultural practice traceable to a particular historical context concerned with shaping the politics of security.’¹⁷

Even if a narrative can be seen as a story or plot, in reality this is not the case: ‘A “Story” consists of all the events which are to be depicted. ‘Plot’ is the chain of causation which dictates that these events are somehow linked and that they are therefore to be depicted in relation to each other. ‘Narrative’ is the showing or the telling of these events and the mode selected for that to take place.’¹⁸ Thus, in this GPNF, where a secure-insecure narrative is produced, what is important is first knowing who the teller is, then the showing, and the process of selecting certain events, and, of course, the reader who has to interpret the narrative text. In the way the GPNF is working in persuading the reader, we find the same Aristotelian rhetorical elements of Ethos, Logos, and Pathos. Thus, the main constituents of this GPNF NATO narrating space are: the author-ethos (NATO), the imaginary-pathos, the reality-logos, and the “model reader.”

The Author-Ethos: NATO

Authors, Voices, and Agencies in Assembling a NATO Narrative

According to what we read on the Alliance’s official web-page, NATO is:

1. **Solidarity:** it is an alliance of 28 countries from North America and Europe committed to fulfilling the goals of the North Atlantic Treaty signed on April 4th, 1949 (Art. 5);
2. **Freedom:** the fundamental role of NATO is to safeguard the freedom and security of its member countries by political and military means;
3. **Security:** NATO safeguards the Allies’ common values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and the peaceful

resolution of disputes, and promotes these values throughout the Euro-Atlantic area;

4. **Transatlantic link:** The Alliance embodies the transatlantic link by which the security of North America is permanently tied together. It is the practical expression of effective collective effort among its members in support of their common interests.¹⁹

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Reading about “What does NATO do?” what does it, in fact, do? Its main *raison d’être* is military defence: ‘NATO is committed to defending its member states against aggression or the threat of aggression and to the principle that an attack against one or several members would be considered as an attack against all.’ This, in brief, is the essence of Art. 5 of The North Atlantic Treaty.

However, more recently, ‘NATO is a security Alliance that fields military forces able to operate together in any environment; that can control operations anywhere through its integrated military command structure; and that has at its disposal core capabilities that few Allies could afford individually.’²⁰

Indeed, asserting NATO as an internationally recognised authority that has ‘moral competence,’ – Aristotle’s *ethos* – is required of any speaker to establish from the beginning of his “speech” with his audience. NATO then becomes an *ethos* because it is the only “winning” defence military organisation and military structure which has survived the end of the Cold War and the implosion of the USSR. Its *ethos* is in the historical fact that the ideals that characterise the NATO community, nations, or ideology, have won over time.

However ‘the monolithic, massive and potentially immediate threat which was the principal concern of the Alliance in its first forty years has disappeared. On the other hand, a great deal of uncertainty about the future and risks to the security of the Alliance remain.’²¹

After the adoption of the 1999 Strategic Concept, NATO reasserted its ‘indispensable role to play in consolidating and preserving the positive changes of the recent past, and in meeting current and future security challenges. It has, therefore, a demanding agenda. It must safeguard common security interests in an environment of further, often unpredictable change.’²²

NATO's journey into the future and its supposed 'management of the future' as 'reflexive security'²³ sounds as a hermeneutical circle in which the management of security becomes the management of risk, then the management of the future, and as a result the management of anxiety.

Apparently NATO is not the only authority in this declarative-performative activity which has become the process of securitisation of the future. Another actor has been successfully involved for centuries, even before the establishment of NATO, in the management of risk. And this actor very recently has been engaged in the NATO narrative: Lloyd's of London.

Lloyd's joined the group of NATO authors and the relation started on the topic of energy security: 'when NATO first began to discuss its role in energy security, I asked Lord Levene to brief NATO Ambassadors on the risks and challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies,'²⁴ said Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, (then) NATO Secretary General. And Lord Levene of Portsoken, chairman of Lloyd's of London, remarked:

'Until now, energy security has felt like a very high level geopolitical problem. One which is best left to governments and strategists, and something that is very far removed from the boardroom. There is certainly no doubt that energy security is a very complex subject. But with a more dynamic global operating environment affecting almost all of us, at Lloyd's we believe that it is an issue of increasing importance for boards everywhere. A former US defence secretary said: "Instead of energy security, we shall have to acknowledge and to live with various degrees of insecurity." To some extent, perhaps we are already doing this, whether we recognise it or not. Today's businesses typically face an increasingly complex supply chain, a growing presence in emerging markets, energy bills which are oscillating wildly, and growing pressure to "think green." For all these reasons, energy security is no longer an issue about which business leaders can risk being in ignorance.'²⁵

Can we say that in this operation in which NATO and Lloyd's come together we are witnessing a *ménage à trois*: the market-state,²⁶ its insurance company and a military structure? Could I be

so cynical or Machiavellian to see in it a kind of NATO metamorphosis, from a security Alliance to an insurance Alliance?

On this management of risk-future it is interesting to note how NATO looked for new authors to contribute to its new “literature genre.” Considering NATO’s strategic concept as a hypertext in which the official author (NATO) lives in a text which is produced by various authors, it is interesting how on 03 and 04 April 2009, NATO’s Heads of State and Governments tasked the Secretary General to develop a NATO New Strategic Concept (NNSC), which was later presented at the NATO summit in Lisbon (2010). xx

To facilitate the process, the Secretary General appointed a group of twelve experts selected from large and small NATO members and representing a combination of insiders and outsiders, including from the private sector, think tanks and the academic community. Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State, chaired the group with Jeroen van der Veer, former CEO in Royal Dutch Shell, as vice-chair.²⁷

NATO’s official page clearly highlights the genealogy of this narrative-enterprise which contributed to the re-writing of the NNSC (2010) which replaced the previous NNSC 1999. Undoubtedly, the presence of van der Veer stands out from among the authors, representative of a particular interest on the topic of energy and energy security.

The relationship between NATO and Lloyd’s does not end there. Lord Levene, together with Rasmussen not only signed an article published in *The Telegraph* on 01 October 2009, on “Piracy, cyber-crime and climate change – bringing NATO and insurance together” but hosted a Lloyd’s conference on the Alliance’s updated Strategic Concept: “360 with NATO: Climate Security, Cyber Crime, Piracy.”²⁸ The article states that ‘industry leaders, including those from Lloyd’s, have been involved in the current process to develop NATO’s new guiding charter, the Strategic Concept; indeed, the vice-chair of the group is the former chief executive of Shell, Jeroen van der Veer.’²⁹

Again, we can appreciate the particular sensibility on linking management of risk-future to energy interests, and the establishment of the official liaison between NATO and insurance. This liaison was further reinforced at *Lloyd’s NATO 360 Risk Conference*, held in New York 30 October 2009.

At Lloyd's 360 live debate *Managing Risk in the 21st Century*; experts discussed piracy, cyber security and climate change for an audience of more than 200 insurance executives, risk managers and business leaders. Richard Ward, Lloyd's CEO, suggested that

The joint Lloyd's and NATO conference would not have happened 20 or even 10 years ago. However, today, forming new coalitions is an essential part of risk management ... In the modern era, we are able to form new alliances to fight our common threats ... We need to speed up our response ... This calls for a combination of visionary policies, thinking the unthinkable and pragmatism- finding ways to mitigate and adjust to a new reality.

Ward was echoed by Admiral Luciano Zappatta, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Transformation for NATO who stressed that threats 'changed from a cold war scenario with a well-defined enemy, to a wide spectrum of risks, threats and potential strategic surprises, and during the past decades NATO has extended incrementally its interests outside the traditional area of responsibility.'³⁰

NATO's Imaginary-Pathos: The Emerging Security Challenges and the Construction of Anxiety

NATO's production of threat perception which falls under the slogan of *Securing our Future* is a non-imaginary map where the pathos is constructed through the use of metaphor or storytelling which, capturing readers' attention, sympathies and emotions, causes the audience to identify with the writer's point of view; to feel what the writer feels.

The discursive part of the map is best seen through *NATO: Emerging Security Challenges* recorded by Rasmussen's London (01 October 2009) speech on emerging risks who remarked that the 'challenges we are looking at today cut across the divide between the public and the private sectors'³¹ and included several pretexts for NATO interventions which include:

1. piracy
2. cyber security/defence
3. climate change and associated issues such as extreme weather events, catastrophic storms, flooding and sea rises
4. mass migrations due to natural or man-made disasters

5. food and water insecurity
6. energy insecurity, including transmission networks and infrastructural.

As Rozoff pointed out, 'none of the seventeen developments mentioned can even remotely be construed as a military threat and certainly not one posed by recognised state actors.'³² Curiously, NATO's map was presented by a 'hard' military personality, Lieutenant-General Jim Soligan of the US Air Force and Deputy Chief of Staff of NATO Allied Command Transformation.³³ xx

In his presentation Soligan showed a map of potential areas of intervention for NATO and defined potential regions of crisis as 'Multiple Stress Zones,' adding that '(i)nstability is likely to be greatest in areas of Multiple Environmental Stress.'

According to Soligan the impact of these *Emerging Security Challenges* for NATO will produce security and military implications:

The security implications include: a general rethinking of Article 5; enhancing and creating new partnerships; expanded opportunities to positively shape and influence ideas, values, and events and changes in military operations to reduce technological vulnerabilities.

Militarily NATO will be forced to: adapt to the demands of hybrid forms of security; adapt force structures and doctrines to train other nations' security forces; adapt C2 and organisational structures; enhance WMD detection and consequence management; strengthen EU/NATO/UN relationships, and win the battle of the narrative.

If, until the demise of the USSR, the terminology of the "balance of power," "nuclear weapons," and "communist enemies" was framed in a "defence" vernacular, now – with the disappearance of a concrete, identifiable and definable enemy – the foe becomes a situation (Multiple Stress Zone) in which the particular interests of NATO countries are at risk: NATO itself us that we are dealing with a narrative.

Behind NATO's Narrative: The Madonna Curve, Energy Security and NATO's Strategic Concepts

The last of the three elements of persuasion listed by Aristotle is represented by logos, the argument itself, which, accordingly, means

‘reasoned discourse.’³⁴ It is from within this reasoned discourse – which I consider the reality of the discourse itself – that the true purposes and intentions of the narrative are revealed. NATO, in its efforts to regain an image which is more believable, to face potential new threats, and with the aim of maintaining a narrative which justifies its “aesthetic surgery,” the alliance has relied on two key elements:

1. a marketing approach defined as the Madonna-curve, and
2. the evolution of NATO terminology which, whilst maintaining a constant interest for energy security issues, has exploited a critical security studies language.

Peter van Ham captures NATO’s marketing approach succinctly and notes that

the quality of adapting to new tasks whilst staying true to one’s own principles is something which business analysts qualify as the Madonna-curve. This curve is named after the legendary pop-diva who reinvented herself each time her style and stardom went into inevitable decline, but whose audacity has lifted her up to ever higher levels of relevance and fame.³⁵

Just as Madonna adapted her style and music in a bid to retain relevance, stardom and income, NATO too has been forced to re-write its lyrics and rebrand itself.

This rebranding first occurred the adoption of NATO’s first New Strategic Concept (24 April 1999) which added two articles – 20 and 24 – recognising NATO members’ interests (energy among them) being jeopardised by ‘critical-security threats.’³⁶ These articles clearly link threat-instability-interests and while article 20 notes that ‘(e)thnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, inadequate or failed efforts at reform, the abuse of human rights, and the dissolution of states can lead to local and even regional instability ...’article 24 suggests that ‘(a)lliance security interests can be affected by other risks of a wider nature, including acts of terrorism, sabotage and organised crime and by the disruption of the flow of vital resources.’³⁷

And then, at the 2006 Riga Summit entitled: *Transforming NATO in a New Global Era*,³⁸ several defining occurrences took place. Firstly George W. Bush declared that ‘NATO is in transition from a static force to an expeditionary force.’ This was not a departure from NATO’s policy direction, it was entirely in-sync with Rasmussen,

though coming from such a polarising president, illustrated NATO's transformation and its marketing angles. This was accompanied, in Riga, with the determination of constructing an unbreakable linkage between energy security and the global war on terror to and the development of NATO's new geopolitical map.

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Indeed, US Senator Richard Lugar suggested the possibility that NATO countries invoke article 5 in cases of deliberate energy supply disruptions,³⁹ while Shea looked to create a NATO Energy Security and Intelligence Analysis Cell responsible for the gathering of information on terrorism and energy security.⁴⁰

The Model Reader: The NATO Reader

If NATO is seeking to win the battle of narrative, then the main question is who or what is the target? As in the case of Madonna, the target was the market, the audience. For NATO's narrative, the goal is to convince those who pay attention to NATO's strategic rewrite in a toe-the-line manner, the "model reader." Indeed, a "model reader" is able to interpret a text in a similar way to the author who generated it. Eco reminds us that '(t)he author has thus to foresee a model of the possible reader (the Model Reader) supposedly able to deal interpretatively with the expressions in the same way as the author deals generatively with them.'⁴¹

In our case, the model reader is what I call the NATO reader, the reader who physically belongs to the cultural-geopolitical space of the Alliance members. The NATO reader is one who, reading the NATO narrative is capable of understanding and psychologically experiencing NATO anxieties and is capable of cooperating with the NATO narrative.

THE FUNCTION OF THE GEOPOLITICAL-NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Cox's posits that a

theory is always for someone and for some purpose. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space. The world is seen from a standpoint definable in terms of nation, or social class, of dominance or subordination, of rising or

declining power, of a sense of immobility or of present crisis, of past experience, and of hopes and expectations for the future.⁴²

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Building on this, I argue that a narrative – including the GPNF – is always for someone and for some purpose. The authors of NATO's documents confesses that the NATO-narrative-text is for NATO and that its purpose is to win the NATO battle of narrative.

The GPNF becomes a vital text and a specific idiom, which its 'interpretative fate is part of its creative process: to produce a text means carrying out a strategy in which the moves of the adversary are foreseen. In military strategy, the strategist builds up a model of an adversary;⁴³ within the GPNF two opposing forces operate: the centripetal and the centrifugal force, and in two directions: 'for someone,' and 'for some purpose.'

"For someone," the GPNF reinforces and recreates the author identity, in this specific case the NATO identity (centripetal force). In this part, the GPNF constructs the plot, the anxieties, the threats, the enemy and the hero in which the reader will identify. At the same time, as far as it produces this narrative, NATO spreads a message which, as a centrifugal force, captures the reader who is present (physically and/or emotionally or for interest) in its geopolitical field of existence.

"For some purpose," – re: to win the battle of narrative – is achieved through a combination of emotional-identity-cultural elements which "interpellate"⁴⁴ or even to "seize and incorporate"⁴⁵ readers. They find themselves hit by the centrifugal force spread by the text and are sucked into it (centripetal force). The text will interpellate these readers, and it will participate in constructing their identities in which, in turn, they will identify themselves. The model reader (interpellated-seised-incorporated), will live in the text and will see the reality through the text.

Reading is a process of having something in common with games of skill or strategy that have a set of rules that do not impose a pre-determined behaviour on the player, leaving room for individual creativity and ability.⁴⁶ But in the case of NATO's narrative, the reader becomes a target (the Madonna's curve) which will not have possibilities to cooperate autonomously. The authors will do the maximum to use referential codes and to construct situations which the model reader will completely understand and they will

push their style in order to stimulate a precise effect and to ensure that a horror reaction will arise they will speak early and say 'at this moment something terrible has happened.' On a certain level the game will work.⁴⁷

The GPNF, being a closed text, at the same time establishes precisely the intellectual profile of the model reader; an ideal reader who has the capacity to interpret the world only through and inside the GPNF, and which puts the GPNF at the centre of a bigger worldview. A reader who, at the same time, moves and lives inside the GPNF space and whose behaviour is the outcome of mental maps provided to him by his local culture.⁴⁸ In short, the GPNF has to educate and "interpellate" the reader in order to win the battle of narrative: 'you are addressed – by ads, for instance – as a particular sort of subject (a consumer who values certain qualities), and being repeatedly hailed in this way you come to occupy such a position.'⁴⁹

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But what is specific of this GPNF is that it represents the space where the security relationship⁵⁰ is constructed and assembled. Because, despite the commercial-marketing approach identified in the Madonna's curve, what is very specific here is a relationship based on emotion, and a very particular one: anxiety.

The GPNF becomes a large political stage where we can realise what Jackie Orr defines as 'Psycho-power'⁵¹ which can be seen as an exercise of 'engineering of consent' (through reason, persuasion and suggestion) which, as a manufactured product resembles so much to the 'panic broadcast' experiment carried out by Orson Wells on 30 October 1938, with his radio play adaptation of H.G. Wells's novel *The War of the Worlds*.⁵²

CHALLENGING THE NATO GEOPOLITICAL-NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK

What happens when the GPNF is not read by a model reader (the NATO reader) but by an empirical one who is located outside the GPNF space?

Those texts that obsessively aim at arousing a precise response on the part of more or less precise empirical readers [...] are in fact open to any possible "aberrant" decoding. A text so immoderately "open" to every possible interpretation will be called a closed one.⁵³

To challenge the GPNE, and highlight its cultural relativism, I need to take the position of the empirical reader, of the non-participating observer-reader: the one who has not been transformed in “animal symbolicum” – “Homo Videns” – NATO Model Reader-Homo NATO.

To do this, as an empirical reader,⁵⁴ I use the following tools:

1. the meaning of “energy security,”
2. the idea of “Rhetorical Territory,”
3. the concept of “Cosmopolitan Realism.”

If NATO has a plan ‘for the defence and security of (its members),’ and apparently one of its major concerns is energy security, it is essential to, at the very least, attempt to define it. In this the World Economic Forum offers an adequate definition which maintains that Energy security is an umbrella term that covers many concerns linking energy, economic growth and political power. (...) The traditional energy security elements – supply sources, demand centres, geopolitics and market structures – have been joined by additional considerations. These include the interconnectedness of world economies and energy infrastructure systems, climate change concerns, technological innovation and increased pressure from a broader array of stakeholders.⁵⁵

Yergin, for his part, explains energy security’s “ten principles:”

1. Diversification of energy supply sources is the starting point for energy security,
2. There is only one oil market,
3. A “security margin” consisting of spare capacity, emergency stocks and redundancy in critical infrastructure is important,
4. Relying on flexible markets and avoiding the temptation to micromanage them can facilitate speedy adjustment and minimize long-term damage,
5. Understand the importance of mutual interdependence among companies and governments at all levels,
6. Foster relationships between suppliers and consumers in recognition of mutual interdependence,
7. Create a proactive physical security framework that involves both producers and consumers,
8. Provide good quality information to the public before, during and after a problem occurs,

9. Invest regularly in technological change within the industry,
10. Commit to research, development and innovation for longer-term energy balance and transitions.⁵⁶

“Energy security” is a combination of two terms in which a commodity (energy) is linked to an emotional word (security – re: freedom from anxiety) implying that a sense of anxiety is linked to energy concerns. But the process of securitisation is a political/speech activity in which ‘what is essential is the designation of an existential threat requiring emergency action or special measures and the acceptance of that designation by a significant audience.’⁵⁷ xx

Then we can understand the emotional link between threat and fear, and assuming “energy security = energy anxiety” will help produce a new use of the term “Energy Security” in which the designation is divided in two components: “energy-security” per se, and “energy-defence.” While “energy-security” covers the topics related to vulnerabilities stemming from the lack of energy, and then close to the points of Yergin, “energy-defence,” the second component of the definition is addressed to the fear of threat against energy structure. “Energy-defence” represents the hard side of energy security and here NATO could play a role.

But if we look at the events of some years ago when the price of oil dropped from \$140 (USD) per barrel to \$40 (USD) per barrel and we try to understand this event through the lens provided by my definition of “energy security” you will see that my approach like the others mentioned hitherto is insufficient.

Between the two fields (“energy-security” and “energy-defence”) which define my concept of Energy Security, there is a zone termed here as the “grey zone” which not only concerns international oil markets, oil companies, but also includes insurance companies, speculators, private security companies (PSC), and organised criminal groups. Entities and agencies which are the very actors in the energy sector profiting, in various ways, from rises in oil prices, and suffered from price falls.

So what NATO can do against this grey zone? If “energy-defence” is provided to oil companies by insurance contracts and by private security companies (PSC) and NATO could help the investors of Lloyd’s of London in saving some money by employing NATO forces, NATO can do nothing against the grey zone. An irony of the case is that members of the grey zone are amongst the authors of

the GPNF despite the fact that NATO is not an actor in the international oil market. But the NATO reader will be convinced of it, and with taxes will contribute to paying for NATO soldiers' deployment (instead of PSC, then at no cost for insurance companies) to protect insured energy infrastructure but will not participate in the establishment of the oil/gas prices.

In his 2006 article, Buzan sustains the thesis that Washington is now embarked on a campaign to persuade itself, the American people and the rest of the world that the 'global war on terrorism' (GWOt) will be a 'long war.' This 'long war' is explicitly compared to the Cold War as a similar sort of zero-sum, global-scale, generational struggle against anti-liberal ideological extremists who want to rule the world. Both have been staged as a defence of the West, or western civilization, against those who would seek to destroy it.⁵⁸

It is the lack of precise definitions and explanations about the necessity to use a military organisation to face future security challenges which opens the field to the use of ontological questions related to the validity of the GPNF. Reading the GPNF pragmatically, as the Empirical Reader does, we should be able to answer the following two sets of questions in order to test the supposed "universal" message of peace and security imbedded in the NATO narrative. Firstly, what is reality? What is real knowledge? What can we do? And secondly, what is being secured? What is being secured against? Who are the enemies? Who defines them? Who provides security? What methods can be undertaken to provide it?

The Empirical Reader reads the GPNF from a different position, from a non-perspective as mentioned by Cox. Being a non-NATO reader, he is not enchanted and captured by the text and is referential codes. He does not collaborate with it according to the intention of the authors, and least of all he is not even interpellated, hailed, seised of incorporated by it.

The GPNF is a specific geographical map in which a large number of security-economic interests of NATO national countries are in territories outside the boundaries of its map (Multiple Stress Zone). At this point is more than clear that the NATO narrative is nothing more than an attempt in the 'strategicalisation of global politics,' the rendering of events as subject to human mastery at the hands of statesman and to the logic of a peculiarly contemporary, (i.e. post-war strategic discourse). And *'by talking of "strategicalisation," we*

*identify processes by which political domain is extended beyond realms of immediate sovereignty.*⁵⁹ Despite NATO's use of a critical security studies terminology which refers to security in a broader meaning (in which the referent object of security is the human being) than defence (typical of the Cold-War period), the danger is represented by a return to a pseudo-colonial approaches to international politics. Indeed, 'what is distinctive about "strategicalisation" is the extent to which state behaviour becomes encoded within world views and then becomes the basis of the whole bureaucratic apparatuses – of security analysis, intelligence estimates, and international surveillance.'⁶⁰ xx

Consequently, it is the NATO narrative pretension to "strategicalise" global politics that crash dramatically against the complex reality outside its own GPNF. If NATO's NSC aims to locate a theoretical position between the realist and the idealist vision, I perceive its discourse (which can be seen as the sum of the various Alleys' national security looks) completely as an example of "cosmopolitan idealism" in contrast to the concept of 'cosmopolitan realism which adheres to the principle that political action and political science make us blind without cosmopolitan concepts and ways of seeing the world.'⁶¹

NATO's NSC, as a national outlook, is sandwiched between its own interpretation of reality, its strategicalisation of it, and a cosmopolitan dimension of the reality that can be summarised in the following six points which embody the "forgotten realities" not envisaged by the NATO narrative:

1. Other countries, like China, have produced their own concept of war. "Unrestricted Warfare" is a book on military strategy written in 1999 by two colonels in the People's Liberation Army, Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui. The book, rather than focusing on direct military confrontation, examines a variety of other means which can be summarised in the Formula: Schwartzkopf + Soros + Xiaomolisi + Bin Laden.⁶²
2. At the 2010 Seoul G20 meeting even the map of the unfolding global financial crisis was altered. Despite the Western countries depicting the financial crisis as global, its perception from others was markedly different. According to O'Neill (Goldman Sachs), policy makers in Asia were referring to the global credit crisis as the 'North Atlantic Crisis.'⁶³

Thus, and for the first time, the “others” defined our military alliance as a financial system.

3. Regarding the “Multiple Stress Zone” map presented by NATO’s Soligan in 2009, it is clearly a replica of a 2004 Pentagon Map⁶⁴ meant to highlight US grand strategy. Furthermore the Pentagon Map is much more than a simple cartographic representation of the planet, it is a division of the world into a “Functioning Core,” characterised by economic interdependence, and the “Non-Integrated Gap,” characterised by instability and absence from international trade. The Core can be sub-divided into Old Core (North America, Western Europe, Japan, Australia) and New Core (China, India). The Non-Integrated Gap includes the Middle East, South Asia (except India), most of Africa, Southeast Asia, and northwest South America. Thus, using a realist terminology, the Functioning Core can represent the land of order while the Non-Integrated Gap the land of anarchy and disorder and also it can be seen as an attempt to “ethnicalise” the world.⁶⁵ If what can happen in the Non-Integrated Gap can produce security concerns for NATO countries and justify military intervention then ‘fear is something that is actually missing in a situation of international anarchy, and because it is missing it must be invented and skilfully deployed.’⁶⁶
4. World Population Growth Rate: ‘By 2003, the combined populations of Europe, the United States, and Canada accounted for just 17% of the global population. In 2050, this figure is expected to be just 12% ... Today roughly nine out of ten children under the age of 15 live in developing countries ... Indeed, over 70% of the world’s population growth between now and 2050 will take place in 24 countries, all of which are classified by the World Bank as low income or lower-middle income, with an average per capita income under \$3,855 in 2008.’⁶⁷
5. The consumption factor: ‘The estimated one billion people who live in developed countries have a relative per capita consumption rate of 32. Most of the world’s other 5.5 billion people that constitute the developing world, with relative per capita consumption rates below 32, are mostly down toward 1.’⁶⁸

6. The life expectancy rate: will the people living in the “multiple stress zone” (the non- integrated gap) accept their dramatic living conditions, and live less than the people living in other parts of the globe? Will they accept the status quo that has produced their misery or will they rebel? And will the “peace” NATO will likely impose be “positive peace” or “negative peace” which will reproduce the same structural violence that provoked unrest and internal conflict, and not seeing instead the ‘civil war as a system?’⁶⁹ xx

CONCLUSION

It is a quantitative and qualitative fact that the above “forgotten realities” are reflected on the map of oil consumption and oil trade which is moving from west to east, with demand growing in a region of scant supplies. The rise of Asia has been reflected in energy and oil demand, while oil production in the region has grown more slowly, supplying less than a third of consumption by 2008. Since 1995 the Asia-Pacific oil deficit – the shortfall of production over consumption – has exceeded that of the rest of the world outside the exporting countries of Russia, Central Asia and the Middle East. (...) The shift of the oil deficits to the east is massive and clear. By 2030 the Asia-Pacific oil deficit will be seven times than that the Atlantic, where demand will grow more slowly, even without the Copenhagen climate change.⁷⁰

The above mentioned energy deficits are already producing a new geopolitical map which is drawing what Mitchell calls “new oil axis” with three main regions: Atlantic, Russia and Central Asia, and Asia Pacific.

This is a new situation in which NATO could play a role. But like the strategic narrative of the GPNF on both side of the Atlantic, foreign policy analysts have convinced politicians that the west faces severe energy security challenge. The 1970s myth of energy independence is back. We hear the same ‘moral equivalent of war’ speeches and see the same subsidies to well-connected industries to save the west from ‘energy superpower’ and oil-funded ‘islam-ofascists.’ (...) Energy policy has become high politics and energy security is hard security. The appropriate institution to deal with

these concerns is no longer the International Energy Agency (IEA) but NATO.⁷¹

It is not only Noel who challenges this vision by noting that ‘the global oil market is not falling apart,’ Victor and Yueb even suggest the creation of an Energy Stability Board modelled after the Financial Stability Board in the banking sector. The Energy Stability Board could gather together the dozen biggest energy producers and users ... At first, the Energy Stability Board’s activities would need to be ad hoc so that other institutions, such as OPEC and one more of the Asian security organizations, could easily join its efforts; it would need to be specially welcoming to China, India, and the other important countries, which have been left on the sidelines of energy governance system so far.⁷²

With this ‘NATO for energy is dangerous nonsense,’ I would like to conclude by suggesting that reading the GPNF outside its “rhetorical territory” is nothing more than an example in which Machiavelli’s suggestion to the Prince to *appear* in order to maintain his power has been updated throughout a new plot in which the NATO narrative has maintained the ever-present ingredients represented by the contrasting emotive words of “security” and “fear.” The NATO reader’s “existential space” is not only the territory of the NATO GPNF, but the world itself, full of complex interactions. A territory in which domestic state power struggles, inter-state power struggles and non-state power struggles dovetail with one another can no longer be located within the frame of the reference of either “national” or “international” arenas. The political theory of national political realism is empirically wrong. What takes its place, though, is not cosmopolitan idealism, but rather cosmopolitan realism, meaning that this meta-power politics – a politics that cuts through and blurs boundaries, as well as setting new, fragile boundaries – needs to be conceptualised and analysed as a New Global Political Economy.⁷³

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