

NATO and the Changing Nature of the Transatlantic Security Community

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Executive Summary

NATO as a political as well as a military alliance has been severely weakened during recent years. The unilateralist turn in US foreign- and defence policies, the evolution of the EU as an ever more autonomous actor in international affairs and the "war" against terrorism has produced effects which is undermining the transatlantic relationship as we know it. The article therefore questions whether it is still correct to argue that the transatlantic relationship is a security community. In the article, security communities are defined as something more than just stable expectations of peaceful settlements of conflicts. A security community also includes common identities, mutual responsiveness and common norms of behaviour. It is underlined that stable expectations of peaceful settlements of conflicts among the countries in the North Atlantic Area will last. However, the US and the Europeans will not, to the same extent as before, regard each other as natural partners in security and defence affairs. What we might be witnessing is an enhanced effort by Europeans to "soft balance" the US via different measures like diplomacy, economic strength etc. to limit the US' room for manoeuvre. Hence, a 'no-war' community is replacing the transatlantic security community as we have known it.

Keywords: NATO, EU, terrorism, United States, Security Communities

NATO and the Changing Nature of the Transatlantic Security Community

Introduction

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has in recent years, and especially after the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, suffered from an identity crisis. In retrospect, NATO has since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact in the early 1990's been an organisation in constant search for a new *raison d' être*. The American neo-conservative commentator Robert Kagan even emphasises that it is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world (Kagan 2003: 3). This article will illustrate that the unilateralist turn in American foreign policy orientation and the fight against international terrorism only partially explains the present character of the transatlantic security relationship. To fully understand and grasp the extent of the present situation we must also take into consideration the strength and the speed of the European Union (EU) integration process, including the effort to transform the Union into a more independent political entity (Ojanen 2006, Cox 2005a, Meyer 2005, Allin 2004, Menon 2004, Jones 2004, Rees & Aldrich 2004). Hence, and according to the former president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, the Common European Foreign- and Security policy (CFSP) should be regarded as the heart and the motor of the emerging political union of the EU (Wind 1992: 23).

The purpose of this article is twofold. Firstly, and from a theoretical perspective, the aim is to shed some new insights upon Karl W. Deutsch' theory of pluralistic security communities in light of the recent developments within NATO and the transatlantic relationship in general. In particular, it reviews NATO's role in the fight against international terrorism from 2001 and onwards. With this theoretical and empirical perspective in mind, I will look at the conditions that may lead to a dissolution of the transatlantic security community. Secondly, if the transatlantic security community should be dissolved, I analyse what might replace it. The article argues that the traditional Euro-Atlantic security community is being transformed in to a "no-war" community. In such a community, there are, on the one hand, no bellicose activities among its parties. On the other hand, the different countries taking part in such a "no-war" community will not look upon each other as partners either. NATO is therefore an institution which is becoming more de-politicised and also a toolbox for other actors' security policies. By other actors we include the US and the EU as well as coalitions of the able and willing. It will be argued that a main feature in such a "no-war" community is "soft balancing" (Pape 2005). Soft balancing could be regarded as a measure where some European states or the EU as a whole use international institutions, economic statecraft, diplomatic arrangements to delay, frustrate, and undermine US policies.

I therefore underline that when it comes to European security politics, NATO is becoming an organisation in the gravity-field of EU integration. Hence, Europe is becoming more "EU-itisied", making it questionable whether it is relevant or, indeed, possible to be a part of NATO without first being European. Furthermore, a weakened NATO has wider consequences because NATO is the main institution linking the US and Europe into an Atlantic security community. The ambition of this article is therefore to investigate the causal links between the transatlantic security community and the institutional relevance of NATO.

The present status of research

The research literature on NATO and the status of the transatlantic relationship has grown immensely in recent years. There is, within the research debate, a near uniform agreement on the need to find a new foundation for the Euro-Atlantic relationship. Furthermore, there is also agreement that the relationship between Europe and the United States will not go back to the way as it was before the end of the Cold War, or even before the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Hence, NATO's political and military significance as a security provider has changed. Most political analysts and observers would argue that the relationship has been weakened.¹ There is, however, a disagreement among researchers and political analysts on the extent of this marginalization of NATO, which is also due to the different theoretical approaches of the analysts. Neo-realists tend to be more pessimistic as regards NATO's future than liberals and social constructivists. Nevertheless, most researchers still regard the transatlantic relationship as something everlasting. Most researchers do not dispute its role as a security community. Hence, there is still a tendency to regard the relationship between the US and Europe through a status-quo perspective.

However, several political analysts also tend to provide policy recommendations on how to enhance the transatlantic relationship. For instance, Ludger Kuhnhardt proposes a new Atlantic Treaty (Kuhnhardt 2003). Such a treaty should have a broad basis to cover the various dimensions of transatlantic relations. The mutual recognition of common duties in matters of defence, justice and home affairs, market developments and technological advancements should, according to him, be elements in such a treaty (ibid.: 64). Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier argue that a globalisation of NATO is necessary by including countries like Australia, Brazil, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa and South Korea in to the alliance (Daalder & Goldgeier 2006). Ted Hopf has argued along the same lines by emphasising that countries which make up the EU, NATO, Council of Europe are part of an "authoritative alliance" (Hopf 2000). Others argue that the end of trans-atlanticism was a process which started long before the terrorist attacks on the US. According to François Heisbourg, what 11 September 2001 did was to close the post-Cold War epoch (1990-2001) with a horrid bang rather than in soft stages (Heisbourg 2001: 143).

To summarise, even though most analysts recognise the need to find a new basis for the transatlantic relationship, they still tend to think that the relationship is being reproduced in the sense that it will last for the foreseeable future (see e.g. Gordon & Shapiro 2004; Risse 2004).

Therefore, Michael Cox complains of intellectual complacency:

"nobody could have forecast in detail the transformative changes in US foreign policy that occurred once George W. Bush had taken over in the White House in 2001...; and none of course could have anticipated the exact date on which the attack on the Pentagon and the Twin Towers would take place. The problem is that IR was not even thinking about such things. Nor was it even faintly prepared for the impact all this then had on the transatlantic relationship itself. Indeed, not only did IR fail to see the storm about to break across the ocean – in much the same way as it failed to

¹ Vincent Pouliot is one political analyst who argues that the transatlantic security relationship is still well and alive (Pouliot 2006). His line of argument is that "... the recent strains over the Atlantic — all solved peacefully if at times painfully — do not signal the demise of the transatlantic security community but, instead, empirically demonstrate how alive and well it is" (p. 119)..

anticipate the end of the Cold War [...] – but was intellectually ill-equipped to do so for one simple reason – it had already determined that Europe and the United States were more likely to bind than to clash” (Cox 2005a: 205).

Therefore, this article contributes to the research debate and tries to overcome this status-quo situation by questioning the longevity of the transatlantic security community as we have known it. A further aim is to try to point out in which direction the transatlantic relationship is heading.

NATO as a loosely coupled pluralistic security community

Different shapes of security communities

Originally, Karl W. Deutsch distinguished between two types of security communities, namely amalgamated and pluralistic security communities. In an amalgamated security community, two or more states formally merge into an expanded state. A pluralistic security community retains the legal independence of separate states but integrates them to the point that the units entertain “dependable expectations of peaceful change” (Deutsch 1957: 5). Deutsch defines peaceful change as the resolution of social problems, normally by institutionalized procedures, without recourse to large-scale physical force (ibid.). Because NATO today consists of 26 different and sovereign states, NATO is a pluralistic and loosely coupled security community (Adler & Barnett 1998: 30). In a loosely coupled pluralistic security community, the members expect no bellicose activities from other members and, therefore, consistently practice self-restraint. A tightly coupled pluralistic security community possesses a political regime that lies between a sovereign state and a centralized regional government. (ibid: 30). The EU is a tightly coupled pluralistic security community, with the potential of becoming amalgamated.

According to Emanuel Adler and Beverly Crawford, security communities are not spontaneous creations. Rather, it is the dynamic and positive relationship between power, ideas, increased interactions, international organization, and social learning, which are the sources of both mutual trust and collective identity. These sources are therefore the necessary conditions for the development of dependable expectations of peaceful change (Adler & Crawford 2002). Furthermore, Deutsch emphasizes the importance of the creation of a “we-feeling” among its population. Such a we-feeling consists of trust, and mutual consideration; of partial identification in terms of self-images and interests; of mutually successful predictions of behaviour, and of cooperative action in accordance with it – in short, a matter of a perpetual dynamic process of mutual attention, communication, perception of needs, and responsiveness in the process of decision-making (Deutsch 1957: 36).

By assessing NATO’s role in the fight against international terrorism and character of the transatlantic relationship, the article focuses in the following on three different, but highly related aspects of the transatlantic security community; namely (1) institutional procedures, (2) mutual responsiveness and a (3) common ideological basis. Institutional procedures refer to the willingness of NATO-member-countries to apply the Alliance’s institutional arrangements in the handling of the common security challenges, as e.g. the fight against terrorism. Mutual responsiveness is a central concept in the research on security communities. In this setting however, I will link this concept to the basic norm in the transatlantic security community since the foundation of NATO in 1949, namely the willingness to mutually adaptation to each other’s security needs within a multilateral and institutionalised framework (see also

Sæter 2005). The common ideological basis refers to the different countries' perceptions of the role of institutions in international affairs, and whether one sees the international system through the prisms of a Westphalian or an international society approach. Hence, the question is whether the international system is regarded as an anarchy where the balance of power dynamics reigns, or as an international society where e.g. the security dilemma has been made obsolete.

Different views on NATO's transformation since 1990

A Rational Approach: Neo-Realism and Liberalism

To understand NATO's current role in Euro-Atlantic security politics, it is important to analyse the transformative period NATO underwent from 1990 onwards. Within the IR discourse, different schools of thought assessed the implications of the end of the Cold War in very different ways. The neo-realists warned against a re-nationalisation of European security politics, also including the dissolution of the major international organisations which framed co-operative behaviour within Western Europe and between Western Europe and the US during the Cold War. The neo-realists argued that these institutions were the result of the bipolar structure which would be rendered obsolete when the power structures were transformed from bipolar to multipolar ones (see e.g. Mearsheimer 1990, Mearsheimer 2001).

The liberal view on the other hand argued that a stable peace now had reached Europe where the balance of power structures were being replaced by a greater Euro-Atlantic civic and democratic space. Hence, new and peaceful relations between the European countries would develop because of the fact that the communist dictatorships in Central- and Eastern Europe were turning toward democracy and pluralism. In accordance with the liberal view, these developments included an enhanced role for institutions like EU and OSCE and a new role for NATO if the organisation managed to transform itself into a more collective and thereby more inclusive security body. In that way, NATO would act as a stabilizer and provide the potential for mutual economic benefits as well as high levels and diverse flows of social communications that facilitate the growth of we-feeling and trust (Ruggie 1998: 231).

In accordance with the liberal paradigm, NATO's transformation towards a new Euro-Atlantic security structure reinvigorated the transatlantic relationship. One of the central aims behind this fundamental transformation was to ensure that the US remained a European power (Holbrooke 1995). During this period, the overarching aim for the US was to prevent the re-escalation of the balance of power dynamics in Europe and to ensure that a collective security order in Europe was developed. From the European perspective, the US was regarded as a *primus inter pares*: The Europeans accepted US leadership which was, according to G. John Ikenberry, based upon a grand bargain: The United States would export security to other countries and open up its markets for foreign investors. In exchange, other countries accepted the leading role of the United States as long as the US abided by international norms and pursued an institutionalized foreign policy. In such a way, the US' closest allies could function as important interlocutors (Ikenberry 2000).

The different co-operative measures adopted by NATO in the 1990's, like the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Partnership for Peace (PfP) arrangement as well as the different measures taken to enlarge NATO towards the Central- and Eastern European states (as e.g. the Membership Action Plan; MAP), were framed in such a way that they would support a liberal minded security order in

the Euro-Atlantic area. However, NATO's relationship with Russia was a problem since Russia herself did not consider NATO enlargement as a process meant to enhance security and stability in Europe, but as a measure which was directed against Russia. Therefore, in the scholarly debate on NATO-enlargement in the 1990's, it was often emphasised that magnanimity towards the loser of the Cold War was deemed necessary and, that, NATO-enlargement was the wrong medicine (see e.g. Gaddis 1998).

Additionally, the developments in former Yugoslavia during the 1990's made it clear that military interventions as in Bosnia-Herzegovina (IFOR and SFOR from 1995 onwards) and in Kosovo (KFOR from 1999 onwards), were strongly needed to secure a lasting and liberal security order in the whole of the Euro-Atlantic area. Hence, NATO's intervention and air campaign in Kosovo was driven by both humanitarian and security concerns (Matlary 2006a: 114).

The enlargements of NATO, which took place in 1999 and 2004 respectively, expanded the Euro-Atlantic security community towards large parts of Central- and Eastern Europe. Besides providing security for the countries concerned, NATO also emphasised the need to enhance the security of the countries not invited to join in the first round. The enhanced PfP-arrangement, as agreed at the Madrid summit in July 1997, aimed at reducing the risk that taking in some countries would imply the permanent exclusion of others. As underlined in paragraph 30 in the "Study on NATO enlargement" from 1995:

"Concerns have already been expressed in the context of the discussion of the enlargement of NATO that a new member might "close the door" behind it to new admissions in the future of other countries which may also aspire to NATO membership. Such a situation must be avoided; the Alliance rests upon commonality of views and a commitment to work for consensus; part of the evaluation of the qualifications of a possible new member will be its demonstrated commitment to that process and those values" (Study on NATO Enlargement 1995)..

In accordance with the prevalent collective security approaches, it was furthermore underlined that enlargement would entail security for all, not just the new NATO members (Yost 1998: 119). NATO enlargement was therefore an inclusive process of indefinite scope and duration. The US even underlined that the difference between being in NATO and being outside in the form of taking part in the enhanced PfP arrangement and in the MAP, should be "razor thin".

Such a development was made possible by the prevalent multilateral approach to European and Euro-Atlantic security that contrary to Realist predictions, accelerated in depth and scope after the end of the Cold War. The meaning of multilateralism in this sense is that it drew these new member states and partner countries into joint force planning, international military command structures, and established a complex transgovernmental political process for making political and security decisions (Deudney & Ikenberry 1999: 183). Hence, a re-nationalization of the Central- and Eastern European countries security policies was avoided. Thomas Risse pointed out that the enlargement of NATO also implied an enlargement of the transatlantic security community. NATO's experience in cooperation, trust building, and integration among members was thereby extended into Central and Eastern Europe. Therefore, NATO aimed to establish a "pacific federation" in the Euro-Atlantic area through enlargement, where this area stretched "from Vladivostok, to Berlin, San Francisco" and even to Tokyo (quoted in Gheciu (2005): 975). The

enlargements of NATO were therefore also an enlargement of multilateral alliance norms. Such a process would have been regarded as unfeasible if it not were for the socialization processes, which were taking place simultaneously with NATO's outreach activities.

A Sociological Approach: Social constructivism

In the IR discourse, socialisation is indeed social constructivism's home turf (Zürn & Checkel 2005). Alexandra Gheciu's study clearly shows that international socialization matters when it comes to NATO's internal (as e.g. new command structure and planning procedures, military transformation also including the so-called Prague Capabilities Commitments), as well as external transformation (EAPC, PfP, MAP and enlargements).

Referring to Gheciu's study, Zürn and Checkel argue that NATO educated and persuaded elites in the Czech Republic and Romania to adopt liberal military norms:

“Because NATO membership was, according to her account, ambiguous in terms of instrumental benefits, guaranteed membership as an incentive cannot reasonably explain these changes. Rather, she argues, it is necessary to adopt a constructivist approach, conceptualizing socialization as a process in which the socializer (NATO) has targeted – and sometimes affected – changes in the definitions of identity and interest held by socializees” (ibid.: 1061).

Hence, different theoretical approaches generate different explanations for the absence of war and the development of common identities and institutions such as NATO at the international level. By contrasting rationalist (Realism and Liberalism) and sociological theories (Social Constructivism), I argue that both of these theoretical approaches can explain NATO-transformation that first of all derive from the instrumental decisions designed to advance NATO's as well as NATO member countries' immediate security and economic interests. Nevertheless, by building upon insights from Adler and Barnett, only sociological theories allow for the possibility that interstate interactions, also including NATO-reform, can transform the identities and interests of states and induce dependable expectations of peaceful change (Adler & Barnett 1998: 34). This makes it different from interest-based theories such as neo-realism and liberalism. It furthermore pulls the security community approach closer to social constructivism. Deutsch' emphasis on the development of “we-feeling” and mutual responsiveness therefore fits well within a sociological framework, which consequently stresses the societal aspect of international relations.

The development of a NATO ability to socialize its partner-countries into new norms, by transforming their security- identities and cultures, were the most important aspects of NATO's external transformation during the 1990's and onwards. Interestingly enough, NATO even managed to socialize countries not aspiring to membership. Since the 1990's, the non-aligned countries, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland have been attached to NATO via the NACC/EAPC-structures as well as the PfP-arrangements. By taking part in the PfP-arrangement, including the Planning and Review Process (PARP), these countries are also integrated into NATO's defence planning procedures. PARP therefore contributes towards making the military forces of these countries available for NATO-operations and all of them have been taking part in the different NATO-operations in the Balkans during recent years.

Therefore, by applying such a sociological approach, I state that NATO during the 1990's helped in redefining its partner-countries security identities to such an extent that it encompassed almost the whole Euro-Atlantic area, also including those countries not invited to join as full members. In that way, NATO adjusted its *institutional procedures* to the new Euro-Atlantic security order, which was characterized by an absence of a common enemy. Additionally, the institutional procedures were adjusted so as to make NATO relevant in a new Euro-Atlantic security order. A case in point are the two strategic concepts elaborated in 1991 and 1999 respectively. Instability broadly defined also including terrorism, were in these two documents defined as the main challenges faced by the Alliance in the post-Cold war period.

Moreover, by reforming NATO's institutional procedures NATO helped to maintain the basic norm in transatlantic relations since the foundation of NATO in 1949, which is *mutual responsiveness*. In this setting mutual responsiveness encompasses the willingness to mutually adapt to each other's security needs within a multilateral framework. It was this multilateral framework which helped in the socialization of the central and eastern European states in their quest for NATO membership. Additionally, it also helped the original NATO members to adapt to a new security framework; the most important one was to keep the United States as a key player in Euro-Atlantic security politics.

In other words, the *common ideological basis* was the foundation for the transatlantic relationship in NATO. The common ideological basis refers to how one perceives the international system; as an anarchy where the balance of power dynamics reign, or as a system where it is possible to build common institutions and norms and thereby build a broader international society. During the first half of the 1990's, these questions were not on the political agenda, but became more visible in the latter part of the decade. It also contains the seed of the disintegration processes in the transatlantic security community in recent years.

Since 2001, George W. Bush and his new administration underlined that the US should increasingly stand aloof from the rest of the international system. Instead, the role of US' political and military power would be to arbitrate right and wrong and enforce peace. In line with this reasoning, the US developed scepticism towards institutions, treaties and liberal internationalism that jeopardize American sovereignty and constrain the exercise of power (Ikenberry 2004: 8-9). According to this view, the role of the US in a world characterized by international anarchy is to step forward as the order-creating Leviathan (ibid). Furthermore, the prevalent view in the Bush Administration is, according to Richard Perle, that "U.S. power is always potentially a source for good in the world" (Walt 2005: 72). Similarly, columnist Charles Krauthammer declares that what protects civilization from barbarism "is not parchment but power, and in a unipolar world, American power – wielded, if necessary, unilaterally. If necessary, pre-emptively" (ibid.: 72).

Michael Cox label this "Bush revolution" in US foreign policy "Wilsonianism in boots" (Cox 2005b). This is also central to the neo-conservative ideology, which has framed US foreign policy since the inauguration of George W. Bush in 2001. Central to the neo-conservative ideology is statements like these, as underlined by the neo-conservative think-tank Project of the New American Century (PNAC):

"American leadership is good for both America and the world; and that such leadership requires military strength, diplomatic energy and commitment to moral principle ... [PNAC] intends ... to explain what American leadership entails. It will

also strive to rally support for a vigorous and principled policy of American international involvement and to stimulate useful public debate on foreign and defence policy and America's role in the world”.

The promotion of democracy through American leadership, if necessary, with the help of American military force, is central to the Bush Administration's foreign policy and to the neo-conservative ideology (Williams 2005).

In the following sections, I will apply the three concepts mentioned above, institutional procedures, mutual responsiveness and common ideological basis to analyse the content of the transatlantic relationship after 2001.

The transatlantic relationship since 2001

I will in the following concentrate upon four different aspects of the transatlantic relationship since 2001: Transatlantic military relations and operations, transatlantic diplomacy, American “modernism” versus European “post-modernism”, and finally, strategic culture.

Transatlantic military transformation and operations

As already stated, there were clear signs of a foreign policy shift in US policy towards the rest of the world even prior to the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 (Gordon & Shapiro 2004: 93-95). According to François Heisbourg, the drift towards unilateralism and the Kosovo war in 1999 led towards a new division of labour between the US and Europe which eroded the traditional NATO focus on risk sharing (Heisbourg 2001: 145).² The Kosovo war illustrated the huge technological differences between the US and Europe. Therefore, the US underlined strongly that the Europeans should enhance their efforts to become better producers of security. Defence transformation within NATO was the key concept, which implied enhanced focus upon military forces that are agile and mobile, also including full application of new technologies in the conduct of military operations. The result was the initiation of the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) at NATO's Washington summit in April 1999. DCI was intended to be a measure to address the growing technology gap between the United States and its NATO allies, including making full use of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). Overall, DCI identified 58 major areas as shortfalls based on NATO's Kosovo air campaign.

At NATO's Prague summit in November 2002 the DCI was reprogrammed. In stead, NATO developed a three-pronged approach to improving its defence capabilities – the launch of the Prague Capabilities Commitments (PCC), the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) and the streamlining of the military command structure. At Prague, NATO also adopted a military concept for defence against terrorism and initiated a new missile defence feasibility study.

² The former NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson warned in 2000 against any division of labour between the US and Europe on risk-sharing: “...[a]nd when I say “NATO's forces”, I mean the forces of all the Allies. We must avoid any division of labour within NATO, whereby the high-tech Allies provide the logistics, the smart bombs and the intelligence, and the lower-tech Allies provide the soldiers — what a NATO official once called «a two-class NATO, with a precision class and a bleeding class». This would be politically unsustainable. Similarly, we should avoid falling into a division of labour whereby the European Allies alone handle the smaller challenges, and the United States only engages in the high-end collective defence missions. For the long-term health of NATO, the burdens, costs and the risks must be shared, and shared equally.”

The backdrop, however, was the American view that Europe was not able or willing to contribute to regional and global security. Current predictions indicate, that by 2007, the US will spend more on defence than every other country in the world put together. The military imbalance between the US and Europe is now so grave that it raises important questions about whether American and European troops can continue to coordinate operations, or be factored into American planning (Coker 2006: 63).

Hence, the prevalent view in the security- and defence discourse in recent years is that the Americans are the ones who act, whilst Europeans are capable of no more than talk. Julian-Lindley-French, a former research fellow at the EU Institute for Security Studies in Paris, is of the opinion that this is one of the great misconceptions of modern transatlantic relations (Lindley-French 2000). As Lindley-French underlines, an examination of recent peacekeeping and peacemaking operations demonstrates that this is patently not the case. While the European performance during air operations of the Kosovo campaign was poor, it matched American performance on the ground through NATO's KFOR-operation. Furthermore, the Europeans are also heavily involved in NATO's ISAF operation in Afghanistan which as of October 2006 comprises approximately 31 000 soldiers from 36 NATO and NATO partner countries.

With regard to equitable burden-sharing, it might be important to draw attention to the importance of European allies who are relatively more prepared to undertake the riskier or longer-term operations that are, still after the Iraq war in 2003, evidently anathema to Washington. Jeffrey Record argues that the US' conventional supremacy and approach to war – especially its paramount reliance on firepower and technology – often are counterproductive (Record 2006: 1). Expecting that the US' conventional military superiority can deliver quick, cheap and decisive success, Americans are surprised and politically demoralized when confronted by Vietnam- and Iraq-like quagmires. As underlined by him, the US' aversion to counterinsurgency is deeply rooted in the American way of warfare (ibid.). He suggests that the US should abstain from intervention in such wars, also including peace-support operations, except in those rare cases when military intervention is essential to protecting or advancing US national security (ibid.). Additionally, the US military force posture appears increasingly at odds with the strategic environment. Hostile great powers, once the predominant threats to American security, have been supplanted by rogue states, failed states, and non-state actors – all of them pursuing asymmetrical strategies to offset US military strengths (ibid.: 6).

In fact, the continuing instability in Afghanistan and Iraq, the situation in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship as well as the war between Israel and the Hezbollah guerrilla during July-August 2006, the crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, all indicate that conflict prevention, crisis management and even peace enforcement operations are actually on the increase. Politically these may not have as high profile as the “war on terror” and the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), but they are the situations that the EU, and the international community more broadly, are striving to ameliorate (Shepherd 2006: 79-80).

Hence, the demand for operations that the EU via its European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is developing is on the rise. Therefore, whilst the US perfects “full spectrum war-fighting”, European powers, and not just Britain and France, have been quietly getting on with “full spectrum peacekeeping” across the globe in such diverse places as Albania, Afghanistan, Bosnia, East Timor, Iraq, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan (Lindley-French 2000). As Lindley-French states: “Whilst

the oft-heard accusation that the Americans are paper-tigers might sound a bit harsh, it is not without foundation and reinforces European frustrations whenever the issue of burden-sharing is raised” (ibid.).

Transatlantic diplomacy

Furthermore, diplomatically and politically, what we have witnessed since 2001 is that the political gap between Washington and Europe has widened almost on a daily basis. The US global “war on terror” and Iraq, were definitely the most dramatic events. This has become increasingly evident, as American and European leaders respectively have been focusing on different parts of the world and on different issues. The US has in large part focused on Asia, the Middle East and on their own continent as well as perceived new threats to their security. The Europeans have been preoccupied with issues like EU-enlargement and the consolidation of EU institutions, with environmental and social welfare issues coupled with the effects of globalisation (Carlsnaes 2005: 402).

These developments have been further aggravated by the fact that diplomatic contact across the Atlantic has dropped precipitously in terms of quantity and quality, whereas it continues to rise within Europe (Daalder 2005: 47). During the 1990s, the US Secretary of State travelled to Europe on average nearly once a month. In contrast, then Secretary of State Colin Powell travelled six times to Europe in 2001 and only three times in 2002. Even in the midst of one of the bitterest transatlantic debates in memory, Powell flew to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2003 to deliver a tough speech on Iraq, but he did not stop in any other European capital to make the case in person (ibid.). In 2005, the new US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice travelled to Europe eight times, the highest number in years but still quantitatively lower than was the case during the 1990s.³ On the European side, European foreign ministers see each other as often as three times a month, ranging from bilateral contacts, to meetings in the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the EU, to meetings within the frameworks of NATO and the UN Assembly (ibid.).

American “modernism” versus European “post-modernism”: The EU as a normative power

Even though such a quantitative description of diplomatic activity has its limitations, it indicates that the US and the Europeans are turning away from each other. This transatlantic drift cannot be explained by different interests between the two parties only, but is also due to structural differences. According to Robert Cooper, the Europeans, and not only the EU, live in a post-modern world where the differences between domestic and foreign issues are increasingly blurred. In fact, the whole EU system is based upon supranational institution building characterised by interferences in each other’s “domestic” affairs (Cooper 2004: 26-27). This “domestication” of European politics where traditional foreign policies are becoming internal, and where traditional high politics issues are turned into low-politics, is one of the main characteristics of a post-modern system. This post-modern turn in European politics has been made possible by the highly intensive and dynamic character of the EU integration process. In fact, the European integration process has weakened the hold of the Westphalian international order that had dominated Europe since 1648.

³ See <http://www.state.gov/secretary/trvl/c14074.htm> for references on the Secretary’s travel program.

Whether this new European order will turn into a federal arrangement or not remains to be seen, but what is evident is that the higher the level of integration, the more the EU is likely to develop its own security- and defence competencies. It will to a much lesser extent, turn to external actors for the handling of its own security challenges. Therefore, the decisions taken by President Jacques Chirac, then Prime Minister Lionel Jospin of France, and his British counterpart, Prime Minister Tony Blair at St. Malo in December 1998 to pave the way for a real European competence in the sphere of security and defence was pivotal, not only for Europe's own competencies as regards security and defence, but for the whole European integration process itself.

Britain had long resisted the integration of the WEU's competencies into the EU. As a result, as long as there was no agreement, the US-led NATO would in practice remain the main instrument for dealing with questions of defence and military security (Sæter 1998: 85).⁴ Consequently, the EU integration process would remain within an Atlantic framework of security and cooperation making it impossible for the EU to turn into a more separate unit in international affairs. The British change of heart, which finally led to the establishment of ESDP within the framework of CFSP, has therefore made the EU a far more autonomous security actor.

However, the unique character of the EU has been a major challenge as it has proved difficult to accommodate a multi-faceted entity which is neither an international organization nor a state, but which operates globally across a range of policy areas (Rieker 2006: 37). The EU is not only a tightly coupled pluralistic security community, but also a comprehensive security actor. Such a comprehensive security actor can mobilize a vast range of both civilian and military means and instruments. This combination of both military and civilian means, further supported by the EU's history as a civilian power, has given the Union an overall crisis-management and conflict-prevention capability (Rieker & Ulriksen 2003; Rieker 2004; Rieker 2006).

There is a causal link between the EU as a comprehensive security actor, and Europe as a *normative* unit within the framework of a post-modern European state-system. An approach that underlines Europe as a post-modern, tightly coupled and comprehensive security actor could also be applied as an analytical tool to contrast the European approach towards security and cooperation with the American one.

The normative dimension emphasizes the role of cooperative security practices, region building, and pluralistic integration in order to achieve peaceful change (Adler & Crawford 2004; see also Manners 2002). It is a system in which sovereignty is shared, where the borders between domestic and foreign affairs are blurred and where power politics in the traditional sense is weakened. The balance of power systems, so much emphasized by Realism, is therefore redundant within such a post-modern system (Manners 2002: 239).

In contrast, the US is still confined to the modern or Westphalian world of power politics and balance of power approaches. It recognises state sovereignty and the consequent separation of domestic and foreign affairs and rejects external interference in the former (Cooper 2004: 22).

One of the staunchest supporters of the foreign policies of the present American administration, Charles Krauthammer, clearly describes this modernity

⁴ With the signing and ratification of the Treaty of Nice (2001/2003), the tasks with the exemption of the modified Brussels treaty, including the WEU Assembly, were transferred to the EU. The WEU treaty is therefore still in power, and a small WEU secretariat still exist.

paradigm within the US administration: “Being uniquely situated in the world, we cannot afford the empty platitudes of allies not quite candid enough to admit that they live under the protection of American power. In the end, we have no alternative but to be unilateralist. Multilateralism becomes either an exercise in futility or a cover for inaction” (Krauthammer 2002). In line with Cooper’s thinking, there is only limited space for supranational decision-making in the modern world. For the hegemon it becomes ever more important to underline that neither formal institutions nor coalitions of the willing shall limit the hegemon’s room for manoeuvre. The foreign- and security policies of the current Bush-administration could therefore, in the words of Stefano Guzzini, be labelled foreign policy without diplomacy (Guzzini 2002). As Krauthammer also emphasized:

“Coalitions are not made by superpowers going begging hat in hand; they are made by asserting a position and inviting others to join. What even pragmatic realists fail to understand is that unilateralism is the high road to multilateralism. It was when the first President Bush said that the Iraqi invasion would not stand, and made it clear that he was prepared to act alone if necessary, that he created the Gulf War coalition” (ibid.).

The last point is also reflected explicitly in the National Security Strategy of March 2006 which states that: “Effective multinational efforts are essential to solve these problems. Yet history has shown that only when we do our part will others do theirs. America must continue to lead”.

Strategic culture: Different approaches to international cooperation and multilateralism

Such an approach towards multilateralism does not correspond well with how this concept is debated, neither within Europe, nor within the IR literature. Robert O. Keohane presents a nominal definition when he states that multilateralism is “the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more states” (quoted in Ruggie 1998: 105). John Gerhard Ruggie states that multilateralism also has a normative dimension: “it coordinates national policies in groups of three or more states, which is something that other organizational forms also do, but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states” (ibid.: 106). It is these generalised principles of conduct, without regard to the particular interests of the parties involved or the strategic exigencies that may exist in any specific occurrence that is important here (ibid.: 109). In this way, Ruggie rules out the possibility that the state that has the most resources at its disposal can legitimately expect to have the final word in any given situation within a multilateral setting on this basis alone (Sjursen 2004: 698). Therefore, Krauthammer’s approach towards multilateralism is of course nothing more than badly disguised unilateralism. Additionally, Krauthammer’s analysis points to why NATO’s role has been weakened during recent years, and especially after the terror attacks on the US.

These differences, between the American and European approaches to international affairs, point to the two dichotomies in the transatlantic relationship as of today; that between modernism versus post-modernism on the one hand, and unilateralism versus multilateralism on the other. Robert Cooper argues that the US in the future must choose between being a state within the modern or within the post-modern sphere (Cooper 2004: 44-50). What seems ever more evident is that a

continued Atlantic pluralistic security community is incompatible with continued American unilateralism.

Because American unilateralism does not accept global peer competitors, it can also not accept a real independent European foreign and security policy, even if such a policy is defined within the frameworks of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or the United Nations (UN). From a European perspective, American unilateralism is incompatible with the founding principles which defined the Atlantic security community from the end of the Second World War to the present day, namely institutionalised cooperation, also including mutual adaptations, where NATO was the linchpin for the transatlantic security community (Sæter 2005: 45). This tension is growing due to an increasing unwillingness in Europe to see the world through the prisms of power politics.

At the same time, NATO is turning into a military organisation for global intervention that also must be regarded in the light of the two US security strategies of 2002 and 2006 respectively. Neither of these security strategies excludes the possibility of US pre-emptive attacks. The debate on pre-emption illustrates one of the greatest paradoxes in today's transatlantic relationship: a common transatlantic threat perception combined with a strong disagreement on how to handle these threats and challenges. These threat perceptions are stipulated in two formal documents, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America from 2006 (NSS 2006) and the European security strategy (ESS), named "A Secure Europe in a Better World", of December 2003. Both of these documents identify international terrorism, failed and collapsed states, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts and organised crime as the gravest threats and challenges to our security as of today. Furthermore, the ESS emphasises early action, implying that conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early. According to the document, this is first of all due to the continued globalisation where distant threats may be as much a concern as those that are near at hand. Therefore, the first line of defence will be abroad.

The US national security strategy also underlines the necessities of co-operation with allies if the fight against international terrorism is to be successful. It states that wherever possible, the United States will rely on regional organizations and state powers to meet their obligations to fight terrorism. It further states: "Where existing institutions can be reformed to meet new challenges, we, along with our partners must reform them. Where appropriate institutions do not exist, we, along with our partners, must create them" (NSS 2006: 36). NATO is furthermore described as an organisation that is reforming itself to meet current threats and is playing a leading role in stabilising the Balkans and Afghanistan, as well as training the Iraqi military leadership to address its security challenges (ibid.: 35)..

These statements taken from the ESS and the US NSS 2006, illustrate on the one hand that the EU sees the necessities of early action if future challenges are to be met. The US on the other hand is not dismissing institutionalised co-operation in the fight against terrorism either.

Even though these two documents correspond on several points, it is important not to underestimate the differences either. These differences are first of all based upon the different characteristics of the EU and the US respectively. While the EU is an actor which is in between an ordinary international organisation and a federal state, the US is a fully fledged federal state. Furthermore, the EU is an organisation without strategic history which mainly is due to the fact that the EU member states traditionally have been reluctant to delegate security and defence competencies to the

EU institutions. Therefore, the EU can be characterised as a different type of security actor (Rieker & Ulriksen 2004).

The ESS gives the EU an impetus to create a strategic culture that also includes issue areas where an EU consensus has traditionally not been that strong (Bailes 2005; Meyer 2005). The ESS calls for the development of a “strategic culture, which fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention”. Christoph Meyer is rather optimistic as regards the EU’s ability to create a strategic culture (Meyer 2005: 532-543). In his study, he argues that national strategic cultures are less resistant to change than commonly thought and that they have been subject to three types of learning pressures since 1989: changing threat perceptions, institutional socialisation, and mediated crisis learning. According to Meyer, the combined effect of these mechanisms would be a process of convergence with regard to strategic norms prevalent in current EU countries which in turn should benefit ESDP. The positive effect on fast and effective decision making procedures in crisis situations, strengthens the Brussels based EU-institutions which handles security- and defence issues, like the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the Military Committee and the Military Staff (Howorth & Keeler 2004). This is also a paradox since the ESS was issued just a few months after one of the worst crisis in the EU generated by the US lead invasion of Iraq.

Such an EU culture is likely to take as its main point of departure that the EU is a “post-modern” entity. This entity is different since it is a civilian power, but is capable of combining political, economic and military means in their foreign policy. The EU also defines its foreign policy in a UN perspective, thus the wording “effective multilateralism” as a steering guide for the making of an EU foreign policy. The US has in recent years and especially after 11 September, turned in on a unilateral foreign policy, which undermines the foundation for the transatlantic security community, namely institutionalised co-operation via NATO where mutual responsiveness is the main norm. Clearly, the absence of a common strategic culture posts a significant challenge to transatlantic cooperation on security policies in general and manifests itself in the counterterrorism efforts of the EU and the US respectively (Rees & Aldrich 2005: 922).

NATO’s role in the fight against international terrorism

On 12 September 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty declaring the terrorist attacks against the United States to be an attack against all of the then 19 NATO member countries. Although this was a sign of transatlantic solidarity, NATO’s contribution to the fight against international terrorism has been hampered by the fact that the US and other NATO states have been at odds on many of the central questions posed by the fight against terrorism (Rupp 2004: 27). NATO was relegated to the sidelines in Afghanistan during the initial US intervention and many NATO members publicly opposed the American-led invasion of Iraq. From Washington’s perspective, terrorism has emerged as the post-Soviet threat. Most European states and European publics do not share this view. NATO, the military alliance linking North America and Europe, simply cannot function effectively if the member-states cannot agree upon how to deal with vital and major threats to their interests (ibid.: 27). Therefore, it appears that the new security challenges of the 21st century are splitting NATO. This development runs contrary to the situation during the Alliance’s first years when the threat from the Soviet Union galvanised the pluralistic security community in the North Atlantic Area.

Consequently, even though a series of anti-terrorist measures has been initiated at NATO, NATO plays a secondary role in the fight against terror. Instead, the US has underlined the necessity of building “coalitions of the willing” where the mission determines the coalition.

The major NATO measures in the fight against terror includes operations like Active Endeavour (OAE) in the Mediterranean where NATO ships are patrolling and escorting non-military shipping through the straits of Gibraltar to help detect, deter and protect against terrorist activity. It furthermore includes NATO’s presence in Afghanistan – the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) –, which was launched in August 2003 and is at present the most important NATO operation. The aim of ISAF is to assist the Afghan government in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, also including the northern as well as, from July and October 2006, the southern and eastern areas of the country, so that the Afghan government and UN personnel can operate in a secure environment. It is also developing Afghan security structures, identifying reconstruction needs, as well as training and building up Afghan security forces. NATO underlines that the successful completion of these projects will help Afghanistan provide for its own security and eliminate the economic conditions in which terrorism can thrive. On 28 September 2006, the North Atlantic Council gave final authorisation for ISAF to expand its area of operations to 14 additional provinces in the east of Afghanistan, extending NATO’s presence and role in the country. NATO will furthermore take command of 12 additional Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), bringing the total number of NATO-led PRTs to 25. The number of troops under NATO command is scheduled to increase to over 31 000. Most of these forces are already in place in Afghanistan.

The PRTs are teams of international and military personnel who are working in Afghanistan’s provinces to extend the authority of the central government. The aim is to provide a safer and more secure environment in which reconstruction can take place. In the longer perspective, it is possible that Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and ISAF are merged into one NATO operation.

Additionally, NATO still plays a role in the Balkans, first of all in Kosovo and NATO’s KFOR mission there. Even though the EU took responsibility over NATO’s Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina in December 2004 (Operation Althea), the NATO headquarters remains in Sarajevo and continues to have a supporting role in counterterrorism, alongside its primary mission of assisting the country with defence reform (NATO Briefing on terrorism 2005).

As an overall measure, NATO has agreed on a package of eight initiatives in its anti-terrorism efforts. Besides the abovementioned operations, these efforts include enhanced capabilities in intelligence sharing and cooperation. It furthermore includes assistance to Allies and other states, which are or may be subject to increased terrorist threats; and it includes the necessary measures to provide increased security for facilities of the United States and other allies on their territory. At NATO’s Istanbul summit in 2004, NATO approved an enhanced set of measures to strengthen the Alliance’s contribution to the fight against terrorism. The NATO countries decided to improve intelligence sharing through a review of current intelligence structures at NATO and through the Terrorist Threat Intelligence Unit at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

NATO has also agreed to “backfill” selected Allied assets required to support operations against terrorism,⁵ and the Alliance has developed its own military concept for defence against terrorism. This concept states that there are four roles for NATO’s military operations for defence against terrorism: anti-terrorism (defensive as well as offensive measures), consequence management, counterterrorism (offensive as well as active measures), and military cooperation.

An integral part of these measures is NATO’s Response Force (NRF), which is also an integral part of NATO’s transformation towards the handling of the new security threats and challenges. The NRF’s aim is to be able to deploy within five days’ – worldwide – notice and sustain itself for 30 days or longer if re-supplied. Possible missions range from non-combatant evacuation missions to combat operations, including terrorism. The NRF was declared operative at NATO’s Riga-summit in November 2006.

In retrospect, when assessing the role of NATO in the combat of terrorism the gravest failure was beyond doubt the activation of the Article 5 of NATO. As it turned out, the US did not want to make use of NATO’s offer of support and instead kept planning and conducting the war in Afghanistan directly with US Central Command, bypassing NATO’s SHAPE staff at Mons (Gärtner 2005: 213). The US ignored NATO, possibly as a lessons learned from the Kosovo war, where the democratic institutions of NATO were creatively bypassed to evade political control (Henriksen 2005).⁶

Furthermore, before the war in Iraq began, Germany, France, Belgium and Luxembourg blocked the beginning of any NATO military planning, conducted under Article 4 in the North Atlantic Treaty, to protect Turkey against the threat of an Iraqi missile attack (Gordon & Shapiro 2004: 136-141). Article 4 in the North Atlantic Treaty states that NATO’s members will consult whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any NATO country is threatened.

These events, made it ever more evident that the nature of NATO was dramatically altered and were reinforced by other developments such as NATO enlargements, a greater voice for Russia in Alliance affairs, the agreements with the EU on assured access to NATO’s command structure and planning facilities, NATO’s limited military role in the wars against Taliban and Saddam Hussein’s regime, but its more prominent role in the peace operations afterwards (Gärtner 2005: 213-214)..

NATO’s core function as a defence alliance became less relevant. At the same time, it became even more pressing to make NATO become a security provider outside its traditional area of responsibility. At NATO’s Prague summit in November 2002, NATO extended its reach as a security and defence organisation, and declared in principle that it could intervene in conflicts far beyond the transatlantic area of responsibility. The decisions taken at Prague were followed up at NATO’s summit in Istanbul (Turkey) in 2004. At Istanbul, NATO’s Heads of State and Government expanded the Alliance’s presence in Afghanistan, agreed to assist Iraq with training,

⁵ For further references to NATO’s role in the fight against international terrorism, see e.g. “Combating Terrorism at Sea”; NATO Briefing, April 2004. See also “NATO and the Fight Against International Terrorism”; NATO Briefing, March 2005.

⁶ In Dag Henriksen’s PhD-dissertation on NATO’s Kosovo war in 1999, he uncovers how the NATO strategy was effectively side-lined by the US when the US unilaterally conducted its own bombing-campaign. The consequence was often that the same targets were bombed twice. To the extent that key allies were kept out of the dark, it happened in a “Black Committee” comprising the US, the UK, and France (Henriksen 2005).

launched a new partnership initiative and adopted measures to improve NATO's operational capabilities.

While European governments support the United States in crisis management operations, even if they take place out of NATO's core area, such as in the Balkans, Afghanistan and under certain conditions even in Iraq, the episode over Turkey reveals that Europeans may not be willing to follow Washington in every instance, especially where European interests are not clearly at stake (*ibid.*: 214). It may even be argued that the policies of Germany, France, Belgium and Luxembourg during this period were an example of "soft balancing". As I will discuss below, soft balancing is a major part of a "no-war" community where the countries that take part in this community no longer regard each other as natural partners in security- and defence affairs.

In line with the normative differences described above, the US insists on its right to pre-emptive strikes in its war against terror and prefers coalitions to institutionalised cooperation. Moreover, the European dislike of Manichaeism in the US rhetoric on terrorism, reflected in statements such as "Either you are with us, or against us" are important elements.

There is a dramatic interpretive gulf between US and other leaders around the world in their understanding and portrayal of 11 September and the ensuing war on terrorism. Brian Frederking, Michael Artime and Max Sanchez Pagano write that whether 11 September was an act of war, or a very serious crime must be connected to a larger dispute about the preferred nature of global security rules in the post-cold war world (Frederking & Artime, Pagano 2005: 142-149). According to them, interpreting 11 September as war is consistent with a preference for Westphalian global security rules; interpreting 11 September as a crime is consistent with a preference for global society rules. By applying a rule-oriented constructivist approach, they argue that this interpretive dispute perpetuates two dominant post-cold war trends: attempts by many in the international community to construct global collective security rules, as promoted by the EU and its insistence on "effective multilateralism" in international affairs, and resistance to that project from a hegemonic United States.

The disagreements within NATO have challenged NATO's institutional procedures, e.g. the willingness of the US to apply NATO's institutions in the conduct of international operations. What furthermore has been challenged is NATO's ability towards mutual responsiveness as well as the ideological foundation for handling terrorist threats. It seems fair to state that NATO has been rather unsuccessful in shaping the interests of its largest member since the close of the Cold War. The US has resisted institutionalised socialisation, as opposed to e.g. the Central and Eastern European countries, where NATO's ability to socialise these countries into liberal and democratic values, more successful (Gheciu 2005; Zürn & Checkel 2005). In the eyes of US neoconservative commentators, like Charles Krauthammer and others, NATO's role as a military alliance has passed away.⁷

Is NATO still the core element in the transatlantic security community?

Emanuel Adler underlines that security communities are first of all socially constructed entities shaped by institutions (Adler 1998: 119). Such a community is defined as comprehensive, in the sense that it links classic security elements to

⁷ Charles Krauthammer has written extensively on transatlantic relations and US foreign policies. See e.g. his article "Re-imaging NATO: NATO is dead. Long Live NATO", *The Washington Post*, May 24, 2002. See also his article "Why the French Act Isn't Funny Anymore", *TIME Magazine*, July 6, 2004.

economic, environmental, cultural and human right factors. It is also indivisible in the sense that one state's security is inseparable from that of other states, and at last is cooperative in that security is based on confidence and cooperation, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and the work of mutually reinforcing multilateral institutions (ibid.). The basic norms within such a community are the development of common institutional procedures and mutual responsiveness.

From this perspective NATO has become severely weakened in recent years. The previous paragraphs clearly show a lack of a common understanding of what the international system is all about: Is the international system an anarchy, or is it possible to develop collective security rules and lay the foundation for an international society?

This lack of common understanding is a critical factor when analysing the development of the transatlantic security relationship in recent years. What is more, the lack of a common ideological basis also spills over in to other aspects like common institutional procedures and mutual responsiveness. In this article, mutual responsiveness has been linked to the basic norm in the transatlantic relationship since the foundation of NATO in 1949, namely the willingness to mutually adapt to each other's security needs within a multilateral framework (Sæter 2005). Janne Haaland Matlary underlines that the US understanding of multilateralism and multilateralisation of military tasks in particular, first of all relates to political risk reduction through coalitions of the willing (Matlary 2006b: 109). This is done more for political than for military reasons, and the political aspects of burden-sharing today play a key role in NATO (ibid.). This definition of multilateralism does not correspond to John Gerard Ruggie's qualitative approach, which refers to the principles of ordering relations between states (Ruggie 1998: 106). Hence, Donald Rumsfeld's statement that the "mission shall determine the coalition" fundamentally contradicts this norm.

In such a perspective, it seems a bit paradoxical that NATO has transformed itself in such a fundamental way since the terrorist attacks in 2001. The invocation of Article 5 in the Washington Treaty the day after the terrorist attacks on the US, NATO's huge emphasis on defence transformation, and last but not least, the creation of the NRF which in principle can intervene anywhere in the world, have made NATO theoretically speaking far more flexible and thereby relevant in today's Euro-Atlantic security landscape. At the same time, it is important not to overestimate the significance of these changes either. The point is that a change in the common ideological basis as well as in mutual responsiveness also will tend to change the content of the institutional procedures of NATO.

Hence, when it comes to real military operations, the US is more interested in preserving its autonomy in defence affairs. The lessons learned from the Kosovo war in 1999 are still valid. This was also clearly shown prior to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq when the US bypassed NATO's defence staff at SHAPE. Equally important has been the progress made in the European integration process since 2001. The EU's assured access to NATO's common planning and command structure (Berlin Plus) from 2002/2003, the elaboration of a European Security Strategy, and the different crisis management operations conducted by the EU since 2003, has clearly contributed to the development of an EU strategic culture.

Christoph Meyer's study clearly shows that national security identities and cultures are far more susceptible to change than previously assumed (Meyer 2005). This process will accelerate in the years to come due to the post-modern character of the EU, and the fact that a post-national security policy is in the making, both within

the different European countries and at the EU level as well. The absence of an existential threat, economic imperatives for military integration and loosening of the citizen-state social contract in general terms, are all factors that make this paradigm change in security identities and cultures possible (Matlary 2006b: 118). These developments are making the EU the natural centre for decisions on European security and defence. NATO then becomes a military alliance in the gravity field of the EU-process (Sæter 1999). Due to the institutional growth of the ESDP, taken together with the lessons learned from different EU-operations, the EU is becoming far more relevant in the handling of the current security challenges as of today. In fact, a continued Europeanisation of Euro-Atlantic security politics is taking place.

Therefore, one might argue that NATO is not a traditional defence alliance anymore, but a security- and defence services institution (Heisbourg 2001: 145). The recipient of the services provided by NATO is primarily the EU, but also the so-called coalitions of the willing. Consequently, NATO's future role is primarily that of providing security-services to other institutions and coalitions. By giving other institutions access to competencies for defence planning, common assets like command structures, NATO no longer plays the pivotal role in Euro-Atlantic security politics. Instead, NATO is becoming a "toolbox".

It is within such a context one must analyse the speech given by the then German Minister of Defence, Dr. Peter Struck at the Munich security conference in February 2005. He stated that NATO is no longer the primary venue where the transatlantic partners discuss and coordinate strategies. He further emphasised that the same applies to the current dialogue between the EU and the US, which in its current form neither does justice to the Union's growing importance nor to the new demands on transatlantic cooperation.⁸ Therefore, he called for a broader and more comprehensive transatlantic dialogue in line with Ludger Kuhnhardt's propositions described above (Kuhnhardt 2003). Hence, the loosely coupled and pluralistic transatlantic security community in its traditional form is fading away. NATO is doing the same, because NATO has been the institutional expression of the transatlantic security community.

By building upon insights from Emanuel Adler, the causal relationship between NATO and the transatlantic pluralistic security community rests upon NATO's ability to socially construct a transatlantic community by different means of community building-practises (Adler 1998: 120). He further underlines that institutional agency and community-building practises affect other necessary conditions of dependable expectations of peaceful change, including (a) cognitive and material structures, (b) transactions between states and societies, and (c) collective identity or "we-feeling" (ibid.). By reconstructing NATO to include former enemy states in its structures, by focusing upon new security threats and challenges and by so doing laying a new foundation for the transatlantic security community, NATO was to remain the foundation for the transatlantic security-community. In such a setting, a collective "NATO identity" was created. Nevertheless, as emphasised by François Heisbourg, even before the 2001 terrorist attacks, there were clear signs that the post-Cold War era was ending (Heisbourg 2001).

In the case of the transatlantic security community, the content of this relationship has changed dramatically since 2001. The unilateralist turns in US foreign- and security policy, the different interpretations of the fight against

⁸ The speech can be found on http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2006=&menu_2005=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=143&

international terrorism, and a more self-confident and assertive Europe, have indeed injured the transatlantic collective identity and “we-feeling”. The US and the EU are therefore, to a lesser extent, partners or allies in international affairs. The question is then what might replace the transatlantic security community, as we know it. The last section suggests that a transatlantic “no-war” community is in the making. In such a no-war community, there are no bellicose activities among its partners, but potentially increased rivalry between them. Previous research indicates that “soft balancing” is a main feature of a “no-war community” (see e.g. Pape 2005).

The meaning of a “no-war” system – Prospects for the future

One of the major puzzles in today’s transatlantic debate is whether the European countries will take part in America’s grand design and in line with American preconditions. The prevalent view in the United States is still the same as it was in 1973 when the then US Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger stated that the United States have global responsibilities while the Europeans have regional interests only (Sæter 1984: 81-82). Therefore, it is still correct to argue that the US regards the Europeans as junior partners. From a European perspective, this is true with respect to military capabilities. However, other power variables as economic strength and so-called soft power (Nye 2004), point to a multipolar world rather than a unipolar one. Due to the diffusion of power relationships, which also is due to the globalization of the world economy and new technologies (Nye 2003: 250), balancing towards the presumed strongest state in the traditional meaning of the concept has not occurred. This is especially so in the Euro-Atlantic area which has traditionally been a pluralistic security community. These developments can contribute to an explanation behind one of the greatest puzzles in the present IR-theory debates, namely why other countries or a coalition of other countries have not balanced the prevalence of US power. As underlined by Joseph S. Nye Jr.:

“The mechanical balancing of states treated as empty billiard balls was slowly eroded ... by the growth of nationalism and democratic participation, but the norms of state sovereignty persisted. Now the rapid growth in transnational communications, migration, and economic interdependence is accelerating the erosion of the classical conception [as e.g. the balance of power concept] and increasing the gap between norm and reality” (Nye 2003: 253).

However, we might be witnessing a new form of balancing in today’s transatlantic relationship, which in the research debate is labelled “soft balancing” (see e.g. Pape 2005; Paul 2005; for a critique see Brooks & Wohlforth 2005 and Lieber & Alexander 2005). This form of balancing contradicts the traditional form of balancing which analytically is linked to the security dilemma in an anarchic international system. Traditional balancing is about equalizing the odds in a contest between the strong and the weak (Pape 2005: 36). Furthermore, balancing theories are linked to the Realist school. In a post-11 September world, Realism’s most obvious strength has been its ability to explain the US’ forceful military response to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington (Snyder 2004: 55).

The mechanism of soft balancing in contrast, includes territorial denial, entangling diplomacy, economic strengthening, and signalling of resolve to participate in a balancing coalition (Pape 2005: 36). The French and German opposition to the Iraq war could be regarded as a sign of soft balancing. What these states did was to try to undermine US moral legitimacy and constrain the superpower

in a web of multilateral institutions and treaty regimes. This is not what standard realist theory predicts and suggests (Snyder 2004: 56). Therefore, the concept soft balancing could be placed within the frameworks of the liberal school in IR. Furthermore, the aim of pursuing a “soft balancing” strategy is to rise the costs of US unilateralism. “Wilsonianism in boots” is expensive (Ikenberry 2004). Hence, the overarching aim is to try to convince the US that even a superpower is in need of institutionalised cooperation.

Therefore, soft balancing in the transatlantic relationship is driven by an increased unwillingness by Europeans to accept US leadership. This unwillingness is based upon two very different perspectives of the world and is furthermore described by Carl Bildt:

“Our [Europe’s] defining date is now 1989 and [America’s] is 2001 ... While we talk of peace, they talk about security. While we talk of sharing sovereignty, they talk about exercising sovereign power. When we talk about a region, they talk about the world. No longer united primarily by a common threat, we have also failed to develop a common vision for where we want to go on many of the global issues confronting us” (quote in Treverton 2006: 49).

Even though the Europeans have difficulties when it e.g. comes to the ratification of the European Constitution, it seems ever more evident that a more united and therefore assertive Europe is emerging. What the US must take into consideration is that unipolarity and unilateralism on the one hand, and the ability to international leadership on the other, are increasingly incompatible concepts. Those who dismiss the very concept soft balancing (Brooks & Wohlforth 2005; Lieber & Alexander 2005), are therefore either taking a status quo perspective on the relationship in the sense that it is going to be reproduced, or are of the opinion that the unipolar international order has a great deal of legitimacy.

Neither of these viewpoints holds true anymore. Instead, the changes now taking place in Europe will not only lead to a Europe with a more positive notion of a European identity, but also an increasingly negative image of the US (New Perspectives Quarterly 2003, quoted in Cox 2005a: 226). Research shows that anti-Americanism is still on the rise more than three years after the major hostilities in Iraq ended. As an example, the share of the respondents with a positive image of the United States has fallen from 83 % in 1999/2000 to 56 % in Great Britain in 2006, from 43 % to 23 % in Spain, from 62% to 39% in France and from 78% to 37% in Germany. The majority of the respondents are also of the opinion that the US war against terrorism has contributed to increased international instability. 60% of the British respondents are of the opinion that the war in Iraq has made the world a more dangerous place. 30 % thinks the opposite - that the world has become a safer place.⁹

Soft balancing then is all about demonstrating resolve in a manner that signals a commitment to resist the superpower’s future ambitions, rather than coercing or even impeding the superior state’s current actions (Pape 2005: 37). In short, instead of traditional hard balancing, other powers, nation states and international organisations may apply soft balancing tools like international institutions, economic strength and diplomatic statecraft to undermine the legitimacy of the power that the super power possesses (ibid.: 44). Hard balancing is not an alternative for European powers or the

⁹ Research project conducted by Pew Research Center in Washington DC in the spring of 2006 among 17 000 respondents from 15 countries. The results are published on <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=252>

EU as a whole because the US is not regarded as a threat to their sovereign existence (Paul 2005: 71).

Therefore, military cooperation between Europe and the US will take place in the future too (as the operations in the Mediterranean, in Kosovo and in Afghanistan illustrate). But, as emphasised by Christopher Coker, the military imbalance between the US and Europe is now so precarious that it raises important questions about whether American and European troops can continue to coordinate operations, or be factored into American planning (Coker 2006: 63).

Hence, what we might witness in the future, alongside the continued strengthening of ESDP capabilities, is autonomous ESDP-operations; i.e. military and civilian operations without recourse to common NATO-capabilities (Berlin plus). Such a development will continue to weaken NATO with regard to the lack of common security identities, different views on how to handle different international conflicts, a weakening of the common institutions binding the US and Europe together, and lastly, the building of a more autonomous and assertive Europe through the EU integration process. As Natalia Touzovskaia emphasises, with the EU building up its Battle Groups, the field of potential disagreement with NATO will grow. This risk is reinforced by the fact that both the EU and NATO draw their military capabilities from the same pool of forces (Touzovskaia 2006: 254).

An autonomous Europe independent from the US, but in an alliance with Washington, is central to a no-war community. Additionally, a transformation of the basic power structures in NATO would in such a perspective become more pressing. As a consequence of an enhanced withdrawal of US military personnel from Europe towards other hot-spots in the world, Europe may demand for a European SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander in Europe).

Nevertheless, the relationship between the US and Europe will be conditional upon having common interests and not to the same extent as before, based upon a common we-feeling, a common identity and mutual responsiveness. Furthermore, an EU capable of conducting successful soft-balancing will also be an EU that underlines the necessity of a strong relationship between power and legitimacy.

Against such a background, the transatlantic pluralistic security community as we know it is history. The research programme elaborated by Karl W. Deutsch 50 years ago and further developed by political analysts like Emanuel Adler, Michael Barnett and Beverly Crawford is being challenged by new developments. The propensity to mutual responsiveness and a common “we-feeling” across the Atlantic has been challenged to such an extent that it has become questionable whether “the West” still exists (Cox 2005a). Charles A. Kupchan went a step further and argues in 2002 that the next clash of civilizations would not be between the West and the rest but between the United States and Europe—and that Americans remained largely oblivious of this danger (Kupchan 2002).

The dynamic and positive relationship between power, ideas, increased interaction, international organization, and social learning has been central to a pluralistic security community. It is the source of both mutual trust and collective identity-making, which is a necessary condition for the development of dependable expectations of peaceful change (Adler & Crawford 2002). The fight against terrorism has been a divisive element and illustrates the differences between the two parties across the Atlantic (Frederking, Artime & Pagano 2005). As described above, the Americans are still confined to the modern Westphalian system of sovereignty and the fight against terrorism as an act of war. The Europeans, in their post-modern

approach, are showing an unwillingness to securitise terrorism to the same extent as the Americans.

It therefore seems fair to argue that NATO is falling victim to the no-war community that is replacing the transatlantic security community. Nevertheless, the organisation will not be dissolved either. A bipolarisation of the Alliance is taking place where the organisation is dominated by the US and the EU. But, as the latest events in the Middle East have shown, neither NATO nor the EU are America's privileged partners in an age of international terrorism. The Israeli war against Hezbollah in Lebanon during the summer of 2006 showed that Israel has become the US' closest ally in the war against terror (Blumenthal 2006). This is clearly illustrated by the statements made by the US President on 14 August 2006 in which he described the Israeli offensive in Lebanon as a third front in his global war on terror after Iraq and Afghanistan.

Additionally, Michael Cox underlines that Europe does not even possess what Americans seem to respect and need most from allies — namely, adequate hard power:

“In fact, if anything has weakened the ties that once bound the two together, it is that Europe does not even have the military wherewithal to operate alongside the Americans in a serious combat situation.... [T]he huge additional investment' the Americans are 'making in defence will make practical inter-operability with allies in NATO or in coalitions impossible. It is not even clear that NATO is up to the job of handling the role it has been asked to perform in Afghanistan” (Cox 2005a: 224).

The status quo perspective in the current IR debate on transatlantic relations must therefore be transformed into a new discourse based on systemic change. Realism is perhaps the school which explains the least when it comes to the status of the transatlantic relationship. This is so because this school is confined to the modern world of sovereignty and the international system as anarchy. The liberal school has a higher explanatory power, but must to a much higher extent take into consideration non-material factors in the transatlantic relationship. Non-material factors as well as the construction of identities and actor socialisation is an integral part of the social constructivist approach. However, social constructivists in particular must consider that de-socialisation among actors can also take place when for example the US breaks with the most fundamental norm in transatlantic relations since the end of the Second World War, namely mutual adaptations to each others security needs. For Europe, this implies that the EU is replacing NATO as Europe's main security provider. When the EU takes command over NATO's KFOR mission – as is likely at some point in the future – there will be no other NATO mission in Europe. The most important implication of a no-war community is that the EU must shoulder the real responsibility of Europe's security at large.

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