

US FOREIGN POLICY, TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND ALLIANCE SECURITY DILEMMA 2001-2008¹.

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Introduction

According to Structural Realism, Alliances are a general incentive created by an anarchical International System to face the Security Dilemma. Thus, the alliance formed by the United States and the European allies, should be generated by the structure of the current International System, and not only being a follow-up of the Cold War. Then, since this current alliance would not be a completely new, it should have some features from the former and some ex novo. In this vein, and according to realist realm, US policy, strategies and behaviour during the Bush Administration have been considered profoundly disestablishing for the foundations of the US-Europe Alliance and for Transatlantic Relations as a whole. US Foreign Policy since 9/11 attacks has produced a perception of disengagement in US-Europe alliance.

Nevertheless, at the same time, European allies' behaviour created in US government a perception of abandonment, or in certain circles, even defection, related to issues as the Global War on Terror, GWOT, or Iraq. However, and despite Obama Administration foreign policy, changes in Transatlantic Relations are related more to dynamics in the International system and domestic changes than only to US behaviour

¹ This paper is based and develops further the positions established in my presentation "US Strategic Policy and Transatlantic Relations". Panel "Transatlantic Relations: the United States view". Internacional Conference "Perceptions and Policy in Transatlantic Relations". Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales. CEPC, Madrid. July, 3-5 2006, and my chapter "Perceptions on US Policy, Transatlantic Relations and Alliance Security Dilemma", en Fernandez, N. and Smith, M. *Perceptions and Policy in Transatlantic Relations*. Routledge. 2009. pp. 113-135.

during Bush Administration. In fact, Bush Administration Foreign Policy was created following a re-assessment of the International System after looking carefully the international system's dynamics during the 1990s and after 9/11 attacks, not only produced by a Neoconservative vision of the World. But, surprisingly, there was more support by European allies to US policies than expected, despite reluctance in European public opinion and in some European governments toward Bush Administration. These results could have been produced due to similar strategic assessments by European countries on the evolution of the International System, not only in terms of threat perceptions, but also in terms of strategic vision, above all among countries as Spain, Portugal, UK, Italy, Holland, Denmark, and Central and Eastern European countries, all of them in the periphery of the EU core (France, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg).

In this sense, this paper seek to identify common and different positions on strategic and particular interests, and the assessment and response to main threats and adversaries in the new International System; how differences affected Transatlantic Relations and if these problems difficult the creation of common policies. Using mainly the Alliance Security Dilemma model, the analysis tries to find structural change in the US-European alliance. The paper will try to check the following hypothesis: if Transatlantic Relations has changed accordingly to the transformation and evolution of the International System, affecting the construction of Strategic and particular interests in the members of US-Europe alliance (Primary Alliance Dilemma or Bargaining Dilemma). And, secondly, if, nevertheless, these changes have allowed the maintenance of the Alliance although in a different feature and nature, taking into account how the threat perception (Adversary or Secondary Dilemma) has also affected the parameters that framed Transatlantic Relations.

1. What Liberal Order? Primacy, Geopolitics and US Foreign Policy.

According to international liberal theorist John Ikenberry, in terms of a liberal order, the international system during the Cold War was maintained by international liberalism and US military superiority², or, in words of Charles Kupchan and Peter L. Trubowitz, by multilateralism and the use of US military force; that is, a sort of balance between cooperation and use of power (alliances, US benign hegemony and military superiority)³. However, they argue that the Bush Administration, Unipolarity, US domestic political change (political polarization) have destroyed multilateralism, US restraint in use of force and have strained allies (although there have been also political domestic change and responses to a new International system, for instance among European allies). For them, in terms of US foreign policy, the maintenance of an international liberal order also means that the “*United States would have to prevent any single power or group of powers from establishing control over the Eurasian heartland and rimland. Doing so would require not just the projection of U.S. military power, but also the consensual help of allies that shared the United States’ strategic priorities*”⁴. In fact, the United States enjoyed during the Cold War the three pre-eminences that denote Primacy, or *in strictu sensu*, hegemony: political-military, economic and normative. The latter means an acceptance of a situation of US Primacy in the sense of the old Greek definition of hegemony, **Hegeisthai**: “Just and Legitimate Leadership, accepted by the others”. This means a hierarchical, not an anarchical or “balance of power”, vision of the international system and alliance network, which can be traced in every national security strategy since the Truman Administration:

² See G. John Ikenberry, John. *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major War*. Princeton University Press, Princeton. 2001. See also Risse, Thomas. *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy*. Princeton University Press, Princeton. 1997.

³ Charles A. Kupchan and Peter L. Trubowitz. “Dead Center. The Demise of Liberal Internationalism in the United States”. *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Fall 2007), pp. 7–44.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p.15.

- An international order open to US interests and values: this means international institutions, rule of law, democracy and free markets. The US would be the centre of this system.
- Prevention of any hostile power from dominating a region, whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. This would mean technological and military superiority⁵.

According to the arguments of political predominance or preponderance, and clearly since the Truman Administration, a primacy strategy was established:

"The US and the USSR are engaged in a struggle for preponderant power: To seek less than preponderant power would be topped for defeat. Preponderant power must be the object of US Policy"⁶.

This posture created the Cold War Grand Strategy, the Containment Policy that included the coordinated use of every political, economical, military and moral national resource to face the threat posed by the USSR. Following this pattern, and in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War, the George H. W. Bush Administration and Clinton Administrations maintained the primacy posture. The strategic reviews carried out during the end of the Cold War kept Primacy as the core of US strategy. Thus, the famous Defence Planning Guidance 1992-1999 asserted:

"Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere that poses a threat on the order posed formerly by the Soviet Union. This...requires that we endeavour to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power....Our strategy must now refocus on precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor". These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union and Southwest Asia"

However, neither the parameters of this vision and strategic posture were original in the Roosevelt Administration nor have their roots only in the imperialist

⁵ For instance, see the unclassified national security strategy documents published since 1987. President Ronald Reagan. National Security Strategy of the United States 1988. The White House, Washington D.C. 1988. p. 1; President George Bush. National Security Strategy of the United States August 1991. p. 4, 7; President William Clinton. National Security of Engagement and Enlargement, February 1996. p. 2; President William Clinton. National Security for a New Century. 1998, p. 5

⁶ Policy Planning Staff. PPS paper. "Basis Issues raised by Draft NSC". Reappraisal of US Objectives and Strategy for National Security. ND, FRUS 1952-54, n°2, pp. 64-65.

ideas of the Mahan-Theodore Roosevelt era. The relation liberalism-realism is intrinsically united to US Foreign policy and can be traced until the very creation of the American Republic⁷. The conception of Founders Fathers about the United States as a Commercial Republic, the 1796 Washington's Farewell Address and the posture of Jefferson on the relations with Europe, created the former Isolationism⁸ and the bedrock for a doctrine to resolve the "strategic" uncertainty of the United States: the problem of preventing any other power from extending its jurisdiction to the vast areas of North America and to justify the US enlargement to the Pacific Ocean. The Monroe Doctrine (1823) and the "Manifest Destiny" (1845) were the main ideological devices of US Strategic Policy to solving those problems. The situation of a natural frontier in the West and the expansion toward the Pacific were seen as a "mission". From this point of view, the interests and principles that are the foundations of the United States cannot be separated and it has to be ready even to defend them intervening abroad. The Monroe Doctrine, then, not only created the basis for Isolationism, but would also create a mechanism to intervene when the US principles and/or interests were at danger. From this point of view, the end of the continental expansion of the United States, but the increasing of US interests abroad, met the geopolitical theories of Mackinder, Mahan, and others. Both were attempting to create a rationalist approach to envisage relevant geographical patterns for policy-making and political behaviour. In this sense, Mackinder created the concept of *Heartland* and Mahan that of the *Shatter Belt* or *Middle Strip*⁹: Mackinder established: "There are certain strategic positions in the **Heartland and Arabia** which must be treated as of world importance, for their

7 See Garcia David. "US Strategic Policy in Central Asia", in European Society for Central Asia Studies. *Central Asia: The Local, the Regional and the Global*. Cambridge Scholar Publishers. (forthcoming 2011).

⁸ "The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign Nations, is extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connections as possible". Andrist, Ralph. (ed) *The Founding Fathers, George Washington: A Biography in His Own Words*. NY, 1972. p. 372. Also Gilbert, F. *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy*. Princeton, 1961. p. 54

⁹ Mahan, A. *The Problem of Asia*. Sampson. London. 1900. p. 47.

possession *may facilitate or prevent world domination*".¹⁰ This dictum is clearly the basis of the DPG 1992-99, so it is not so clear that a liberal international order and his geopolitical aspect were only a product of a Post- WWII liberal internationalism strategy created by US Administrations.

Unipolarity and Unilateralism?rather Complex Polarity.

The structure of the International System after the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks has clearly and deeply changed, and a kind of "Unipolarity-Multipolarity complex" has finally arisen¹¹, most clearly after the Iraq crisis, a Complex Polarity international system, more than a no polarity system¹². First, there is a more anarchical International System with different parameters than those from the Cold War¹³, and, according to Henry Kissinger, the centre of world affairs has moved from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Secondly: a different and asymmetrical distribution of power and capabilities at global: clear US military superiority (pre-eminence), with a group of great and regional powers, mainly EU, Japan, China, India, Russia, Brazil, Iran and Sud-Africa; third, a new concept of security, where the difference between interior security and foreign security has been blurred. It exist a trend to the "privatization of war" due to non-state groups and the creation of Low-Intensity Conflict Environments, but also there is a rising classical competition among regional powers. This creates a complex environment where it is difficult to establish polarity in terms of absolute polarity. Moreover, and as a fourth character of the international system, as a result of US policies and behaviour during Bush Administration, weakened acceptance of the US role as a benign hegemon (weakened normative pre-eminence).

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 223.

¹¹ Samuel Huntington used this term first in 1999 but Complex Polarity goes beyond this conception. See Huntington, Samuel. "The Lonely Superpower". *Foreign Affairs*. March-April 1999

¹² This vision is developed in Hass, Richard. "The Age of Nonpolarity". *Foreign Affairs*. May-June 2008.

¹³ See Waltz, Kenneth. "Structural Realism after the Cold War". *International Security*. Vol. 5, n.1. 2000.

Unilateralism was, until WWII, the most common way of running US Foreign Policy, and one of the consequences of this posture was the use of pre-emption. The end of the WWII-Cold War international system and the 9/11 attacks allowed to recover this conception as the main vision in foreign affairs. In fact, it was not the Bush Administration the first administration to think about that and the concept of pre-emption. The Bush Doctrine and the GWOT were the embodiment of the new Primacy strategy following the 9/11 events due to the new assessment of world dynamics that included the increase of uncertainty in the international system due to Complex Polarity; the strategic assessment carried out by Republicans and Neoconservatives during the 1990s: for instance, Peter Rodman, Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security Affairs in the first Bush Administration wrote in 1999: *“Most of the world’s other major powers have made it into a central theme of their foreign policy to attempt to build counterweights to American power. This is in fact one of the main trends in international politics today”*¹⁴. There are different views about the International System that influence US and European policies and behaviour. For instance, one of the most debatable issues after the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks has been the use of force.¹⁵ For the United States, the assumption of a more anarchical international system (including a lower confidence in the UN system), the perception of vulnerability in the face of terrorist and unconventional attacks, using or not weapons of mass destruction,¹⁶ and the experience of short and decisive operations in previous wars thanks to technological superiority (from the 1991 Gulf War to the

¹⁴ Rodman, Peter. *Uneasy Giant: the Challenges to American Predominance*. Nixon Center, Washington D.C. 1999. p. 2.

¹⁵ In regard to the use of force and Article 51 of the UN Chart, see UN General Assembly. “A more Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility”. Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. A/59/565. 2005.

¹⁶ For an American vision see Richard N. Haass, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution. 1999. p.71.

2001 Afghanistan invasion, for instance) fuelled the creation of the Bush Doctrine and US National Security Strategy 2002.¹⁷ Thus, for the United States, there are structural incentives in the International System for the creation of this posture. However, European perceptions on terrorism and experience of recent wars created a different result in terms of policy, although similar in certain ways to US policy: the European Security Strategy is a reflection of European interests and capabilities as the Bush Doctrine and NSS 2002 are for the Bush Administration.

Even though the changes in the structure of the International System since the end of the Cold War had really modified the parameters of Transatlantic Relations, US behaviour in Alliance politics has also created certain perceptions of US disengagement, creating an image of unilateral behaviour. In this sense, there are also some situations that reflect not so much the actions of the Bush Administration, but rather European positions and misperceptions on interpreting US behaviour, which have more to do with the new realities of the International System's structure and with a new Transatlantic Relations. Thus, Europe, as even EU reports point out, must be conscious that "Europe is at peace, but the world is not".¹⁸ From this point of view, the alliance between the United States and Europe is suffering due to these changes, and structural changes have to do with the International System, Transatlantic Relations and the allies themselves.

¹⁷ For a review of this process see García Cantalapiedra, David. *Una Estrategia de Primacía: la Administración Bush, las relaciones transatlánticas y la creación de un Nuevo Orden Mundial 1989-1992*. UNISCI Papers 23-24. Madrid 2002, and García Cantalapiedra, David. "Peace through Primacy": *la Administración Bush, la política exterior de EEUU y las bases de una Primacía Imperial*. UNISCI Papers 30. December 2003-February 2004. Madrid. It is also available an reduced on-line version; see García Cantalapiedra, David. "Peace through Primacy": la Administración Bush, la política exterior de EEUU y las bases de una Primacía Imperial". *UNISCI Discussion Papers*. February 2004. <http://revistas.ucm.es/cps/16962206/articulos/UNIS0404130019A.PDF>

¹⁸ Independent Task Force. *European Defense: A Proposal for a White Paper*. EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris. 2005. p.9.

The view of a new dynamics in the International System, a new strategic assessment and ideological neo-conservative influence on the Bush Administration pushing forward an ideological aspect to this new Primacy Strategy even beyond Wilsonian concepts. In fact, this envisaged a posture *à la Reagan*. The neo-conservatives from the Congress had already been pushing during the Clinton Administration for a hard-headed foreign policy¹⁹. Thus, the three pillars that would support the new 2002 National Security Strategy were established by President Bush at the 2002 Graduation Exercise of the United States Academy in West Point²⁰. They are directly related to the 3 principles that constitute the US Grand Strategy:

- To “defend the peace against threats from terrorists and tyrants”: Global War on Terror, the first principle of the Grand Strategy.
- To “preserve the peace”: through preventing any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power.
- To “extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent”: an international order according to US values.

According to those premises outlined above, this strategy establishes an approach to fight terror (WMD, terrorist and tyrants), re-creating the Reagan approach of “Peace through Strength”, restoring the militarization of US Foreign Policy, including the rhetoric of the fight against Evil (Evil Empire, Axis of Evil) as its key ideological aspect. Thus, the GWOT is not only the fight against terrorism as most European

19 Kristol, W. and Kagan, Robert. “Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy”. *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1996. "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century," September 2000. A Report of the Project for the New American Century; Project for the New American Century. Statement of Principles. June 3, 1997. Robert Kagan and William Kristol . *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy* . Encounter Books. San Francisco, 2000. Kagan, R. “Power and Weakness”. *Policy Review*, n° 113. June-July 2002.

²⁰ President Bush. Remarks at 2002 Graduation Exercise of the United States Academy. West Point, New York. June 1, 2002. Office of the Press Secretary. The White House. Washington D.C.

countries understand it. It is not only a fight against “classical” terrorist organizations such as IRA, ETA, *Bader-Meinhoff*, Red Brigades, *Hamas*, *Jihad Islamic* o *Hezbollah*, but a fight against the following aspects:

- Terrorist groups, organized crime,
- Proliferation of WMD.
- Aggressive regional behaviour; support of terrorism; WMD proliferation by non-democratic states and so-called Rogue States.

This is the “renaissance” of the Reagan Doctrine, in form of the so-called Bush Doctrine. The Reagan Doctrine identified firstly those that were the objective of the US Counterterrorist Policy: the so-called “League of Terror”. Later, the Clinton Administration called them “Rogue States” and the Bush Administration called them the “Axis of Evil”. They were the same countries: Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, and North Korea. The Reagan Administration had also begun to consider a turn in common anti-terrorist policies toward a more pre-emptive approach. On July 4, 1984, Secretary of State George Shultz made the following statement:

Can we as a country, can the community of free nations, stand in a purely defensive posture and absorb the blows dealt by terrorists? I think not. From a practical standpoint, a purely passive defence does not provide enough of a deterrent to terrorism and the states that sponsor it. It is time to think long, hard and seriously about more active means of defence—defence through appropriate preventive or pre-emptive actions against terrorist groups before they strike²¹”.

This conviction would later help to create the Bush Doctrine and an approach based on pre-emptive action. For Bush Administration neoconservatives, the behaviour of these countries could be contained but not always and not forever. In fact, this rogue behaviour is only the “effect”; the idea was to attack the origin of this conduct, and the origin of this conduct is the nature of the regime itself: a posture of containment cannot

²¹ Netanyahu, B. (ed) *Terrorism: How the West can win*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. NY. 1986. pág. 16-17, 23.

be indefinitely sustained because this could fail, and then pre-emptive action or even a regime change is seen as the only solution. Both the National Security Strategy 2002 and its later revision of 2006 focus on global terrorism and terrorists as non-state actors., but the NSS 2006 establishes that the United States and its allies make no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbour them: “If necessary, however, under long-standing principles of self-defence, we do not rule out the use of force before attacks occur, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. When the consequences of an attack with WMD are potentially so devastating, we cannot afford to stand idly by as grave dangers materialize. This is *the logic of pre-emption*”²².

2. Transatlantic Relations and Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics.

Then, Transatlantic Relations face a different International System from that of the Cold War; a different distribution of power and capabilities at global and transatlantic level; but also changes produced within each part of the alliance. Taking into account these parameters, the tendency in Transatlantic Relations is that Allies should face problems on material capacities, incentives to cooperate, and convergence in expectations of interests (present and future), that is, they face uncertainty. This situation is also fed by perceptions, misperceptions and images of the International System, the Transatlantic Alliance, of each side of the alliance, and very important, of the adversaries and challenges both face. In this sense, this process creates or helps to create the identity, values and political system that compose each side, and the mechanisms used to choose alignments and to identify friends and foes. This problem goes to the basics of traditional Transatlantic Relations: a (real and perceived) common

²² George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington: The White House, September 2006). p. 23.

threat, a wide and deep economic relationship, and a common vision of Democratic Peace²³ and its content.

Transatlantic Relations were established within the framework of the Cold War International System, and based on certain core parameters:

- Political-military parameter: an existential security threat posed by the Soviet Union, with Europe protected by US Extended Deterrence.
- Economic parameter: a deep bilateral relationship since the Marshall Plan.
- Democratic Peace parameter: common values such as democracy, rule of law, civil freedoms and human rights, and free market economy. Democratic states do not fight each other, so the spread of democracy will create “perpetual peace”. In Karl Deutch’s words, “the creation of a Security Community”²⁴

Nevertheless, these relations were established within a situation of different relative power that *favoured US Pre-eminence and Primacy, which was accepted by the European Allies, so there was a hierarchical order within Western Alliance, not a balance of power system or concert of powers: that is, a situation of Unipolarity within Western Alliance with, at least, a predisposition to bandwagon by Western European countries.*

Progressively, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, changes in Transatlantic Relations could be envisaged, above all since the middle of the 1990s although as noted above the inertia and relative stability of the alliance framework allowed this structure to be maintained. The “soft landing” and evolution of a new international system during

²³ Owen, J. “How Liberalism produces Democratic Peace”. *International Security*. Vol. 19, n° 2. Fall 1994

²⁴ Deutsch, K. *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*. Princeton. 1957.

the 1990s were not well recognised in spite of successive crises in the Balkans. American and European Allies reinforced the Transatlantic Link using the inertia of the Cold War model with only some gradual institutional changes, in part due to a thirst for the “dividends of peace”, even though NATO started a policy of enlargement to the East and a instigated a change in the vision and the mission of the Atlantic Alliance. The 1999 NATO Strategic Concept would reflect substantially these changes in nature of the alliance. However, the evolution in the International System and in the parameters of Transatlantic Relations was clear and progressive during the 1990s, producing a Unipolar international system where US enjoyed a situation of Global Primacy.²⁵ But, at the same time, US Extended Deterrence in Europe lost its main rationale after the end of the Soviet threat, and the role of Transatlantic Relations in US Strategic Policy then started to change. From an economic point of view, the members of the original Transatlantic Market turned their attention increasingly to a globalized economy. The Transatlantic Market, although reinforced after successive initiatives and buttressed by the largest mutual Foreign Direct Investment in the world, is not the only market for Europeans and Americans. The European integration process has been focused on a progressively enlarged common market, and both sides of the Atlantic have focused on the opportunities offered by Asian economic growth. The consensus about US Normative Pre-eminence has changed to a new normative framework. According to this, “Democratic Peace” should be achieved, but using different means according to Americans and Europeans: There is a different understanding of the content of democracy and human rights and the ways to promote them globally.

Finally, there have been changes within each part of the alliance. For instance, the idiosyncrasy of the European integration process, related to a growing

²⁵ Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs*. (Winter 1990/91), pp. 23-33.

assertiveness on security and defence issues; and certain economic and social divergences since the late 1980s. There had been economic and social convergence since the progressive European economic recovery after the Marshall Plan, where the European income per capita ratio improved from 54% to more than 80% of the US level in 1990. The fertility rate and population were similar until the mid-eighties. Nonetheless the economy, although reflecting more liberal economic models during the Reagan-Thatcher years, maintained certain important differences. However, from 1990 on, Europe has decreasingly reflected this convergence on fertility, population, economy and technological growth and innovation related to the United States.²⁶

2. The Alliance Security Dilemma and the Transatlantic Relations after Post-Post Cold War.

In this sense, the allies face problems of different material capacities, incentives to cooperate, and divergent expectations of interests (present and future): as a result, they face uncertainty, and after the 9/11 attacks and previous assessment about the evolution of the International system, US policy and behaviour tried to balance this situation and this was to provoke reactions.²⁷

According to Robert Jervis, states suffer a security dilemma in International Politics. Uncertainty regarding other's current and future motivations under anarchy feeds this security dilemma and it arises as states take measures to augment their security that other states perceive as being detrimental to theirs. This spawns reactive behaviour that ultimately undermines the security of all involved, and makes war more

²⁶ A Nation Apart. A survey of America. The Economist. November 8, 2003. pp. 5-7.

²⁷ In this sense see Walt, Stephen. *Taming American Power*. Norton, NY. 2005.

likely.²⁸ The Security Dilemma is one of the fundamental assumptions within Defensive Realism in the theory of International Relations, alongside offence-defence theory, perception processes and domestic policies. Nevertheless, the security dilemma is a common concept for all defensive realist approaches. This concept reflects the anarchic nature of the international system that produces uncertainty. States cannot be sure about present and future intentions of other states and thus they carry out security seeking policies. But these policies make others feel threatened and then they seek to increase their own security, reducing security for all.

Since the formation of alliances is a mechanism through which to address the security dilemma in international politics, alliances will suffer the problems of uncertainty, perception process and, eventually, “the self-defeating aspect of the quest for security in an anarchic system”. Thus, according to Security Dilemma theory, states may also face an Alliance Security Dilemma²⁹ and this dilemma will be more severe in Multipolarity than in Unipolarity or in Bipolar systems, as Multipolar systems are less stable.³⁰ The Alliance game will deal with the “interior” aspects of Alliance formation, but it is the Adversary game that considers the “external” relations of Alliances, that is, in the end, threat perception. This latter will be of extreme importance in analysing the behaviour of both sides of the current Transatlantic

²⁸ Jervis, Robert. “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma”. *World Politics*. Vol. 30. n° 2. January 1978. pp. 168-214. Jervis concedes that differences among states, especially in the priority given to security in relation to other domestic concerns and the degree of threat perceived, will impact the severity of the security dilemma, by shaping the costs associated with the sucker’s payoff. Geography, commitment to particular beliefs, and technology also impact the degree to which the security dilemma prevails. Specifically, the offense-defense balance and the ability to differentiate between offensive and defensive strategies alter the likelihood of spiraling security-related behavior.

²⁹ Snyder, Glenn. “The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics”. *World Politics*, vol. 36, n° 4. July 1984. pp. 461-62.

³⁰ For instance Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. Addison-Westley. Reading . 1979. p. 172.

Alliance: the perception process about possible adversaries (Global Terrorism, Iraq, Iran) of each side, each side's position on adversaries perceived by each side of the Alliance, and the impact on Alliance behaviour.

As noted above, due to this Complex Environment and Complex Polarity, the Security Dilemma arises as states take measures to augment their security that other states perceive as being detrimental to theirs. This spawns reactive behaviour that ultimately undermines the security of all involved, and makes war more likely.³¹ Jervis concedes that differences among states, especially in the priority given to security in relation to other domestic concerns and the degree of threat perceived, will impact the severity of the security dilemma, by shaping the costs associated with the sucker's payoff. Geography, commitment to particular beliefs, and technology also impact the degree to which the security dilemma prevails. Specifically, the offense-defense balance and the ability to differentiate between offensive and defensive strategies alter the likelihood of spiralling security-related behaviour. According to Glenn Snyder, the Alliance Security Dilemma is a subgame of this self-defeating aspect of the quest for security in the anarchic international system.³²

The Alliance game explains one of the ways the states accumulate power to face the Security Dilemma (others would be armaments and territorial expansion: the Armament game and the Adversary game).³³ The Alliance game has two phases: the game of alliance formation, or Primary Alliance Security Dilemma, and the Alliance bargaining process, or Secondary Alliance Security Dilemma. As Alliance creation is a general incentive generated by the structure of the international system, states will

³¹ See Jervis, Robert. "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," in *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214.

³² Snyder Glenn. "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics". *World Politics*, vol. 36, n° 4. July 1984. pp. 461-95.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 461.

search for allies or abstain from alliances, and since there are asymmetries in capabilities and different security interests, alliance formation will mean gains and costs. But although the main goals in creating alliances to achieve membership in the most powerful one and to maximize this membership, there are other major interests that help to address indeterminacy in the bargaining process of creating the alliance: General Interests and Particular Interests, which predispose states to align with certain other states.

General or Strategic Interests are related to the anarchic structure of the international system; the geographic position of the state; and they do not involve conflicts over specific issues with specific other states but will be defended against all comers. From this point of view, as already noted, US Extended Deterrence in Europe lost its sense after the end of the Soviet threat, and Europe is not the centre of the US Strategic Policy: there are other areas such as East Asia and the Greater Middle East that command greater attention. But the European Security Strategy 2003 and the NSS 2002 and 2006 identified a more anarchic international system and common threats such as Terrorism, WMD, and rogue states.

Particular Interests create conflict or affinity with other states, establishing a tacit pattern of alignment prior to alliance negotiations. Thus, features such as power content, ideology, prestige, economy can create a set of affinities, giving states expectations that they will be supported by those with whom they share interests: for instance, the United States expects the support of Europe/EU in its fight against terrorism, because of NATO's military support during the Cold War, a shared ideology based on liberal democracy, economic interdependence and general normative agreement on international rules. Moreover, the internal political configuration of states, apart from general ideological preferences, is also important in alliance creation. Even

though during Cold War and Post-Cold War years there were competing parties such as Gaullists/socialist, Tory/Labour, SPD/CDU in the main European allies and Republican/Democratic in office in the United States, the alliance was maintained in spite of different positions in some crises. These alignments created a core of precedents and relationships, which conditioned the process of alliance bargaining, “predisposing the system toward certain alliances and against others”: in this case, the experience of US/European alliance during the Cold War created a predisposition to maintain the alliance. But, as Snyder points out, conflicts and affinities reduce but do not eliminate indeterminacy in choosing allies or adversaries, due to overestimation or underestimation of conflicts with third parties by allies: for instance, the perception and assessment of terrorism or Iraq was seen by the United States and European states differently.³⁴

Once formed, alliances move towards the so-called Secondary Alliance Dilemma, that is, how allies move between Cooperation and Defection. Jervis analyzes this process using other terms such as firmness and accommodation, pointing out that the choice between them depends on one’s estimate of the ultimate aims of the adversary, in this case of the ally.³⁵ In this sense, it is necessary to analyze how allies deal with adversaries and interact with the so-called Adversary game because both games proceed at the same time and complement each other.³⁶ Cooperation means a strong general commitment and full support in specific adversary conflicts. The strategies of strong commitment will deter the adversary, enhance reputation of resolve, but reduce the bargaining leverage over the ally. For instance, NATO European allies

³⁴ See Sarotte, M.E. “Transatlantic Tension and Threat Perception”. *Naval War College Review*. Vol. 58, n.4. Autumn 2005.

³⁵ Jervis, R. *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, p. 113. He uses these terms to discuss the problems with Deterrence and Spiral theories.

³⁶ Snyder, p. 468.

promoted the use of Article V of NATO after 9/11; most Western European countries, especially the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy and Portugal, but including all Central and Eastern European countries, supported the US invasion of Iraq. Strong commitment makes the ally then less influential: the GWOT and *Enduring Freedom* Operation in Afghanistan were launched with European full support and commitment. These strategies also reduce options of realignment with other states (common position with Russia or China, for instance) and, at the same time, reinforce the probability that adversary alliances may be consolidated, as for example the current Syria-Iran alliance in the Middle East.

A defection or abandonment posture means weak commitment and no support in specific adversary conflicts, with a number of different variations. For instance, re-alignment, de-alignment, failure on explicit commitments and failure in providing support in contingencies where it is expected. In the current situation of the US-European alliance, the two latter will be the only ones to be considered, since the alliance remains although expectations of support are weakened. A strategy of weak commitment reduces the risk of entrapment and enhances bargaining leverage, and reduces tension: there is EU support at anti-terrorist level, but ambiguous European military commitment on the GWOT in spite of NATO's military strategy to fight Terrorism and Bush Administration, in some cases, perceived the European position on antiterrorist policy negatively³⁷.

Different U.S. administrations had been arguing unsuccessfully since the end of the Cold War that the main threats to the transatlantic alliance were terrorism and

³⁷ See Michael F. Scheuer, former Chief, Bin Laden Unit, CIA 1995-1999. "Extraordinary Rendition in U.S. Counterterrorism Policy: The Impact on Transatlantic Relations." Statement before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight. Subcommittee on Europe. April 17, 2007.pág. 2.

WMD. The lack of European interest in these issues was one of the parameters that contributed to the US tendency for unilateral solutions to global problems. Even the effects of 9/11 and the Iraq war on European threat perceptions have been ambiguous.³⁸ This also enhances the risk of abandonment, that is, some allies try to avoid alignment and burden-sharing, in the face of a rising threat, expecting not to bear unnecessary costs or/and improve their relative position vis-avis their allies in the future: in terms of Iraq, Iran or the military aspects of the GWOT, European states see the costs of intervention as being high, and pass them to the US; they believe that, due to the commitment to fighting these countries and US military superiority, this buck-passing and partial abandonment (in the GWOT's case) will not mean a dangerous reduction in either US security or European security. But it increases the risk of abandonment, reduces their reputation for resolve and encourages the adversary to stand firm.³⁹ A US strategy of deterrence (threat of force) is opposed by some European states through lack of willingness to use force in support of the United States, in order to restraint their ally: for instance, France and Germany's position against the Iraq invasion, or withdrawal of Spanish and other countries' troops from Iraq. A European/EU strategy of conciliation could produce an entrapment effect. For instance, Iran is appeased by the E-3/EU, emboldening and allowing an enhancement of Iran's bargaining position on its nuclear programme. As a result, the United States may become more intransigent and aggressive if the EU supports them afterwards.

Moreover, the progressive development of a EU security and defence policy creates alternative visions and strategies for EU general and particular interests; after the end of the Cold War, Europe is not the priority of US Global Policy – although it is still

³⁸ This argument is developed in Gordon, Philip H. and Shapiro, Jeremy. *Allies at War: America, Europe and the Crisis over Iraq*. Brookings Institution, 2004.

³⁹ Snyder, p. 471.

a main element - but the vision of military superiority might create a tendency in the EU “to pass the buck” to the United States.⁴⁰ Thus, the CIA Rendition Program, created in 1995, did not create “problems” with the European Allies until 2005, and the CIA and French Intelligence created in 2002, a joint intelligence/counterterrorist centre called Alliance Base in Paris. Although President Chirac battled the US invasion of Iraq publicly at the end of 2003, 200 French Special Operation Forces were fighting under US command in Afghanistan⁴¹, and he had authorized in January 2003 to prepare French Armed Forces to organize a possible contribution of 15.000 troops, 100 aircraft and a carrier group to the invasion⁴². Although the allies committed themselves to fight against terrorism, and undertook a number of common actions, they continued to maintain quite different views of how important the threat was, as well as how to combat it. This perception certainly matches poll data that found that 55 percent of Europeans think that U.S. policies contributed to 9/11.⁴³

Alliance bargaining considerations tend to favour a strategy of weak or ambiguous commitment. Bargaining power over the ally is enhanced by weak, ambiguous commitment, but the incentives or disincentives to choice are also affected by some key determinants: the relative dependence of the partners on the alliance, the degree of strategic interest in defending each other, how explicit is the alliance agreement, the degree to which allies’ interests in conflict with the adversary are shared,

⁴⁰ Christensen, T. and Snyder J. “Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity”. *International Organization*. Vol. 44. n° 2. Spring 1990. pp. 139.

⁴¹ Julianne Smith. Director and Senior Fellow, Europe Program. CSIS. “Extraordinary Rendition in U.S. Counterterrorism Policy: The Impact on Transatlantic Relations.” Statement before before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight. Subcommittee on Europe. April 17, 2007. p.3.

⁴² Gordon and Shapiro. *Allies at War*, p. 142.

⁴³ Craig Kennedy, Craig and Bouton, Marshall M., “The Real Trans-Atlantic Gap: US and European Public Opinion Differences,” *Foreign Policy*, Nov.–Dec. 2002.

and recent historical behaviour.⁴⁴ The United States, while it led the Transatlantic Alliance throughout the Cold War, maintains different attitudes toward EU security policy⁴⁵ and, in some cases, remains suspicious of allies because of fear that “alliance obligations might force America to act in circumstances not of its choosing”,⁴⁶ for instance, in situations as Kosovo.⁴⁷ The Kosovo crisis came shortly after the 1998 St.Malo decision that agreed to an autonomous EU military force, thus reversing fifty years of British policy. The UK was better positioned to exert leadership within the EU on military rather than fiscal or monetary affairs, but also thought that the development of an EU force would improve transatlantic relations, as it would encourage member states to increase military spending. Nevertheless, a collective European military force gives the EU more options, allowing Europeans to be less bound to follow the U.S. lead in NATO, particularly if that involves operations such as Iraq.

However, in the Adversary game, firm commitments tend to strengthen bargaining power vis-à-vis the opponent, that is, leverage over the Adversary is strengthened by a firm, explicit commitment. In this sense, explicit agreements, high degree of shared allies’ interests in conflict with the adversary and recent common historical behaviour would support a strategy of strong commitment in the alliance. From this point of view, there is a large set of US-European agreements identifying and creating common policies on terrorism and WMD, as early as 1990. The 1990 Transatlantic Declaration established that “the United States of America and the

⁴⁴ Snyder, pp. 471-77.

⁴⁵ Oudraat, Chantal de Jonge. “US. Attitudes evolve about EU Security Ambitions”. *European Affairs*. Summer/Fall 2007.

⁴⁶ Welsh, p.29.

⁴⁷ For a European view, see Frederic Bozo, “The Effects of Kosovo and the Danger of Decoupling,” in Jolyon Howorth and John T. S. Keeler, eds., *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy* (Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2003).

European Community and its Member States will fulfil their responsibility to address trans-national challenges..... combating and preventing terrorism..... and preventing the proliferation of nuclear armaments, chemical and biological weapons, and missile technology”. The New Transatlantic Agenda of 1995 and its Joint Action Plan also set out the intention to respond to the same challenges.⁴⁸ Even NATO MC 472 implicitly supports pre-emptive strikes in a similar way to those established in the National Security Strategy 2002⁴⁹.

Thus, the European Security Strategy 2003 and the NSS 2002 and 2006 identified common threats in Terrorism and WMD, and the United States and the EU/European states have reinforced this posture through several agreements. Since the 2002 US-EU Summit in Washington D.C., a huge range of accords and partnerships on anti-terrorist policy have been signed in various areas⁵⁰ such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Container Security Initiative, the Bio-terrorism Act, the Europol-US Agreement to collaborate on police matters, the EC-US Customs Experts Group and the 2004 US-EU Passenger Name Record (PNR) Agreement. Thus, in the Adversary

⁴⁸ The New Transatlantic Agenda. December 3, 1995. Joint Action Plan. II. Responding To Global Challenges. “We are determined to take new steps in our common battle against the scourges of international crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. We commit ourselves to active, practical cooperation between the U.S. and the future European Police Office, EUROPOL”.

⁴⁹ NATO’s Military Concept for Defense against Terrorism,” October 2003, www.nato.int/ims/docu/terrorism.htm

⁵⁰ See also Conclusions adopted by the Council (Justice and Home Affairs). Brussels, 20 September 2001. SN 3926/6/01; Conclusions and Plan of Action of the Extraordinary European Council meeting on 21 September 2001. SN 140/01; Europol-US Agreement to collaborate on police matters. December 2001; The G-8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Statement by the Group of Eight Leaders. Kananaskis, Canada. June 27, 2002. EC-US Customs Experts Group. Customs Cooperation on transatlantic supply chain security; National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*. WW Norton, NY. 2004; Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-458); 2004 US-EU *Passenger Name Record* (PNR) Agreement.

Game, EU or US commitment against opponents may foreclose compromise settlement options. Strengthening EU commitment to the US tends to foreclose any alternative alliance options for the EU, and the EU hastened to publicly reject Osama bin Laden's reported offer for a "separate peace". Since Al-Qa'ida has "expansionist" goals, a policy of firmness will enhance the reputation for resolve, but a strategy of conciliation would produce a falling domino effect: al-Qa'ida or Iran might interpret EU overtures as weakness and thus push harder on both present and future issues.

3. Some conclusions

Once the international system has changed or is in process of change towards greater complexity, there will be a general incentive for creating alliances, and certain states would ally with other states, according to the logic of the security dilemma. However, the alignments result from a process that is indeterminate. This indeterminacy can be reduced but not eliminated by general and particular interests. From this point of view, the US-European alliance suffers a process of structural adjustment. The current alliance would however not be a completely new one and, as we saw above, there would persisted some features from the former Cold War alliance such as those reflecting certain General and Particular Interests, which predispose the United States and European states to align with each other. US Extended Deterrence in Europe is no longer necessary as it was during the Cold War; there is no potential insecurity spiral and Europe is no longer at the centre of US Strategic Policy. But the European Security Strategy 2003 and the NSS 2002 and 2006, identified a more anarchic international system with rising competitive regional powers and common global threats such as Terrorism, WMD, and rogue states, which provide a general incentive to form (or maintain) an alliance. Furthermore, there is a core of precedents

and relationships (democratic ideology and political system, NATO support, common values) that conditioned the process of alliance bargaining, predisposing towards certain alliances and against others.

During Cold War Bipolarity, the Western Allies were under Soviet threat; this created an insecurity spiral that in turn produced an integrative spiral in which Allies moved progressively closer because of fear of the adversary, reducing the risk of abandonment among the allies. This sort of existential threat does not exist anymore, or at least, there is no common perception of a threat as severe as that emanating from the Soviet Union. In fact, there are perceptions and assessments about rogue states and/or terrorists with WMD that differ on their importance as main threats. Thus, it seems that there is still no incentive to sustain the integrative spiral and strategies of strong commitment as existed during the Cold War. Moreover, the larger the threat spectrum become the less cohesion become an alliance. The different interests and perceptions become so large that it is difficult to maintain Alliance cohesion. A clear and, sometimes, unique, threat (probably existential threat), allows a shared vision and a strong cohesion (Soviet Union). At a systemic level, the current dynamics of the (new) distribution of capabilities in the International System, the expectations on the future alignments and the impact of future dynamics produced by lack of economic resources to allocate in defence due to the economic recession, would create a different set of strategic and particular interests in the Alliance members that will affect primary Alliance Dilemma. Even in a situation of common ideological background, i.e. “liberal order”, the forces of the system can create strong divergences on interests among the members, although can at the same time, other incentives to cohesion.

One of the main problems within the US-European alliance now rests upon a disagreement about how to deal with the adversary game within the security dilemma,

and how this affects Alliance bargaining (Secondary Alliance Dilemma). For instance, each side tended to adopt different approaches to deal with terrorism: the US was more prone to a strategy of confrontation, using pre-emptive actions and a military counterterrorist posture, while Europeans preferred a strategy of moderation and perceived excessive US bellicosity.

These strategies directly affect the alliance game. The United States and European Allies had divergent images of the motives and intentions of the adversary. At the same time Europeans tended to see more danger in the dynamics of the conflict than in the adversary. However, there was a common vision on terrorism during the 1990s (including US-EU summits and 1999 NATO Strategic Concept), and Europeans shared the vision that terrorism and WMD were serious threats and that international law would have to be revised to take care of these new concerns. In this regard, and using a strategy of strong commitment in order to maintain solidarity with the United States after 9/11, the EU did not fight the US position on the proposed verification protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention. Prior to 9/11, the EU had overwhelmingly rejected this position. Moreover, the 2003 European Security Strategy is an acknowledgement in principle that Europe shares US fears about terrorism and WMD, as can be seen in the range of agreements between both sides of the Atlantic on counterterrorism measures signed following the 9/11 attacks. Besides, EU law enforcement and intelligence officials clearly agree with the US threat assessment and the substantial counterterrorism cooperation that has emerged among the EU member states since 9/11. Sadly, this EU policy was not carried out until these events.

Nevertheless, there are European perceptions of a declining credibility in the US commitment to Alliance interests. The US focuses on global, rather than European, security concerns: for instance, the US Global Posture Review, the plans for troop

withdrawals in Europe even before Bush Administration took office, the establishment of US bases at the periphery of Europe to address extra-European threats, and the “Greater Middle East” strategic vision⁵¹. Furthermore, this trend would reinforce an Alliance game’s prediction about European fears about entrapment: being dragged into a conflict over an US interest that they do not share or share only partially. In this sense, European allies valued preservation of the alliance more than the cost of supporting the United States in Iraq or military support of the GWOT. Moreover, they saw possibilities of extraregional entrapment in terms of a further NATO enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia, an entanglement in Afghanistan or even beyond, supporting NATO Global Partners.

Europeans thus try to escape or minimize risks of entrapment without serious risks of US abandonment, although accepting partial abandonment in the form of troop withdrawals, priority to the Greater Middle East, and unilateralism. Even NATO European allies accepted a US Ballistic Missile Defence system (BMD) in Europe related to threats coming from Greater Middle East. However, there has been no troop withdrawal in Europe;⁵² the EU also gives a priority to the Middle East and the learned lessons after the campaigns in Afghanistan, Iraq and the GWOT driven a remarkable change in US policy toward a more multilateral approach during the second George W. Bush administration. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld envisaged this new posture after the “Long War” statement in February 2006.⁵³ There was an implicit

⁵¹ For the origin of this conception, sometimes erroneously identified with the first Greater (later Broader) Middle East Initiative, see Garcia Cantalapiedra, David. *“Peace through Primacy”: la Administración Bush, la política exterior de EEUU y las bases de una Primacía Imperial*. UNISCI Papers nº 30. December 2003. Madrid.

⁵² Gates halts cut in Army Force in Europe. The New York Times. November 21, 2007.

⁵³ Secretary Rumsfeld's Remarks at the National Press Club. February 02, 2006. U.S. Department of Defense. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs).

acknowledgement by the Bush Administration that it was necessary to de-emphasise unilateral solutions and coalitions of the willing, and to accept other powers' interests, seeking partnerships with regional powers to face problems and crisis. In this sense, this means a better understanding in Washington of the limitations of military power and a greater appreciation of the European contribution. Unfortunately, the controversy over Iraq has tended to obscure these positive trends in U.S.-European cooperation.

European states debate the balance between cooperation and defection in Alliance bargaining mainly because of the influence of certain aspects of the structure of the International System (for instance, the absence of perceived existential threat that would create an integrative spiral within the Alliance), a perceived reduction in US commitment and, above all, the influence of the Adversary game in the Secondary Alliance Dilemma (reflecting different threat perceptions). Since the end of the Cold War, with clear Unipolarity, prospective or actual peace dividends and the absence of perceived major threats, there were no clear perceptions of changes and needs for adjustment, but inevitably the Alliance dilemma is more severe in a Complex Polarity international system. Members of the US-European alliance currently respond differently to the Adversary game depending on threat perception, and this makes for different results in the Alliance game.

Following Snyder's approach and taking into account the analysis above, there was a mutual fear of abandonment in the case of fighting terrorism and WMD, this promoted convergence of policies in terms of mutual support and firmness toward adversary, and thus, although there is still a tendency towards weak commitment in the Alliance game, fear of abandonment outweighs fear of entrapment. However, in such cases as the invasion of Iraq, there were different threat perceptions and structural pressure, making abandonment more possible because allies may adopt opposing

policies. But in terms of the existence of the alliance, this will not produce its breakdown because, after adjustment, it is already a reflecting of the current international system, there are certain interests that predispose the United States and European states to align with each other. Even in the case of European buck-passing and partial abandonment, there will not be a dangerous reduction in European security, because, at the end, in terms of liberal order, US military Unipolarity along the experience of US/European alliance during the Cold War created a predisposition to maintain the alliance, although reduce but do not eliminate indeterminacy in choosing allies or adversaries, due to overestimation or underestimation of conflicts with third parties by allies.

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