

On NATO's Identities and Temporalisations

The current IR studies have issues of ontological and temporal nature, stemming from their theoretical approaches to entities, phenomena and events which belong to a purely intersubjective field, with no direct correspondence in the self-standing objectivity. The IR theorising, even in contrast to social sciences, tends to become its own ontological anchor, to precede the pre-theoretical, intersubjective, immediate givenness in the field and fit it to its constructs and narratives, which are genetic as regards to already post-genetically given study objects. However, it is possible to conduct the IR study on the ground of the pre-theoretical, intersubjective immediacy of the entity, phenomenon and event in their synthetic unity, as a phenomenological inquiry, avoiding the ontological and temporal complications of the IR theorising. This article attempts to outline such a study on NATO, aiming at describing its ontological and temporal aspects within consecutive intersubjective environments which are expressed, referentially, in terms of polarity. It focuses on the ontology (identity) and the temporalisations of NATO, in particular regarding its ontological/ temporal impasses face to transformations of its intersubjective environments. In this sense, NATO's adjustment to the post-bipolarity through a double-identity and double-temporalisation setup appears to have been obstructing a new adjustment dictated by further changes in the interstate intersubjectivity. The systemic crisis created by Russia's ongoing aggression toward Ukraine, which was facilitated by this obstruction, is likely to provide it with an end as well, the form of which being dependent on how the current war ends.

Keywords: NATO, alliance, security community, phenomenology, post-bipolarity

Introduction

What was NATO when it was first instituted? How NATO continued to exist when the international environment in which it gained validity “radically changed”? How is it evolving face to the even newer changes in its environment which seems to have reached the stage of crisis with the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

These questions are certainly not novelties, including the last one that is related to the ongoing war. Moreover, they are related to the IR phenomena of “alliance” and to an extent, “security community” on the one hand and to those of confrontation and war with systemic as well as individual perspectives on the other, which have long been studied and deliberated upon. In doing so, however, IR studies reflect their own, preceding axioms, constructs, prioritisations of theoretical nature onto the study, which indeed makes the very study “possible” within the confines of the discipline. Still, this results in building narratives of the specific IR entities, phenomena and events on precedingly built theoretical grounds. The IR field presents a unique character, contrasting as to its nature even to the sphere of the social sciences, from where the IR theorising imports its

various theoretical grounds mainly. Social sciences are anchored to objectivity through self-standing presence of their fundamental actors –true individuals and their groupings, if not through institutions, values or other communicative “protocols” as products-. This makes theory’s assessment against the independently accessible objectivity. However, the IR field is purely intersubjective, including its actors/ subjects, such as the State: Even true individuals gain meaning within the field through their appresentation of the purely intersubjective actors, therefore constitute an image, an extension of what they refer to. The absence of an immediate correspondence in the self-standing objectivity makes the IR theorising ontologically exogenous to entities, phenomena and events as they are given intersubjectively and immediately. This alienation almost invariably results in the imposition of the preceding theory on the givenness through a genetic narrative of the coming-into-being of the latter. Theory fits the givenness into its own framework, also in temporal sense, as the narrated geneses are imposed on the immediacy of the givenness, which is by nature post-genetic.

Moreover, the IR theorising has multiple grounds and *a priori* proposals, producing manifold constructs and narratives, which contradict to the singularity of the intersubjective, immediate, pre-theoretical givenness of the IR entity, phenomenon or the event. Due to the lack of an ontological anchor to the self-standing objectivity, for the theory as well as its critics, this multiplicity remains under-challenged in contrast to constructs within the sphere of social sciences and survives more easily.

Studies related to alliance and security-community as phenomena and to NATO as entity related to them, are not different in this regard. They reflect the ontological complications of the IR theorising. These shall be referred-to in the initial part of the first section. Against this background, a proposal shall then be outlined for anchoring the study to the immediacy of the givenness itself and for proceeding toward the description of its intersubjective, pre-theoretical, singular synthetic unity in the second sub-section. This proposal shall be based on notions and tools the Husserlian phenomenology offers, with adjustments, at the ontological level, from the Heideggerian phenomenological ontology.

The second section shall deal with NATO in its given ontological states/ identities as related to alliance and to security-community and its temporal states/ temporalisations in reference to the intersubjective environment of the interstate interactions as-then-given. This latter shall be expressed in structural realism’s polarity terms but as related to their intersubjective referentiality and not to their theoretical/ “explanatory” elements.

The first sub-section is reserved to a phenomenological description of NATO’s ontological and temporal givenness within bipolarity as its genetic environment as well as in its transformation into early phase of the post-bipolarity. Here, NATO’s alliance identity and security-community function in its original environment as well as their change into a double-identity and double-temporalisation which made it valid and viable during the post-bipolar period will be debated. The second sub-section shall focus on inquiring NATO in relation with the transformation of the interstate environment from the earlier post-bipolarity into the current, “late” phase of it,

gradually displaying and for NATO, “imposing” different ontological parameters and re-temporalisations. The third sub-section shall outline NATO’s current ontological and temporal impasses related to the said changes as “centrifugality” and “friction”, which may have reached to their decisive stage with the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The Ontological Complications of the IR Theorising and the Proposal of Phenomenology

IR theorising’s dealing with the alliance and the security-community

The phenomena of alliance and security-community are studied both through and on the ground of theorising, with complications outlined in the introduction, yet in different manners and degrees depending of the nature of the particular theoretical construct.

According to the realist/structural realist approach as related to alliance, its nature, founding, maintaining, altering and terminating are matters of power-relations between States, the subject-nature of which is pre-recognised and the behaviour patterns of which are imported from microeconomy as *a priori*. As such, power as substance of interstate interaction finds a specific definition in line with these pre-recognitions and through this substance further definitions appear, to begin with that of threat and of interest (see Waltz 1979:114-128;165-167, Morgenthau 1948: 137-157, Fedder 1968, Liska 1962: 26-27, Walt 1987:17-50, Snyder 1997, Schweller 1994). The alliance as phenomenon is defined on these pre-postulated grounds, this framework of the realist/ structural realist narrative precedes the encounter with the phenomenon and the event, fitting them to itself. Therefore, the phenomenon of alliance appears when the sources of threat or objects of interest, expressible in terms of power and survival –also related to power-, become compatible between States-actors. Compatibility/ incompatibility are expressible in reference to the same concept of power-relations and fundamental behaviour patterns of a “microeconomic” agent. Here, theorising uniformises state-actors at the ontological level, attributing precedence to these parameters in their interactions. Individuality of the state-actors is certainly not denied, but appears in ways that are also pre-defined, *a priori* to immediate, living encounter with singular entities, phenomena and events. Individuality is therefore expressed with the same power-parameters, the “amount” of power accompanied by elements that influence this amount, for example geographical/ geopolitical ones. On the other hand, when this kind of reductionism becomes or threatens to become too evidently in conflict with the immediate givenness of entities, phenomena and events, the theoretical effort happens to formulate remedies to protect the construct itself. An interesting example to that is Waltz’ differentiation between the theory of international politics and the “theory of foreign policies” – based on the actors’ *internal compositions*-, which results in transferring the individualities of the state-actor to a vague sphere, effectively purifying the construct from incompatibilities (Waltz 1996).

On the same matter of alliance as phenomenon of pre-postulated ground of international interaction, other approaches replace these ground with other pre-postulates –but not pre-postulation itself– for example through underlining interdependence (Keohane and Nye 1989; Nye 2002; Deutsch 1957) or through adding and accentuating a self-preserving and promoting institutional “identity” (Keohane and Martin 1995, Keohane 1988, Wallander and Keohane 1995), producing newer narratives with similar effects.

The constructivist line of thought amplifies the ontological complications of the IR theorising because of its more rigorous “ontological effort”. Intersubjectivity constitutes the fundamental diagnosis of constructivism as regards the IR field -however the term itself is not often employed- (see Onuf 1989: 35-64, Onuf 2013: 3-20, Wendt 1999) and replaces less subtle postulates of realist/ structural realist approaches, which do not exclude assumptions for example as to the subject-character of the State and its general uniformisation within a “system” that is defined by a few interconnected parameters that are mentioned above (Waltz 1979). Whereas the realist assumptions create a possibility of partial reconciliation between the intersubjective, immediate, singular, pre-theoretical givenness of the IR entity, phenomenon or event with the theoretical construct, the constructivist ontology works against it. The constructivist intersubjectivity becomes itself the object of a preceding theoretical ground and ensuing genetic narrative, therefore subject to ontological complications at a very fundamental level. This preceding “genetic” ground consists of sociology/socio-psychology, norms and discourse analyses and so on, exogenous to the *given*, lived, immediate intersubjectivity of the IR entities, phenomena and events. Wendt’s “thin constructivism” also constitutes, in this context, an attempt to remedy this radical nature of constructivism’s ontological intervention to the benefit of what is given, for example when drawing attention to “legitimacy” of referring to a constructed entity (the State) as “actor” (see Wendt 1999: 193-245). However and even there, the study concentrates on social dynamics in their construction of their object, therefore partially “thinning” the ontological intervention which is always present and effective.

Constructivism’s amplification of the ontological complications of the IR theorising is more visible in its dealing with the concept of security community, which is –almost– a direct product of its understanding of the IR. Here, the genesis and the continuation of a security community may be “explained” on the ground and according to parameters of realist/ structural realist and liberal understanding of international relations as well. Still, the constructivist work in general sense contributed more radically to the study of the security community, *narrating ontology* instead of the reductive/ assumptive approach of the realist/ structural realist thought on it and as such producing a neater picture of its understanding of the interstate interactions through the said “content” (see Wendt 1999: 201-233; Kratochwil 2011: 161; Kratochwil 1989: 24-25; Kratochwil 2011a; Adler and Greve 2009; Kratochwil 2018; Pouliot 2008; Adler 2008). Here, the narrated ontology’s parameters vary from language/ discourse to culture/ norms/ values, social practise and so on, practically depending on the researcher’s “axiomatic preferences”. In any case, the study presents a genetic character, not only

displaying the security community's social construction/ coming-into-being but also constructing the security community (or alliance) itself.

It is not easy to state that the existing "anti-narrative" attitude in the IR field resolves the ontological complications of the IR theorising either. The post-structuralist understanding has apparently its own *a priori*, pre-determinedly critical –almost moral- position in deconstructing the narrative, with the result of building an alternative one, if not as construct then certainly as consequence of "attitude" which but repeats, from another angle, the redesign/the alteration of the immediate, intersubjective, singular givenness of IR phenomena and occurrences. Not only the narrative but also the givenness itself becomes the malleable material of the de-centering/ deconstruction here, since the "attitude" acts upon it as well (see for example , Teorell 2018:218-232; Ashley 1984; Ashley 1996; Der Derian 2009: 43-62; Bartelson 1995). Here the "metanarrative" is dismantled directionally, in pursuance of an "aim" rather than research, on the grounds of pre-determined, pre-selected, in fact pre-judged concepts such as sovereignty, freedom, oppression, pluralism and so on.

A Phenomenological Proposal

The current IR studies' approach to IR entities, phenomena and events is fundamentally "genetic" not only in the sense of privileging their coming-into-being over their post-genetic immediacy of givenness but also of re-shaping them in order to fit them, through narrative, into the theoretical framework that is precedingly built on grounds that are basically exogenous to the IR sphere. Then how one may define an alternative way of study which might avoid these ontological complications? Are there concepts and a method that would permit to approach, without a pre-made genetic background, the entity, phenomenon and event as they are given pre-theoretically, immediately, intersubjectively, singularly, yet also in its intersubjectively meaningful unity of givenness, both as to its substance and its temporal states (as to its past, present and anticipated/ contingent future)?

Phenomenology offers useful concepts and tools in this regard. The *reductions* may be applied in this direction and serve to reach to the entity, phenomenon and event "as is", as given, as appears pre-theoretically, immediately yet meaningfully, putting into perspective all "altering" act and preceding content, may that be of predicative, doxic, emotional and most importantly, theoretical nature (Husserl 1982: 71-81; Husserl 1983: 57-59, 220-221; Brainard 2002: 68-74). In other words, within the purely intersubjective sphere of the IR, the entity's, phenomenon's, event's own, pre-theoretical, intersubjective givenness may be discerned in putting these *a priori* constructs and *a posteriori* contents into brackets.

The more general type of reduction, the universal/ phenomenological one, aims at putting into perspective the *attitude* of the subject/ observer/ researcher in its relationship with the "world", more precisely with the object of its attention/ object with becomes defined in line with the type of relationship it establishes. It

1 thus shows and labels the doxic, emotional, predicative and more importantly for
 2 our work, theoretical/ genetic nature of the “relationship” (Husserl 1983: 51-55;
 3 Luft 1983). As such, the universal reduction itself constitutes a particular attitude
 4 for the researcher, the rather “introspective” phenomenological attitude, in contrast
 5 to the “natural attitude” which reflects a naive belief in the world at a very
 6 fundamental level and to which the theoretical/ genetic acts belong. As such, the
 7 phenomenological attitude constitutes the methodological background of this
 8 study proposal. However, the focus on the study object at hand, NATO as entity
 9 and alliance/security-community as phenomena it is related-to, requires the *eidetic*
 10 *reduction*. This reduction bears upon the experience of *something* as its “*generic*
 11 *way of presenting itself, its Erscheinen*” (see Taminiaux 1988: 62). The bracketing
 12 here would mean putting into perspective any genetic construct *a priori* and any
 13 judgement and predication that is issue of it, as related to the entity, phenomenon
 14 and event that constitute the study object.

15 Here the eidetic reduction to NATO as entity gives neither a temporally
 16 “frozen” picture at its immediacy nor an isolated appearance of some substance/
 17 content but a meaningful whole which is ontologically bound to phenomena as
 18 meaning-grounds as well as to a past, present and (contingent/ anticipated) future,
 19 as a synthetic unity. The *appresentation* constitutes the link between the elements
 20 of this synthetic unity of givenness at its intersubjective, singular, pre-theoretical
 21 immediacy, in substantial and temporal senses as well as regarding the related
 22 phenomena and occurrences which makes it appear meaningfully before and
 23 independently from any theoretical/ genetic act. The eidetic reduction gives these
 24 elements as irreducibles, which are bound to each other appresentatively. This also
 25 means that in case the eidetic reduction shows some element as reducible to a
 26 theoretical proposal/ judgment/ predication, therefore to something exogenous to
 27 the givenness, it is bracketed/ put into perspective as such. The appresentative
 28 links make the synthetic unity of the study object on its own ground of appearance/
 29 givenness.

30 The given synthetic unity is individual and generic at the same time, due to
 31 the appresentative link between the phenomenon and the entity/ event. The event
 32 or entity appresents phenomenon as *conditio sine qua non* of meaningfulness,
 33 which is of central importance to our study. In a purely intersubjective field,
 34 meaningfulness is not a contingent feature of an appearance but the very condition
 35 of its possibility, since the appearance is nothing but a meaning there as it has no
 36 correspondence in the objectivity. Phenomenon becomes individualised in its
 37 synthetic unity with entity or event and forms a singular, intersubjective,
 38 immediate, pre-theoretical givenness. Entity or event appears meaningfully on the
 39 “generic” ground of the phenomenon in the synthetic unity. As substance, the
 40 eidetic reduction therefore gives the study object’s phenomenal/ generic and
 41 individual aspects, while putting into perspective the exogenous reflective/
 42 theoretical interventions to it.

43 As to temporality, the eidetic reduction gives the study object in a temporal
 44 coherence of its past, present and future that are appresentatively linked to each
 45 other. The Husserlian concepts of retention-protention, recollection and
 46 anticipation are particularly expressive in this context, yet not without their own –

remediable- complications. Retention-protention expresses the grasp of the study object's *actuality* (see Husserl 1964: 39-50; Kortooms 2002: 177-179; Rodemeyer 2006: 73-176). The present-as-moment is equivalent to a dimensionless "dot" and as such, is not given to experience in isolation. The present (of something, including the experimenting subject itself) is a continuing moment, made possible in unity with the immediate past and immediately upcoming future, the former in its retention and the latter in its protention (Carr 1991: 24, 40-45), which appresent each other. Still this progressive "now" extends further into its past and its future. Husserl uses the terms of recollection and anticipation for these extensions (Marion 1998: 77-97, Carr 1991: 24, Rodemeyer 2006: 12-13) yet reduces both to the volitional act of the subject and not to the givenness itself, thus separating the subject from the -study- object quite *unfittingly* to his own phenomenology. Here, Heidegger's temporality terms (*extases*) of having-been (with), dwelling-with and to be-with (Heidegger 1982: 266-267; Heidegger 1996: 111-112; Heidegger 1985: 238-239) better expresses the inseparability and non-precedence to each other of the *intentio* and *intentionum*, of the subject-act and the givenness. Also, in the case of the relationship between recollection and retention, Bernet's inquiry on their separability/ inseparability is of note (Bernet 1994: 248). Furthermore, we need to reiterate here that the intersubjective givenness is ontologically separated from volition, here as related to recollection and anticipation: Presenting the temporal states of the study object as volitional is equivalent to reproducing the theoretical/genetic approach which is exogenous to givenness. This exogeneity is displayed through the eidetic reduction of the study object which includes volition in temporalisation, as it leads to a narrative and a construct about the object rather than its givenness. On the other hand, the eidetic reduction that puts into brackets "volition" as a narrative element displays directly and automatically the immediate and unifying appresentative nature of the relationship between the temporal states of the givenness, which integrates them to each other, recollection to retentive "now" and vice-versa, anticipation to protentive "now" and vice-versa.

Now, the entity that constitutes the study object is NATO and its ontological ground is given through the phenomena of alliance and security-community, which may both be reduced to two forms of interaction with a collectively defined Otherness. Otherness is immediately apparent as regards the phenomenon of alliance, since it more often than not takes a dialectical form. As regards security-community which involves preventing confrontation *among* its members, the dialectic and therefore the Otherness is vague and potential. It is consequently undermentioned in the literature but not entirely ignored, as it is inherent to, constitutive to the ground phenomenon of interaction according to which the security-community as phenomenon becomes possible (see Bellamy 2004: 31-39, 52-63, Adler and Greve 2009, Neumann 1999: 207-228). However, the problem with the security-community theorising appears that its inevitable recognition of Otherness does not clearly extend to its constitutive nature of the phenomenon, as theory tends to formulate a "they-less We" as community, a quite clear ontological complication. However, the eidetic reduction gives the Other / the relationship with the Other appresentatively as part of the synthetic unity of this paper's specific study object.

1 Lastly, the intersubjectivity/ intersubjective environment -as itself given- is
 2 necessarily inherent to the synthetic unity/ meaningful appearance of the entity/
 3 phenomenon/ event that is being studied. As such, it may neither be amorphous –
 4 therefore without appearance and meaning- nor a theoretical construct/ narrative
 5 (since it would be reduced to exogenous genetic proposals and not to the
 6 immediacy of the givenness). Therefore it needs to be collective reference to the
 7 (IR) intersubjectivity. Such a reference is equivalent to the general appearance of
 8 the shape of the interstate interactions, the pre-theoretical, immediate, collective
 9 knowledge of the common environment of the IR, which is equivalent to true
 10 subjects' collective knowledge of the fundamental parametres of the “outside”
 11 world. Here, the structural realist polarity terminology appears to be useful to
 12 express that referentiality. The said reference equates in fact to Waltz's
 13 understanding of the “international structure”, at a pre-theoretical, immediate level.
 14 Structural realism's *assumptive* character, as mentioned before, makes the
 15 theoretical construct/ explanatory narrative, therefore the exogenous content, *a*
 16 *posteriori* to given referentiality.

19 NATO's Ontological and Temporal States

21 *NATO as alliance and as security-community during the bipolarity and the earlier*
 22 *post-bipolarity*

24 NATO came-into-being in reference to bipolarity. Before bipolarity, for
 25 example during the 20s and 30s, the USSR with its same ideology, rapid
 26 development, inclination to excessive military build-up and even expansionism
 27 had not caused the establishment of a NATO-like entity. There had been, relative
 28 to the USSR, only an *ad hoc*, quite fragile and short-lived anticommunist
 29 alignment during the revolutionary period and Moscow was then integrated, if
 30 gradually, into the-then order of interstate interactions/ international system as an
 31 actor among others.

32 Until the nascence of bipolarity-as-reference at the end of the IInd World
 33 War, multiple and relatively equivalent major actors with flexible alignment
 34 practises, expressible as multipolarity (Waltz 1979: 129-130), had constituted the
 35 intersubjective reference to the general shape of interstate interactions. This had
 36 not excluded bi-polarisation as a contingent form of it (Waltz 1979: 167-168, De
 37 Keersmaecker 2018: 16-21). The fundamental change brought by the passage to
 38 bipolarity appears as the Otherness' gaining a rigid and precise content, in contrast
 39 to the alignment flexibility that characterised the preceding multipolar
 40 intersubjectivity. The Other, instead of being an attributable identity within
 41 multipolarity, became a concretely attributed one in line with the international
 42 state-of-affairs which radically differed from that of the multipolar era. Bipolarity
 43 appeared as the intersubjective acknowledgement of a precise and central *dialectic*
 44 of two precise actors (see Sayle 2019: 1-17; Waltz 1979: 168, 170-173).

45 NATO was an entity reducible to the substance and phenomenon of alliance-
 46 within-bipolarity. The will of collective defence was neatly and rigidly defined as

1 to its Other, which was precisely the USSR and its dependencies and as such
 2 displayed the bipolarity reference. The entity gained meaning from the specificity
 3 and the anticipated continuity of its Other that presented a synthetic unity with the
 4 bipolarity-reference. As such, it radically differed from the multipolar-era
 5 alliances, which were rather *ad hoc* and far from constituting entities themselves
 6 due to the multipolar alignment flexibility.

7 However and also interlaced with these elements, NATO also appresented a
 8 *function* of security-community, in terms of the mitigation of confrontations and
 9 the maintenance of peace among members. The term function expresses here the
 10 precedence of the phenomenon of alliance to the phenomenon of security-
 11 community in the case of NATO, since it came-into-being strictly in reference to
 12 its precise Other within a temporally “stable” interstate environment. In other
 13 words, the alliance preceded the security-community and attributed to it a
 14 meaning, not the other way around. As a function of something else, NATO
 15 differed from the security-communities of the multipolarity, like the Concert of
 16 Europe or the League of Nations, which were not built upon, preceded by and
 17 referred-to an alliance. Moreover, being issue of the alliance and not directly of the
 18 member states, the security-community function protected the alliance as it
 19 protected peace and harmony among them. It may be said that the efficiency of
 20 NATO’s security-community function, ensured by and “served” its preceding
 21 bipolar-type alliance identity, proved to be much higher than that of the security-
 22 communities of the multipolar era (see Waltz 1964 and Snyder 1984 respectively
 23 on the negligibility and the tolerability of the inner divergences). Among the
 24 examples to the said efficiency, one may cite the Suez Crisis (Nichols 2011), the
 25 French withdrawal from the Alliance’s military wing (Sayle 2019: 45-75, 120-
 26 123; Eznack 2012: 47-85) and the Greco-Turkish confrontations on the Cyprus
 27 and the Aegean demarcation issues.

28 In temporal terms, this “actuality” of NATO at its coming-into-being
 29 appresented the passage from the multipolarity to bipolarity as it did not have
 30 another past that would meaningfully precede its own genesis. At anticipatory
 31 level, the temporal appresentation consisted of the continuation of the dialectic, as
 32 it was the defining element of the NATO-as-entity (see also Webber, Sperling,
 33 Smith 2012: 1-20) as well as of the intersubjectivity it existed or was made
 34 possible within. Here the anticipatory horizon would appear as contingent forms
 35 that the irreducible dialectic might take, such as what were later expressed as cold
 36 war-proper or *détente*, rather than its contingencies of invalidation/ disappearance.
 37 However the very existence of the dialectic appresented, *ipso facto*, its own
 38 contingent end at the anticipatory horizon, this contingency was, at least during
 39 bipolarity, equivalent to the disappearance of NATO’s meaningful existence,
 40 again due to the irreducibility of the dialectic in NATO’s givenness.

41 However, the USSR and its alliance network disintegrated. The “given”
 42 successor of the USSR, emerged with loss of allies and territory, of political-
 43 economic stability and military degradation in comparison to its predecessor (see
 44 Herspring 1995; Tikhomirov 2000). On the other hand, it is difficult to state that
 45 even in the wake of the disintegration, the successor-State was not “powerful
 46 enough” to impose the bipolarity’s fundamental balances upon the interstate

interactions. This “objectivity” seems to have confused for example Waltz, as he drew attention to the preservation of Moscow’s largely intact nuclear (and even conventional) power-base and depicted the situation rather as the continuation of bipolarity in a newer form (Waltz 1993). Others who theorised on the ground of power-relations seems to have omitted this argument and put forward others that were more fitting to the preceding construct, for being able to declare a selectively structural realist type of unipolarity (see Krauthammer 1991, Wohlforth 1999).

It seems that the bipolar dialectic had disappeared before the balance of power was transformed. The Russian Federation herself positively/ validatingly referred to the unipolar “givenness”, as observed in her discourse and policies of democratisation, economic liberalisation and her displayed willingness to adhere to “Western” institutions (Tsygankov 2016: 59-96, Melville 2018, Rumer 2007). Russia’s very *identity* as the precise and constituent “Other” for NATO disappeared. In other words, the bipolar dialectic was intersubjectively invalidated before being made explainable in accordance with the related IR theorising.

As to NATO, the end of the bipolarity apparently meant an ontological impasse and a temporal destabilisation related to it. Much doubt was expressed as to the viability of the NATO at the time of the transition from the bipolarity to the post-bipolarity (Mearsheimer 1990). Still NATO was not annulled or reduced to an institutional “husk”. Here the application of the narrative of institutional self-preservation to NATO would be viable in the latter case, if the entity’s ontological ground itself was in fact removed. Instead, institutional reflexes appeared to be *auxiliary* to main ontological and temporal facts (see also Walt 1997, de Wijk 1997 and Goldgeiger 1998).

Perhaps NATO’s “viability problem” was after all an illusion issue of the IR theorising, unattached to its intersubjective, immediate, pre-theoretical givens, an illusion stemming from the omission of the temporal features of the passage into post-bipolarity. The givenness of the transformation, of the invalidation of the bipolarity’s central dialectic, was actual (retentional-protentional), which did not equate to the “erasure” of what was being transformed but included its retention within the synthetic unity of the entity, as its invalidation was constituent to what was becoming “valid”. In other words, the post-bipolarity seems to have been given as a sort of “non-bipolarity” and not in a self-standing shape –in contrast to multipolarity or bipolarity itself-, therefore including bipolarity in its synthetic unity, *ipso facto* in NATO’s synthetic unity as reference to the interstate intersubjectivity. As such, it is not surprising to witness the long debate about the existence/ inexistence, nature and durability of the “unipolarity” (Ikenberry, Mastanduno and Wohlforth 2011: 1-32; Jervis 2009; Beckley 2018; Pape 2009; Monteiro 2014; Mearsheimer 2018; Brooks, Wohlforth 2011; Layne 2012). This kind of transformation which actively retained the reference that had been transformed, appresented the contingency, in the anticipatory horizon, of another “change of sign” as well. The post-bipolarity, not having taken an independent shape of its own, remained ontologically and temporally linked to bipolarity and entities that referred to bipolarity, such as NATO, found their ontological viability on that ground, with changing “temporalisations”.

The transition itself meant the diminishment of the USSR's successor's bipolar identity, including the apparent and even pioneering consent of the Russian Federation herself, as displayed by a multitude of occurrences in the "West"-Russia relations, in accordance with the ontological/ temporal depiction above. However, it also appeared that, again in accordance with the same ontological/ temporal depiction, the identity of the bipolar-Other was *partially* transferred to Moscow within the transition into the post-bipolarity, even as the very condition of possibility of such transition. This may be exemplified by the preservation of the *liberum veto* in the UN Security Council, of Moscow's bipolarity-like counterpart status in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe¹ and of bipolar-like *balance* and *reciprocity* norms and practises in the field of nuclear arms.

In other words, the ontology and the temporalisation of the transition would warrant neither the suppression of NATO's reason of being nor the preservation of its identity and temporalisation as it had been during the bipolarity. The result of this impasse appeared as the re-temporalisation of NATO in two temporally separated identities, one appearing at the living actuality (retention-protection) one temporalised on the anticipatory horizon. The original alliance as identity belonged to the anticipatory horizon and made the contents related to it be preserved, such as the Article V or the joint command structure. As to actuality, NATO's security-community *function* seems to have emerged as identity in a *sui generis* form. (Adler and Greve 2009; Williams and Neumann 2000). These two identities, overlapping yet temporally separated, constituted the possibility of existence of each other (see also Adler and Greve 2009; Morgan 2003; Wallander 2000).

Accordingly, the "Otherness" element of the NATO's synthetic unity gained a dual identity and temporalisation, which also made NATO's new security-community identity *sui generis*: A security community-with-"Other" stemmed from the post-bipolar synthetic unity of NATO as double identity and temporalisation, where the two parts are ontologically bound to each other. NATO's *sui generis* security-community identification at its post-bipolar actuality included the Otherness among the asymmetrical "new threats" ranging from the terrorist groups and organised crime to the "rogue states" (see Webber, Sperling, Smith 2012: 27-28 for the Strategic Concepts of 1991, 1999 and 2010). If these new threats were not in fact "novelties", they nevertheless became valid contents of "Otherness" at a time when the original "Other" of bipolarity ceased to be so in the immediate, living actuality (see also Adler and Barnett 1998: 30-34; Mitzen 2016; Moustakis and German 2009: 21-26). NATO's secondary function thus appeared as its identity in preservation of its synthetic unity. Having been designed against exogenous threats, NATO's established structures and capabilities fit in this *sui generis* security-community identity with adaptations, while it continued to be viable as regards the alliance identity which was temporalised on the anticipatory horizon (also see Kay, Petersson 2014). Adaptation to the *sui generis* security-community identity included revisions of doctrine and capabilities that were built for bipolarity (Da Mota 2018: 146-149; Webber, Sperling and Smith 2012: 22-30, 153-159), not without problems

¹<https://www.osce.org/library/14087?download=true>

between the US and the EU-members or even between the Europeans themselves for example in relation with burden-sharing (Terriff 2013). Still, NATO could act on more than one occasion as *sui generis*, outwardly security-community (Burton 2018: 62-74 for the Kosovo and 113-123 for the Afghanistan interventions). It is of note that the sole recourse to the Article V in the history of NATO occurred after the 9/11 attacks, as a *sui-generis* security-community act (Webber, Sperling, Smith 2012).

As to Moscow's otherness that was placed on NATO's anticipatory horizon, it is of note that Russia also gradually tended to refer to herself as such, again partially and as temporalised on a similar anticipatory horizon instead of immediacy (see Prizel 1998: 239-299; Gardner 2013: 51-71). This took different forms, contents and discursive rationalisations (see O'Loughlin, Toal, Kolosov 2017), which may be exemplified by the efforts to deepen the CIS or the invention of the "near-abroad" *in reference to* Russia-"West" relations (see also Selden 2016: 105). The tendency toward being/ becoming the counterpart of the West-*en bloc* was also expressed in the fundamental policy papers of the Federation (Melville, Shakhleina 2005²). However, the CIS' debatable progress and efficiency (see Torjesen 2009: 154; Vinokurov 2007 but also Willerton and Beznosov 2007) or the practical limits of the Russian involvement in the separatist near-abroad crises (see Jackson 2003: 81-111, 112-139, Kennedy 2016, Lemay-Hebert 2008) apparently prevented this tendency in the-then actuality and extended it toward an anticipatory horizon as potentiality. In other words, NATO's post-bipolar dual-identity and dual-temporalisation depended, in particular, on the Russian Federation's non-confrontational, non-dialectical stance at the-then actuality, as well as its Otherness on the anticipatory horizon, NATO's as well Russia's.

Transition to the late post-bipolar intersubjectivity

At that point, the outwardliness of NATO's security community identity – which made it *sui generis*- seems also to have undermined this ontological and temporal balance of post-bipolarity. Being at first glance *sui-generis* security community policies, the NATO enlargement with its normative contents (Epstein 2005) and NATO members' "unipolar/ unilateral" interventions seem to have constituted the main factors of gradual destabilisation. These could also be interpreted as acts of a well defined Alliance, in particular by Moscow in its own identification and temporalisation that was parallel to NATO's.

NATO's waves of enlargement toward Eastern Europe and into Baltics held Russia at a distance, both in terms of consultation or Moscow's invitation into the process (see Simon 2008: 93, 102-103). From the very early phases of the post-bipolarity, for example within the PfP, different outcomes for different actors seem to have been pre-posed, ranging from NATO membership to promotion of democratic/ economic reforms, which were generally embraced by the member countries as means of balancing Russia with the West (see Adler and Greve 2009;

²For the texts of the Foreign Policy Concept, Military Doctrine and National Security Concept until then.

1 Cottey 2018: 61-65 but also Schimmelfennig 2003; Adler 2008 and Acharya
 2 2004). For the Russian Federation, the PfP practically became a mechanism for
 3 pacification and limited cooperation. This function was further reinforced by a
 4 bilateral mechanism of inconsequential dialogue³.

5 This apparently contradicted with Moscow's understanding of continuation of
 6 the non-dialectical relationship with the West, which required an "equal say" or *de*
 7 *facto* "veto right" in the matters of the near-abroad, in particular as regards the
 8 NATO enlargements (see Smith 2003, Smith 2006, Light 2009). The contradiction
 9 extended, quite naturally, to NATO interventions in Kosovo and later in Libya,
 10 which Russia categorically labelled as unilateral and illegitimate (see Petro 2017,
 11 Norris 2005). The Russian criticism, in reduced form, appears to have been on
 12 NATO's acting as an alliance within a security-community context –with Russia
 13 being the "Other"- (also see Braun 2008). "Legitimacy" meant here consensus for
 14 such interventions in the UN Security Council (and the OSCE), where Russia had
 15 its bipolarity-inherited equal counterpart position. The Russian reaction gradually
 16 stiffened on these lines (see Williams and Neumann 2000, German 2017).

17 Russia gradually became abler to react as well. A staged yet heavy-handed
 18 centralisation policy from the end of the millennium onward increased her inner
 19 coherence (see for example Selden 2016: 102-107). The public opinion evolved, in
 20 parallel to the centralisation and economic recovery/ increase of capabilities
 21 fuelled by rising oil/gas prices, toward a bipolarity-like anti-Westernism (see
 22 Rumer 2007, Petro 2018). Russia approached more and more to a dialectical
 23 position with NATO due to the inevitably "outwardly" nature of its security-
 24 community policies. In this vein, the colour revolutions of 2003-2004 and then the
 25 GUAM initiative seem to have been the last pro-western occurrences in the near-
 26 abroad that did not face direct action from the Russian side.

27 Putin's famous warning addressed to the NATO-members at the 2007
 28 Munich Security Conference arguably marks a turning point⁴. It signified Russia's
 29 adoption of a bipolar-like, confrontational posture *in actuality*, with consequences
 30 on NATO's dual-identity and dual-temporalisation. It seems to have significantly
 31 influenced the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, when NATO members failed to
 32 reach a consensus in granting MAPs to Georgia and Ukraine (Arbuthnot 2008).
 33 NATO's actual security-community state's failure to "riposte" apparently
 34 encouraged Moscow to take further action the same year. As the NATO-aspirant
 35 Georgia intervened in the separatist region of South Ossetia, Russia directly
 36 intervened in the conflict and defeated the Georgian forces. The NATO-members'
 37 reaction to the Russian intervention remained discursive, therefore
 38 inconsequential. In fact, it seems to have deterred NATO from the enlargement
 39 toward the "near-abroad" as the MAPs issue was to be rediscussed the same year
 40 (Kipiani 2015, Antonenko 2009). Moreover, the US initiated "Reset" with Russia
 41 in 2009, which appeared as *appeasement* in the light of the 2007 and 2008
 42 developments (Hahn 2013, Lazarević 2009).

43 NATO's and its members' reaction to the Russian moves indicate reflexes
 44 aiming at adapting Russia to their double-identity and double-temporalisation

³The NATO-Russia Founding Act and then the NATO-Russia Council.

⁴<http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>

rather than adapting themselves to Russia's self-assertion. However, even the "Reset's *positive* outcomes such as the facilitation of the new START or of the "coordination" in the Afghanistan operation (Deyermond 2013) seem to have reinforced the Russian understanding of being a *de facto* bipolar-type "equal counterpart" in actuality and of preponderance in its "near-abroad".

Here if this second element of the emerging state-of-affairs between NATO and its members on the one hand and Russia on the other was –arguably- correct as it fit, at a *regional* level, in the NATO's adaptation of Russia to its double-identity and temporalisation and the Russian expectations, it did not extend to the first element, which was the "equality" akin to bipolarity in general terms. This dissociation between the two sides emerged when the "West" supported the "Arab Spring" in 2010 and NATO "unilaterally" intervened in Libya in 2011. This collapsed the Reset (Perra 2016; Dannreuther 2015; O'Sullivan 2018) and NATO's double-identification and temporalisation's erosion continued.

The Ukrainian crisis of 2014 constituted another milestone in the process. Ukraine had long been a theatre of friction between two demographically/linguistically *balanced* factions with pro-Western and pro-Russian inclinations (Van den Pijl 2018: 38-41, Simon 2010; Wydra 2014). The friction had not caused disintegration, apparently due to the Russian pre-2007 and then to NATO's (and the EU's) post-2007 self-restraint. Yet the dissociation between the two sides as to their identifications and temporalisations in their relationship, as the Reset's collapse strongly indicated, seems to have brought the Ukrainian friction to a course of eruption. However the NATO MAP issue was frozen, the seemingly lesser yet meaningful issue of the choice between the EU Association Agreement and EAEU membership triggered the events. The Yanukovich government opted for the EAEU, the ensuing Euromaidan uprising suppressed the Yanukovich government. Russia immediately intervened in Lugansk and Donetsk and annexed Crimea in furtherance of her post-2007 course of action (see Kalb 2015: 158-179, Van den Pijl 2018: 69-86).

NATO *members* did react this time, not repeating the attempt to accommodate Russia to their self-identification and temporalisation through "appeasement", yet not entirely accommodating themselves to the emerging dialectic in the actuality either (also see Gardner 2016). Alliance identity began to be re-temporalised to the actuality, yet not entirely replacing the *sui generis* security-community identity and temporalisation. NATO tried, voluntarily or involuntarily, to "co-temporalise" two different identities.

In line with the abovementioned, the consecutive NATO Summits of Wales 2014, Warsaw 2016 and Brussels 2018 revived the mothballed-looking concepts and measures of collective defence (see Burton 2018: 156-166, Larsen 2019). NATO took some initiatives regarding the force readiness and deployment, such as the Readiness Action Plan of the Wales Summit, the "enhanced security measures" with a "focus on the Eastern Flank", the "renewed emphasis on deterrence and collective defence" and the "reliance to US forces" of the Warsaw Summit and the conventional deterrence commitment "30/30/30 over 30" of the Brussels Summit (Larsen 2019; Heisbourg 2020; Ringsmose and Rynning 2017). Some additional measures were taken in the field of nuclear deterrence as well

(see Larsen 2019). Still, face to Russia's seemingly rapid military modernisation, the reinforcement of the NATO-members on their contact-zones remained feeble (Giles 2017, Petersson 2019). The issue of granting MAPs to Ukraine and Georgia, already a matter of strong inner divergences, disappeared in the background apparently *because* they had been targeted by Russia (Lanoszka 2017). The efficiency of the NATO-members' sanctions against Russia proved to be at best limited (see Kholodilin, Netšunajev 2019), also diminished by divergences among NATO-members (Stahl, Lucke, Felfelli 2016). Even the "spillover" of the Russian military activity toward the conflict zones of the Middle East, in Syria most prominently but also in Libya, could not be deterred. On the other hand, Russia's self re-temporalisation to a bipolar-like relationship with NATO and its members went on and reflected increasingly on its official discourse⁵.

Centrifugality and friction: NATO's impasses in the late post-bipolarity and the Ukrainian war

NATO's/NATO-members' apparent delay in re-identifying/ re-temporalising the entity face to obvious changes in the post-bipolar environment may be reduced to two mutually appresenting phenomena, expressible as centrifugality and friction. Centrifugality appears as regards the NATO-members' lack of coherence with each other in determining and pursuing policies related to the entity, which stems from post-bipolarity's flexibility in contrast to the characteristic alignment discipline of the bipolar era. NATO's double-identification and double-temporalisation, in particular the adoption of the characteristically supple *sui generis* security-community identity in the post-bipolar "actuality", establishes centrifugality at ontological level. Subsequently, the phenomenon of friction appears between the two NATO identities as the alliance was being re-temporalised in the actuality, where the *sui generis* security-community is already temporalised, in connection with the centrifugal policies of the individual NATO members (also see Waltz 2000, de Wijk 1997, Garey 2020: 6-7).

The passage to the post-bipolarity had widened the state-actors' policy horizons, including these of the NATO-members, *relative* to the rigid bipolar dialectic, creating an appearance of centrifugality when common action is being debated. The *sui generis* security-community as the "actual" post-bipolar NATO identity amplified centrifugality as its reference to "Otherness" was blurred in comparison with the bipolar-type alliance. As such, NATO's or NATO-members' interventions, in planning and in implementation, appresented inner disconcert at varying levels (see Sperling 2019, also Bellamy 2002). This phenomenon appeared also in NATO's enlargement process, despite the fact that enlargement proved to be more practicable/ justifiable as that of a security-community (also see

⁵https://russiaeu.ru/userfiles/file/foreign_policy_concept_english.pdf ;
https://carnegieendowment.org/files/2010russia_military_doctrine.pdf
<https://www.rusemb.org.uk/in1/>
<https://rusemb.org.uk/press/2029>
https://www.rusemb.org.uk/rp_insight/

Adler 2008, Wallander 2000). Even as such, Russia's penchant for partial retention of her bipolar-identity seems to have amplified the centrifugality within NATO, differentiating more cautious members from the others. France's and Germany's blockage of Georgian and Ukrainian MAPs constituted a particularly consequential event which appresented the phenomenon. Among the subsequent examples, one may cite the inconsistent sanctioning of Russia and the weak support to Kiev, Tbilissi and Kishinev after 2014 (see Leigh 2019, also Moustakis and German 2009; Mikhelidze 2015).

The friction may be described on the basis of the continuation of the "new threats" that provided the *sui generis* security-community with its "Otherness" ground, when the "Other" of the alliance identity was becoming actual as well. During the period following 2007, NATO-as-security community did not disappear, nor was replaced in the actuality by the alliance-identity and its Other entirely. What had been happening appeared rather as the alliance identity's gradual and in fact controversial co-actualisation with the security-community without a sort of "ontological precedence" akin to their relationship during bipolarity. Webber's depiction of the Wales Summit of 2014 as "absorbed in its terms of reference (1990, 1999 and 2010) ranging from terrorism to piracy to cyber-attacks, Afghanistan, Balkans and Iraq... a damaging internal struggle to preserve a common front" is descriptive at that juncture (Webber 2016, see also Deni 2019).

Centrifugality, which is augmented by the *sui generis* security-community and which is amplifying friction, has been appearing as the main obstacle to NATO's re-temporalisation. It expresses reduced coherence among the member States in attributing ontological precedence to the alliance-identity over the *sui generis* security-community identity in the actuality, at a time when the Russian Federation has no such parameters. As such, centrifugality, in combination with friction, offers a horizon of contingencies that would not exclude ontological precedence for NATO's *sui generis* security-community identity over the alliance-identity, or a mutually paralysing co-actualisation of the two. On the other hand, effective progress in the current re-temporalisation of the alliance-identity through NATO's adaptation to its already emerged "Other", would mean the decrease of the centrifugality and of the friction, which in their turn would appresent further progress in the said re-temporalisation. This contingency is that of the security-community identity's regression to a function face to the self-assertion of Moscow as dialectical "Other".

What would Russia's ongoing aggression toward Ukraine⁶, as the current peak of Russia's bipolar-like acts, mean in the abovementioned context of NATO's identity and temporalisation? Moscow had explained and continues to explain its current war not only on the basis of its bilateral discordances with Kiev but also on that of NATO's susceptible "anti-Russian" enlargement toward Ukraine and the Ukrainian regime's willingness to adhere⁷. In other words, the

⁶As of mid-December 2023

⁷https://mid.ru/en/press_service/spokesman/briefings/1800470/#4;
https://mid.ru/en/press_service/spokesman/briefings/1800470/#11;
<https://tass.com/defense/1409813>

war was initiated by Moscow more as a Russo-Western confrontation than an isolated, bilateral act. This gives the ontology of the current struggle as it is validated from the NATO side: So far, the entity's and its members' reaction included significant and continuous material aid to Ukraine, *relatively* robust and coherent political stance against Russia, potentially crippling sanctions with little divergence among the NATO-members and acceleration of collective defence measures in contrast to the afterwards of the 2014 crisis⁸, including the incorporation of Finland and probably of Sweden into the entity. It would not be incorrect to state that these efforts have proved to be quite effective within the actual course of the war. Russia failed to decapitate the Ukrainian government, to take Kiev or most of other important cities she targeted, her advance was stalled and she had to evacuate Kiev and Kharkov "fronts" as the Ukrainian side counterattacked. In other words, the developments on the battlefield initially validated and further encouraged the NATO identity's re-temporalisation and diminished both centrifugality and friction.

However, more recent developments in the war –or the lack of them- have apparently begun to erode, if not to reverse this directionality and re-increase centrifugality and friction. The Ukrainian counter-offensive failed to achieve breakthrough at the front. Furthermore, Russia's offensive capabilities have apparently not been suppressed, although the Muscovite army could not achieve a breakthrough either. This state-of-affairs is apparently becoming "exhausting" for part of the NATO-members' determination and coherence in helping Kiev in the prosecution of war, in contrast to their earlier and very vocal commitments and their so far considerable material help. Not a Russian victory but the war of attrition has been reinvigorating centrifugality and friction within NATO and among its members, which focuses on questioning and possibly discontinuing the all important support to the Ukrainian war effort.

The discourse of a "diplomatic solution" is resurfacing again. This had meant at the very beginning of the war, when a Russian victory seemed to be imminent, a peace with Ukrainian concessions such as Kiev's constitutional neutrality and possible cessation of territory through plebiscites⁹. In the case of a halt or even decrease in NATO-members' aid to Ukraine, Kyiv may be unable to prosecute a war of attrition against Russia and may have to yield to pressures of a "diplomatic solution" which would stem from the same actors.

The "diplomatic solution" with concessions to Russia means nothing short of a Russian *systemic* victory against NATO and NATO-members due to the very significance of the current event of war. It would be more consequential than Russia's total military victory over Ukrainian arms and elimination of the Kyiv regime since it would suppress the ground of the current sanctions, which are the

⁸https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_193719.htm

⁹<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/30/ukraine-offer-neutrality-meaning-constitution-russia-what-does-neutral-status-country-mean-how-would-it-work>; <https://news.sky.com/story/ukraine-war-zelenskyy-says-ukraine-is-willing-to-consider-declaring-neutrality-and-offer-security-guarantees-to-russia-12576688>; <https://www.ft.com/content/7b341e46-d375-4817-be67-802b7fa77ef1>; <https://www.newsweek.com/russia-claims-dispute-over-crimea-donbas-settled-ukraine-1693474>

most direct expression and content of NATO's/ NATO members' reaction against Moscow. Russian positions in the "near-abroad" would be validated, in normative sense as well as political and military over the countries of the region, possibly irreversibly. Moscow, in furtherance of a process which had already progressed until the start of the Ukrainian war, would constitute a gravity centre, an alignment alternative for third countries that are unwilling to align with the "West", in particular for normative incompatibilities with it. Moscow's already existing alignments, in particular its *entente* with China, would probably gain a new momentum as well. In other words, whereas a Russian military victory would likely decrease centrifugality and friction, possibly completing NATO's re-temporalisation to alliance, a "diplomatic solution" would probably work in the opposite direction.

Conclusion

It is possible to study IR entities, phenomena and events in their pre-theoretical, singular, intersubjective immediacy, avoiding the ontological and temporal complications of the current IR theorising. Phenomenology offers notions and a method to conduct such a study toward their description as they are "given", as a synthetic unity formed through appresentative links between its irreducible ontological and temporal elements.

On the grounds of a phenomenological proposal, NATO, as an entity of the IR field, may be studied in its pre-theoretical, intersubjective givenness as synthetic unity. Within this framework, it appears that NATO, which was constituted as an alliance that was specific to the bipolarity, was adapted to the immediacy of the post-bipolar intersubjectivity by being attributed separate identities that were separately temporalised. This particular adaptation indicated the non-completion of the "invalidation" of the bipolarity, of which a significant part were transferred to the post-bipolarity. In this vein, in the actuality of the early post-bipolar era, NATO appeared rather as a *sui generis*, "outwardly" security-community and as an alliance of -still- bipolar-type on the anticipatory horizon. As long as the bipolarity-type dialectic continued to remain temporalised as future contingency and the non-bipolar/ non-dialectic appearance of the interstate subjectivity made the actuality, NATO as entity with dual-identity remained valid and viable.

This duality of identity and temporalisation was gradually eroded by the "preserved" elements of the past dialectic, through their –also gradual-transformative re-temporalisation from the anticipatory horizon to the actuality, which gained momentum from 2007 onwards. Throughout events displayed by this progressive re-temporalisation of the interstate intersubjectivity, NATO faced serious impasses that have been delaying, if not preventing, in re-temporalising itself accordingly. They stemmed from the very nature of the dual-identity/ dual-temporalisation, appearing as "centrifugality" among the constituents of the entity that prevented coherence and "friction" as related to the non-precedence between the two different identities that were being co-temporalised in the actuality.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine created not only a political/ security crisis but also an ontological/ temporal one for NATO. However NATO's re-temporalisation as alliance was apparently accelerated, with reduced centrifugality and friction, another dynamic has appeared as the war was prolonged and the prospects of a Ukrainian victory dimmed, once again increasing centrifugality and friction that could materialise as pressures for a "diplomatic solution" with Ukrainian concessions, which would suppress the ground of current sanctions against Moscow and validate Russian positions concerning NATO and its members. The final picture as to the identity and temporalisation, therefore the validity and viability of the Western Alliance depends largely on the result of the current war.

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