Rightist Shift in Poland's Internal Security: Regional Security Implications for NATO

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Abstract

       Within the last decade, European states, particularly in the post-Communist and post-Soviet region, have elected more rightist-led governments. Poland is no exception and after a surprising election in 2015 led to a PiS government majority in the state, questions of how this political shift in the "role model" Eastern European state could impact Polish security began to circulate. (Lupitu, 2016, p. 25) This study analyses the PiS's security actions within its first year as the Polish government majority (2015-2016) to discern the potential agency political actors have in determining how regional security organisations function through a structure vs. agency framework. Using NATO as a unit of analysis, the study aims to synthesise regional security implications of Poland's political shift on the Alliance. To do so, a triangulated methodology is applied to four key security events and actions PiS took within 2015-2016 using both a document and news media analyses as well as three elite interviews. These four events include a controversial pardoning of the minister responsible for all Polish Special Services, lustration activities within Polish security agencies, a controversial dismissal of the head of NATO's Centre of Excellence in Warsaw and the Warsaw Summit of 2016. A common protocol was developed to search for documents, news articles and ask the interviewees about these four events, the results then being compared and contrasted across all methods of research to find commonalities in member state reactions, NATO's reactions and Poland's reactions to the four events. Through the consistent protocol, three main findings surfaced:

1. NATO is adept at maintaining its structure despite member state political shifts;
2. Individual member states like Poland have less agency in the Alliance if their internal politics result in distancing from leading member states of NATO such as Germany and France;
3. And finally, the security environment has the most agency in influencing the structure of NATO.

Further research analysing the effects of political shifts in states belonging to other regional security alliances are necessary to support these findings, as this research cannot extrapolate the results and apply them to other security alliances without more research. However, this study shows that political shifts should be monitored by security alliances due to the affect they can have on member state relations within the organisation. More importantly, the leading

implication embedded in the study is that the security environment holds the most agency over NATO and demands adaptation of NATO's structure to maintain the resilience of the Alliance's ability to provide security to its members.

Definitions and Abbreviations

EU: European Union

IR: International Relations

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NSS: National Security Strategy

PiS: Law and Justice Party of Poland

US: United States of America

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or the Soviet Union

Regional security: Regional security is a pattern of security commonalities and trends within a specific geographic region. For NATO, which is a regional security organisation and is used as the region studied in this dissertation, the Alliance oversees the specific region involving "Europe and North America." (NATO, 1949)

'Eastern Europe' or the 'East': Loosely applied to European states that were previously incorporated or associated with the USSR but since the USSR's dissolvement have gained independence and joined or partnered with NATO. This includes states as far west as the Czech Republic and as far east as Romania.

'Western Europe' or the 'West': Loosely applied to European and North American states that were not involved with the USSR and were allied against the power during the Cold War.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Background and Theory
     Political parties are in a constant flux as citizens of states elect leaders they believe will best serve their interests at that time. In recent years, more and more democratic governments in Europe and North America are seeing elections that result in increased representation, or in some cases leadership, of far-right wing government officials. This trend is particularly visible in Eastern Europe, in which the Hungarian and Polish governments are now composed of right-wing majorities. The Polish government in particular was a result of a surprising election in 2015 that led to the PiS gaining the first complete majority in all branches of government since the state's independence. (Szczerbiak, 'A Model for Democratic Transition…', 2016) Speculation began to circulate on how this change could impact the security of the Eastern European region as Poland since the 1990's and early 2000's has been perceived as a "role model" in Eastern Europe for upholding EU and NATO standards. (Lupitu, 2016, p. 25)

     When first elected to the majority, PiS found itself in a dramatically changing security environment due to the invasion of Crimea in 2014 by the Russian Federation, the migration crisis of 2015 and significant terrorist attacks such as that on Paris in November of 2015. The term 'security environment' thus became a commonality within NATO security meetings and documents, as states along the border of the Alliance's territory felt threatened. (*The Secretary General's Annual Report 2014*, 2015; *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2015*, 2016; *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2016*, 2017) PiS running on a platform of renewing Poland's call for NATO forces and bases being placed along Eastern Europe's border during the election, the party in 2015 became one of the leading countries in supporting a NATO military build-up of defences along NATO's eastern flank. PiS, alongside calling for actions by NATO, persisted in its own reformation of Polish security, leading to controversial or major security events that gained mass media coverage throughout Poland. Previous literature describes PiS actions during 2015-2016 as fervently following a realist perspective of regional security; therefore, a military and security build-up of forces is needed to deter further action from an increasingly bold Russia. (Bieńczyk-Missala, 2016; Lupitu, 2016; Zięba, 2020) Few constructivists attempt to refute this, claiming that PiS constructing a common threat perception between it and other Eastern European states bolstered Poland's ability to conduct drastic security actions. (Kolmašová, 2019) However, the usage of these theories neglects answering questions about PiS's ability as a state

actor to shift NATO's security strategies and instead focuses on explaining the behaviour of the actor and why such actions were pursued.

In order to measure PiS's impact on NATO security, this study purports to use the structure vs. agency framework that is often imbedded in traditional IR theories. The reasoning for selecting the framework is to avoid discussion of state behaviour in favour of a more robust discussion of the ability of actors to change security structures which will be further explained within the literature review section of this work. To explain the concepts, however, between the sociological and security strategy works consulted it is generally agreed that a structure is a system constrained by a certain set of rules. This system must also carry a certain resilience in adapting to the challenges posed by changes to its environment. (McGarry and Davidson, 2016; Gruszczak, 2016) NATO will thus be the system of rules Poland is acting in, these rules based on the Articles of the original North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 defining the collective security alliance. Agency, on the other hand, is the ability to influence and/or enact lasting change to the system. (Goodwin, Jasper and Khattra, 1999) As one of the aims of this research, discerning the agency of the political actor of Poland—PiS—in influencing and/or shaping NATO's structure will be a priority. The results will then aid in determining what impact a political actor could have on NATO's security prerogatives, an essential research question as more of Eastern Europe adopts rightist government frameworks for security proceedings of their states.

1.2   Research Questions

This research will answer questions that get to the root of how politics and security institutions relate. In order to study how shifts in political orientation can impact regional security, Poland's role in NATO is analysed throughout the first year of the PiS majority, 2015-2016. NATO defines its region of security as "territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America." (NATO, 1949) NATO provides the perfect unit through which PiS's capabilities of influencing a regional security organisation can be analysed due to the Alliance orientating itself as a regional security provider. NATO also is considered a political and a military alliance, interconnecting politics to security decisions of the organisation. (SHAPE) Thus, how Poland's shift to the right by the government impacts its role in regional security can be analysed through NATO, a regional security alliance that emphasises Europe and North America as its regions of concern.

As will be explained more in the methodology section, the research intends to measure the agency of PiS through four main security events or actions taken by the party in its first year as the majority in the Polish government. These four events are as follows: the pardoning of Minister Mariusz Kamiński, who was then installed as the Minister-Coordinator overlooking all Special Services of Poland; lustration activities within multiple Polish security agencies, involving the dismissal of many Polish military generals by PiS officials; the night-time entrance into NATO's Counterintelligence Centre of Excellence (CICOE) in Warsaw by leading PiS military officials, followed by the dismal of the head of the facility; and finally, the Warsaw Summit of 2016. The four events were selected due to the attention they received within Poland, this attention due to the lasting effect these events had on Polish security. Due to NATO relying on security contributions from member state security agencies, these events or actions decided upon by the PiS, all which changed how security proceedings operated within the state, had potential to impact NATO. The four events then were used in designing a common protocol through which searches for documents, news articles and in designing questions for interviewees was applied. While searching using Polish and English for documents on the four events and their effects, other commonalities that surfaced in search results were also added to the protocol to avoid cherry-picking sources for analysis.

Thus, through a triangulated research methodology of document and news media analyses along with three elite interviews, the research will contribute to studies on security institutions and on politics' role in security. Poland being the "role model" for Eastern Europe provides an excellent unit of analysis for study as it shifts to the more radical right in terms of government orientation. (Lupitu, 2016, p. 25) The aims of this study thus are to discern the agency of political actors such as PiS to determine how regional security organisations function as well as synthesizing the regional security implications of the political actor on all member states within the regional security organisation of NATO. The research questions for this study are thus twofold:

1) How did Poland's interal security evolution during 2015-2016 impacts its relationship with NATO?;

2) What implications does this evolving security relationship hold for NATO's capacity as a regional security supplier?

Through this research, how individual political shifts impact security institutions and their member states will be analysed, thus contributing to the field of security studies a conclusion that will aid in NATO's decisions on how to address the increasing number of member state political shifts to the far right-wing government security strategies.

1.3   Chapter Overview

This dissertation is broken into eight chapters that split the analysis into three main categories following a literature review chapter and methodology chapter. The literature review will provide an outline of previous studies conducted on related security topics. The chapter, as no previous study covers the exact questions of this research, is broken into three sections on relevant topics. The first section in the chapter provides a background for how previous academics use theory to explain Polish security and Polish security relations with NATO over time, emphasising realism in Polish security policy; however, no study applies the structure vs. agency framework to these topics. Background into the structure vs. agency framework is therefore provided using studies on Estonian security and NATO structures as a whole, providing an example for how this framework will benefit the study at hand. Section two and three of the literature review will then delve into previous literature covering Polish security and Polish and NATO security relations, offering a mostly realist explanation of Polish security behaviour in the 2015-2016 time frame.

Chapter three provides details on the methodologies selected for this research, a triangulated approach using document, news media and elite interview analyses. It is explained how a common protocol for source selection was used between the document and news media sources, this protocol then being applied to the elite interview questions produced for the research. This common protocol aided in analysis between the various methodologies used, and thus was applied to gain data that was used to measure the agency of PiS in changing NATO structure. The data described is presented throughout the next three chapters of the dissertation, chapters four, five and six. These chapters present evidence from the sources that show how NATO keeps internal security matters separate from organisational matters, evidence of shifting bilateral and multilateral relations within NATO that impacted Poland's position in the organisation and finally, evidence on the power of the security environment to enact changes within NATO's structures over individual member states. All evidence is then discussed in

chapter seven which is broken into three subsections on main conclusions derived from the evidence. Chapter eight will then cover any criticisms on the research conducted while also explaining the implications of the conclusions on NATO and Polish security policy. It is through the layout presented here and the analysis completed using a triangulated methodology that the aims and research questions of this study will be fulfilled.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Previous literature on Polish security covers a wide range of topics. In order to provide an adequate display of other scholars' point of view for the project at hand, this literature review will incorporate works covering three key topics pertaining to this dissertation. The first section will cover IR theory that is frequently applied to Polish security then contrast it with other studies applying the structure versus agency framework. Within the contrast, the benefit of using the framework for the study at hand is made apparent. The second section demonstrates the range of studies conducted on Polish security, these studies focusing on challenges Poland faces within its security evolution involving Polish history and how Polish politics intertwines with security developments. The final section relates Polish security to NATO as previous research presents explanations on how Poland's position in NATO has evolved. The final section also pays special attention to the US as an actor shaping NATO and Polish security as well as the events of 2014 acting as a catalyst of change within the Alliance. Through this literature review, the themes of scholars using a realist perspective to explain Poland's internal security and its relationship with NATO, Poland's struggle to overcome its history, and the state's struggle to maintain sovereignty and its leadership role in Eastern Europe surface. However, emphasising the balance of power and sphere of influence neglects answering if Poland has the capability to change regional security dynamics within the structure of NATO. Thus, the overall study at hand, based on the literature portrayed in this chapter, directly analyses Poland's agency and will allow a clearer look at how internal security changes brought on by a right-wing party will enact change to the Alliance's security structure. However, the review of literature purports that events and actors, such as the invasion of Crimea in 2014, must be considered and included in this research project on Poland's agency within the Alliance, recognizing that Poland does not act in isolation but within the current security environment and with other actors influencing NATO's security structure.

2.1   Theory and the Structure vs. Agency Framework

This section will provide an overview of IR theory found within literature pertaining to Polish security and Polish/NATO relations. The previous studies emphasise the realist or neorealist theory with some mention of constructivism theory. However, other authors, in studies on Eastern European security as well as some sociological works, provide examples of the

usefulness of using the structure versus agency framework outside of IR theory. Through this section, the benefit of using the framework instead of IR theory is demonstrated, addressing the root of how state actions interact within regional systems of security already in place instead of explaining state behaviour as traditional IR theory accesses.

Few scholars use constructivism to describe member states' role within security alliances. Seagle offers insights into how NATO's intelligence sharing between states is hindered by state autonomy and a lack of a common culture to bind members together, noting that the Nordic security alliance is better at sharing intelligence due to its common identity, culture and geography. (2015, p. 559) Thus, according to Seagle, a security alliance can only be successful with common values, norms and culture, fitting well within the constructivist theory that lends common values power in supporting NATO's structures. Kolmašová provides another example based on common threat construction. With her analysis of Poland's role within the Visegrad 4 (V4) group, the scholar shows how common culture and values are not the only factors in a harmonious security alliance; how threats are constructed by group members can determine how functional an alliance group is as well. Kolmašová argues that although the V4 members have a common culture and geopolitical position, their "security and defence potential…is fundamentally limited" due to a lack of a common threat perception. (2019, p. 225) Most scholars of Eastern European security criticise the constructivist view, however, and other researchers, such as Zięba, Tardy, and Lupitu take different approaches. Instead, these scholars support that alliances are built off the unipolar structure of the international order, thus creating a unified clash against the less prominent constructivist theory in Eastern European security studies.

For instance, in his book Zięba demonstrates that Poland's actions in both foreign and security policy can be explained through the neorealist paradigm. (2020). Zięba uses neorealism to demonstrate Poland's tendency to bandwagon and act according to the international order shaped by the US (ibid., p. 9) This follows the common realist scholarly perspective that structure holds more power than actors' agency. However, Zięba also admits to the flaws in applying solely this theory, as Polish "policy contains a number of contradictions leading Poland to have a problem of compatibility with the changing international order." (ibid., p. 8) While Poland's behaviour can be explained as the state acting as a regional leader to counterbalance the renewed threat from Moscow (Lupitu, 2016, p. 31), its actions do not always fall in line with the

Western international order; as an example, Zięba marks Poland's shying away from compromises with EU partners and supporting nationalist and (as commonly viewed by the EU powers) anti-liberal beliefs. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of how Poland's government interacts and influences this order through its potential ability to influence NATO's regional security structure, which is an aim of this study, will clarify how actors or states can influence the international order at large.

For this purpose, the structure versus agency framework provides a model through which states' roles within a system can be analysed. Sociologists have conducted a slew of research on the structure versus agency model in terms of groups' capabilities of defining a structure versus individual actor's ability to overcome structural limitations. One of the key issues of the structure versus agency approach, according to Goodwin, Jasper, and Khattra, is the lack of definition and clarity of what structure is. (1999, p. 29) In their research on the political process theory of social movements, the scholars narrow the definition of a structure to that in which "factors…are relatively stable over time and outside the control of…actors," demonstrating that a structure has limited fluidity and instead is a fixed framework for actors to act within. (idib., p. 29) As a reaction to this definition of structure, Duyvendak and Jasper in their works take structure as a given, and therefore resort to using the verbiage of arena: "arena not only allows us to observe what happens in the arena under its current rules, but also to understand how and when it changes." (McGarry, A., Davidson, R.J., etc., 2016, p. 640) Duyvendak and Jasper point to the rigidness that is associated with the term structure, therefore presenting a possible surrogate that provides more fluidity between the power of agents (or players) and the environments they find themselves in. Overall, in the sociological mindset the structure and agency frame of mind will only be successful if one considers both in motion as evolving situations based on micro-level interactions which can compound to macro-level outcomes, such as changes of power or a shift in structure. (McGarry, A., Davidson, R.J., etc., 2016, p. 643) This can be applied to the study of security by analysing interactions of state leaders and state versus state interactions to determine the macro-level (or security structure) change over time.

Within security studies, structure and agency is more rarely applied due to its linkage with various IR theories, each theory containing an emphasis on either the power of structures (realists) or power of actors (constructivists) within the international system. The exception is in the work of Gruszczak on resilience and mitigation in security management. Duyvendak and

Jasper as well as McGarry and Davidson's demand for structure being a more fluid concept relate to Gruszczak's study, leading in to a security-based definition of structure. According to Gruszczak, an institutional structure must be static and active in its adaptation to events in its system, as resilience "embodies the transformative capability of the system exposed to sudden threats." (2016, p. 11) Gruszczak, similarly to Duyvendak and Jasper, makes the argument that the system's institutions are constantly changing, and a successful security arrangement that demonstrates resilience will hold portions of its structure steady while other parts adapt to respond to the changing system.

Other security studies that relate to structure and agency analyse the interaction between the two, focusing less on interpreting individual interactions like the sociologists and more on the interactions between states and the international order through security institutions. Security studies emphasise that structure versus agency standing on its own aids in answering questions about member states' abilities, reflecting on if they have the capability to act instead of examining state behaviour like IR theory. As an example of its application, Petersen applies structure versus agency to his study on individual actors' power to shape NATO, asking whether "the transatlantic alliance is structural in the sense of being resilient even in the face of wider, global power shifts." (ibid., p. 638) The question gets to the crux of regional security organisations and their relationship with the member states, pertaining exactly to this study's aim of determining political actors' ability to influence a regional security organisation. Studemeyer provides a broader example of how to apply the framework in his study of Estonia's place in NATO. Studemeyer analyses Estonia as a state within NATO's system; he demonstrates how a "periphery state" such as Estonia can gain agency within NATO, denoting that "peripheries do not have to remain peripheries forever." (2019, p. 789) Studemeyer argues that Estonia gained agency within the organisation through speech acts made after the invasion of Crimea in 2014, though he admits that certain geopolitical constructs—in this case US interests within NATO—can constrain a member states' ability to gain agency and influence within the organisation. (ibid., p. 795)

There has not been a study that applies the structure versus agency framework to Poland directly as of yet, though through other IR theory, Poland has been described as completely conforming to NATO's structure as a regional security provider. (Ciéslak, 2019; Zięba, 2020; Lanoszka, 2020) Other scholars, however, are not as confident in that conclusion on Polish

actions. For instance, Moldovan's research on the Polish NSS of 2014 shows that Poland has "questioned the sustainability of the Western rules of political behaviour, which threatened to compromise the rules on the international scene." (2018, p. 90) Lupitu as well argues that Poland has "transfigured as a pillar for NATO's continuous adaptation," urging that NATO must adapt to the environment and the demands of member states. (2016, p. 26) Therefore, instead of analysing state behaviour through IR theory, using the structure versus agency framework will allow this study to measure the ability of Poland to enact change, a study that is needed due to the conflicting opinions in literature and a lack of addressing the state's agency.

2.2   Polish Security Evolution

Previous literature on Polish security emphasises the impact Polish history continues to have on security policy and actions; therefore, any review of Polish security must include an excerpt on the history that continues to influence security decisions in the state. Historical legacy has, since the partition of Poland in 1772 by Prussia, Austria and Russia, remained a prominent feature of both foreign and security policies. (Zięba, 2020) Between partitions, occupations and foreign overseers, Polish history is marked by vigorous attempts to gain and then maintain independence against various actors, most notably Germany and Russia. Recent Polish security initiatives correlate to the crimes Poland faced during its time within the Soviet Eastern Bloc, during which Poland exemplified a "leading role in questioning the authoritarianism…and initiat[ing] several antisystemic crises—in 1956, 1970, 1976 and 1980-1981." (ibid., p. 2) Poland's history of foreign actors seizing the state and betraying promises of sovereignty has led to Poland to be a robust supporter of sovereignty for smaller and medium states today.

However, commonly found within Polish security literature is a critique of Poland's resolute position on overcoming the historical legacy of being a victim, this position preventing progression in its security policy. As scholar Zięba denotes, Poland is caught in a "Jagiellonian idea," or a pursuit to spread civilisation eastward. (2020, p. 16) This idea continues to today and has led to a tense rivalry with Russia, fuelling a constant animosity between the two states as Poland continues to urge its Western allies to push eastward. Indeed, literature on Polish security commonly includes criticism on Poland's "security obsession", the realist scholars often concluding that Poland's anti-Russian perspective could lead to a security dilemma in the East. (Moldovan, 2018, p. 94)

Zięba's theory of two enemies adequately explains the position Polish politicians, especially the PiS, take in making security decisions. This idea puts Poland squarely between Germany and Russia as a victim. (2020, p. 57) Claiming to be a victim and vehemently pushing against Russia has been consequential to the Polish prestige and agency. This can be seen in the Poles actions addressing the conflict in Ukraine, Zięba noting that Poland "stirred the conflict and…Poland's views counted for less and less in the confrontation between the West and Russian over Ukraine." (ibid., p. 184) Poland's aggressive response to the Ukraine invasion in 2014 and refusal to negotiate with Russia could be detrimental to its track record in NATO. Studemeyer explains that member states trying to gain influence in the organisation must be a "good citizen of NATO." Thus, scholars argue that Poland's influence within the security organisation could decrease if it becomes less willing to negotiate and more fervent against Russia. (2019, p. 795) Moldovan expands on the potential for a Polish-led security dilemma with Russia, showing that within Poland's 2014 NSS, deterrence is used to imply Poland will use "any possible means" to build up defences against the threat of Russia; certain NATO powers such as Germany do not support this method of addressing Russian aggression and think Poland is too extreme in this mindset. (2018, p. 94; p. 99) The historical legacy of Poland, therefore, is important to understand as it impacts all security decisions the state makes, particularly in its security position with Russia.

In correlation with discussions on the impact of historical legacy, scholars also emphasise the practice of lustration as a characteristic of Polish security. How to overcome the legacy of communism has been a longstanding question for the Eastern European states. In transitional democracy studies, the practice of lustration continues to be a popular study due to its controversial methods of rendering the communist past. Lustration is a controversial security reform that includes, according to Szczerbiak, "measure[s] directed against former functionaries of and collaborators with the state security apparatus" that can include "simply vetting or screening individuals for past associations with the communist security services without any sanction necessarily following." ('Deepening Democratisation…', 2016, p. 223) Poland in particular has changed its policies on lustration many times in the last five years since PiS came to power in 2015. Szczerbiak also asserts that Poland's lustration law is often connected to an intense political debate between the left and right-wing parties. ('A Model for Democratic Transition…', 2016, p. 428) Lustration thus is a combination of political and security reform, as

the 1997 lustration law coincides with the installation of both a new Constitution and multiple intelligence reforms, including the removal of the UOP internal intelligence agency. (Lefebrve, 2016, p. 497) It should be mentioned that no current literature draws connection between Poland pursuing lustration reform to the accession into NATO in 1999; this possible connection between security reforms and extreme lustration practices to fulfilling NATO requirements will be pursued as part of this study.

Regardless, many scholars are critical of lustration due to its connection to politics. Researchers Matei and Garcia denote that while there must be a certain degree of transparency within a new democracy and its security agencies to adequately transition to a proper civilian-intelligence relationship, lustration has a common problem of "political elites manipulat[ing] the process to acquire legitimacy and electoral gain, and/or blackmail, and eliminate political opponents." (2019, p. 726) Hardly the only scholar to support this view, Pintilescu also argues that lustration differs from denazification in only one way, that being that "the former secret agent is vulnerable to blackmail." (2014, p. 97) Any study of Polish security must include an investigation into lustration practices as they continue to be expanded on by specifically right-wing political parties in the name of protecting Polish sovereignty and overcoming the Polish legacy of being a victim.

Considering the background of historical legacy and lustration security implications, the year 2015, according to previous scholars, marked another year of rightist-led reform of internal security agencies after the surprising election outcome, again connecting politics to security in Poland. The 2015 election was the first election since 1989 that resulted in a political majority within the Sejm Parliament and the Presidency under PiS. (Szczerbiak, 2017, p. 405) Leading scholars of both Polish politics and internal security denote that 2015 marked a year of dramatic change in the state. (idid.; Dymek, 2016) Regardless of the reasons of its rise to power, right-wing PiS in Poland have proven to be more extreme in their reforms, following the pattern of previous right-wing leaders who were known to focus on lustration reform. (Lefebrve, 2016) Security in Poland, therefore, is largely interconnected with both history and political parties, with right-wing parties conducting more intensive security reforms.

To demonstrate the rapid evolution of Polish security reforms after 2015 and thus continuing to tie politics to security actions and reform in Poland, scholars such as Gruszczak provide important details on the extent of change taking place within the first year of PiS control.

Gruszczak presents his research critiquing PiS actions, using the pardoning of Minister Mariusz Kamiński as an example of an event that was in the PiS's favour and not the Polish public's, with Kamiński being pardoned from a charge of abuse of power only to be anointed to the position of Minister-Coordinator of Polish Special Services. (2017, p. 73) Gruszczak denotes that Kamiński is responsible for the ideas of "big reform" in Polish intelligence, including reshaping the ABW and AW intelligence agencies while dismissing many of their officers for the purpose of reconstructing "the intelligence community and 'cleaning of deposits' left by former Communist officers." (ibid., p. 76) Within this quote, one can tie a direct correlation to the goals of controversial lustration practices, demonstrating how overcoming the communist past impacts all aspects of Polish internal security reform. The cleansing and reform left a gap in Polish intelligence capability according to scholars on Polish internal security, this compounding with other factors that led to Poland carrying less weight in European security settings. As Bieńczyk-Missala notes: "events of 2015 undermined the image of Poland" in the face of common foreign policy and security, noting that the Polish authorities being sceptical towards welcoming refugees and the Constitutional Court changes overseen by PiS made Poland seem less willing to cooperate with EU partners. (2016, p. 106)

Overall, rightist security changes have been marked as remaining within the party's values of ridding Poland of Soviet-era (and now pro-Russian) officials and building defences against an aggressive Russia; however, most scholars agree the new policies are detrimental to Poland's national interests. Continued study must be made that take all these elements—historical legacy, the importance of the political shift in 2015, and the connection between security and politics—into consideration when analysing how Poland's security changes by PiS have impacted NATO as a security alliance structure.

2.3   Polish and NATO Security Relations

Literature on Polish/NATO relations shows a pattern of Poland including NATO as a cornerstone to ensuring its security and sovereignty, though contradictions on Poland's role in the organisation today present a need for new research. Scholars, while enforcing the idea that Poland will always be a dedicated member to the organisation, debate whether the state continues to be shaped by NATO as it has in the past, or if the state has gained a greater ability to influence the organisation in the past few years. In this section of the review, literature on how

NATO shaped Polish security in the 1990s and 2000s is presented as a lead into the current debate in studies over Poland's ability to lead and influence NATO today. The section also includes scholars' explanations of other actors and events that have impacted the Poland/NATO dynamic.

In the 1990s, researchers agree that NATO helped to reshape Polish military and intelligence agencies around the organisation's security frameworks. Espstein describes the changes to the military in his article analysing how NATO rewrote the role of the Polish military. According to Epstein, "NATO accelerated the consolidation of democratic civilian control in Poland by removing key elements of the Polish military tradition." (2016; 2006, p. 255) These military traditions included military leaders acting in political leadership roles which did not comply with NATO standards. (ibid., p. 257) Epstein's research agrees largely with Cieślak's study on NATO's impact on the Polish Armed Forces. Through an analysis of Polish and NATO's strategic concepts in the 2000s, Cieślak concludes his study noting the strategic concepts reveal that Polish Armed Forces and security at large had been shaped by NATO, the evidence being in the Armed Forces professionalisation and modernisation to keep up with NATO standards. (2019, p. 27) Thus, according to most scholars, Polish security has been reformed largely to fit within the structure of NATO before and during early years of its membership, supporting the realist argument that states do not have much agency in larger security organisations.

It would be a mistake, however, to not acknowledge the events and other actors that influence and impact the evolution of Poland's role in NATO. Previous literature highlights the events in Ukraine in 2014 as a turning point for NATO as well as for Poland's role in the Alliance. Scholarship on the events in Ukraine in 2014 mark the year as a year of change and a confirmation of the Polish-realist perspective of NATO as a traditional collective security provider with a special focus on Article 5 of the Alliance, rather than emphasising a wider political role for NATO. (Lupitu, 2016, p. 53) However, Poland's role in decisions taken after 2014 are controversial. Zięba says that Ukraine offered a visible weakening of Poland's role as the state turned more to the US for security instead of its European allies as a result of PiS gaining the majority in the Polish government. (2020, p. 4) Bieńczyk-Missala, meanwhile, points out that 2014 resulted in a dramatic increase of security forces in Poland and a change in the Polish and US relationship; the change in relationship is shown through President Obama's visit

to Warsaw in 2014 in which he stated that "Poland will never stand alone." (2016, p. 107) Lupitu concurs with Bieńczyk-Missala, highlighting that the Readiness Action Plan of NATO published in 2014 states that Poland is a "mainstream piece" of NATO's military, thereby exemplifying 2014 as the event that earned Poland more recognition and potentially more agency within the organisation. (2016, p. 54)

Mixed into the puzzle of events' impact on Polish/NATO relations is the leading foreign actor in Polish security relations: the US. The US is consistently labelled as either the director of Polish security actions or actor on which Polish security is based. Gruszczak mentions that for Poland's internal security, gaining the security assurance of the US has always been a priority of policy and strategy. (2017, p. 69) Zięba expands on a more dependent definition of the relationship, marking Poland as a clientistic character whose political leadership makes decisions based on political criteria of maintaining the US relationship instead of technical and military considerations. (2020, p. 22) Thus, Poland seems less likely to be able to gain influence in an organisation that is largely controlled by the U.S., as it gets its security policy directly from the actor. However, Moldovan gives Poland credit in that "Warsaw has been pursuing over the years the internationalisation of Poland's security and defence policy," a pursuit that has been more successful since the events in Ukraine in 2014. (2018, p. 95) Considering the achievement of gaining US troops stationed along the eastern flank of NATO in 2016, an action that Polish leaders had been vying for since 2010 (Zięba, 2020, p. 67), Moldovan's argument stands with Lupitu's reiteration that the Readiness Action Plan of NATO (published in 2014) included Poland as a needed state for security along the eastern flank; according to these scholars, Poland had gained agency through NATO's and the US's adoption of Polish security policy needs of building defences against Russia. (Lupitu, 2016) However, no current scholar has explicitly tested Poland's agency in NATO against the power of events, such as the invasion of Ukraine in 2014, and foreign actors, such as the US This research will therefore remain cognizant of the possible effect of these potential outside catalysts while analysing Poland's agency within the Alliance.

As demonstrated through literature on 2014 and changing Polish/US relations, however, over the 2000s and especially in more recent times, some scholars have argued that Poland's ability to influence and even shape NATO's security policies is growing. Within this argument, scholars can be broken into critics of NATO as well as critics of Polish security policies.

Allowing member states more input has fallen under some criticism, Seagle denoting that allowing member states more agency allows for the politicisation of the Alliance, leading to a "lack of mutual trust and state tendencies to keep intelligence 'in house.'" (2015, p. 560) While the power of common norms Seagle backs may be too similar to constructivism for the realist researchers to support, many do support that NATO needs to develop a common threat perception between its members to uphold the structure of the Alliance and coherence in how security policies are applied in each state. (Seagle, 2015; Lupitu, 2016; Tardy, 2020) NATO therefore has been criticised by researchers for allowing members to gain agency and for its lack of ability to assure the security of its members.

Poland's place in the Alliance is up for debate as well. Lupitu adamantly argues within the realist paradigm that Poland is acting within the international system that demands it to support NATO security structures to remain secure itself; however, Lupitu also admits to Poland having some agency, describing the state as playing a "central role" in managing the events of 2014 in Ukraine. (2016, p. 27) 2014 again proving to be a pivotal year in developing Poland's role within the organisation, Lupitu's research shows that "Warsaw has been a resilient ally within NATO" since the crisis began, supporting and taking leadership roles in most NATO initiatives. (ibid., 32) Tardy, meanwhile, supports that NATO's structure is fluid, denoting that the organisation is shaped by the needs of its member states and by the environment of the region it is positioned in. (2020, p. 5) Tardy marks 2014 then as a turning point in which NATO is reacting to the events in its environment in shifting the NATO security structure back to the deterrence framework of security and not giving agency to individual member states. Fighting back against the power of the structure and elements outside of actors shaping the security frameworks, Bocse analyses Poland's ability to shape NATO through its impact on NATO's energy security policies. Bocse concludes that "states play an important role in setting up international institutions as well as defining and redefining their functions," remarking that in the case of energy security, "smaller states can trigger institutional change when they align their positions." (2020, p. 439; p. 450)

Thus, it is not conclusive within the literature the ability that Poland or any other member state within the Alliance has to change the structure of security in NATO. In the 1990s, it is clear within the studies that Poland shaped its internal security, specifically its military, to fit the requirements of NATO's security structures. However, 2014 marked a change for both the

Polish/US relationship and the Polish/NATO relationship. How this impacted the role of Poland within NATO is not clear within literature, as scholars debate on Poland's weakened role versus its enhanced agency through the US Therefore, a study focused exclusively on Poland's agency as an actor within NATO, taking into consideration the possible effects of 2014 and US influence on the state, is needed to determine how changes to Polish security could then evolve NATO security structures.

2.4   Final Overview of Previous Studies

Throughout this literature review, the obvious lack of a conclusive agreement between scholars on Poland's role within NATO following 2014 and its agency in shaping the organisation is evident. Questions surface when going through the literature on how NATO has responded to the internal changes enacted by the PiS after 2015, changes such as lustration resulting in the reorganisation of Polish intelligence agencies; this study seeks to answer such questions using NATO and Polish documents, news media and three interviews with experts on Polish security. Previous literature does point to some important themes that must be considered during this study, such as how the need to overcome the communist past and claim victim to past transgressions has impacted Poland's changes and image within the Alliance, as well as to whether the Eastern European states gained agency as a whole due to the events of 2014. The literature demonstrates that one must not forget the other factors impacting Polish security relations with NATO, but that internally Poland has many factors influencing its own security decisions. This study aims to answer the questions that arose during the literature review to analyse Poland's agency within the NATO alliance structure, taking into consideration all internal and international factors that may influence agency.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Design

This project has triangulated its research methods by using three method types for the study. Pursuing a multi-pronged research approach will produce more robust results of research, each method filling in the gaps left by the others' inadequacies. Thus, applying multiple methods has been viewed by other scholars as producing the most reliable and valid studies. (Pashakhanlou, 2017, p. 448) The research of this dissertation will use qualitative analyses due to the research questions pertaining more to the interpretations of sources and gaining perspective of how each actor views Poland's position in NATO rather than quantitatively measuring reactions to the four events. The qualitative approach will be applied through a document analysis, a news media analysis and elite interviews to offset the challenges of each method, forming a more cohesive reflection on the changing dynamics of the Polish/NATO relationship compared through a common protocol of research. This methodology section will be divided into two parts covering the document and news media analysis in the first portion and the interviews in the second. The combined sections provide an overview of a how the methods will be compared and contrasted through the common protocol to measure the agency of Poland in NATO's regional security organisation structure.

3.1   Documents and News Media

In this first section, the process the project incorporates in its study for document and news media analysis is presented and justified. The benefits of the document method of analysis suit the study well, as Burnham writes that through document analysis one can see how policy is made and gain the "department view instead of solely the individual." (2008, p. 202) The nature of the study involves using the Polish government in 2015/2016 as a unit of analysis instead of individuals within the PiS party; this is due to NATO's structure addressing each state as a state through its government, not by individual. Thus, Burnham's point of documents allowing a department view adheres to the needs of the study to measure the agency through PiS's security actions and events in 2015/2016 and how this conforms to or tests NATO's structure. Because this project centres on analysing Poland's agency after the political shift to the right in 2015 and how that could or could not impact NATO's structure, analysing Polish government documents alongside NATO documents ensures that these organisations' perspectives as a whole are compared. This will benefit the project in being able to derive differences in meaning behind the

actions PiS took in 2015/2016, and how Poland's role in the Alliance is changing not by individual actors, but by political party influence.

Meanwhile, news media sources allow for the study to analyse the responses of all member states to the events through a less screened source. As Van Puyveld states in his work on studying intelligence, government documents are often "tailored for public dissemination…that is constrained by political and bureaucratic imperatives." (2018, p. 377) Though less reliable due to an inevitable bias dependent upon the audience the news source is written for, this issue for news articles will be overcome by comparing the articles to details found within other sources analysed through the other methods as well as through noting each news sources' alignment and motives during the analysis. The inevitable bias will also be overcome by gathering a variety of news sources with various motives in producing the articles. The new sources used in this study are as follows: the AtlanticCouncil.org (NATO news source), DefenseNews.com (Western Europe and U.S. news source), Gazeta Wyborcza (left-wing Polish news source), Rzeszpospolita (moderate-conservative Polish news sources) and wPolityce (right-wing and PiS supporting Polish news source). By balancing the politically-aligned sources and studying the Western media sources as well, the project will be able to provide more voice from each entity and a real time reaction to the events analysed.

One of the key issues of a document and news media analyses methods are the limitations of time for completing a project, especially when applying a qualitative approach to the analysis. Thus, producing and applying a protocol for data collection is essential to providing the study with a structure that enables a comparison of sources from which conclusions can be drawn. A protocol being a "way to ask questions of a document," it guides a researcher through each document by outlining how each source answers questions, those answers then being compared against each other to produce results. (Altheide, 2013, p. 7) However, a researcher must be careful to continuously adapt the protocol as data comes in so as to avoid missing details that may fall outside of the original protocol.

This study's protocol centred around the four events taking place in Poland as a result of the 2015 election of the PiS-majority government, all impacting Polish security and correlating with NATO in security matters. All these events, listed within the introduction, were selected because of their controversiality within Poland and their connection to internal security changes PiS pursued in their first year of governance. Though these four events shaped the original

design of the research, particular attention was paid to other events that impacted NATO/Polish relations as well, suiting Altheide's suggestion that researchers must look outside the protocol or exclude certain key words used by the protocol to gain a more well-rounded, comprehensive study. (2013, p. 6) Thus, while phrases surrounding the four events above were applied in searches both in Polish and in English, searches also included broad sweeping terms for each event; as an example, terms such as "lustration", "communism" and "Institute of National Remembrance" were used to search publications surrounding lustration actions taking place within the Polish Ministry of National Defence in 2016. The process of including repeated terms changed the selection protocol over time, as more common phrases were found and included with the mention of certain events. For instance, reference to Minister of Defence Antoni Macierewicz, who frequently made comments on each of the events taking place, was included as well in all the event searches. The process of adding terms that frequently made an appearance to the search was performed when searching through document databases in Polish and in English, as well as when searching through the five news sources between 2015 and 2016.

While evolving the selection protocol, research on source availability took place, dictating what the research could and could not include. Accessibility is important to consider in any document research, as some sources, such as government reports, could be written with the public in mind. (Van Puyvelde, 2018) More frequently less well-recognised government departments are used for research to attain a less constrained, more accurate depiction of government views. (Burnham, 2008, p. 204) This study therefore incorporated documents from the Official Journal of the Ministry of National Defence and the Polish Journal of Law to gain the Polish government's (PiS) perspective on the events taking place. These two sources used a search bar through which the protocol on events could be applied. From NATO, the Warsaw Summit Guide of 2016 was compared to the Wales Summit Guide of 2014 to see how NATO had changed between the years of political party shift and what impact Poland hosting the Warsaw Summit had on the Alliance, a similar comparison also being made between the Polish NSS produced in 2014 and 2020, the later created by the PiS government. The Defence Concept of 2017 and the Foreign Policy Paper of 2017-2021 were also used to see the verbiage PiS used in comparison to the previous government when describing NATO security arrangements. NATO officials' speeches were also analysed and searched using the protocol to see how official leaders reacted to events taking place in Poland, if any reaction occurred. NATO Annual Reports

2014-2016 were included in analysis in comparison to the Polish government's documents while noting any information purposely left out about security events taking place in Poland.

A main issue of news media is its reliability; as a secondary source produced for the public, each news article is produced for a purpose and to fit a specific audience. (Burnham, 2008, p. 192) To overcome this obstacle in selecting news sources, the study applied the same protocols of the four events analysed within the document analysis to a search for news articles from various sources. These sources were selected with the intent of balancing the bias to see general patterns or contrast the differences between the sources. Given the politically charged climate in Poland during 2015-2016, this study incorporated three Polish media sources to see each side's perspective on the events as described previously. NATO news sources, which gathers NATO news from sources such as Politico and NATOSource, gave NATO's official news position on events transpiring; meanwhile, DefenceNews.com gave the western perspective of events in Poland without having to be cleared by NATO officials. Thus, each news source was balanced by others that had different goals in portraying the events taking place in Poland, leading to a more valid selection of sources that provide the immediate reaction of various entities to such events. Because of the balance and assurance of lessening the bias carried within the secondary news sources, along with using less publicly-analysed government and NATO documents, the document and news media analyses are reliable and valid methods for a qualitative analysis of gathering interpretations of security events inside Poland to see the overall reactions from which agency can be measured.

3.2   Elite Interviews

The final piece of this project relies on three key elite interviews. Interviews are a necessary component of the study because they directly suit the qualitative method of analysis at hand. According to Burnham, interviews "explore people's experiences, practices, values and attitude in-depth and establish their meaning for those concerned," correlating directly with the meanings and definitions that qualitative analysis is aiming to finalise. (2008, p. 247) However, this project has to address the long-standing issues with this method of study, that being issues in accessibility and reliability. Because the study is focused on a government entity (PiS) that is secretive in nature, the interviews being able to access information not available to the public through documents counters the negatives of the method and make it an essential piece to the

research. (Richards, 1996, p. 200) For this research, three academics of varying backgrounds on Polish/NATO security relations were interviewed, these academics having more access to the high-profile government officials than the study's researcher. These academics were selected based on their similarity in having knowledge on Polish security developments in 2015/2016, but having different framings for Polish security studies: an emphasis in Polish politics' impact on security, focus on Polish internal security and security strategy, and another in Polish security policy as part of the Central/Eastern European region within NATO. These various backgrounds of expertise balance the aspects of the study while linking the experts under the context of Polish security, dabbling in the political, the internal and the institutional aspects of the study.

The interviews were set up in a structured interview manner due to the need for the ability to compare the results easily to the data derived from the documents and news sources. These questions were developed from the same protocol used previously and was comprised of similar questions asked of the documents and news sources surrounding each of the four events and followed by more broad-based themes such as US influence on the Polish/NATO relationship and the effect of the events in Ukraine in 2014. By asking similar questions that the protocol asked of documents and news sources, a broad-based comparison could be set up between the various methods composing this research. For example, in comparing responses to the night-time entrance into NATO's CICOE in Warsaw, the research will be looking at the terminology used to describe the event from all sources while keeping in mind any absence of documenting the event in certain sources.

Having chosen a structured interview style, there are certain negatives and positives that must be acknowledged. The structured interview will limit any extra knowledge that may be achieved by going outside of the questions; however, in a qualitative analysis where reliability is frequently questioned, this ensures that the study is more replicable and maintains consistency across the methodology. The ethical component of the study is also maintained through this structure, as all experts were given the opportunity before their interviews to overview a participant information form with the subjects they would be asked about as well as allotted time to ask questions of the researcher, all requirements for the ethics approval process. The study also includes a concluding open-ended question at the end of each interview asking the interviewee if they could think of other major contributing events that shaped Polish security and impacted the Polish/NATO relationship, or if they have any concluding thoughts on Polish

agency within NATO's structure. This final question allows for some flexibility of the interviewees to expand upon other elements that the researcher may not have thought of to include in the study, making it more valid and justifiable.

3.3   Methodology Conclusions

This research has taken many precautions against the common challenges each of the methods can present, balancing each challenge with a benefit from another method. The study demands a qualitative design, as security relations between Poland and NATO would not be stated outright but in the meaning behind the speeches made, documents developed and what is said behind closed doors. Since qualitative analysis is best suited for interviewing and document analysis methods because of the amount of interpretation applied to these methods, qualitative analysis establishes another commonality between each of the methods used to better derive meaning from the data collected. While reliability within qualitative analysis is often questioned, this research methods' usage of a common protocol between all methods of study provides cohesion and a common template from which comparisons can be made and analysed between the four events and other common themes arising from studying the four events. Using verbiage surrounding the four events, while also allowing for new verbiage to enter the protocol as research continues, allows for the reaction of both Poland and other NATO member states to demonstrate the agency of Poland within NATO's structures.

Chapter 4: Distinguishing Internal from Organisational Matters

  As noted in the introduction, this chapter begins the three-part presentation of evidence for analysis. A common trend in Polish politics, becoming more noticeable since 2015, is the politicization that now divides Polish society. Within the internal security events sitting at the heart of this study, this political divide is evident in Polish reactions to these events, both left and right-wing manipulating the event to portray their party favourably: "everyone has an angle" as Szczerbiak denotes in his interview (2021), a warning for researchers on Polish security to distinguish between the politically-biased noise. Found within NATO documents, Western news media and three elite interviews on the four security events is a distinct attempt by NATO to disregard the internal political squabble of the security happenings while holding Poland to the security structures of the Alliance. Indeed, within NATO annual reports, summit guides, and NATO leaders' speeches, NATO does not mention these internal events besides the Warsaw Summit of 2016—a stark contrast to the Polish legal and Ministry of National Defence documents which outline certain events and explain their legality from the PiS perspective. Similar trends can be noted within western and Polish news media and each elite interview, NATO refusing to engage in the internal security matters while the Polish side debates between the two political positions. However, the sources from the Polish side also portray the importance of maintaining Poland's place within NATO and adhering to NATO's overarching security policies within its structure. In this chapter, therefore, evidence of NATO robustly maintaining its structural integrity and thus placing limitations on Poland's actions even as the controversial internal events take place is evident due to Poland continuing to adhere to NATO's structure.

  The first set of documents studied in this research are noticeably lagging in containing mention of the internal Polish security events, instead emphasising the need to uphold the structure of the Alliance. Only the Warsaw Summit is brought to attention, spoken of without mention of any individual states with the blatant exception of the US. This becomes a commonality within the NATO documents studied: US interests are intertwined with NATO's structure while other individual state matters are kept out of the organisation's papers, instead emphasising the Alliance as a whole. As an example of this, in the NATO Annual Report of 2014 the report repeatedly calls for a maintenance of a "robust and agile NATO command structure." (NATO, 2015, p. 6) Appeals for supporting the structure are often followed by a call to support missions (mainly in Afghanistan) and an emphasis on the importance of monetary

contributions from member states; these key activities and contributions by members are known concerns of the US, showing that the structure of NATO is influenced heavily by US interests. These patterns continue in the Annual Reports of 2015 and 2016 as well, urging all members support a structure that is based on the US interests of monetary funding and missions like Afghanistan. (ibid.; NATO, 2016)

Within the annual reports, summit guides and key NATO leaders' speeches, Poland is mentioned individually only when the Secretary General of NATO comments on how the state contributes to "our missions and operations." (NATO, 'Joint Press Conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Witold Waszczykowski', 2016) Secretary General Stoltenberg repeats this in speeches on May 30, 2016 and July 7, 2016 as well, noting how the state's involvement "shows Poland's leadership" and that "Poland has become a driving force" in terms of "contributions" to NATO. (NATO, 'Joint Press Conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Polish President Andrzej Duda', 2016; NATO, 'Joint Press Conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda…', 2016) While using the terms "leadership" and "driving force" implies a type of agency in Poland's ability to influence and drive NATO adaptations, each are linked to Poland contributing to the missions and operations decided upon by NATO as a whole and largely with the interests of the US in mind. Thus, Poland is not creating a change in NATO, but contributing to an already established structure that is largely influenced by US interests.

As described previously, the only security event portrayed within these NATO documents is the Warsaw Summit of 2016. The Summit is most commonly mentioned in terms of the importance of Summit decisions for the Alliance at large, and again does not mention Poland individually. Even when the Secretary General notes that his first visit as Secretary General was to Poland while speaking with the Polish PiS president, President Duda, during the Summit, he remarks that the visit was warranted because Warsaw is a "very important Summit." (NATO, 'Joint Press Conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda…', 2016) In terms of the controversial actions of Poland, the security events are ignored, the only comments from leaders being on the topic of changes to the Polish court institutions that are questionable in terms of upholding the rule of law. However, even this topic is left out of NATO discussions: when asked about the rule of law transgressions at a news conference, Secretary General Stoltenberg states that the Alliance is "committed to the

values on which it was founded." (NATO, 'Joint Press Point with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda…', 2016) Noticeably, NATO high officials such as Stoltenberg refuse to criticise Poland for its questionable actions even when directly asked. This combined with the lack of official commentary on any of the controversial events shows that as long as states are adhering to NATO's structure and contributing to missions and operations, the internal actions of states do not inhibit NATO's functioning nor warrant a response from the Alliance.

Moving to the Polish security documents, the continuity of Poland adhering to NATO's security structure despite the change in politics is evident. For example, in the NSS of 2014, statements such as the strategy being "consistent with strategies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation" are continually mentioned, making conforming with NATO structure a key part of Polish security before the 2015 election. (National Security Bureau, 2014, p. 7) This does not change in the NSS written by the PiS in 2020, with the only key difference being in how the new government views working with the EU (a dimension that will be explored more in chapter five). Continuity, however, is upheld in how NATO is discussed, with a key goal of the PiS strategy being to "build (the) transatlantic bond with Poland's position within its structures." (National Security Bureau, 2020, p. 23) The Defence Concept of 2017 and Foreign Policy Strategy of 2017-2021 reflect the same position, conforming Poland to NATO structure and NATO security needs; this is viewed as the best way to ensure Polish security regardless of the political party in power in the state.

Meanwhile, in Polish laws and in the Ministry of National Defence government papers, the removal of the head of the NATO CICOE in Warsaw, lustration actions in internal security agencies and the Warsaw Summit of 2016 are all mentioned; however, these controversial security events are described based on how they adhere to NATO policy and international law. Thus, PiS through these laws and government papers demonstrate that the overall security changes still conform with NATO structure and that conforming is important to the party. For example, Item 1318 on reforms within the Military Intelligence and Counterintelligence Agencies (which resulted in applying the newly expanded 1997 Criminal Code on lustration to these agencies) the activities pursued by the Internal Security Agency in investigations relating to the Criminal Code must adhere to "international agreements by which the Republic of Poland is bound" and must be "in line with NATO orders." ('Item 1318: Notice on the publication …',

2016, p. 5) This notice on lustration thus ties the new Polish provisions to NATO's structure, thus demonstrating a need by the PiS government to justify their changes and ensure that they stay within the bounds of the Alliance.

Another key example is in result of the dismissal of the head of the CICOE in Warsaw. In Item 591, a government statement coming in June of 2016 six months after the event transpired, PiS "expressed its consent" to the agreement on the CICOE that was made on September 29, 2015. Moreover, in Item 590, a memorandum of understanding, PiS takes it one step further and reiterates how personnel can be dismissed from the Centre only if all states working in the Centre agree to the dismissal. ('Item 590: Memorandum of Understanding…', 2016) Although the removal of the head of the facility was highly controversial, these statements and memorandums show PiS is attempting to conform within the NATO guidelines for Centres of Excellence. The pattern of including statements assuring NATO structure is continued within other government items on the Warsaw Summit as well; all these items, then, show that with all security events taking place in Poland, the PiS takes special care to frame them to fit NATO standards.

Transitioning now to the news media source analysis, within the western-published sources a similar message to what was found in the NATO documents can be found: reminders to follow the structure of NATO. However, in these western news outlets are slight messages of concern for the happenings in Poland, showing that in the more open commentary networks Poland did gain attention for actions taken by the PiS. To demonstrate western sources keeping a distance from Polish security events, firstly, is a common quote on what should take place at the Warsaw Summit in which it is stated that NATO's adaptation should include Eastern Allies contributing to missions in the South because the "value of NATO is unity." (Mehta, 2016) Thus, all member states must continue to adhere to the policies of NATO covering all parts of its territory regardless of individual state security concerns. In another article interviewing General Pavel at the end of 2015, Pavel states that NATO "does not get involved" in individual states' security during peacetime, making it known that NATO does not intervene in member states unless a major military event were to take place. (Clevenger, 2015)

Western sources, again like the NATO documents, also highlight American leadership repeatedly with no mention of other individual member states. In an article written by Secretary General Stoltenberg, it is stated that NATO "need(s) American leadership…we need to recognise the value of partnership between America and Europe" while reporting on the increase in

exercises following the Warsaw Summit. (Stoltenberg, 2016) These statements are often included in news articles on the outcomes of the Warsaw Summit, making it known that the U.S. is a needed part of NATO's structure. Not including mention on individual states provides a key example of NATO keeping other states out of the power structure of the organisation.

The key difference between the NATO documents and Western news articles is how they respond specifically to each of the security events in Poland. Articles on Polish lustration, the "raid" on the CICOE and the Warsaw Summit (with the pardoning of Minister Kamiński continuing to be absent) reflects on NATO's distancing strategy while also including a shocked or concerned verbiage. For instance, the resignation of Polish generals in 'Polish Government Rocked by Resignations of Several Generals' uses the word "rocked" to describe the reaction to the resignation from other member states. It also is reported as an internal Polish change that resulted from Minister of National Defence Macierewicz's "crusade to stamp out all traces of the communist era." (Agence France-Presse, 2016) These resignations are tied to lustration activities in Poland led by PiS actors like Minister Macierewicz; however, the shock in it is very dismal and it is overall described as an internal issue. There are no connections made from this lustration activity, nor any other lustration activity reported, to Poland's ability to perform its NATO duties within the NATO and western news sources.

This pattern continues in mentioning other internal Polish security events such as the "raid" on NATO's CICOE in Warsaw. This term "raid" is used by two articles to describe the event, showing an air of unease on how the replacement of Colonel Dusza took place. (NATOSource, 2015; Adamowski, 2015) In 'Polish Defense Minister Says Raid On NATO Center Agreed With Slovakia', statements from Minister of National Defence Macierewicz are quoted as saying that the effort was "to replace senior military officials it considers as backed by the previous centre-right government." (Adamowski, 2015) The usage of the quote from Macierewicz marks this raid as part of an internal political procedure, separating it from NATO commentary. Macierewicz also was quoted as noting that the Slovakian Defence Ministry was also told of the event, making the 'raid' in line with NATO Centre of Excellence protocols. In the article 'Poland Raids NATO Center in Warsaw,' there is more concern shown, calling it "dramatic" and reporting that the event has been denounced by the "previous head" of the facility. (NATOSource, 2015) However, following this hint of concern, this article quotes the official NATO statement made about the occurrence: "This is an issue for the Polish

authorities…centres of excellence are international research centres…but they are not NATO bodies." (Ibid.) Besides the statement firmly separating this security change in Poland as an internal matter not warranting the attention or concern of NATO, no other individual member state nor their security agencies make comments on the event either, portraying a strong resistance to commenting on internal affairs.

The Warsaw Summit, meanwhile, shows the influence that NATO continues to have over Poland regardless of the political shift. In a video published by Defence News on the outcomes of the Warsaw Summit, when asked if Poland had gained agency through the Summit, Brzezinski notes that the summit highlighted how Poland "want[s] to be a leader" but must "contribute to missions in all areas" to get there. (Mehta and Brzezinski, 2016) Again, Poland has to abide by NATO structure and contribute in all areas in order to gain a leadership role, the video disclaiming that Poland is currently not a leader but desires to be one. This happens again in 'NATO Urged to Have Military Presence on Eastern Flank'" about the defence minister meeting preceding the Warsaw Summit. In this article, it is stated that Poland "has pressed especially hard" for a permanent presence in Eastern Europe; following this, it is noted that "NATO is studying two possible plans," both of which do not include permanent presence in Eastern Europe. (Villarejo, 2016) This demonstrates how PiS is striving to be recognised more within NATO, but does not achieve its desires and instead must adhere to the decisions made by other member states.

Within the Polish news sources, however, a deep contrast is evident between what is stated in the Western media. Polish news media sources report each of the security events taking place in depth with a definite divide between the political parties on reporting. The entrance into the CICOE, for example, is labelled as a "night-time invasion" (Czuchnowski and Kublik, 2016), a "breaking in…under the cover of darkness" (Czuchnowski, 2016) and a "brawl over" the centre (Czuchnowski, 2015) by the left-wing Gazeta Wyborcza news source. wPolityce, moreover, represents a pro-government stance by labelling it as an "introduc[tion] (of) the new acting director" ('Overnight battle for NATO counterintelligence…', 2015) and a "replacement" activity ('Waszczykowski: Replacement at NATO Center…', 2015). The moderate conservative source, meanwhile, reports that the colonel was "dismissed" and that PiS "does not guarantee…a clear level of predictability" because of how the replacement transpired. (Biernacki, 2015) Similar to NATO sources, the moderate conservative news source Rzeszpospolita includes an air

of caution while portraying the PiS government's view that this event was indeed a "replacement," a much calmer narrative than the "invasion" and "brawl" from the left-wing news sources. While giving a slight warning, this shows how the security events were largely debated in internal political circles rather than presenting a risk to NATO.

Lustration events and the Kamiński pardoning follow the same pattern; the left-wing articles attempting to use the events to demonstrate the PiS's questionable abilities to defend Poland and be a solid ally, while the right-leaning articles claim that every action taken is well within the laws of Poland and statutes of organisations like NATO. The articles on the Warsaw Summit concur with this political divide as well, the left claiming that the lack of permanent bases in Poland is a failure of the PiS, while the right shows that rotational bases and forces placed on the eastern flank as a result of the Summit are a success coming out of their leadership and negotiations within NATO. Rzeszpospolita then provides a more politically objective view demonstrating Poland's main focus when at the Warsaw Summit: Poland will give priority to bilateral relations with the US, "but this approach cannot be seen as an alternative to NATO." (Balcer and Buras, 2016) The statement notes concern, but overall Poland adheres to the US and remains a solid ally to NATO.

Finally, Poland's agency staying miniscule and PiS staying well within NATO structure is made evident in three elite interviews with experts on NATO/Polish relations, Polish politics and Polish internal security developments. When asked about the pardoning of Minister Kamiński, lustration, and the events at the Warsaw CICOE, these three experts all proclaimed these events internal to Poland. Gruszczak explained this in detail, noting that since Polish "tasks and objectives as a NATO member state were unhindered," NATO kept treating Poland as a "sovereign state" in the aftermath of these events. (2021) This idea of sovereignty continues as the Former U.S. Government Official said that only "expressions of concern" could be given over any of the events if any NATO official commented at all; these expressions were reserved mostly for the Polish internal institutional changes to the courts, however, not the security events and actions taking place within Poland. (2021) Szczerbiak continues the discussion by noting that the internal security matters were issues more for internal political tensions, and if they were discussed by NATO this took place in "back channels." (2021) Expanding on Szczerbiak's idea of "back channels," Gruszczak reports that there is an "official discourse of statements" for NATO relations with states, and that in this official discourse there was no reaction to internal

matters of Polish security. (2021) It is an important concept to be presented, that NATO makes certain that internal matters, even ones that may impact NATO's security, are kept out of the NATO official discourse due to the clause of sovereignty within the organisation, a key part of its structure. (NATO, 1949)

The Warsaw Summit is the only difference between the experts in the interview. The former U.S. Government Official and Szczerbiak highlighted the brief issues between Poland and NATO before and during the event. For example, it was pointed out by the former U.S. Government Official that the Summit was almost moved to a Baltic capital since NATO officials were "concerned about the changes in Poland." (2021) This rumour of moving the Summit was reported in Gazeta Wyborcza as a sign of PiS isolating Poland and was also reported by wPolityce as a false report and ridiculous notion. However, the Official, who had been working for the US Secretary of State at the time, portrays that the move was seriously considered, an example that NATO did not agree with the rule of law changes and contemplated addressing the situation. This Official, moreover, reports that the "political capital" of such a move would cost too much, demonstrating again the rigidness of keeping internal shifts in security policy caused by politics outside of the Alliance. (Ibid.) Szczerbiak, meanwhile, points out that President Obama made statements that were against Poland during the Summit. (2021) Szczerbiak noted that this is not much to worry about, as PiS has a strategy for overcoming negative statements and that their relations with the US was stable regardless of these negative comments.

Gruszczak is the only expert that proclaimed the summit "a political success for Poland," because the decisions "that were deployed in Poland did matter." (2021) Gruszczak being the most internal expert of Polish security, he provides an inward Polish view on the Summit that overall made Poles feel more secure. However, the reason for this "success" is described by all elites as more of a result of the US change in orientation to the East rather than Poland having agency. Szczerbiak even comments that "to some degree" EU powers shifting also had an impact; the former U.S. Government Official agreed and highlights that Germany's "180 degree shift" on Moscow relations served as a key catalyst in changing NATO strategies in the East. (2021; 2021) So once again, the leading powers in NATO are seen to have a greater impact on NATO security structure than Poland, whose controversial internal changes made NATO officials question Warsaw holding the Summit. Overall, these experts all concur that the events of 2014 in Ukraine, while putting Poland in a sort of "driver's seat," PiS was "pushing at an open

door" in terms of strengthening NATO's eastern flank. (Former U.S. Government Official, 2021; Szczerbiak, 2021) This is largely due to the key powers of NATO changing their previous position on Russia, generating an adaptation of NATO structure. So while Poland "was fulfilling its tasks upon the treaties and international conventions," it did not gain agency and instead stayed within NATO structures contributing to all areas of concern for the Alliance.

Drawing together evidence from the documents, news media and the three elite interviews, Poland's PiS, while making changes to security, stayed outside of influencing NATO's structure as NATO denoted them (when addressing them) as internal events to Poland. What is demonstrated clearly, especially in the news media, is the internal political skirmishes that followed each security event. NATO, in its documents, articles and in the statements from the experts in the interviews makes clear that these are internal matters to Poland, separating itself and preserving state sovereignty within the organisation. In the next chapter, the impact of the US and Western European powers' shifting their views on Russia after 2014 are expanded on; the expansion then demonstrates how PiS's emphasis in relating to the Eastern European states and the US over the Western European powers negatively impacted Poland's agency, showing how relations within NATO can damage agency rather than a state's relations with the organisation as a whole.

Chapter 5: Shifting State Relations Within NATO

While Poland's rightward shift did not impact its dedication to NATO standards and operations, as is evident in all types of sources, it did change the dynamics of bilateral and regional state relations within the Alliance. While studying the security changes transpiring within Poland, strategies of PiS in terms of bilateral and multilateral relations were shown to affect the agency of the state. A strategy of PiS to gain agency in the security field within NATO is to emphasise the connection it has to its Eastern and Central European partners which is seen in all Polish documents, news sources and within the interviews. Often, this connection to the partners ties to a victimisation of the post-Communist states by PiS by invoking a feeling of being "second class" or "new members" in NATO. (Gruszczak, 2021; wPolityce, 'Minister: Poland Wants NATO-Russia Deal Scrapped…', 2015) To its detriment, however, NATO allied states and leaders of the security organisation itself usually group Poland with Eastern European states (specifically the Baltics): instead of boosting Poland's agency, this decreases the ability of Poland to be recognised individually. Another shift in relations occurred between Poland and the top EU leaders, namely France and Germany. The tension between Western European allies and Poland worked against Polish interests, as evidence shows that Poland was often left out of strategic meetings involving these key powers even in discussions on Eastern European matters. Within this chapter, evidence of PiS's shift in relations with other member states of NATO shows its general decline in high contacts with key powers such as the US, France and Germany; the evidence thus also demonstrates that when measuring agency, state relations within security organisations can affect the agency of individual states in amounting changes to the structure of the Alliance.

Throughout the NATO Annual Reports of 2014-2016 and Summit Guides of 2014 and 2016, it is touted that forces and exercises are taking place in Eastern Europe while not distinguishing any one power. In the NATO Annual Report 2015, "planning and training" of eastern allies requires placing new headquarters in "the east." Along with this, Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Romania are all tied together in each one receiving NATO Force Integration Units. (NATO, 2015, p. 17) These mentions of how NATO is building up the East at large continues in all the other documents without mention of a single Eastern European state on its own. Speeches given by the Secretary General are no different and offer an even more blatant melding of these states. In a press conference with Secretary General Stoltenberg for the

inauguration ceremony in Riga, Stoltenberg is asked why Riga was chosen for the ceremony. (NATO, 'Joint Press Conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Lithuania…', 2015) His response was that the goal was to set up "small headquarters" that "link the eastern forces together," and that these headquarters were also set up in "five other countries" in Eastern Europe. Here, the Secretary General is careful to discuss the whole of Eastern Europe and not focus on a singular state even when directly asked. Similarly, in a press conference in Poland with President Duda, the Secretary General notes that while "there will be more NATO troops in Poland after the Warsaw Summit," the exercises are taking place all along the eastern flank of NATO. (NATO, 'Joint Press Conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Polish President Andrzej Duda…', 2016) NATO leadership acknowledges an individual state in the East only to tie it together with the whole of the Eastern European region, thereby limiting how individual states are recognised for their work in the Alliance.

In the Polish documents, PiS noticeably pushes for the strategy of using the whole of Eastern Europe to gain agency within the Alliance. The contrast between the NSS of 2014 written by the previous government compared to the NSS of 2020 provides an excellent example of this change in strategy. In NSS 2014, it is stated that Poland hopes to encourage "consolidation of the subjectivity of Eastern European countries." (NATO, 2015, p. 28) Statements on Eastern European consolidation are not common in the NSS of 2014, however, and are much more noticeable in the documents written by representatives of the PiS government. In the Defence Concept of 2017, Poland becomes the glue that holds Eastern Europe together, aiming to "serve as a unifying force of all Allied activities on the eastern flank." (The Ministry of National Defence, 2017, p. 10) Similar statements are used in the Foreign Policy Strategy of 2017 and NSS of 2020, where Poland, instead of encouraging all Eastern Europe to consolidate, is instead a driving force of Eastern European activities, shifting relations to more of a leadership role in the region.

The change in tactic to focus more on the East, however, can have a limiting effect on Poland's individual capacity building capabilities with NATO's refusal to recognise and react to the state individually. Part of this lack of recognition may be tied to the negative effect on Polish relations with the Western European powers this shift in relations focus had; while emphasising relations with Eastern Europe, Poland's attention to Western Europe is seen to be more negative.

This trend directly ties to Poland's ability to be part of the decision-making process in NATO and other security organisations. In Poland's Foreign Policy Strategy from 2017, for instance, the PiS targets the EU powers by stating there is "rising popular discontent in ever more member states mainly due to the establishment of a decision-making mechanism based on simple demographic weight." (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2017, p. 3) The NSS of 2020 also negatively comments on the EU powers, moving from the 2014 NSS that mentions wanting to build a "strong position of Poland" in both NATO and the EU to noting an "evolving" Polish relationship with European allies. (National Security Bureau, 2014, p. 11; National Security Bureau, 2020, p. 7) This evolving relationship has led Poland to focus on "actively…shaping EU policies in conformity with Polish interests" and criticising decisions like Nordstream 2 that "will generate risk" in Eastern Europe. (Ibid., p. 24; p. 8) Thus, PiS's papers distance itself from EU powers by criticising the EU for not considering the interests of those states from Eastern Europe and being controlled heavily by the demographic heavyweights such as Germany and France.

Poland's documents contrast with NATO's documents in this case, the annual reports and summit guides showing the Alliance moving to greater cooperation with the European powers, the EU specifically becoming a central feature in NATO's structure as an alliance. In the 2015 and 2016 Annual Reports, the EU repeatedly is mentioned as being a needed partner of NATO, with the need to increase cooperation with the organisation made prominent. (NATO, 2016; NATO, 2017) The pattern is followed in the summit guides, specifically increasing in prominence within the Warsaw Summit guide of 2016; within the guide, it is boasted that NATO has reached a "new level of reciprocal cooperation" with the EU. (NATO, 2016, p. 5) The Alliance thus is shifting to greater EU cooperation while Poland moves in the opposite direction, creating internal tension within the Alliance between Poland and key EU powers.

These findings of a shift away from the EU powers and a shift towards the Eastern European region states are all the more apparent in news sources. Polish sources criticise France and especially Germany while tying Poland more directly to the Eastern European allies. Meanwhile, Western news articles portray Poland as moving in an anti-Western direction with a tone of concern when writing articles on Poland individually; when not containing a concerned tone, Poland is grouped with a variety of Eastern European states.

News sources from Poland's Rzeszpospolita (the moderate-conservative news source), centring on NATO developments leading up to or following the Warsaw Summit focus on building up the strength of Eastern Europe as a whole also hint at the potential for worsening relations between Poland and the Franco-German axis. Examples of only mentioning the Eastern European states as a whole instead of individually can be seen in articles on the outcomes of the Warsaw Summit, noting that Russia "could destroy Poland or the Baltics," that Eastern Europe has experience with Russia and "Poland and the Baltics need reassurance," and lastly that the outcome of the Warsaw Summit resulted in "four battalions for Poland and the Baltics." (Villarejo, 2016; Mehta and Brzezinski, 2016; Adamowski, 2016) In all articles, Poland is tied to the Baltics and other Eastern European states when discussing NATO actions.

When Poland is mentioned individually, Rzeszpospolita portrays concern for Polish relations with the European powers, specifically with Germany. For example, in Defence News' article on Polish-German relations, it is warned that a concern of the European allies is that the state reverts back to its anti-German perspective that "led to [a] common perception throughout Europe that Poland was an unreliable and unstable partner" in 2005-2007 under the previous PiS government. (Twardowski, 2015) The article continues noting that President Duda has declared himself a "friend of Germany," though hints that the European allies must wait and see if this is true. An article from a year later reports that Poland has moved away from the European powers in rejecting the deal with France for the Caracal Helicopters, the Defence Minister spokesperson from France quoted as saying that "France has shown solidarity with Poland through the EU and NATO, but Warsaw has failed to reciprocate." (Tran, 2016) Other similar stories are reported as well, warning about the Polish turn away from the West followed by examples of this shift occurring between Poland and its Western European allies in the defence sector.

Meanwhile, Western media frequently publishes articles that contain quotes from PiS leaders demonstrating the strategy shift in focus away from Western Europe and towards Eastern Europe. In an article quoting the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Waszczykowski, he states that the 1997 NATO-Russia agreement should be "scrapped" since it is based on the "inequality" between old and new member states. (Agence France-Presse, 'Minister: Poland Wants NATO-Russia Deal Scrapped…', 2015) This correlates to PiS representatives frequently claiming Poland and Eastern European states are victims of unequal security guarantees within the Alliance, another tactic of the PiS to gain Eastern Europe's security priorities recognition within

NATO. The article continues to quote Minister Waszczykowski as he asks the Germans "whose comfort are you more concerned about? A state that is your NATO and EU ally or a non-member that is engaged in its third war?" In this question, Waszczykowski reflects another commonality in PiS foreign policy: blaming Germany for not achieving security prerogatives against Russia. In contrast, the Estonian president was quoted in another article as saying that there is "no need to uphold the 1997 agreement" because of the change in the security situation. (Agence France-Presse, 'Estonia President Presses for More NATO Troops', 2015) This shows that Eastern European states differ in how they argue the case against certain agreements, with the PiS statements coming across as harsher and accusatory in comparison.

The PiS leaders' criticisms of Germany and other EU powers becomes more aggressive in Polish newspaper sources on the left and on the right. Gazeta Wyborcza emphasises how the PiS is isolating Poland from these key allies while wPolityce shows that because of Western Europe not being reliable, they must switch strategies to focusing more on Eastern European allies. As an example of the left-wing strategy, when describing lustration activities in the Ministry Intelligence Services, Gazeta Wyborcza criticises Minister Macierewicz for placing people loyal to him in high positions, accusing some of these well-placed individuals as having Euroskeptic and anti-NATO opinions. (Czuchnowski, 'The Macierewicz Deal', 2016) This is seen as unforgivable and another reason to disapprove of Macierewicz's actions. The more blatant example comes from two articles surrounding lustration actions Macierewicz participated in, where Macierewicz is targeted as having anti-Western motives by "needlessly alienating France," the second article quoting Macierewicz in saying that "Russia is behind Germany's refusal to let American troops" through Poland. (Grochal and Kondzińska, 2015; Wieliński, 2016) Macierewicz is also quoted as having stated that opposition party leaders are weak and "succumb to the belief that you have to submit to the Germans, because they are the strongest. And the Russians, because they are the cruellest." What is common for Gazeta Wyborcza is how they point to Macierewicz and other PiS leaders tying the Germans to the Russians, making PiS leadership appear disillusioned and anti-German while negatively impacting Poland's position in the Alliance with relation to its German ally.

Moving to the PiS government-supporting news source, wPolityce claims that Poland and Eastern Europe are victims of inequality within the Alliance more frequently than Gazeta Wyborcza reports, propagating the feeling of being second class members in the Alliance. In this

way, PiS tries to bind the Eastern region states to gain more voice as a whole within NATO. However, often within the same articles, anti-EU power statements are also made, limiting the effect of any power grab PiS attempts through the Eastern European allies. wPolityce frequently contradicts itself in Polish-German relations, by writing that "relations between Warsaw and Berlin have improved," while in the same article noting how Merkel has "tramp[led] the interest of Poland…with her feet." (wPolityce, 'A Polish-German armored battalion…', 2016) The article is supposed to show that PiS has achieved better relations and better security through an improved Warsaw-Berlin relationship since PiS was elected; however, the article comes across as anti-German with how Merkel is described. This is again used in 'Before the NATO Summit…', in which PiS claims that Poland and other post-Communist states are victims of being overlooked as the 1997 agreement with Russia was made without these states but is still seen as valid. (Kostrzewa-Zorbas, 2016) After claiming to be victims, PiS criticises how East Germany transitioned to being a democracy, saying that "Poland together with the rest of the Visegrad Group…rejected all pressure and removed the (Soviet) Bloc cleanly." Not only does this tie Poland to the Eastern European allies: it shows how in PiS's perspective those in Eastern Europe are better than Germany.

Rzeszpospolita, meanwhile, points to how Poland is being left out of key negotiations within the alliance by reporting on meetings of key decisions that excluded PiS representatives. When the news source mentions NATO's actions, Poland is most frequently tied to other Eastern European states. For example, 'The Mission of Last Hope' describes a meeting with Russia before the Warsaw Summit taking place in Berlin, the first meeting with Russia since the invasion of Crimea in 2014. (Szoszyn, 2016) As a key discussion, only Germany, France, Ukraine and Russia were invited to the negotiations, leaving the US and Poland out of the event. This shows Poland to be separate from European matters just as the US is. In other articles coming later in 2016, Poland is left out of discussions once more and Angela Merkel and Francois Hollande are reported as "responsible on behalf of the EU for negotiations with Russia and Ukraine." (Słojewski, 2016) Thus, the key Western European states often negotiate with Putin on behalf of Eastern European powers, and this did not change as a result of Poland's shift in strategy led by PiS in 2015. Instead, Poland is tied to the other Eastern European powers, all frequently being labelled "at risk" together. (Balcer and Buras, 2016)

Moreover, it is within the interview answers that these themes become all the more pronounced. According to all experts when asked about the affects Crimea had on Poland's agency come 2015, all framed their answers in terms of what the Eastern European region gained. The former US Government Official states that the invasion of Crimea in 2014 reignited the "unfinished business" of Eastern Europe for NATO, and ultimately resulted in greater "engagement of the US and Europe" that "served Poland's advantage" rather than provide the state with more agency. (2021) Szczerbiak concurs with this idea, noting that Poland was "pushing at an open door" since Ukraine made the US and EU powers "more open to the kind of argument that Warsaw…(and) other post-Communist states" were trying to make. (2021) The shift in the US and EU powers focus to the eastern flank led to decisions to increase the presence in the east at the Warsaw Summit which is a "success" for Poland in terms of gaining forces; however, the "success" did not happen because of Poland's push for the increased presence. (Gruszczak, 2021)

The experts all agree that the US and EU powers carry a great deal more agency than Poland or other individual Eastern European states. They also all agree that Poland changing its foreign policy to focus on the Eastern allies rather than supporting the Western European allies had a "dampening" effect on Poland's role in the Alliance. (Former US Government Official, 2021) The former US Government Official pointed to fewer "high levels of contact" between both Poland and the U.S. and Poland and the Franco-German axis as key evidence of this, therefore inhibiting Poland's "ability to do things." (ibid.) Szczerbiak adds that Poland was not considered a "key player," and "a lot of key decisions were still taken by the Franco-German axis." (2021) Gruszczak supports Szczerbiak on this, stating that Poland "was…not consulted when it comes to the strategic orientation of the allies" in 2015 and 2016. (2021) This is because PiS frequently critiqued Germany, claiming it to be "undermining" the alliance by making decisions such as continuing on the Nordstream project. (ibid.)

Lastly, in terms of the shift away from Europe, all experts also note how Poland's renewed focus on US relations did not gain the state much individual voice. Gruszczak in particular states that it was a shock to PiS when the US "preferred to consult with Berlin or with Paris, and not with Warsaw or with Prague when it comes to situations in Central Europe." (2021) In all then, the rightward shift and PiS's strategy change to centre on Eastern Europe and

the US over the Western European powers was detrimental to Poland's security position within NATO.

When working and analysing the security changes taking place in Poland during 2015 and 2016, these patterns of shifting security relations within NATO appear. Through the Polish documents and news articles, it is evident that PiS attempts to gain agency through attaching itself to the Eastern European states, trying to form an "alternative bloc" within NATO. (Szczerbiak, 2021) There is also evidence of PiS victimising Poland and these post-Communist states to gain agency, claiming these states to be subjected to a secondary status in the Alliance. While it is true that the Eastern states did achieve and gain NATO forces following the Warsaw Summit, PiS framing the EU powers (specifically Germany) as being against the East and even working with Russia pushed Poland to the margins. Concern and criticism are obvious in both the Western and Polish sources and are distinct in the interviews as being a key to understanding Poland's role in NATO following PiS assuming the majority in Poland. Thus, it can be seen that Poland, in its rightward-shift, also shifted in state bilateral and multilateral relations within the Alliance. The next chapter identifies two other factors showing that Poland's position in NATO did not carry as much of an impact as the most dominant agency factor in this security organisation's structure: the security environment.

Chapter 6: The Agency of the Security Environment

The final chapter presenting the evidence found in researching key security events in Poland demonstrates that while Poland in its rightward political shift largely conforms and adheres to NATO structure, the changes to the security environment impacting NATO's territories dramatically shifted the Alliance's responses and outlook on security. Within NATO documents, news articles and when addressing NATO in the three interviews, the emphasis on the need to adapt to all aspects of the security environment are displayed. After the Warsaw Summit in particular, the focus of NATO sources is seen to not only focus on Eastern Europe because of the situation in Ukraine following 2014, but also focuses on the South of the Alliance. The South is emphasised in terms of the risks associated with terrorism and the migration crisis that started in 2015. Within NATO documents, values of democracy are used to justify the responses to the security environment changes, noting that these values must be protected. However, democratic value justification disappears in news sources and in interviews, showing the difference between the official NATO narrative on paper and what the organisation pursues, especially in terms of holding individual states accountable for discrepancies with these values. Polish sources, meanwhile, mention Poland's and Eastern European allies' contributions to the shifting strategy of NATO that focuses on both the East and the South, once again exemplifying how individual states are held to the structure of the Alliance which is shaped by the happenings in all the security environment. It is within this chapter that the research demonstrates the true aspects of agency that shapes NATO, that being changes in the security environment that present threats to NATO's members.

Between the two-year span of NATO documents, from 2014 to 2016, there exists a change of verbiage and focus that demonstrates how NATO's structure adapts based on the security environment. Beginning with the Annual Report and Summit Guide of 2014, the tone of both of these documents implies that 2014 is a year of change for the organisation due to Russia's "disregard [for] international law and violat[ion] of security arrangements and commitments." (NATO, 2015, p.4) NATO thus changes its structural language in the documents, starting in 2014 and with greater emphasis in 2016, transitioning from a position of crisis management security to a structure that relies on deterrence for security. It is also highlighted throughout both documents that it is due to the threats on the Eastern flank, specifically the breakage of law and basic democratic values, that NATO must adapt to the new security

environment: "we will always protect our values and keep our nations safe." (ibid., p. 3) In this statement, one can see how the protection of values is tied to safety, making the protection of these values a justification for reacting to Russia's actions.

The 2015 Annual Report changes its wording of the need to adapt slightly and again shifts in 2016. In the 2015 Annual Report, it states that "NATO has adapted" but must continue to adapt as the "security environment changes." (NATO, 2016, p. 11) In this shift, the Alliance has started the adaptation in 2014 and continued it in 2015. Notably in 2015, the continued adaptation needed is represented through a new emerging threat in the security environment of the Alliance: the threats of terrorism and challenges arising from the waves of migrants. Turkey in particular is mentioned multiple times in this Annual Report, a departure from limiting the commentary on individual states because of the affects the security environment of the South of the Alliance is having on Turkey specifically. In 2016 this pattern continues through repeated mention of the Warsaw Summit which is marked as a "landmark in our adaptation." (NATO, 2017, p. 6) Within the document, the results of the Warsaw Summit portray how NATO is a successful Alliance because of its ability to "change as the world has changed," demonstrating that adapting to a changing security environment is an essential part of the organisation and demanding that the structure change to incorporate the shifts in the security environment. (ibid., p. 6) In the Warsaw Summit Guide specifically, the Warsaw Summit is described as the "next phase of adaptation," in which the Alliance must focus on the Baltics and Eastern Europe and in the South on Turkey. (NATO, 2016, p. 2) Therefore, the Summit itself has the ability to change the Alliance, but only in reaction to shifts in the security environment due to events and situations affecting many member states.

The speeches by NATO officials again highlight the change in NATO's focus from the East to the East and South as the security environment forces the organisation to adapt. In a speech by Secretary General Stoltenberg, Stoltenberg states that while the Spearhead Force is important for the eastern allies, it is exercises to the East and South that show that NATO is able to defend itself. (NATO, 'NATO Secretary General in Poland for key 'Spearhead Force' exercise', 2015) This highlights that it is important NATO responds to every challenge of the security environment affecting all member states, not responding to only one area in particular. In a testimony of the Warsaw Summit's success as well, Stoltenberg commends the accomplishments of NATO, noting how these accomplishments are because of NATO's

adaptation and ability to address and combat issues in all areas of the Alliance. (NATO, 'A strong transatlantic bond in uncertain times…', 2016) Once again, the Warsaw Summit's respectability and success comes from the adaptation needed from the security environment in all areas, not responding to one states' needs but all.

Appearing as the lead reason for the need to respond to the changes in the security environment, the need to adapt is frequently tied to the desire to preserve democratic values. General Vershbow states in a speech before the Warsaw Summit that NATO's values are threatened through the security environment changes, and how the Alliance needs to support "individual sovereign nations." (NATO, 'Strong on Values, Strong on Defence…', 2016) In a lead up to the Warsaw Summit, General Vershbow again demonstrates how the response of NATO to events affecting member states is tied to preserving NATO's values, saying "NATO kept Europe safe through common values" and now the "Alliance…[is] adapting with urgency." (NATO, 'The Warsaw Summit and the New Security Environment', 2016) It is within the NATO official documents and statements from NATO leading officials that the connection between the response to a changed security environment and value preservation is made, making democratic values a justification for NATO changes in structure.

The Polish documents as well denote the need to adjust security policy to a changing security environment; though more focused on the eastern territory of the Alliance, Poland is shown in these documents to have followed NATO's lead in adjusting its security priorities to all NATO's territory, showing the strength of the Alliance's structure. In the NSS of 2014, the document centres its focus on eastern allies. There are notices within this document that "in consolidating NATO," Polish security prioritises the strengthen of the eastern flank. (National Security Bureau, 2014) A shift is then noticeable with the NSS written by PiS, a strong indicator that this rightist-party still conforms to NATO structure and priorities. In the NSS of 2020, Poland goes a different direction, mirroring the change from 2014 to 2016 in the NATO papers. The need to "adapt with the evolving security situation faced by Poland" is coupled with participation in "the process of adaptation of NATO to continued challenges and threats according to the 360-degree approach." (National Security Bureau, 2020, p. 5; p. 23) The Defence Concept of 2017 and the Foreign Policy 2017-2021 follow the same pattern as the NSS of 2020, and in Polish law, later in 2016 laws focusing on implementing NATO decisions such as sending troops to Iraq, Jordan, Afghanistan and Turkey are formalised. Therefore, Poland

under PiS shows in great detail its dedication to NATO's responses to all parts of the security environment, demonstrating the agency of events in the security environment to get all members to respond.

There does exist a change within the Polish documents surrounding security's relationship to values. In the NSS of 2014, "promoting principles…and universal values" is seen as a way to guarantee security. (National Security Bureau, 2014, p. 18) These universal values are also used as a justification of strengthening forces on the eastern flank, having stated that Russia demonstrated a disregard for international law and basic democratic standards, such as human rights. (ibid., p. 18) The later Polish documents coming from the PiS government drop the democracy standards, only noting that in responding to the evolving international order, respect for international law must be a priority. (National Security Bureau, 2020, p. 11) This slight change reflects the challenges PiS faces throughout 2016 in being accused of going against democratic values, particularly in terms of the rule of law. Thus, the party attempted here to separate international law from democratic values, making Poland less conformed to NATO security documents.

Western news media portrays the need for NATO adaptation from the security environment perspective similarly to the NATO documents; however, the focus on values as a justification disappears in these sources. These articles denote a security environment that "is changing very fast," and the result is NATO "boosting defences on Europe's eastern flank." (Mehta, 2015) Again, the focus on the eastern flank changes over time to focus on the other aspects of the security environment. Polish PiS leaders are quoted here as fully supporting all areas of the Alliance, Minister Macierewicz saying "Poland is convinced that this summit will stabilize the situation in both the south and the east." (Adamowski, 2016) President Duda as well is quoted as saying "the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas, terrorism and mass migration have shattered our perception of the system's stability." (Adamowski, 2016) This shows that as the Warsaw Summit approaches and in its aftermath, there is a change in focus from Eastern European security to involve all areas of change in the security environment of the Alliance, demonstrating the power of security environment changes to shift the focus and thus the structure of NATO.

Interestingly, in news articles democratic values are hardly mentioned let alone given as a reason for needing to adapt to the security environment. While there exists caution and concern

about internal events taking place in Poland that go against NATO democratic values, exemplified by the report on the five Polish generals resigning in part because they disagree with the "controversial" institutional reforms in the state, the justification of using the defence of democratic values as a reason to react to the changing security environment is absent. (Agence France-Presse, 'Polish Government Rocked…,' 2016)

In the Polish news sources, upholding values is a centre piece in Gazeta Wybrocza and Rzeszpospolita articles, as these sources, especially Gazeta Wyborcza, portray PiS actions as being anti-democratic and thus as evidence of PiS separating Poland from its allies. Gazeta Wyborcza, for instance, produced three articles on President Obama's criticism of Poland during the Warsaw Summit, his statement reportedly rebuking the "right-wing authorities" as Obama "urged them to cherish democratic values and institutions." (Stasiński and Bielecki, 2016) Rzeszpospolita is less abrupt in this criticism, their articles rarely containing quotes from other figures who call PiS-led events, such as the entrance into the NATO CICOE in Warsaw, as "unlawful actions." (Biernacki, 2015) The more moderate news source also presents the PiS argument of how they have a right to take these actions, noting that the president has the right to pardon in an article on the legality of Minister Kamiński's pardon. ('Kamiński legally pardoned', 2016) While both offer criticism and caution in terms of how PiS goes against democratic values (Gazeta Wyborcza much more frequently than Rzeszpospolita), neither links this transgression of values to NATO efforts to adapt to the security environment like seen in NATO and Polish documents. wPolityce follows suit in this regard, only defending PiS through explaining how it is in line with international law in its security policy actions.

The mysterious absence of value motivation for responding to the security environment in both the Western news sources and Polish news sources does not mean that the need to react to the security environment is absent. In wPolityce articles, PiS takes a hard-line approach to adaptation noting that Europe is divided "by different visions" and that Poland must "actively shape its (NATO and the EU) policy…to pursue the interests of the Republic of Poland to ensure real security." ('A lot of specifics and announcements!...', 2016) This correlates to the previous chapter on PiS working to distance itself from Western European allies, though in relation to the adaptation the new security environment calls for. A quote included from Minister Macierewicz announcing that Poland will support the southern flank but expects to be paid for it in NATO placing forces in the East; the quote shows PiS's more hard-lined adaptation in which the party

comes across as being in a position to make demands of NATO. ('Poland will join the actions against IS…', 2016) However, in Macierewicz's announcement and the article on needing to shape NATO and the EU to Polish interests, PiS is committing Poland to following NATO's shift in structure that is resulting from the change in security environment.

The interviews act to fill in the gaps between the documents and news media concerning the usage of values, presenting the importance of using multiple methods of research. Moreover, as seen in the previous chapter, the emphasis in the interviews on the change in position of the US and key EU powers within NATO towards the eastern flank reflects the agency of the security environment in shaping the structure and direction of a security alliance. As noted before, the three experts interviewed concur that the invasion of Crimea in 2014 resulted in a shift of "engagement of the US and Europe," specifically a "180 degree shift on Russia by Germany." (Former US Government Official, 2021) Each expert agrees with this, and Szczerbiak and Gruszczak continue on this thread by tying the outcomes of the Warsaw Summit to this change in the security environment. Szczerbiak states that the decisions made in Warsaw "came as a result of the recalibration of US attitudes towards Moscow which happened in 2014 as a result of the events in Ukraine." (2021) Not only does this show the agency of events in the security environment shaping the way actors pursue security, but it also gives a certain amount of agency to the US as well. Gruszczak notes that Poland was selected to host the summit in 2014 "because of the developments in Ukraine…the eastern flank should be a real priority for NATO." (2021) Again, it is the events in Ukraine that shifted the attention to the eastern flank; not to one individual state, but to the eastern flank as a whole.

In terms of democratic values being used as justification for the reaction, only Gruszczak explicitly states that the reaction to the east was due to a violation of international law by Russia. This signifies that values, while used in official papers as justification, may not be as important a glue to keep the Alliance together, NATO reacting more out of the leading NATO allies (the US, Germany and France) feeling threatened by the changes in the security environment. This concept will be further explored in the discussion chapter. To continue with presenting evidence from the interviews, Gruszczak and Szczerbiak explain why it is that values disappear as sources become less formal. From Gruszczak, it is noted that the international community was used to various member state governments pursuing "controversial internal policies…they were tolerated…and no one saw any issue with that" as long as they were not risking the "laws and

standards" that bound the members together. (2021) From this, it can be gathered that as long as a state's government is within the bounds of NATO's structural security standards, NATO could not interfere as these internal matters did not impact the Alliance's security. There is thus a distinction between internal values and the values of the Alliance, each member state interpreting it in their own way and perhaps explaining why the justification in reacting to the security environment is only in formal papers and not in the news sources.

Szczerbiak continues in this explanation through describing a "twin track" approach used by PiS, in which certain issues relating to democratic values could be disagreed on between Poland and NATO, but "that doesn't mean that alongside these disagreements we (NATO and Poland) can't work very closely together," especially "in terms [of] military cooperation." (2021) By distinguishing what is workable and what cannot be bypassed, PiS is still able to support the transition to a new structural security response from NATO with the controversial internal security events taking place in the background. This may also explain how outside of formal papers, usage of values as a reason to adapt drops off, because each state is allowed to interpret values as long as there are no "egregious" transgressions with NATO's structural standards. (Szczerbiak, 2021)

All evidence throughout the documents, news media and interviews supports the agency of the security environment to shift the security strategies within NATO, thus changing the structure of the organisation. Formally, both Poland and NATO in documents use values as a reason to act upon the changes to the security environment, though the lack of values and handling of controversial security events in Poland suggest that this is a broad-based reasoning that does not hold much power in justification of NATO's actions. Overall, it is the threats emanating from the security environment and the shift of certain key players such as the US and German-Franco axis to focusing on these areas that creates a change in NATO structure, making changes to the security environment the leading catalyst for NATO's structural change. PiS and all other state governments then follow with this shift, supporting all areas that NATO is facing threats from. The final chapter now will be a discussion of the findings in the research in connection with the research questions of this dissertation. The discussion will apply the structure versus agency concepts to the evidence gathered to answer how a rightward shift in Polish government impacts NATO's structure and other member states' security.

Chapter 7: Discussion of Poland's Agency

This chapter applies the evidence presented in the previous chapters to cohesively draw meanings and connections from the evidence to answer the research questions of this study. As exhibited within the abstract and introduction of this piece, the aim of this study is to discern the agency of the lead political actor in Poland, PiS, in shaping NATO structure. The importance of discerning agency lies with the regional security implications it entails as the frequency of right-wing groups gaining representation and power in Eastern Europe is increasing; thus, knowing if such political groups have any agency in shifting a regional security organisation's functions is necessary. To answer how Poland's internal security evolution in 2015-2016 changed its relationship with NATO and impacted NATO's ability to provide security to all members of the Alliance, the present discussion is broken into three sections: NATO as a fluid institution, the agency of leading member states, and the resilience of NATO to Poland's internal security events. Through these three sections on themes derived from research evidence, one can draw three overwhelming conclusions: NATO responds to changes in the security environment largely through the leading powers of the Alliance; Poland's rightist-led internal security changes did not affect Poland's position in NATO, being more related to internal political squabbles; and finally, the shift in bilateral and multilateral relations under PiS limited Poland's capabilities within NATO as leading members excluded the state from making key decisions.

7.1   Measuring Agency and the Fluidity of NATO's Structure

As mentioned in the literature review section, the difficulty in measuring agency and structure relates to the lack of a concrete definition. However, within the evidence presented in all previous chapters, Jasper and Duyvendak's idea of an 'arena', in which structure is a more fluid concept, more adequately applies to NATO as an institution. (2016) This is seen in NATO's adaptation to both players (states) and the environment NATO oversees: in chapter four, the NATO documents frequently tout that NATO has an "agile" command structure that calls for states to respond to various missions and operations that are adapted to the security needs of the organisation. (NATO, 2015, p. 6) This is more astutely demonstrated in chapter six within NATO documents' evolution from 2014 to 2016, in which the strategy shifts from crisis management to one of deterrence in response to actions in Ukraine. The adaptations are therefore a response to changes in the security environment, correlating with Gruszczak's idea of

resilience in security organisations being successful only if the security organisation can adapt to changes in the environment of the international system. (2016) As a sign of the Alliance's strength, the evidence showed NATO capable (despite internal events of Poland) of ensuring member states adhere to the institution's adaptation. The Polish papers make reference to Poland increasing vigilance of the "360-degree" approach to security among other references in strategy and defence papers that coincide with the shift in the Alliance to a deterrence strategy in all concerned parts of the security environment; Poland then is adhering to this fluid and resilient structure of the organisation as it adapts to the changes in the security environment. (National Security Bureau, 2020, p. 23) This is not only displayed in the documents, but in reported statements from the PiS leaders in news sources. One example as noted in Adamowski's article for Defence News is President's Duda's recognition that all threats in NATO's periphery must be responded to in Eastern Europe and in matters concerning terrorism and mass migration in the South. ('NATO Agrees On E. European Rotational Troops', 2016)

However, as Jasper and Duyvendak, as well as Lupitu, direct attention to, "players" also can have a certain directing ability in the organisation's response to the security environment. (2016; 2016) This can be deduced from the research evidence, pointing to a lack of agency by Poland in favour of direction from the US, France and Germany. As stated in chapter four, the pattern of NATO documents and key NATO official speeches reflect the interests of the US by supporting missions to Afghanistan and calling for an increase in monetary contributions from member states. Since the official documents state the explicit goals of the US, in that the US led the mission to Afghanistan and has wanted members to contribute more monetarily since the Cold War period, this member state has demonstrated power on orchestrating the focus of the Alliance as a whole. Within interviews as well, each expert notes the importance of the US in NATO, often determining NATO's shift to a deterrence stature as being a result from the US shifting its stance on Russia. (Former US Government Official, 2021; Szczerbiak, 2021; Gruszczak, 2021) As one of many examples, the former US Government Official notes that the "engagement of the US and Europe" due to the events in Ukraine turned NATO's attention to the eastern flank, meaning that key players in NATO reacting to the security environment changes direction of the organisation and therefore carry more agency. (Former US Government Official, 2021) Germany as well is noted by all interviewees as being a key catalyst to NATO's shift in position, as 2014 led to a "180 degree" shift in Russia relations for the state. (ibid.) Thus, the

security environment and limited member states work together to direct the organisation, reaffirming Jasper and Duyvendak's argument for a fluid concept of 'arena' based on needs of key 'players' and their 'environment' in a security context.

Within the evidence, the strength of structure can be measured in its ability to adapt to the environment and thereby be directed by a limited number of member states to the threats of that environment. The security environment, therefore, is given the most agency in leading to changes in NATO, due to changes in the environment leading to responses from the noted key allies, these responses then resulting in structural change in NATO's security. This conclusion is derived from the overarching evidence that the events in Ukraine in 2014 and other security events relating to terrorism and mass migration during 2015 and 2016 resulted in a change in security priority for the Alliance. Within the news articles analyses, statements such as "the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas, terrorism and mass migration have shattered our perception" of security are common and are portrayed as the leading factor of NATO's adaptation. (Adamowski, 2016) In interviews as well, Szczerbiak reiterates that Poland and other Eastern European states were "pushing at an open door" for an increase in eastern security because of the events in Ukraine in 2014, the other experts all concurring with this point. (2021) What really determines the main actors of the organisation reacting is the events that take place in NATO territory and on the borders, leading to the "pivot" of the US on Russian/US relations and the "180 degree shift" in Germany's thinking because of 2014. (Szczerbiak, 2021; Former US Government Official, 2021) The security environment then demands the fluidity and adaptation of the Alliance, meaning it has high levels of agency in this regional security organisation's structure and functions while Poland is seen to conform to the direction key states pursue in their response to the security environment changes.

7.2   The Agency of Member States

The evidence overwhelmingly portrays the US as dominating NATO's actions, supporting Studemeyer's notion that US interests can constrain member states within NATO. (2019, p. 795) It is indeed the shift in US mentality towards Russia that enables the shift in NATO structure, a statement that is not only supported by interview contexts, but also in the reporting on US leaders' actions in speeches made to Poland: the US became more active in Eastern Europe after 2014, reported as standing "shoulder to shoulder" with Poland through

exercises in Eastern Europe and in how the US dedicates more forces and leads one of the battalions in Poland to show how NATO is focusing on protecting its members on the eastern flank. (Mehta, 2016; wPolityce, 'Commander of US forces in Europe', 2015) Because of the US holding some agency in directing NATO defence, PiS determining that a shift in foreign policy to make the US the most important contributor to Polish security over Western European powers could have resulted in the state gaining more agency through its leading ally. (The Ministry of National Defence, 2017)

However, Western European powers also are shown in the evidence to have agency, and the result of Poland distancing itself from these powers leaves the state out of certain meetings and discussions and therefore with less agency within the Alliance. Germany especially is noted to have agency within the Alliance, as in all interviews experts agree that Germany's shift in relations with Russia after 2014 was a major factor in NATO shifting to a deterrence strategy on the easter flank. (Former US Government Official, 2021; Szczerbiak, 2021; and Gruszczak 2021) News articles also point out this factor, as noted in chapter three. The US, Germany and France being the key states for NATO decisions and direction is supported by news reports of meetings on Eastern European security being directed out of Berlin and statements from experts on the US preferring to consult France and Germany instead of Poland or Czechia on matters of Central and Eastern European security. (Wroński, 'Meeting before the NATO Summit', 2016; Gruszczak, 2021) Meanwhile, in Polish news sources from the PiS perspective, any action that Germany takes to defend Eastern Europe is shown to be surprising, and criticisms of Germany's view on the 1997 NATO-Russia agreement and the continuation of the Nordstream 2 project show PiS to be overly critical in targeting Germany's actions as being against the interests of NATO's eastern flank security. As noted in chapter five, this anti-EU power sentiment can be found in the NSS of 2020 and other security strategy documents published by the PiS as well, making the Polish government publicly critical of the Western European states. It must be noted that the aim of the left-wing opposition party to PiS is to display how PiS is isolating Poland, and that this aim can be seen throughout the left-wing news sources and may have had an impact on the Western media as well; however, given that the high profile former US government official, who worked on NATO policy in Eastern Europe during 2015-2016, reported that there were significantly less "high contacts" between Poland and the US and Poland and Western European powers, the news articles reporting on the meetings that excluded Poland are supported. (Former US Government

Official, 2021) Given that Germany, France and the US carry most of the agency in NATO in responding to changes in the security environment, Poland distancing itself from the European powers in favour of solely the US and the Eastern European countries led to it being excluded from meetings and thus lose agency within NATO.

PiS's criticisms of Germany align perfectly with Zięba's theory of two enemies noted in the literature review; the theory of two enemies relies on Poland being portrayed as a victim throughout history in efforts led by Germany and Russia. (2020, p. 57) Zięba's theory can especially be seen in wPolityce reports on the Warsaw Summit, in which leaders from the PiS, such as Minister Macierewicz, routinely tie Germany to Russia and attempt to make Germany seem sympathetic to Russia and against Polish and Eastern European interests. (Cywiński, 2016) However, using this victimisation limits the "high contact" Polish leaders may have had with Germany and led to Poland being left out of meetings on eastern flank security within NATO. (Former U.S. Government Official, 2021) Though the internal actions received little international attention or attention from NATO other than the marks of concern noted in chapter one, the PiS is seen to have limited Poland's ability due to its position with certain Western states. Thus, the Pis focusing on this historical perspective in combination of this victimisation does indeed limit the capabilities of Poland to enact change within NATO by separating it from the true driving forces of the Alliance.

7.3   The Distinction of Internal vs. Organisational Events

Lastly, NATO's resilience in resisting involvement in internal state matters also points to PiS not gaining agency within the Alliance for Poland. As shown particularly in chapter four, official NATO documents and Western news media do not officially comment on PiS's actions in the security realm of its own state. This reflects on the strength of NATO's structure in preserving the sovereignty of individual states, in that only "terribly egregious" actions that go against core NATO values would not be tolerated. (Szczerbiak, 2021) Within the sources gathered for the study, only one event in Poland received an official comment: the night-time entrance into the NATO CICOE in Warsaw by Polish Ministry of National Defence officials. However, this official comment was only to state how it was an internal Polish matter. (Adamowski, 'Polish Defense Minister Says Raid On NATO Center', 2015) In terms of individual leaders from member states reflecting on Polish security changes, no foreign leader

expressed concern explicitly within news sources or in official comments or speeches. President Obama's criticism of the PiS actions of reforming the court systems remains the only formal means of challenging Poland's changes; however, the statement did not reflect on security concerns, and instead concerned the values that are a key part of the structure of NATO. In relating to security concerns, Gruszczak comments that although the replacement of multiple Polish generals could be "dangerous" to the security of Poland, there was no international reaction largely because of upholding sovereignty within the organisation. (2021) Thus, the controversial actions of the PiS were kept separate and out of NATO proceedings and did not gain Poland any agency within the organisation.

In fact, the evidence within this study in combination with Studemeyer's work on how Estonia has gained voice within the Alliance shows that Poland may have lost some capability of influencing NATO's direction and functioning. Studemeyer, to recall, emphasises the necessity of small states to be "good citizens" of security organisations in order to have their opinions of security matters heard. (2019) Poland resoundingly is a good citizen of NATO in the sense that, as seen in documents, speeches, and news articles, the state contributes to most missions and operations of the Alliance as well as meeting its 2% GDP monetary contribution requirement. However, being a good citizen could also be interpreted in terms of the state of relations between other members of the Alliance. As shown in the last section, PiS was criticised for its transgressions against the rule of law with its court system reforms, thus showing the actor to not be completely in line with the values of NATO. Because of this and the issues mentioned between Poland and Germany in the last section, Poland, though a follower of NATO's structures in contributions to operations and funding regardless of political party, is not included in making key decisions for the organisation; this point is supported from the proven lack of high contacts PiS had with the leading powers of NATO as described by the former US Government Official. (2021) Poland therefore demonstrates how maintaining good relations with all member states of the Alliance is of high importance if a power is to maintain its "good citizen" ability to influence the structure of the organisation.

Another common theory on how the smaller states can gain agency comes from Bosce, in which smaller states gain agency and voice through aligning themselves with other smaller powers. (2020) Poland has been shown to do this in the evidence, shifting their strategy to more clearly align with Eastern European states alongside the US instead of the Western European

powers. These states did achieve their security prerogatives in terms of gaining NATO forces on the eastern flank; however, as Szczerbiak directs our attention to, these states seem to have been "pushing at an open door." (2021) With all the news sources and interviews emphasising how the US and Germany have shifted their view on Russia as a result of the events in Ukraine in 2014, this being supported in the change in NATO documents showcasing a transition in strategy from crisis management to a deterrence following 2014, the smaller Eastern European states do not have much agency as opposed to the key powers of NATO.

7.4   Summary Reflection

This study on Poland's agency within the security structure of NATO highlights that internal security changes as a result of political shifts to the right do not impact NATO's security structure. As presented here, the Alliance astutely keeps internal security changes outside of the organisation, only taking heed at actions threatening or undermining the values of NATO. Even in this case, NATO officially makes no statement on value transgressions, focusing its attention instead on adapting to the external security environment changes that threaten multiple member states. The findings of this study are thus threefold: NATO remains a resilient security alliance that responds to environment changes and adapts as the leading powers (the US, France and Germany) see fit, giving agency to the environment and these actors; Poland's internal security events, while controversial and receiving limited remarks of concern, did not affect Poland's position in NATO; finally, Poland's shifting relations with NATO members did affect its position in NATO negatively, limiting the capabilities of the state because of its exclusion in the decision making of the Alliance.

Chapter 8: Final Reflections

8.1   Criticisms

No study can cover the full complexity of any subject; thus, this section will outline potential issues within the research and how other researchers could continue the study. As noted in the methodology chapter, the original protocol was expanded as the research continued; however, no researcher could include every relevant source in a specific study due to errors in overlooking sources or in a lack of time and space in the paper. This study therefore focused on the most related documents and news articles to the four events in Polish security that were accessible at the time of research. Documents and commentary by politicians on Sejm (the Polish Parliament) legislation correlating to the events is only accessible in person in Warsaw; because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the research could not include these documents. A similar issue is present with NATO documents, more being available in person at Centres of Excellence in various states. Research on the effects of political shifts on regional security organisations would benefit from inclusion of these documents in the future when they are available, enabling a look into the "back channel" commentary on the events Szczerbiak noted could contain more details on NATO reactions to PiS actions. (2021) More interviews with NATO officials and Polish politicians in the opposition or in PiS would also benefit an analysis of the agency of Poland's political actor to change NATO structure.

The second leading criticism following accessibility and limited sources issue is any information that may have been lost in translation during research. This study utilised documents and articles produced both in Polish and English, the Polish sources being translated by a American Translators Association-certified translator. The translator provided, when called for, multiple meanings of certain Polish phrases to convey the various meanings a passage of the source could have. However, there is room for error in translation that should be acknowledged. This research therefore used a triangulated methodology and a wide range of sources to compare the meanings of sources before determining what conclusions could be derived.

Both of these critiques were overcome within the study through using a variety of methodologies. Though research should continue using the in-person sources once they are available, adapting to the pandemic and comparing documents, news articles and interview transcripts provided an avenue to see all side of the data that arose during research. Having these sources also overcame the translation issue, as comparing multiple articles from multiple sources

allowed the researcher to arrive at common meanings between the sources written in Polish and those written in English. Therefore, the project's balance of methodologies provided a means of deriving accurate and reliable findings from the research despite these criticisms.

8.2   Implications and Conclusion

From the previous chapter, there are three common conclusions that were derived from the findings within the research. The first conclusion relates to NATO's ability to adapt in the face of changes to the security environment, purporting to the security environment's agency to influence NATO's structure. Evidence here also portrayed that leading member states of the Alliance (the US, France and Germany) lead reactions to the security environment, meaning that they carry a large amount of agency as well. However, states such as Poland, despite changes to its internal security resulting from the political shift to the right, do not hold much agency in changing NATO's structure. This is because these changes to security related more to internal political skirmishes rather than security alliance structure. The final conclusion limits the agency of PiS even more, as the political change, while not impacting Polish-NATO relations in terms of security, did negatively impact Polish-French and Polish-German security relations. Because of PiS shifting its focus to rely more on its Eastern European allies and the US over Western Europe, Poland was excluded from high contacts with Western European states and decision-making meetings on Eastern European security conducted with Germany and France. Thus, relations between member states within the Alliance is seen to have an effect on the agency an individual member state holds.

In combining the criticisms with the conclusions from the last chapter, implications of this research are thus threefold:

1. Based on the conclusion that PiS-led changes to Polish security did not impact the structure of NATO, other studies should be conducted to see if this conclusion is valid for other states that have shifted to the right in government orientation and/or within other regional security organisations outside of NATO;

2. The conclusion that relations within the Alliance between member states may impact agency of a specific state demonstrates the importance of bilateral and multilateral relations within NATO for the integrity and cohesiveness of the Alliance in its security operations;

3. The security environment being the leading cause of structural change within NATO implies that the Alliance's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing environment is imperative to its success as a security alliance.

This study cannot conclude that NATO can ignore rightist shifts in member states; the Alliance must remain vigilant due to the effect these political shifts can have on bilateral and multilateral relations within the organisation, as worsening relations could negatively affect the Alliance's ability to provide all members with security assurance. Meanwhile, however, NATO should pay greater attention yet to monitoring the security environment along its borders as changes there demand Alliance adaptation. Further studies involving other states whose governments are shifting right in composition politically and involving other regional security alliances such as OSCE should be conducted as this study cannot be applied to the agency of all states transitioning to the right politically or in all other regional security organisations. This study overall is a beginning to security research through the structure vs. agency framework, getting the crux of whether member states have the ability to change a security alliance's structure.

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