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*NATO's Decisive Half-Decade:
The Failure of Alliance Grand Strategy
1989-1994*

Extended Outline

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NATO's Decisive Half-Decade: The Failure of Alliance Grand Strategy 1989-1994

“But 1989 will most probably also be a year for the second NATO Summit in as many years and for reflecting about our objectives to the year 2000. The 1990s could be a decisive decade for the future of Europe, of West-West and of East-West relations. We will require a global plan of action to guide us safely and soundly through its challenges and opportunities. We must construct a European pillar of the Alliance in which all European Allies find their place and which secures the foundations for a mature transatlantic relationship. We must pursue our endeavours to mould a structure of East-West cooperation, which is up to the challenges of finding constructive solutions in the many areas demanding a concerted approach – whether it be a more stable security order, a new political dynamism, or the efforts to combat problems which concern us all, such as the hardships of the developing world, environmental concerns, and the requirement for adequate energy supplies. And we must build on the leadership role played worldwide by our Atlantic community... There can be no doubt that we are holding the winning cards. The challenge – and we should have no illusions that it will be an exacting one – is to play our hand with the circumspection and determination which benefits a worthy task of historic proportions.”

NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner, *Speech to the Belgian-Atlantic Association*, 23 January 1989 Brussels, Belgium

Section I: The Road Not Taken

Part 1: Problématique: “A Global Plan of Action”

Research Question: How does Grand strategy emerge and become implemented in practice in a constitutionalizing multi-level system of governance like the Trans-Atlantic Community (‘the Community’)? This question is examined by assessing the reform processes that the Community’s primary military organization, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (‘NATO’; ‘the Alliance’) underwent in the years immediately preceding and following the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (‘USSR’; ‘Soviet Union’). The specific puzzle this research project aims to elucidate focuses therefore on *why NATO member states collectively failed, during the critical historical juncture that began opening in 1989 and was virtually closed by 1994, to devise a resilient Grand strategy for the Alliance capable of articulating and implementing over the long term its fundamental objectives as stated in Art. 2 of its Founding Charter*¹.

Originally drafted by Canadian diplomat and future Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson and known as the “Canadian article”², Art. 2 promotes a democratic internationalist³ vision of

¹ NATO (2010) *Towards the New Strategic Concept. A selection of background documents*. NP – Public Diplomacy Division (PDD), https://archives.nato.int/uploads/r/nato-archives-online/8/8/7/8877fa0a92c41490fc0f687dc64d334d62798726880a70bfc7e54ae7f621e4ba/1367_Strategic-Concept-background-documents_2010_ENG_HR.pdf.

² Jockel, Joseph T. and Joel J. Sokolosky (2021) *Canada in NATO: 1949-2019*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press: 9.

³ Deudney, Daniel H. (2007) *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Deudney, Daniel and G. John Ikenberry (2012) *Democratic Internationalism: An American Grand Strategy for a Post-exceptionalist Era*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations (Working Paper). <https://www.cfr.org/report/democratic-internationalism>.

NATO by proposing the creation of a transformational framework of governance for “a broadly based North Atlantic community with shared economic and social interests”⁴. This approach, outlined in NATO General Secretary Manfred Woerner’s above-quoted speech to the Belgian-Atlantic Association delivered on 23 January 1989, describes NATO members’ security Grand strategy not only in terms of collective security, as articulated by Art. 5 of the Charter, but first and foremost in terms of “encouragement of peacetime cooperation... in the economic, social and cultural fields”⁵ by “strengthening their free institutions... and by promoting conditions of stability and wellbeing” (Art. 2) Such a farsighted, resilient Grand strategy would have required NATO members to purposefully, collectively and collaboratively enact during the critical historical juncture of 1989 to 1994 period transformative institutional changes to this organization’s command, control and governance functions that would have endowed it with the legitimacy, effectiveness, adaptability and sustainability dynamics it now required in order to successfully meet the ever-more complex emerging long-term security challenges of its global strategic environment.

Working hypothesis: Extensive available literature on post-Cold War NATO⁶ shows that the Alliance did indeed undergo during this time-frame important organizational changes in terms of the scope, extent and execution of its mandate, and set the foundations to significantly expand its membership, thus ensuring its continuing viability as a collective security organization. However, today’s precarious state of health of many of its members’ democratic, economic and social systems, combined with an increasingly volatile global strategic environment, together point towards the dangers of a return to a hyper-nationalist era of Great Powers’ competition, of which the Russo-Ukrainian war is the most devastating example, as well as towards a significant weakening and delegitimizing of the Rules-Based Liberal International Order (RBLIO) created and maintained by the Western Allies since the end of the Second World War⁷. The working hypothesis of this project, based on the evidence at hand today, is therefore that NATO’s incremental reforms during the 1989-1994 era aimed at ‘defensive consolidation’ rather than ‘proactive transformation’ of the RBLIO led to medium-term tactical success but long-term grand strategy failure for the Community: NATO was ultimately unable to effectively carry out its mission and attain its objectives as outlined in Secretary General Manfred Woerner’s visionary Brussels speech of January 23, 1989.

Why This Matters: A new historical critical juncture similar to the one experienced during the 1989-1994 period is likely open up for a few brief years towards the end of the current decade, allowing again for the emergence and implementation of a transformational Grand strategy for the Community. As NATO members endeavor to upgrade the Alliance’s 2022 Strategic Concept⁸ (‘NSC 2022’), they can learn from “the road not taken” in the past by clearly documenting and carefully deconstructing their strategic multi-level policy processes and practices between 1989 and 1994 that ultimately contributed to NATO’s member states’ ongoing internal democratic deconsolidation and social destabilization and external global power retrenchment.

⁴ Jockel, Joseph T. and Joel J. Sokolosky (2021) *Canada in NATO: 1949-2019*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press: 9.

⁵ English, J. (1992) *The Worldly Years: The Life of Lester Pearson*, Vol. II: 1949-1972. Toronto: Vintage Books (Kindle), Chapter 1, location 432.

⁶ See the ‘NATO’ section of the attached Thematic Selected Bibliography:

⁷ See the ‘Relevant Current Events’ section of the attached Thematic Selected Bibliography.

⁸ NATO (2022) ‘NATO 2022 Strategic Concept’, Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Madrid, 29 June 2022, *Nato.int*. https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf.

Central Argument: The central argument of this project first asserts that both endogenous systemic and exogenous environmental factors in existence between NATO's foundation, in 1949, and the end of the Cold War, in 1989, resulted in the dominance of a restrictive Community Grand strategy, developed under the leadership of its hegemonic member, the United States of America ('US'), which focused primarily on deterring the imminent external military existential threat to its survival posed by the Soviet Union. This strategy gave Article 5 of NATO's Charter, which provides each member a firm security guarantee against external military attacks, pre-eminence over its Article 2, aimed at 'strengthening free institutions' in their states and 'promoting conditions of stability and well-being' for their citizens.

Secondly, it argues that both these endogenous and exogenous restrictive factors dramatically changed in the half-decade starting with the fall of the Berlin Wall, in November 1989, thereby opening a critical historical juncture period during which the Community had it within its grasp to transform the Alliance as it had existed over the past four decades by developing the immanent potential of Article 2 and bringing it in equilibrium with Article 5⁹. Such a Grand strategy would have allowed the sustainable and resilient implementation of the Alliance's mission and objectives as outlined by Secretary General Manfred Woerner's 1989 speech.

Third, it asserts that such a transformational change did not take place, despite significant substantive changes to NATO's scope, extent and execution of its mandate both during the critical 1989-1994 half-decade and in the succeeding three decades: it is now evident that today's Community falls far short of attaining the Woerner overall vision and its internal and external objectives as outlined in 1989. The consequences of this failure are vividly illustrated by both a dramatic erosion of the Community members' internal social stability and democratic institutions, and their external power projection and capacity to deter military conflict, maintain regional peace, and preclude global conflicts.

Finally, by seeking to uncover by means of detailed archival research, why such a transformational Grand strategy did not emerge and become institutionalised in this multi-level governance system, this project aims to present as its main deliverables:

- 1) a detailed multi-dimensional 'road map' of the complex dynamics of NATO's Grand strategy-as-practice in operation between 1989 and 1994, and
- 2) a set of specific recommendations for the upcoming upgrading of NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept, designed to overcome the limitations of the 1989-1994 process and to empower the Community to rise up to, and successfully meet the Woerner vision and mission for NATO as detailed at the beginning of this paper.

Part 2: Theoretical Contextualization: The Allies' Strategy-as-Practice

Analytical Framework: This project's key objective is to advance our understanding of why and how pluricentric communities comprised of a multiplicity of sovereign democratic states engage in constitutionalising institutional processes leading to the emergence of new systems of post-sovereign, multi-level democratic governance. It thus seeks both to identify the system-endogenous factors and processes that both facilitate and restrict such transformations and provide potential pathways to maximise the former by overcoming the latter.

Structural design: This paper applies the heuristic process-tracing conceptualisation illustrated in Fig. 1 below, and in particular the dynamics between the national Executives of

⁹ Kačič, Matjaž (2019) 'Commentary on Articles 2 and 3 of the Washington Treaty', *Emory International Law Review* 24: 53-70.

the US, Canada, UK, France and Germany, the bargaining taking place at NATO's Political Command level, and the concurrent decisions taken by NATO's Military Command to illustrate the emergence and crystallization of NATO Grand strategy, to each of the subsequent five chapters, defined as individual 'acts' composing together the 1989 to 1994 critical historical juncture described in the previous chapter. Each 'act' - and its specific set of actors, arenas, assets, assignments, advice, advantages, alignments, antagonisms, alliances, actions, and accountability vectors- illustrates both a particular phase in a rapidly evolving and changing Global Strategic Environment (GSE), and NATO's attempts to catch up with each phase in terms of 'Grand strategy' just as a new act is about to begin and render its ongoing efforts largely obsolete.

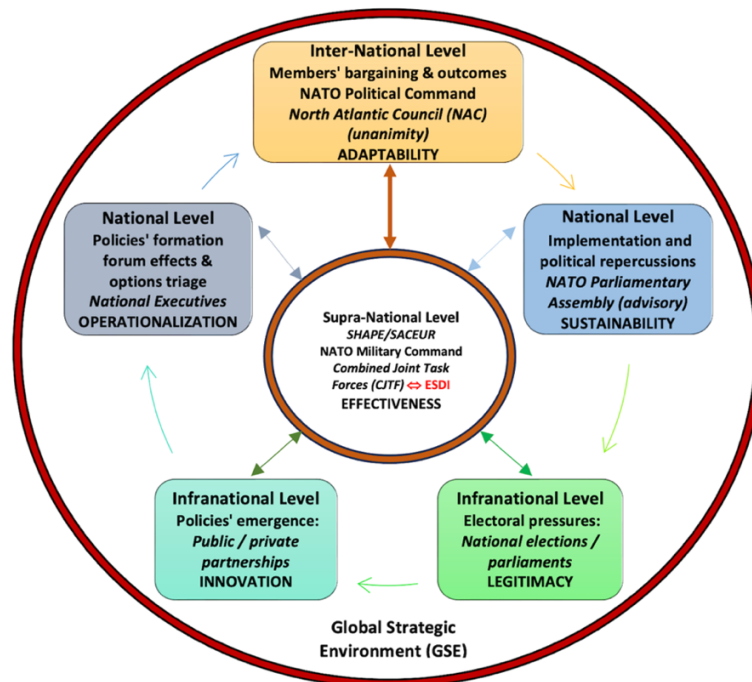


Fig. 1: Trans-Atlantic Community multi-level governance Grand Strategy Practice (GSP) dynamics

Successful multi-level Grand strategy practice is operationalised here by the institutional actor's capacity to align the six variables indicating whether its means and ends are in resilient balance – namely, legitimacy, innovation, operationalization, effectiveness, adaptability and sustainability. Fig. 1 above illustrates why such an alignment is particularly difficult to achieve in a multi-level governance structure like the Trans-Atlantic Community: each of these variables emerges out of a different institutional unit, and each such unit is endowed with its own interests and accountability processes, where competition within an existent, path-dependent system¹⁰ rather than cooperation within an emerging, creative one is usually the norm.

Agential operationalisation: Throughout the four-and-a-half decades spanning the Cold War, the political leaders of the states constituting the Trans-Atlantic Community developed four main Grand strategy streams, resulting from their ideological and practical positioning with respect to its two primary supranational organisational structures: NATO and the European Coal and Steel Community ('ECSC') / the European Economic Community ('EEC') / the European Union ('EU'): Anglo-Saxon Liberal Intergovernmentalism; Atlanticist Democratic

¹⁰ Goldstone, Jack A. (1998) 'Initial Conditions, General Laws, Path Dependence, and Explanation in Historical Sociology', *American Journal of Sociology* 104(3): 829-45.

Internationalism; ‘Europe-First’ Supra-statism; and Hyper-Nationalist ‘Balance-of-power realism’ (see Fig. 2 below).

	<i>Anglo-Saxon Liberal Intergovernmentalists</i>	<i>European Integrationists</i>
Strong NATO <i>(pro US hegemony)</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">Anglo-Saxons: Liberal Internationalism</p> <p>Rishi Sunak, Theresa May, Boris Johnson (UK, 2010s-2020s) Stephen Harper (Canada, 2000s-2010s) David Cameron, Gordon Brown (UK, 2000s-2010s) Tony Blair, Margaret Thatcher (UK, 1980s-2010s) G.H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, G.W. Bush (USA 1980s-2000s) Gordon Robertson (UK/NATO, 1990s) Ronald Reagan (USA, 1980s)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Atlanticists: Post-Westphalians</p> <p>Angela Merkel, Olaf Scholz (Germany, 2000s-2020s) Jens Stoltenberg (Norway/NATO, 2010s-2020s) Justin Trudeau (Canada, 2010s-2020s) Barack Obama, Joe Biden (USA, 2010s-2020s) Helmut Kohl, H. Schmidt (Germany, 1970s-1990s) Nicolas Sarkozy (France, 2000s) Javier Solana (Spain/NATO, 2000s) Vaclav Havel (Czech Republic, 1990s-2000s) Manfred Woerner (Germany/NATO, 1980s-1990s) Jacques Delors (France/EU, 1980s-1990s)</p>
	Weak NATO <i>(no US hegemony)</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">Nationalists: Balance of Power</p> <p>Donald J. Trump (USA, 2010s) Matteo Salvini (Italy, 2010s) Viktor Orban (Hungary, 2010s-2020s) Jaroslaw Kaczyński (Poland, 2010s-2020s) Alex Salmond (Scotland, 2000s) Jean Chretien (Canada, 1990s-2000s) Dominique de Villepin (France, 2000s) Charles de Gaulle (France, 1960s) Pierre Trudeau (Canada, 1960s-1980s) Kurt Schumacher (Germany, 1950s)</p>

Fig. 2: Ideological Roots of Member States Leaders’ Four Grand Strategies towards NATO

The strength and influence of these streams varied across the Community as a function of each stream’s salience in NATO/EU member states’ political processes. By the end of the Cold War, in the late 1980s, each presented an entirely distinct Grand strategic vision of how the Community should create and construct its common future¹¹. It is therefore necessary to examine how these four streams interacted and how their respective influences evolved and affected NATO ‘s institutional reform plans and strategic practices from 1989 to 1994.

Original Contributions: This project aims to provide new insights in the five following interlocking Grand strategy research areas:

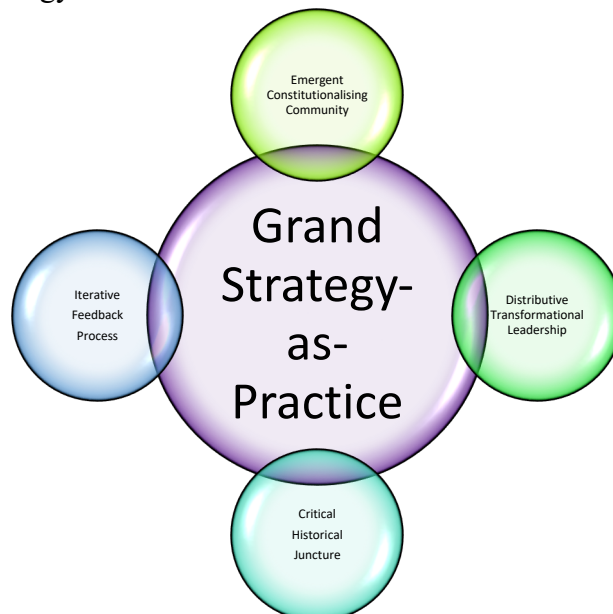


Fig. 3: Key variables informing the Trans-Atlantic Community’s Grand strategy processes

¹¹ See the ‘NATO’ section of the attached Thematic Selected Bibliography

1. *Developing a dynamic alliances' analysis perspective capable of aligning and integrating recent findings in the areas of strategic culture, network centrality, and permissive and restrictive policy delegation environments, by replacing the sovereign state as unit of analysis with that of an 'emergent constitutionalising community'.*

Most analyses of the interaction and decision-making procedures of military alliances in general¹², and of NATO in particular¹³, adopt a rational theory approach driven by member states' national interests, from which emerge various theories of states' behaviour depending on their position and function within the Alliance. While some authors focus on the interests of the Alliance as a security community¹⁴, none take the radical step of adopting the Community itself as the primary unit of analysis and analysing NATO's decision-making procedures not a result of purely inter-state bargaining and negotiation¹⁵, but as a complex iterative deliberative process taking place within an unprecedented democratic multi-level governance system. Building on existing analyses of the close relationship between NATO and the EU as the two main supranational institutional pillars of governance of the Trans-Atlantic Community¹⁶, this project adapts Markus W. Gehring's recent analysis of the transformation of the ESC/EEC/EU from an entirely "intergovernmental organization, agreed in a treaty of Member States" into a "constitutional polity that is subject to constitutional development"¹⁷ and critically applies it to NATO's actual development and immanent evolutionary potential. By re-casting the Trans-Atlantic Community as an 'emergent constitutionalising community' and NATO as its central organizational structure, this project bridges sovereignty's 'inside/outside divide'¹⁸ and re-frames the Community in Andrew Linklater's terms, as an "[a]lternative means of organising human beings which are already immanent within the modern states", capable of moving beyond the "[t]otalising processes... of the modern state with its fusion of sovereignty, territoriality, citizenship and nationalism"¹⁹.

2. *Extending the concept of Grand strategy development by drawing on findings from social sciences' work on sociologically-inspired historical epistemology and historical institutionalism, as well as from business management research on discursive institutionalism and strategy-as-practice, in order to develop a detailed model of Grand strategy as a dynamic set of 'on-going accomplishments'.*

¹² Gagliano, Joseph A. (2019) *Alliance Decision-Making in the South China Sea: Between Allied and Alone*. London: Routledge; Weitsman, Patricia A. (2014) *Waging War: Alliances, Coalitions, and Institutions of Interstate Violence*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

¹³ MacDonald, Adam O. (2023) *Fit over Function: Explaining the Differences in US Strategic Approaches Towards China and Russia in the Post-Cold War Era*, PhD Thesis (unpublished), Dalhousie University, September 2023 (provided by author); Mello, Patrick A. (2019) National restrictions in multilateral military operations: A conceptual framework?, *Contemporary Security Policy* 40: 38-55.

¹⁴ Gheciu, Alexandra (2022). 'Protecting NATO's security community', *NDC Policy Brief No. 10* (May 2022), NATO Defence College: Research Division.

¹⁵ Readman, Kristina S. (2011) 'Conflict and Cooperation in Intra-Alliance Nuclear Politics – Western Europe, the United States, and the Genesis of NATO's Dual-Track Decision, 1977-1979', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 13(2): 39-89; Redacted (2004) 'NATO's Decision-Making Procedure', *CRS Report For Congress, Order Code RS21510*, Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service.

¹⁶ Schimmelfennig, Frank (2003). *The EU, NATO and Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Reichard, Martin (2006) *The EU-NATO Relationship: A Legal and Political Perspective*. Abingdon: Routledge.

¹⁷ Gehring, Markus W. (2020) *Europe's Second Constitution: Crisis, Courts and Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 12, 25.

¹⁸ Walker, R.B.J. (1993) *Inside/outside: International Relations as Political Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹ Linklater, Andrew (1998) *The Transformation of Political Community*. Cambridge: Polity: 218.

Having established a new post-Westphalian unit of analysis functioning at a supra-national level of governance, this project proceeds to unpack its strategic decision-making procedures and practices by drawing on literature penned by both social science and business management scholars. The field of strategic business management has developed over the past two decades a sophisticated analysis of how complex business organisations envision, legitimise and implement their corporate strategies for sustainable success²⁰. These perspectives, properly adapted and contextualised, can throw a new light on the Grand strategies of political organisations, by focusing research away from the static notion of whether a state *has* a Grand strategy and towards the dynamic one of how it continuously *does* Grand strategy as a function of rapidly evolving internal power structures and external geo-political environments²¹. This is particularly useful given the paucity of case studies available to political analysts, and these government structures' tendency to engage in punctuated equilibrium practices over time to maximise their chances of survival²². In contrast, business organizations emerge, succeed, and fail at much faster rates than governmental structures, and have developed a sophisticated organizational design and change body of knowledge providing useful insights to political constitutional engineers.

Two such complementary insights are strategy-as-practice and discursive institutionalism. Strategy-as-practice focuses on strategy-making as the activity of an epistemic community that acts like a profession endowed “with a collective identity and a set of connections” functioning at four levels: practices (tools), praxis (activities), practitioners (actors) and the profession of strategy itself (organization).²³ It thus connects “the micro-level of individual activities to the meso-level of organisation and the macro-level of the organizational field”²⁴. Three interrelated clusters of concepts deriving from this approach are particularly relevant for this project. First, the “accumulation of multiple practices by multiple actors over time” intensifies the power effects of the discourses taking place between strategizing actors and gives rise to both “a clear strategy object” and to “oppositional resistance” to it.²⁵ Second, procedural strategizing describing formal and administrative practices enables the coalescence of structural legitimacy for the emerging strategies, whilst interactive strategizing involving direct interactions between senior actors allows interpretative legitimacy to consolidate²⁶. Finally, the dynamic interaction between these two processes results in the emergence of “multiple streams of strategy” that all play a role in shaping the organization’s core strategy at any given point in time²⁷. Similar concepts in the social sciences among rational choice theorists attempting to integrate ideational variables in their analysis in order to address the origins of actors’ interests are those of “focal points” or “roadmaps” capable of facilitating cooperation²⁸.

²⁰ C. Fenton and A. Langley (2011) ‘Strategy as Practice and the Narrative Turn’, *Organization Studies* 32 (9): 1171-1196.

²¹ F. Muller, A. Whittle, A. Gilchrist and P. Lenney (2013) ‘Politics and strategy practice: An ethnomethodologically-informed discourse analysis perspective’, *Business History* 55 (7): 1168-1199.

²² Lundgren, Magnus, Theresa Squatrito and Jonas Tallberg (2018) ‘Stability and change in international policy-making: A punctuated equilibrium approach’, *Rev Int Organ* 13: 547-72.

²³ Whittington, R. (2007) ‘Strategy as Practice and Strategy Process: Family Differences and the Sociological Eye’, *Organizational Studies* 28(10): 1575-86.

²⁴ Suddaby, R., D. Seidl and J.K. Le (2013) ‘Strategy-as-practice meets neo-institutional theory’, *Strategic Organization* 11(3): 329-44.

²⁵ C. Hardy, C. and R. Thomas (2014) ‘Strategy, Discourse and Practice: The Intensification of Power’, *Journal of Management Studies* 51(2): 320-348.

²⁶ D. Harrison, ‘Review, P. Jarzabkowski (2008) *Strategy as Practice—An Activity-Based Approach*, (London: Sage, 2005)’, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, 15 (4), pp. 481-487 (p. 484).

²⁷ Ibid: 485.

²⁸ Berman, S. (2001) ‘Ideas, Norms, and Culture in Political Analysis’ (Review Article), *Comparative Politics* 33: 244.

In turn, discursive institutionalism refers to both the structural, substantive content of ideas and to agency, interactive processes enabling such ideas to be communicated²⁹. Discursive processes show how communicative interaction at the four levels mentioned above can overcome obstacles to change and therefore explain why certain policy actors' "repertoires of strategic ideas" succeed and why others fail as core strategies³⁰. The interactions between individuals and groups who create and shape policy within their epistemic community is defined as "coordinative discourse", whilst interactions taking place in the public sphere between political actors and the general public is referred to as "communicative discourse"³¹. Together, these two types of discourses give rise to the development of strategy-as-practice along six consecutive stages: creation, elaboration, justification, legitimation, implementation, and adaptation. Strategy streams that successfully navigate these six stages over time become sustainable core or Grand strategies; those that do not, are set aside, discarded, or fail. By deploying this analytic framework to the emergence and implementation of NATO's Grand strategy during the critical historical juncture of 1989-1994, this project aims to gain a new understanding of Grand Strategy-as-practice as a set of dynamic, discursive 'ongoing accomplishments' of an entire transnational epistemic community rather than as 'predetermined social facts' dictated by a narrow group of individuals or even by a single dominant actor.

The transfer of strategic analysis concepts from business management to political processes must of course be undertaken with the utmost care, as they must be adapted to the unique features of political institutions absent in business organisations. For example, a recent article focusing on endogenous change in international organizations ('IOs') posits that the dynamics of authority delegation are shaped by whether their founding contract is open or closed: "IOs rooted in an open-ended contract have the capacity to discover cooperation over time: as new problems arise these IOs can adopt new policies or strengthen collaboration in existing areas"³². However, the article's findings also show that in "predominantly democratic IOs delegation is constrained by politicization which intensifies as an IO's policy portfolio broadens"³³. These conclusions are eminently applicable to this project's study of Grand strategy development in the Community and NATO, whose open-ended founding Charter by way of Art. 2 is limited by an increased politicisation of further delegation of tasks from the democratically-controlled national level of its members to a supranational level lacking any intrinsic democratic legitimacy. A second caveat is the need to take into account the role of the historical foundations of emerging Grand strategies in political organisations. As Margaret Somers cogently argues, this results in the ensuing need to deploy a sociologically-rooted historical epistemology that draws on Kuhnian conceptualizations of scientific revolutions and paradigm shifts to engage in theorising causality, resulting "in a conception of theory as problem driven, pragmatic, relational, and historical"³⁴.

3. *Aligning studies of leadership in the political, military, business and educational fields to upgrade classic concepts of 'heroic' and 'managerial' leadership with that of 'distributed*

²⁹ V.A. Schmidt, 'Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse', *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 11, (2008) : 305.

³⁰ Ibid.: 309-10.

³¹ Ibid.: 310-11.

³² Lenz, Tobias et al. (2022) 'Discovering cooperation: Endogenous change in international organizations', *The Review of International Organizations* 18: 631-66 (631).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Somers, Margaret R. (1998) "'We're No Angels': Realism, Rational Choice, and Relationality in Social Science," *American Journal of Sociology* 104(3): 725; Kuhn, Thomas (1962)1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

transformational leadership’ at both individual and organizational levels, thus focusing on new methods and practices of command, control, and coordination capable of effectively articulating requirements of unity of command, diversity of inputs and legitimate accountability to achieve sustainable mission success in any given arena.

Leadership is an essential component of successful Grand strategy practices: persuasion, motivation, planning, coordination, implementation, adaptation and feedback generation are all Grand strategy stages that require the right kind of leadership, at the right place, at the right time. In fact, leadership and Grand strategy are so intertwined that one tends to think first and foremost of great leaders as Grand strategy performers – hence the designation of ‘heroic leadership’. Given its multi-faceted nature, the concept of leadership has been extensively studied in a number of fields, and in particular in the political, military, business management and educational arenas. While each of these develop their particular insights on the definition and practice of leadership based on their unique needs and objectives, they all study the effects of leadership – and in particular, leadership success and leadership failure³⁵.

Business management scholars who study organizational leadership often put emphasis on transformational leadership, which comprise four different behaviours: idealised influence, focusing on the ethical component of leadership; inspirational motivation, helping teams to perform beyond expectations; intellectual stimulation, empowering followers to think for themselves; and individualised consideration, by means of which leaders focus their attention on the needs of their team members and thus generate respect, trust, and loyalty³⁶. Educational scholars have developed the notion of distributed leadership, defined as a fluid phenomenon that happens between leaders and followers – “not a quality vested in an organizational position”, where leaders and followers interact in specific situations and switch roles in others, and where leadership practices occur as three organizational components interact over time: situation, leaders, followers³⁷. Military leaders have most recently written about the need for decentralised, adaptable and cohesive leadership practices where leaders’ primary task is to create a “team of teams” and a working environment conducive to a variety of dynamic, constantly changing approaches to guide soldiers through the “fog and friction” of combat³⁸. Finally, Henry Kissinger’s latest book, aptly entitled “Leadership – Six Studies in World Strategy”, defines political leaders as individuals who can balance the past and the future, values and aspirations, analysis and an “intuitive grasp of direction.... to set objectives and lay down a strategy”³⁹.

This project aims to develop a hybrid matrix of leadership called Strategic Leadership Ethos (SLE) drawing on all these four strands to explain how Grand strategies emerge, are implemented, and then succeed or fail in complex multi-level governance systems⁴⁰. As Fig. 4 above shows, this matrix is structured by two axes: a Strategic Axis spanning a

³⁵ Barling, Julian (2014) *The Science of Leadership: Lessons from Research for Organizational Leaders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 3.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

³⁷ Brooks, Jeffrey S. and Lisa A. W. Kensler (2011) "Distributed Leadership and Democratic Community", in Fenwick W. English, ed., *The Sage Handbook of Educational Leadership Distributed Leadership and Democratic Community*, Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications, Inc.: 56-67.

³⁸ McChrystal, Stanley, with Tatum Collins and Chris Fussell (2015) *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*. Penguin Business: 2.

³⁹ Kissinger, Henry (2022) *Leadership: Six Studies in World Strategy*. UK: Penguin Random House: xv-xvi.

⁴⁰ McChrystal, Stanley, with Tatum Collins and Chris Fussell (2015) *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*. Penguin Business: 2.

spectrum from Managerial to Visionary Strategy, and a Leadership Axis from a Self-Protecting type to an Empowering one. Four ‘ideal’ SLE’s emerge, which will be deployed to examine what kind of leadership was provided by key actors who played a leading role in NATO’s Grand Strategy formulation and implementation and assess the achieved outcomes.



Fig. 4: Strategic Leadership Ethos Matrix

- Refining conceptualisations of ‘critical historical juncture’ periods by studying NATO’s reform process during the 1989-1994 half-decade and breaking it down into five distinct periods of rapid change where external developments forced internal Community adaptations of preferred national Grand strategies to match emerging ‘facts on the ground’ in order to achieve higher-level agreed-on objectives.

The concept of ‘critical historical juncture’ is rooted in Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein’s analysis of the cycles of history. They differentiate between cyclical historical processes within existing political systems which constitute *conjoncture*, requiring incremental adjustments to overcome emerging contradictions, and *longue durée* structural processes where it is clear the system will not survive, thus demanding radical transformational changes. Depending on how these transitions are navigated, the institutions that emerge out of such a crisis – a unique aggregation of facts and events rendering revolutionary change unavoidable, whilst leaving open the scope, size, depth, and direction of such change – may represent progress when compared with their predecessors, but also stagnation or even regression:

A crisis is a situation in which the demise of the existing political system is certain and which therefore presents those found within it with a real historical choice: what kind of new historical system to build or create... This period of crisis can also be called a period of transition... [W]hat comes after the transition is historically open. There is no inevitable secular line of human history, which guarantees that every successive phase be progress over every previous phase. Quite the contrary. We know many clear instances where successor systems were morally on a par with predecessor systems, and some that were outright regression. On the other hand, we also know of instances where there was progress. Progress is very possible; it is merely not inevitable.⁴¹

Wallerstein goes on to denote as ‘bifurcations’ such fundamentally important moments of crisis opening up during transitions between systems of governance enduring over

⁴¹ Wallerstein, Immanuel (1991) *Geopolitics and Geoculture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 105.

extended periods of time, and making possible the emergence of various futures, of progress, stagnation, or regress. Historical institutionalists picked up the notions of conjuncture and crisis and developed the notion of ‘critical juncture’, defined as “a period where large-scale change to institutions - in terms of power distribution, interests, operations, strategies and overall trajectory -are more probable than at other periods of time”⁴².

Adam MacDonald refined and applied this concept most recently in his monograph entitled “Fit over Function: Explaining the Differences in US Strategic Approaches Towards. China and Russia in the Post-Cold War Era”. However, he does not seize upon the distinction made by Braudel and Wallerstein between conjunctural crises requiring incremental changes and systemic bifurcations demanding transformational renewal. This project will examine how conjunctural crises can evolve into systemic bifurcations and the effect of Grand strategies in either avoiding or accelerating such mutations. MacDonald also notes that few studies focus on what happens within critical junctures “in terms of the process(es) in which a dominant trajectory emerges”⁴³ and proceeds to remedy this gap by offering a persuasive account of such processes. Yet he does not focus on the effects of relevant actors’ Grand strategies in addressing the ongoing events taking place during the critical juncture, and how such a dynamic dialectical process can be repeated numerous times between the opening and the closing of this timeframe. This project will pick up this challenge and apply it to the post-Cold War conjunctural crisis. It will show, in the five chapters constituting Part II of this paper, how the Trans-Atlantic Community’s Grand strategies aiming to adapt NATO’s mission, scope and processes to the new realities of the day shaped and in turn were re-shaped by rapidly occurring exogenous geo-political events, how these dynamics ultimately resulted in avoiding a transformation of this critical historical juncture into a terminal systemic bifurcation, and examine the consequences.

5. *Implementing an ‘iterative feedback’ process capable of applying the lessons learned during the critical historical juncture ‘in play’ at the end of the Cold War to the opening of an anticipated near-future systemic bifurcation to propose a set of recommendations. For the purposes of this project, the objective of these recommendations is to inform the eventual upgrading of the 2022 NATO Strategic Concept in light of the vision and mission outlined by Secretary General Manfred Woerner in his 1989 Brussels speech – vision and mission which remain imperative for the survival of the Community almost four decades after their articulation.*

This project posits that the Trans-Atlantic Community is likely to face in the near future a new critical historical juncture that may well this time evolve into a systemic bifurcation. It will then, in Part III of this paper, first draw the necessary lessons from NATO’s failure to develop a successful Grand strategy leading to its transformative institutional change in order to meet 21st century’s challenges as anticipated by Secretary General Woerner in his seminal 1989 speech; and finally, it will provide recommendations regarding how the Community could take advantage of such an epochal transformative opportunity to re-invent NATO in line with its immanent potential embedded in Art. 2 of its Founding Charter, thus re-tooling it to become the key agent of change capable of shaping according to the Community’s own vision and values the new world order possibly lying in wait just beyond our near horizon.

⁴² MacDonald, Adam O. (2023) *Fit over Function: Explaining the Differences in US Strategic Approaches Towards. China and Russia in the Post-Cold War Era*, PhD Thesis (unpublished), Dalhousie University, September 2023: 95.

⁴³ *Ibid.*: 96.

Choice of Case Studies: The main ‘deliverable’ of this research project is a detailed, dynamic roadmap of the networks of practices and outcomes – defined together as ‘praxis’⁴⁴ – of Grand strategy regarding NATO reform from early 1989 to early 1994 in the UK, USA, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Canada⁴⁵. The countries to be studied have been chosen not only because of their centrality both at the end of the Second World War and in the creation of the Transatlantic security architecture of the First Cold War, but also because their respective governments during the period under study (1989-1994) fairly accurately represent the four Grand strategy streams outlined above⁴⁶:

- Presidents’ G.H.W. Bush’s and Bill Clinton’s USA approximates the Liberal intergovernmentalist stream;
- Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s Federal Republic of Germany represents the European integrationist stream;
- President François Mitterrand’s France comes close to the Supra-statist stream; and
- Prime Ministers’ Margaret Thatcher’s and John Major’s United Kingdom stands for the incipient Hyper-nationalist stream.
- In addition, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney’s Canada attempted to develop strategic options drawing on Art. 2 of the NATO Charter promoting the emergence of a democratic internationalist / liberal intergovernmentalist synthesis that could also prove acceptable to the UK and France.

Another important reason why the detailed study of five countries’ documents is proposed resides in the fact that each of them takes different positions with respect to the disclosure of and access to their respective foreign, security and intelligence documents. Some even stage-manage their production to influence historians’ rendition of historical processes and events in accordance with governments’ preferences and interpretations.⁴⁷ To remedy these unfortunate practices, Peter Jackson recommends the adoption of a multi-national approach to research as a

... crucial way to study state behaviour in general and the role of intelligence in particular... Comparing and contrasting intelligence and intelligence-related material in archives generated by different states can therefore provide new perspectives on both intelligence practices and decision-making. It can also highlight gaps and inconsistencies in the official record... A multi-national approach to research provides the opportunity to alleviate the problem of systematic distortion of the archival record by state authorities seeking to shape historical interpretation.⁴⁸

Section II: “A Worthy Task of Historic Proportions”

Section II of this project consists of five parts, each focusing, in chronological order, on one clearly bounded time-frame of the critical historical juncture comprised between 1989 and

⁴⁴ Grant, A.J. (2022) ‘Towards Praxes of the Region: Agential Constructivist Approaches to Regionalisms’, *International Journal* 77(3): 416-18.

⁴⁵ Gerring, John (2017) *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁶ Hughes, J. and J. McDonagh (2017) ‘In defence of the case study methodology for research into strategy practice’, *Irish Journal of Management* 36(2): 129-45.

⁴⁷ Jackson, Peter (2008) ‘Introduction: Enquiries into the ‘secret state’’, in G.R. Hughes, P. Jackson, and L. Scott, eds. (2008) *Exploring Intelligence Archives: Enquiries into the secret state*. London, Routledge: 7.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 8-9.

1994. Three interlocking strands weave their way across all five chapters and give them an essential unity: unfolding facts on the ground; research findings commentary; and critical analytical contrast between facts and findings, in almost dialectical fashion, spilling over from one chapter to the next.⁴⁹

To anticipate, there is no clear synthesis at the end of this process: with the closing of this critical historical juncture, a new reality seems to freeze in place and structure the evolution of the next three decades – until the outbreak of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts. The rising external threat of increasingly authoritarian states and radical movements is compounded today by the forward march of what Germany’s pre-eminent living philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, once famously called “the new International of surging right-wing populism”⁵⁰, whose latest successes are the Argentinian Presidential election win of right-wing Peronist candidate Javier Milei on a wave of anti-corruption rhetoric⁵¹, and the shocking first-place finish in the latest Dutch election of the far-right PVV led by the unapologetically anti-immigrant Geert Wilders⁵². Add to this a surge in surreal US news headlines all bewailing that *Trump Widens lead over Biden in new CNN poll*⁵³, thus raising the spectrum of a second mandate for the impeached and indicted former President that would undoubtedly be a disaster for America, the Trans-Atlantic Community, NATO, and the entire world, and one only begins to have an inkling of the parlous internal and external state of affairs of a Community about which NATO’s Secretary General Manfred Woerner was optimistically stating some 34 years ago that it was without doubt “holding the winning cards” in the global context for power, prestige, and influence. It is again Habermas who most succinctly explained, five years ago, the root cause of this shocking reversal of events in the EU – comments fully applicable to the entire Trans-Atlantic Community, including the US:

Given that within the EU public opinions on politics are formed exclusively within national borders and that these different public spheres are not yet readily available one for one another, contradictory crisis narratives have taken root in different eurozone countries during the past decade. These narratives have deeply poisoned the political climate since each one draws exclusive attention to one’s own national fate and prevents that kind of mutual perspective-taking without which no understanding of and for another can be formed – let alone any feeling for the shared threats that afflict all of us equally and, above all, for the prospects of pro-active politics that can deal with common issues and only do so in a cooperative mode and mentality.⁵⁴

One need not quote William Butler Yeats’ famous lines in his ‘The Second Coming’ poem, written in 1919, at the end of the First World War, presciently announcing that “*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world*”⁵⁵, to realise that the existence of the Community and of the Rules-Based Liberal International Order it has crafted, upheld and defended over the past century are both facing imminent and formidable threats

⁴⁹ Kojève, Alexandre (1969) *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

⁵⁰ Habermas, J. (2018) “‘New’ Perspectives on Europe”, *Social Europe*, 22 October 2018. <https://www.socialeurope.eu/new-perspectives-for-europe>.

⁵¹ Linch, J. Patrick (2023) ‘Misunderstanding Milei’, *Law & Liberty*, 23. November 2023. <https://lawliberty.org/misunderstanding-milei/>.

⁵² Mudde, Cas (2023) The Netherlands underestimated the far right – and Geert Wilders’ victory is the result’, *The Guardian*, 23. November 2023. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/nov/23/netherlands-far-right-geert-wilders-victory-mark-rutte>; Schaart, Eline (2023) ‘Geert Wilders seeks coalition after seismic Dutch election’, *Politico.eu*, 24. November 2023. <https://www.politico.eu/article/geert-wilders-seeks-coalition-allies-after-seismic-dutch-election/>

⁵³ Alafritz, Olivia (2023) Trump widens lead over Biden in new CNN poll’, *Politico.com.*, 7. November 2023. <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/11/07/trump-lead-biden-cnn-poll-00125945>.

⁵⁴ Habermas, J. (2018) “‘New’ Perspectives on Europe”, *Social Europe*, 22 October 2018. <https://www.socialeurope.eu/new-perspectives-for-europe>.

⁵⁵ Yeats, William Butler (1919), ‘The Second Coming’, *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats* (1989), Poetryfoundation.org. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43290/the-second-coming>; Write, Thomas (2021) ‘The Center Cannot Hold: Will a Divided World Survive Common Threats?’, *Foreign Affairs* 100(5): 192-202.

both from within and without⁵⁶. It is only now, from a third of a century's distance, that we can fully realise the extent to which the Community and NATO utterly failed to meet the challenge launched by Woerner in 1989 "to play our hand with the circumspection and determination which benefits a worthy task of historic proportions".

The inevitable question that arises from this cognitively dissonant narrative of events since the fall of the Berlin Wall echoes, in simple terms, the question raised by this project: How did we get from there here? *Why did NATO member states collectively fail, during the critical historical juncture that began opening in 1989 and was virtually closed by 1994, to devise a resilient Grand strategy for the Alliance capable of articulating and implementing over the long term its fundamental objectives as stated in Art. 2 of its founding Charter?* It does not require the divining gifts of a Nostradamus to postulate that a new critical historical juncture is almost upon us again - one that could easily expand into a systemic bifurcation that will put in question not only the pecking order of the world's major powers, but the very survival in its current form of our global civil society and of the Rules-Based Liberal International Order that contributed to its emergence and world-wide extension⁵⁷. The remaining two sections of this project endeavour, therefore, to answer the two key questions flowing logically from this unsettling historical narrative: *How did we get from there here?* and *What can we do about it?*

Part 3: In Victory, Magnanimity? Dreams of a New World Order

This part, *covering 17 months*, begins with the almost-simultaneous First Address to Congress by newly elected US President George H.W. Bush⁵⁸ and the Speech delivered by NATO General-Secretary and former German Defence Minister Manfred Woerner to the Belgian-Atlantic Society, on 23 January 1989⁵⁹. Both signal an acute awareness of the changes being engineered in the USSR by General-Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and their repercussions on the strategy of the Trans-Atlantic Community; however, the latter's comments call for a radical, transformative change to NATO, fully in line with the hitherto neglected Art. 2 of its Charter; whilst the former's take a much more cautious approach aiming to implement incremental changes that would preserve the existing NATO dynamics as a US-led, defensive alliance aiming primarily to contain the USSR.

It then maps out the internal discussions leading to the emergence of the initial positions of each the five member states being studied (US, UK, France, Germany, Canada) regarding the strategy to be adopted by NATO over the long term, as well as that of the NATO Military Command, based on existing archival and academic material available. Two critical questions to be researched in all countries under study as well as in the NATO archives are first, that

⁵⁶ Benhabib, Seyla et al. (2013) *The Democratic Disconnect: Citizenship and Accountability in the Transatlantic Community*. Washington, DC: Transatlantic Academy; Mounk, Yasa (2021) 'Democracy on the Defense: Turning Back the Authoritarian Tide', *Foreign Affairs* 100(2): 163-173.

⁵⁷ B.C. O'Neil et al. (2017) 'The roads ahead: Narratives for shared socioeconomic pathways describing world futures in the 21st century', *Global Environmental Change* 42 (2017): 169-180; E.M. Bennett, et al. (2016) 'Bright spots: seeds of a good Anthropocene', 14 *Front. Ecol. Environ.* 14(8): 441-448; T. Homer-Dixon (2006) *The Upside of Down: Catastrophe, Creativity, and the Renewal of Civilisation*. Washington: IslandPress.

⁵⁸ Bush, George H.W. (1989) 'Address on Administration Goals Before a Joint Session of Congress', Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project* <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/247737>

⁵⁹ Woerner, Manfred (1989) *Speech to the Belgian-Atlantic Association*, 23 January 1989, Brussels, Belgium. https://archives.nato.int/uploads/r/null/1/4/141579/STATEMENT_WORNER_1989-01-23_ENG.pdf

pertaining to the attitude to be adopted towards Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR and plans to take steps in ending the Cold War even before the fall of the Berlin Wall, on November 9, 1989; and how that entirely unanticipated historical event might have affected such opinions within various institutions and administrations⁶⁰; and second, after this momentous event, how different countries' diplomatic and military personnel, as well as NATO leadership, approached a rapidly moving forward prospect of German unification and of ratification of a final settlement with respect to Germany. Available research and commentary on what exactly the Western Allies promised General Secretary Gorbachev regarding NATO expansion in exchange for the Soviet Union's agreement for a united Germany to remain part of NATO abound⁶¹ and have acquired renewed relevance in light of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war.

The focus of this project's archival research for this section is not primarily to answer these questions, but to investigate how each country's officials approached this issue, what reports and memorandums they submitted, what alternative pathways they explored, how they interacted both with other national departments interested in these issues and what connections, alliances and tensions they generated with their counterparts in other Community member states. In short, by researching these two issues, the objective is to begin mapping out the networks connecting the Community's security epistemic community members and their individual and institutional patterns of interaction, consultation, and decision-making. This will hopefully begin answering the central theoretical question, namely 'How does Grand strategy emerge and become implemented in practice in a constitutionalizing multi-level system of governance like the Trans-Atlantic Community?'

One important underlying issue mentioned in Part 2 is to determine the extent to which the very different ideological positions of the heads of state or government of the countries under study with respect to NATO and the EEC affected their officials' positions on the above questions. Did they impose their views on their diplomats and senior policy and military leaders? Were alternate views voiced in official documents? How did ministers and head of government interact with counterparts in different countries to make common cause on issues of common concern or to diffuse potential conflicts? Did officials below ministerial level who had alternate views to their superiors correspond with officials in partner countries holding similar views to attempt to keep alive alternative courses of action? This is particularly important, for example, in the case of early discussions on German unification, in late 1989 and 1990, where the German-American common front in favor of a united Germany within NATO was met at the very least with reluctance and skepticism in both Paris and London.

This part concludes with the July 1990 London NATO Summit and its *Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance*⁶². Its working hypothesis is that key Community security and diplomatic officials agreed on short-term tactics regarding the evolution of NATO facing a weaker but still powerful Soviet Union, but disagreed on both the long-term Grand strategy to be adopted towards the USSR, and on the type of policies and institutional reforms NATO

⁶⁰ Sarotte, Mary Elise (2014) *The Collapse: The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*. New York: Basic Books.

⁶¹ Sarotte, M.E. (2010): 'Not One Inch Eastward? Bush, Baker, Kohl, Genscher, Gorbachev, and the Origin of the Russian Resentment towards NATO Enlargement in February 1990', *Diplomatic History* 34(1): 119-140; Itzkowitz Shiffrinson, Joshua R. (2016): 'Deal or No Deal? The End of the Cold War and the U.S. Offer to Limit NATO Expansion', *International Security* 40(4): 7-44; Kramer, Mark and Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrinson (2017) 'NATO Enlargement – Shiffrinson: Was There a Promise?' *International Security* 42(1): 186-92; Marten, Kimberley (2020) 'NATO Enlargement: evaluating its consequences in Russia', *International Politics* 57: 401-426.

⁶² NATO (1990) 'London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance', 6. July 1990, *Nato.int*. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23693.htm.

would need to undertake in light of Gorbachev's reforms and the end of the Cold War in order to remain viable and effective in terms of its fundamental objectives as defined in Articles 2 and 5 of its founding Charter.

Part 4: Blueprints for a Vanishing Age: Competing Grand Strategies

This part starts with the aftermath of NATO's *London Declaration* of July 1990 and concludes with the *Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation* of 8. November 1991⁶³, presenting NATO's *New Strategic Concept ('NSC')*⁶⁴ - less than two months before the official dissolution of the Soviet Union, on 26. December 1991⁶⁵. Events unfolding during these critical *16 months*, marked by German Unification and the failed August coup against Soviet President Gorbachev, show how close cooperation between the USA, Canada and Germany regarding German unification sidelined French and British concerns and their alternative strategies to NATO evolution. This period also demonstrates how a clear failure of intelligence of Alliance members resulted in an inability to foresee the collapse of the USSR and a genocidal war in Yugoslavia. The NATO 1991 *NSC* therefore ends up putting forward a 'new' strategic vision that in significant respects is outdated almost from its inception and therefore does not live up to the Community's emerging realities, while at the same time fundamentally preserving the Alliance's institutional *status quo* and leadership structure.

A few months before the publication of the *NSC*, in a speech delivered to a Joint Session of the U.S. Congress on September 11, 1990, President George H. W. Bush put forward his vision for a post-Cold War 'New World Order' in the context of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's recent invasion of Kuwait:

A new partnership of nations has begun, and we stand today at a unique and extraordinary moment... Out of these troubled times, our fifth objective—a new world order—can emerge: A new era—freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice and more secure in the quest for peace. An era in which the nations of the world, east and west, north and south, can prosper and live in harmony... This is the vision that I shared with President Gorbachev in Helsinki. He and the other leaders from Europe, the gulf and around the world understand that how we manage this crisis today could shape the future for generations to come.⁶⁶

Two months after this visionary speech, on November 19, 1990, President Bush, together with all European Heads of State and Government including the President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev, British and Canadian Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Brian Mulroney, gathered in Paris to sign the documents ratifying the final settlement with respect to a united Germany and setting the foundations of a New Europe⁶⁷. This was a unique opportunity for them to chart a common course for the entire Trans-Atlantic Community from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and to devise a new 'Marshall Plan' for the USSR that may well

⁶³ NATO (1991) 'Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation', *Nato.int*, 8 November 1991. <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c911108a.htm>

⁶⁴ NATO (1991) 'The Alliance's New Strategic Concept', *Nato.int*, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_23847.htm; NATO (2010) *Towards the New Strategic Concept. A selection of background documents*. NP – Public Diplomacy Division (PDD): 21-32. https://archives.nato.int/uploads/r/nato-archives-online/8/8/7/8877fa0a92c41490fc0f687dc64d334d62798726880a70bfc7e54ae7f621e4ba/1367_Strategic-Concept-background-documents_2010_ENG_HR.pdf.

⁶⁵ Gorbachev, Mikhail S., trans. Arch Tait. (2016) *The New Russia*. Cambridge: Polity: 15ff.

⁶⁶ Bush George H.W. (1990), 'Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the Persian Gulf Crisis and the Federal Budget Deficit', Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project* <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/264415>

⁶⁷ Gorbachev, Mikhail S. (1996) *Memoirs*. London: Doubleday: 547-49.

have had the same effect on these regions as the actual Marshall Plan had on war-torn western Europe, in the late 1940s and early 1950s. And yet, they failed. Some of them still regarded the Soviet Union as the archenemy to be destroyed instead of a partner to be helped, whilst others were too concerned about the repercussions of such a proposal on their national electoral fortunes. As now former Prime Minister Thatcher presciently told President Gorbachev one year later, at the 1991 G7 Summit, in London,

It would be truly a tragedy if your efforts should end in failure merely because the West proved incapable of coming to your assistance in a timely fashion. Future generations will never forgive us for that.⁶⁸

As a result, the Paris Conference concluded on November 21, 1990 without any real, concrete commitments and achievements except vague plans no one intended to carry out⁶⁹.

How did these momentous events impact the drafting of NATO's 1991 *NSC*?⁷⁰ How did officials across the five Alliance countries under study, as well as NATO's Military Command, perceive these events and include them in their forward planning process for NATO's future?⁷¹ When did they realise that the Soviet Union was about to disintegrate, and how did that affect their increasingly diverging plans for Europe's future security structure?⁷² Given US officials' previous successful experience with integrating a defeated but critically important Germany in NATO and European institutions in the 1950s⁷³, were any similar plans proposed with respect to Eastern European states - in particular Yugoslavia and the USSR? These are only a few of the relevant questions that careful archival research for this project might shed new light on, while simultaneously continuing to map out the interconnected diplomatic and security networks stretching across the Trans-Atlantic Community that were tasked to generate a common Community Grand strategy and that contributed to the drafting of NATO's 1991 *NSC*.

Part 5: 'From Vancouver to Vladivostok': NATO's New (i)Maginot Line

This part covers 7 months, from the *Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation* of 8. November 1991 to the 5. June 1992 *Oslo Meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council*⁷⁴, established in December 1991 to bring the Allies together with all former members of the USSR together and create a zone of peace and prosperity "from Vancouver to Vladivostok". Its primary aim is to examine in detail the genesis and provisions of NATO's 1991 *NSC*⁷⁵ from the prism of archival documents of all countries under study as well as of

⁶⁸ Ibid.: 610.

⁶⁹ Gorbachev, Mikhail S., trans. Arch Tait. (2016) *The New Russia*. Cambridge: Polity: 336; Baker, Peter and Susan Glasser (2020) *The Man Who Ran Washington: The Life and Times of James A. Baker III*. New York: Doubleday: 472-3.

⁷⁰ Balanzino, Sergio S. (1995) 'Adapting the Alliance: Restructuring NATO after the Cold War', *Harvard International Review* 17(2): 34-5 & 62-3.

⁷¹ Wallander, Celeste A. (2000) 'NATO After the Cold War', *International Organization* 54(4): 705-35.

⁷² Itzkowitz Shiffrinson, Joshua R. (2020): 'Eastbound and down: The United States, NATO enlargement, and suppressing the Soviet and Western European alternatives, 1990-1992', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2020.1737931

⁷³ Hampton, M.N. (1995) 'NATO at the Creation: US Foreign Policy, West Germany and the Wilsonian Impulse', *Security Studies* 4 (3): 610-56.

⁷⁴ NATO (1992) 'Statement of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council', Oslo, 5 June 1992, *Nato.int*. <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c920605a.htm>.

⁷⁵ NATO (2010) *Towards the New Strategic Concept. A selection of background documents*. NP – Public Diplomacy Division (PDD): 21-32. https://archives.nato.int/uploads/r/nato-archives-online/8/8/7/8877fa0a92c41490fc0f687dc64d334d62798726880a70bfc7e54ae7f621e4ba/1367_Strategic-Concept-background-documents_2010_ENG_HR.pdf.

NATO's Headquarters in Brussels. For the first time in its history, NATO published such a document and made it freely available in public. Here was the first official statement of what came closest to a NATO 'Grand strategy'. At the NATO's Heads of State and Government meeting in London, in 1990, "it was already clear that the Alliance would have to undergo a radical transformation to reflect the emerging new security environment"⁷⁶. Therefore, within two weeks of that meeting the NATO Council set up an 'ad hoc Group on the Review of NATO's Military Strategy, which became known as the 'Legge Strategy Review Group' from the name of its Chairperson, J.M. Legge.⁷⁷

In June 1992, Legge published an article in the journal of the *Royal United Services Institute*, the world's oldest national and international defence and security think-tank established by the Duke of Wellington in 1831, in which he discussed the document's terms of reference and evolving ambit and engaged in a detailed commentary of its substantive contents. Particularly noteworthy is his statement that although

the original decision at the London Summit was to review NATO's *military* strategy, it was clear almost from the outset that it would be highly desirable to set this strategy in a wider political context... Ultimately we were successful in doing this, so that the final document represents the first time since the early days of the Alliance that the political and military elements of NATO's strategy have been integrated in detail in a single document.⁷⁸

Legge explained that the new NSC was "founded on two central pillars": a redefinition of the security objectives of the Alliance, guided by the NATO Council development of a set of four 'core security functions', as well as an analysis of the possible future risks to Allied security. He proceeded to outline these four core security functions as follows:⁷⁹

To provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable security environment in Europe.
To serve as a transatlantic forum for consultations on any issues that affect the Allies vital interests.
To deter and defend against any threat of aggression against the territory of any NATO member state.
To preserve the strategic balance within Europe.

Legge then addressed how the NSC balanced future risks to Allied security such as the enduring threat posed by the Soviet Union, its guidelines for the defence of the Alliance, including its nuclear policy, and was one of the first to discuss NATO's emerging 'out-of-area' commitments, and how this strategy aligned with a developing European Security and Defence Identity. Finally, he commented at length on the NSC's implementation and durability, and attempted to answer a key question – namely:

...how long will the Concept remain valid? In other words, did we get it right? Given my experience over forecasting the survival of MC 14/3, I should perhaps be very cautious here. But I would wish to stress that we deliberately tried to cast the Strategic Concept in the form of a set of principles, a framework that would prove sufficiently flexible in its implementation to take account of further developments in the security environment. Of course it is quite possible that events in Europe will continue to develop at the same astonishing pace that we have seen over the last two years, and by the mid-1990s we could be looking at a very different situation.⁸⁰

This part will use the work of the Legge Strategy Review Group as an entry point into its archival research in all countries under study as well as NATO's archives to access both older and newly-available documents drawn from across the Community's security epistemic community to describe and analyse how the genesis, drafting, and final substantive content of

⁷⁶ Legge, J. M. (1992) 'Nato's new strategic concept', *The RUSI Journal*, 137(3): 11-14. DOI: 10.1080/03071849208445597.

⁷⁷ Ibid: 11.

⁷⁸ Ibid.: 12.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.: 14.

the NSC were influenced by national officials of NATO's member countries, and how the publication of this Grand strategy statement was regarded in various Community chancelleries and senior executive offices. An important theme running in parallel with the drafting of the NSC is the existence of an advanced alternate project for European security and defence, promoted primarily by France's President, Francois Mitterrand, aiming to empower the EEC to develop an autonomous military capacity, independent of NATO and the US. Although the story of how these competing visions both clashed and found common perspectives has already been told in detail⁸¹, new documents recently declassified will shed new light on NATO's strategy-formation process and interaction with ongoing competing security projects. A second important theme is how various Allies and NATO experienced their first interactions with the Russian Federation, emerging out of the ashes of the Soviet Union as its primary successor state and claiming to inherit the place of the defunct USSR on the global stage in general and on the European diplomatic, political, defence and security scenes in particular⁸².

The project's preliminary hypothesis here is that the Allies were unprepared for both the collapse of the USSR and the outbreak of the Balkan wars and were more concerned to promote their own competing visions of what NATO's and Europe's future security structure should look like than addressing in an effective manner the rapidly-changing geopolitical events that were transforming Europe and the world. What is certain is that by the time of the June 5, 1992 Oslo meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council⁸³, the much sought-after area of peace and security "from Vancouver to Vladivostok" had become little more than a mirage.

Part 6: Rolled Up in Bosnia: Facing Facts on the Ground

This part stretches over *14 months*, from the June 5, 1992 Oslo meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council to the August 2, 1993 Brussels meeting of North Atlantic Council on Bosnia⁸⁴, when NATO Allies finally decided to intervene into the quickly spiraling out of control Bosnian civil war. It covers the failure of 'Europe's moment', as the EEC member states were incapable of taking joint military action to stop the Balkan wars, the UN failed in attempting to do so, and the US decided not to intervene after Secretary of State James Baker famously declared that "We do not have a dog in this fight"⁸⁵. The result was a recognition by all Community members that NATO intervention was both necessary and impossible without US cooperation and leadership.

"The hour of Europe" brought forth commissions to create plans, but no diplomatic or military intervention to stop the killing. The war went on. Reporters under fire filed hair-raising dispatches. They

⁸¹ Moens, Alexander (1993) 'The European Security and Defence Identity and the Non-Concert of Europe', *European Security* 2(4): 567-84; Schake, Kori (1998) 'NATO after the Cold War, 1991-1995: Institutional Competition and the Collapse of the French Alternative', *Contemporary European History* 7(3): 379-407; Bozo, Frederic (2009) "'Winners" and "Losers": France, the United States, and the End of the Cold War', *Diplomatic History* 33(5): 927-56; Itzkowitz Shiffrinson, Joshua R. (2020): 'Eastbound and down: The United States, NATO enlargement, and suppressing the Soviet and Western European alternatives, 1990-1992', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2020.1737931.

⁸² Sarotte, M. E. (2021) *Not One Inch: America, Russia, and the Making of Post-Cold War Stalemate*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press; Aguirre, Mariano and Penny Fisher (1992) 'Discriminate Intervention: Defining NATO for the '90s'. *Middle East Report* 177: 28-33; McCalla, Robert B. (1996) 'NATO's Persistence after the Cold War', *International Organization* 50 (3): 445-75.

⁸³ NATO (1992) 'Statement of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council', Oslo, 5 June 1992, *Nato.int*. <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c920605a.htm>.

⁸⁴ NATO (1993) 'North Atlantic Council special meeting on Bosnia and Herzegovina', Brussels, 2. August 1993, *Nato.int*. <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c930802a.htm>.

⁸⁵ Goldfarb, Michael (2015) 'Srebrenica, 20 Years Later: A day of darkness and slaughter, when Europe betrayed its very own values', *Politico Magazine*, 8. July 2015. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/07/srebrenica-20-years-later-119845/>.

were plastered across front pages. Public opinion was duly outraged, to no avail. More commissions, more plans, more parcel-passing. The EU was bypassed as the UN organized troops to observe but not intervene... And so the war went on. The hour of Europe passed.⁸⁶

A strategic compromise was therefore arrived after four years from the start of the Balkan civil wars to 'bring the US in'⁸⁷ and sideline, at least in the short term, alternative European defence initiatives and strategies to that orchestrated in tandem by the US and NATO's Military Command⁸⁸.

The Balkan wars in the mid-1990s represent, as Brendan Simms argued in his "Unfinest Hour: Britain and the Destruction of Bosnia"⁸⁹, one of the most shameful episodes in the history of NATO and of the European Community in general and of Britain in particular. Despite the hopeful claim of Jacques Poos, the Foreign Affairs Minister of Luxembourg and President of the EU Council in July 1991 that this was 'the hour of Europe'⁹⁰ and despite decades-long commitments by all member states of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) 'never again' to allow repression and genocide to rear its ugly heads on the European continent, this is exactly what happened. Places like Vukovar - whose murderous siege of 1991 was compared with that of Stalingrad exactly half a century earlier, and Srebrenica - where more than 8,000 Bosniak Muslims were massacred in 1995 in full sight of UNPROFOR's helpless Dutch contingent of troops, will live forever in shame and infamy in the annals of European history⁹¹. Only US-led NATO interventions were finally able to stem first the savage conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and later in Kosovo. The European Community's impotence in the face of aggression and genocide fifty years after Auschwitz and Dresden was demonstrated yet again – due to its leaders' inability to agree on a decisive common plan of action and to two US Presidents' reluctance to take leadership in resolving these breaking conflicts from their very beginning.

Contrasting these events with the aims and objectives of NATO's 1991 NSC and evaluating the causes of the Trans-Atlantic Community's newly-minted 'Grand strategy's utter failure to live up to its 'four core security functions' so soon after its adoption and publication requires detailed archival research in all five countries under study, in the Presidential Libraries of George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton, as well as in NATO's archives. This is the moment when the "Failure of Alliance Grand Strategy" enunciated in the title of this project became an unavoidable reality. It is essential to develop a better understanding, in light of recently declassified documents on both sides of the Atlantic, what avenues of action were proposed, why were some adopted and others discarded, why it took so long for the NATO-led security institutions of the Trans-Atlantic community to finally kick into gear⁹².

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Danforth, Nick (2016) 'The Arc of History Is Long, But It Bends Toward Bombing Assad', War on the Rocks, 20. October 2016. <https://warontherocks.com/2016/10/the-arc-of-history-is-long-but-it-bends-toward-bombing-assad/>

⁸⁸ Schake, Kori (1998) 'NATO after the Cold War, 1991-1995: Institutional Competition and the Collapse of the French Alternative', *Contemporary European History* 7(3): 379-407.

⁸⁹ Simms, B. (2001) *Unfinest Hour: Britain and the Destruction of Bosnia*. Allen Lane.

⁹⁰ Goldfarb, Michael (2015) 'Srebrenica, 20 Years Later: A day of darkness and slaughter, when Europe betrayed its very own values', *Politico Magazine*, 8. July 2015. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/07/srebrenica-20-years-later-119845/>.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ruhle, Michael (1993) 'Crisis Management in NATO', *European Security* 2(4): 491-501.

Part 7: Backwards Into the Future: Winning the Battle, Losing the World

The final part of Section II of this project covers the 8 months from the 2 August 1993 Brussels Special Meeting of the North Atlantic Council to discuss the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina⁹³ and the decisions it took at its August 9 meeting authorizing NATO air strikes⁹⁴ to the 18 March 1994 Washington Agreement signaling US determination to bring to an end the Bosnian conflict⁹⁵ by concluding a cease-fire agreement between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia and ratifying the creation of a Constitution for the Federation of the two entities, which eventually led to the Dayton Peace Agreement signed on 14. December 1995 in Dayton, USA, marking the end of the Bosnian conflict⁹⁶.

It also covers the very first discussions on setting up the Partnership for Peace ('PfP') initiative first announced that marked the first steps towards NATO's eastwards enlargement that has generated so much academic debate and controversy ever since⁹⁷. Although PfP was first announced by US Defence Secretary Les Aspin at the very first NATO Defence Ministers' Meeting held in Travemunde, Germany, on October 20-21, 1993⁹⁸, it "had been developed by US General John Shalikashvili, who intended PfP to be an alternative to NATO membership"⁹⁹. German Defence Minister Volker Ruhe disagreed, and with the support of NATO General Secretary Manfred Worner, strongly argued that failure to open NATO to eastern enlargement would destroy it, and that "there was support for the US concept of a 'Partnership for Peace' as a useful step in this process, but not as an alternative"¹⁰⁰. The two men worked together to craft the language reporting the conclusions of the meeting "so that PfP could also be understood as offering a path to eventual NATO membership"¹⁰¹.

This was confirmed by the 11. January 1994 Brussels Declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council ('the Brussels Summit Declaration'), announcing the Allies' decision "to launch a major initiative through a Partnership for Peace, in which we invite Partners to join us in new political and military

⁹³ NATO (1993) 'Special Meeting of the North Atlantic Council to discuss the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina', 2. August 1993 *Nato.int*. <https://archives.nato.int/press-statement-by-secretary-general-following-special-meeting-of-north-atlantic-council-in-brussels-on-2-august-1993>

⁹⁴ NATO (1993) 'Decisions Taken at the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 9th August 1993', *Nato.int*. <https://archives.nato.int/decisions-taken-at-meeting-of-north-atlantic-council-on-9th-august-1993>

⁹⁵ USA (1994) '1994 'Washington Agreement concluding a cease-fire agreement between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia', 18. March 1994, *United States Institute for Peace*. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/washagree_03011994.pdf

⁹⁶ USA (1995) 'The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Dayton Peace Agreement' (DPA), 14. December 1995, *Osce.org*. <https://www.osce.org/bih/126173>.

⁹⁷ Epstein, Rachel A. (2005) 'Nato Enlargement and the Spread of Democracy: Evidence and Expectations', *Security Studies* 14(1): 63-105; Itzkowitz Shiffrinson, Joshua R. (2016): 'Deal or No Deal? The End of the Cold War and the U.S. Offer to Limit NATO Expansion', *International Security* 40(4): 7-44; Goldgeier, James and Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrinson (2020) 'Evaluating NATO enlargement: scholarly debates, policy implications, and roads not taken', *International Politics* 57: 291-321; von Hlatky, Stéfanie and Michel Fortmann (2020) 'NATO enlargement and the failure of the cooperative security mindset', *International Politics* 57: 554-72; Lanoszka, Alexander (2020) 'Thank Goodness for NATO enlargement', *International Politics* 57: 451-470; Marten, Kimberley (2020) 'NATO Enlargement: evaluating its consequences in Russia', *International Politics* 57: 401-426.

⁹⁸ NATO (1993) 'Meeting of NATO Defence Ministers at Travemunde, Germany', 20-21 October 1993, *Nato.int*. <https://archives.nato.int/meeting-of-nato-defence-ministers-at-travemunde-20th-21st-october-1993>.

⁹⁹ Hamilton, Daniel S. and Kristina Spohr, eds (2019) *Open Door: NATO and Euro-Atlantic Security After the Cold War*. Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins University SAIS: 224.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 224-5.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

efforts to work alongside the Alliance”¹⁰². The Brussels Summit Declaration justified this step in its preamble by uniquely invoking Art. 2 of the Washington Treaty and the resulting need for “close collaboration in all fields...[by] reaching out to establish new patterns of cooperation throughout Europe”¹⁰³.

Further archival research to identify documents adding to existing knowledge about how these decisions were negotiated and finalised across the Community’s security epistemic community and then communicated to partners and potential adversaries, as well as their consequences in terms of supporting or undermining the 1991 NATO NFC’s ‘four core security functions’ is critical to better understand the Community’s Grand strategy practice and the ongoing debates going on at the time about NATO’s future prospects¹⁰⁴. Two working hypothesis emerge out of the preliminary research carried out so far: it is not NATO enlargement eastwards that antagonised the Russian Federation’s leaders in the mid- to late 1990s, but its exclusion from the prospect of eventually joining both NATO and the EEC – thus denying its role as a major European power, cutting it off from the rest of Europe and encouraging the rise of a Europhobic political elite that consolidated early in the 21st century under the leadership of Russia’s new President, Vladimir Putin¹⁰⁵. The second working hypothesis posits that the period under study in this chapter enshrines NATO’s long-term strategic failure to create a transformed Trans-Atlantic Community from Vancouver to Vladivostok and sets the foundations of internal democratic regression in the Central and Eastern European countries vying to accede to both NATO and the EEC - but also in Western European states and in the US, as well as increasing confrontation levels with Russia, leading all the way to today’s Russo-Ukrainian war¹⁰⁶. It concludes that by the end of 1995 at the latest, with the signature of the Dayton Peace Agreement, NATO had embarked on a path-dependent trajectory ultimately leading to the internal destabilization and external confrontation processes it is experiencing today¹⁰⁷.

Section III: Articulating a NATO Grand Strategy

The two parts making up Section III of this project constitute the deliverables of this project, namely:

- 1) a detailed multi-dimensional ‘road map’ of the complex dynamics of NATO’s Grand strategy-as-practice in operation between 1989 and 1994, and
- 2) a set of specific recommendations for the eventual upgrading of the NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, designed to overcome the limitations of the 2019-2022 process and

¹⁰² NATO (1994) Brussels Declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council (‘the Brussels Summit Declaration’), 11. January 1994, Nato.int. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24470.htm.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Haglund, David G. (1995) ‘Must NATO Fail? Theories, Myths, and Policy Dilemmas’, *International Journal* 50(4): 651-74.

¹⁰⁵ Myers, Steven Lee (2015) *The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf; Belton, Catherine (2020) *Putin’s People: How the KGB Took Back Russia and then Took on the West*. New York: Farrar, Strus and Giroux; Galeotti, Mark (2022) *Putin’s Wars: From Chechnya to Ukraine*. Oxford: Osprey.

¹⁰⁶ Wolff, Andrew T. (2015) ‘The future of NATO enlargement after the Ukraine crisis’, *International Affairs* 91(5): 1103-1121.

¹⁰⁷ Webber, Mark, James Sperling and Martin A. Smith (2021) *What’s Wrong with NATO and how to fix it*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

to empower the Community to rise up to, and successfully meet the Woerner vision and mission for NATO as detailed at the beginning of this paper.

As such, the ensuing overviews of these chapters will necessarily be brief, since one cannot anticipate the results of the archival research to be undertaken or the analyses and conclusions flowing from the eventual documentary findings.

Part 8: Lessons from NATO's Decisive Half-Decade: Folding the Winning Cards

This part aims to apply the theoretical concepts developed in Section I of this paper and insights derived from relevant secondary literature listed in the Thematic Selected Bibliography below¹⁰⁸ to the facts and findings presented and analysed in Section II, to thus develop a detailed and dynamic overview of how Grand strategy emerges and becomes implemented in practice in a constitutionalizing multi-level system of governance like the Trans-Atlantic Community and its principal institutional structure, NATO. It will also highlight the successes and failures of such a Grand strategy-as-practice system encompassing the Community's entire security epistemic community during the critical historical juncture comprised between 1989 and 1994 and justify why this period has become the Alliance's 'decisive half-decade' of the past forty years, since the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall.

Part 9: Upgrading NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept: Meeting the Woerner Challenge

In 2019, NATO Allies were preparing to draft a new Strategic Concept for the 2020s. To this effect, NATO General Secretary Stoltenberg commissioned in April 2020 a reflection group composed of eminent academics and politicians to undertake a "forward-looking reflection process to assess ways to strengthen the political dimension of the NATO Alliance"¹⁰⁹. The General Secretary asked the Group to provide recommendations in three key areas:

- 1) Reinforcing Allied unity, solidarity, and cohesion, including to cement the centrality of the transatlantic bond;
- 2) Increasing political consultation and coordination between Allies in NATO; and

¹⁰⁸ See, for example: Andrews Sayle, Timothy (2019) *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Colburn, Susan (2020) 'NATO as a political alliance: continuities and legacies in the enlargement debates of the 1990s'. *International Politics* 57: (492-508; Gheciu, Alexandra (2022). 'Protecting NATO's security community', *NDC Policy Brief No. 10* (May 2022), NATO Defence College: Research Division; Johnson, Seth A. (2017) *How NATO Adapts: Strategy and Organization in the Atlantic Alliance since 1950*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; Menon, Anand and Jennifer Welsh (2011) 'Understanding NATO's Stability: The Limits of Institutionalist Theory', *Global Governance* 17(1): 81-94; Moens, Alexander (2001) 'European Defence and NATO: The case for new governance', *International Journal* (Spring 2001): 261-78. Olsen, J.A. (2020) *Future NATO: Adapting to New Realities*. London: RUSI – Whitehall Paper 95; Ricketts, Peter (2020) 'Rediscovering a Strategic Purpose for NATO', *PRISM* 9(1): 22-31; Tardy, Thierry (2022) *The Nations of NATO: Shaping the Alliance's Relevance and Cohesion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹⁰⁹ NATO (2021) *NATO 2030: United for a New Era: Analysis and Recommendations of the Reflection Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General*, 25. November 2020: 3. https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf.

- 3) Strengthening NATO's political role and relevant instruments to address current and future threats and challenges to Alliance security emanating from all strategic directions.¹¹⁰

The Reflection Group presented the findings of its report on 3. December 2020 under the title: “NATO 2023: United for a New Era. Analysis and Recommendations of the Reflection Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General”¹¹¹. NATO leaders approved a new Strategic Concept (‘NSC 2022’)¹¹² for the Alliance at the Madrid Summit on 29 June 2022 “setting out NATO’s priorities, core tasks and approaches for the next decade”¹¹³. Coming only a few months after Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine, on 24. February 2022 – a conflict that still rages to this day at the heart of Europe with undiminished intensity, unmatched in its scope, range and devastation since the darkest hours of the Second World War – this new Strategic Concept runs the risk to suffer the same fate, for many of the same reasons, as NATO’s 1991 NSC.

This project aims to update the reflection process which preceded the adoption of NSC 2022 by applying the conclusions of its analysis of NATO’s Grand strategy practice during the critical historical conjuncture of 1989 to 1994 to develop a series of recommendations focusing on the same three key areas of inquiry outlined by General Secretary Stoltenberg in April 2020. In doing so, it aims to inform the NATO allies of the critical challenges the Trans-Atlantic Community faces over the next decade including, according to its analysis, the opening of a new historical conjunctural crisis that may well escalate into a systemic bifurcation, and recommend a set of transformational changes for NATO as the Community’s primary institutional structure, so as to sustainably meet these challenges over both the short- and long term in a manner corresponding to NATO’s founding vision and values, as expressed in its 1949 Founding Charter. By updating this consultation process, this project hopes to contribute to ensure that NATO will not tread on the same road of Grand strategy failure as it did three decades ago, by informing the Community on how to successfully rise up to the existential challenges it is likely to be confronted with in the near future. Ultimately, this project hopes therefore to meet the 1989 Woerner challenge mentioned at the start of this paper, suitably adapted to the realities of the mid-21st century:

The 2030s “could be a decisive decade for the future of Europe, of West-West and of East-West relations. We will require a global plan of action to guide us safely and soundly through its challenges and opportunities.”

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² NATO (2022) ‘*NATO 2022 Strategic Concept*, Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Madrid, 29 June 2022, *Nato.int*. https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf.

¹¹³ NATO (2022) “NATO 2022 Strategic Concept”, last updated 3. March 2023, *Nato.int*. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_210907.htm#

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