

WHEREIN THE DIVIDE? TERRORISM AND THE FUTURE OF ATLANTICISM

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This article argues that the tactical and strategic divergence in the approach to counterterrorism across the Atlantic is best understood through the prism of strategic culture. The different experiences with international terrorism have contributed to vastly different perceptions of the terrorist threat and in turn to different counterterrorism approaches. The paper introduces the concept of strategic culture, outlines the two continents' experience with terrorism and explains why the end of the Cold War brought new tensions to the fore. It suggests that a strategic culture analysis of the divergent approaches to terrorism will help inform and enrich the ubiquitous one-dimensional realist rendering of the Atlantic divide and demonstrate that under the right conditions, international terrorism, rather than leading to permanent divorce might paradoxically be the very thing that transforms the Atlantic relationship back towards a consolidated Atlantic community.

Keywords

Terrorism, U.S. foreign policy, Common Security and Foreign Policy, strategic culture, trans-Atlantic relations.

Introduction

The “Unipolar Moment” poses significant challenges to the transatlantic relationship.² The defining security environment of the restructured international order is as distinct as the system itself: the prime military threat facing major powers does not come from other first tier powers but rather from transnational actors able and willing to carry out “grand terror”— operations using conventional, radiological, nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons aimed at killing thousands if not millions of non-combatants.³ Failed states, wherein “disorder, anomic behavior,

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² Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (1990/91), p. 23.

³ Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 15.

anarchic mentality and entrepreneurial pursuits” prevail, provide auspicious grounds for terrorist networks to operate.⁴ The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War combined with the new security environment, have altered the strategic priorities on both sides of the Atlantic and in turn undermined the foundations of Atlantic security cooperation.

Although terrorism has been around in its different permutations for decades, “The attacks on 9/11 have turned the fight against terrorism into a central dimension of international relations... Terrorism has changed the global agenda.”⁵ Opinion polls reveal that Americans and Europeans both designate international terrorism as their chief security concern.⁶ Their approach to dealing with it, however, is characterized by tactical and strategic divergence.

This paper will argue that the tactical and strategic divergence in the approach to counterterrorism cannot be explained solely by disparity in the balance of power and the structural shifts caused by the end of the Cold War. The discrepancy is better understood through the prism of strategic culture. The different experiences with international terrorism have contributed to vastly different perceptions of the terrorist threat and in turn to different counterterrorism approaches. By comparing the two methodologies the paper will show that the future of the transatlantic relationship will rest on whether the two sides can reach a consensus on the nature of the security environment and in turn adjust their threat perception and counterterrorism approach accordingly.

Strategic Culture

Strategic culture is an analytical tool that tries to explain why under seemingly parallel conditions states behave differently. Scholars of strategic culture maintain the fundamental concept of rationality in decision making, but conclude that each country’s historical experience, national culture, and unique circumstances lead it to analyze and react to international events in different ways. Iain Johnston defines strategic culture as “an ideational

⁴ Robert I. Rotberg, “The New Nature of Nation-State Failure,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer 2002), p. 90.

⁵ EU Counterterrorism Coordinator, Gijs de Vries, “The European Union and the Fight Against Terrorism,” 19 January, 2006

<http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/speech_gijs_de_vries_19jan06.html>

⁶ German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2003*. <<http://www.transatlantictrends.org/index.cfm?id=18>>

milieu which limits behavior choices... Different states have different predominant strategic preferences that are rooted in the early or formative experiences of the state, and are influenced to some degree, by the philosophical, political, cultural and cognitive characteristics of the state and its elites.”⁷

The use of culture as an analytical tool is admittedly problematic. Culture is elusive, all encompassing, and ill-defined. Scholars tend to turn to cultural explanations when the rationality paradigm fails to properly explain the complexities of the modern world. Strategic culture as used in this paper simply recognizes collective ideas, values, and most importantly historical experience and memory, as important yet not overriding constitutive factors in the design and execution of states’ security policies and more specifically their strategy for combating terrorism. Strategic culture is not deterministic. It only informs the tendencies and influences of state behavior. The European Union’s Common Security and Foreign Policy (CSFP) is the EU’s foreign policy concept. It is derived within the framework of the organization’s strategic culture but it is not a direct result of that culture. Although at times deep-seated so as to take on a systemic dimension, Kerry Longhurst is correct in reminding us that strategic culture is not a permanent or static feature.⁸

A strategic culture analysis of the European Union is complicated by two factors. The EU, from an institutional perspective, is still in an embryonic stage. It has yet to benefit from any meaningful experience that might consolidate a sense of collective values akin to Johnstone’s “ideational milieu.” The second drawback is that the EU is made up of important sub-cultural divisions. Whereas the British and the Danes might believe that the EU should base its CSFP on deeper transatlantic partnership, the French might support European autonomy. This fragmentation is indicative of the diverse historical experiences of individual member states and the fiction of a common European identity. It is not, however, premature to understand Europe as a Deutchian “security community” where the spread of transnational values, the development of shared understanding, and the generation of mutual trust facilitated through deep institutionalism can lead to a cohesive entity with long-term peaceful

⁷ Alastair Iain Johnston, “Thinking About Strategic Culture,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Spring 1995), p. 34.

⁸ See Kerry Longhurst, “The Concept of Strategic Culture,” in Gerhard Kuemmel (ed) *Military Sociology: The Richness of a Discipline*, Baden Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000.

interactions. The key aim of Europe, and indeed the Atlantic relationship as a whole, is to develop the common interest of actors in peace and stability rather than to deter or balance a common threat. The historical experience of terrorism in Europe and the United States has shaped their respective ideational framework for decision making. A strategic culture analysis of the divergent approaches to terrorism will help inform and enrich the ubiquitous one-dimensional realist rendering of the Atlantic divide.

Terrorism and Europe's Strategic Culture

The Europeans have experienced far more incidents of terrorism on their soil over the past thirty years than the United States has.⁹ The European approach to combating international terrorism is a product of their encounter with regional separatist groups and homegrown ideologically radical groups. For example, from 1968-88, 75% of terrorist attacks in France came from separatist groups and only 6% from international terrorists.¹⁰ In Europe, for example, the British have had to deal with Irish Republicans, the Germans and Italians with left-wing revolutionaries, as well as Kurdish and Algerian militants, the Spanish with the Basques and Corsicans, fundamentalist Muslims, and Sikhs.

In their study of the French experience of counterterrorism, Jeremy Shapiro and Bénédicte Suzan recognize the importance of strategic culture. They argue that counterterrorism in France has evolved over time and is a consequence of three factors: France's particular threats and its perception of them, its capacities to confront these threats, and the country's "distinct civic culture."¹¹ They conclude that the French experience, like the experience of many of their continental neighbors, encouraged France to view terrorism within a political context. The arrival of international terrorism did not alter drastically the ideational assumptions of Europe's counterterrorism approach.

France's "sanctuary doctrine" reflects the predominant currents in Europe's early counterterrorism approach. So long as terrorist groups did not directly challenge French interests, the French sought to isolate

⁹ William Wallace, "Europe, the Necessary Partner," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 3 (May/June 2001), p. 5.

¹⁰ A.J. Jongman, "Trends in International and Domestic Terrorism in Western Europe," in Crelisten Schmid ed., *Western Responses to Terrorism*, London, Frank Cass, 1993, p. 61.

¹¹ Jeremy Shapiro and Bénédicte Suzan, "The French Experience of Counterterrorism," *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 68.

themselves from international terrorism by giving sanctuary to suspected militants. As Shapiro and Suzan suggest, “the sanctuary doctrine was based on the belief that international terrorism was ultimately a political and foreign-policy problem distinct from law enforcement and as such had to take into account both the interests and capacities of the French state abroad.”¹² For example, in 1977 the French arrested Auhammad Daoud Audeh, the mastermind behind the 1972 Munich Olympics murder of eleven Israeli Olympic athletes. Soon thereafter, to avoid becoming the target of attacks from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) or its cohorts, France, resisting calls by Israel and West Germany to extradite him, let him go.

The policy was not only a failure at the time of its implementation but also managed to sow the seeds for the birth of a local brew of international terrorism. Europe’s 21st century terrorists are second-generation immigrants, now citizens, who had converted to more radical forms of Islam and some of whom made their connections with al-Qaeda and their ilk in Bosnia and Afghanistan. Three of the four suicide bombers identified in the 11 July 2005 attacks on the London Underground, the first suicide bombings in Western Europe, are British citizens of Pakistani descent. This form of terrorism is still seen as a political problem – either a consequence of failed integration policies or criminally lax immigration laws.

Over time, the French learned from the failures and success of their policies and adapted their counterterrorism methods accordingly. They transitioned from sanctuary to accommodation and then to suppression. The most important feature of this evolution in counterterrorism is the empowerment of the justice and interior ministries and the decision to sideline the foreign affairs ministry and its penchant to elevate international relations over the tactical imperatives of counterterrorism. The French system progressed into a sophisticated struggle co-managed by the judicial magistrates and the domestic intelligence agency, the DST. The French approach never portended to “solve” or “defeat” the terrorist enemy but rather to manage it, “because France has lived so long under the specter of terrorism at home, neither state officials nor the public views the problem

¹² IBID, p. 69.

as transitory or fixable, but rather sees political terrorism as an inevitable and permanent feature of modern life.”¹³

Efforts to address terrorism on a Europe-wide level demonstrate a rather cohesive strategic culture of counterterrorism. By the middle of the 1970s several working groups at the expert level began to discuss terrorism inside and outside of the EPC.¹⁴ In 1976 an intergovernmental framework known as “TREVI” (Terrorism, Radicalism, Extremism, and International Violence) was established. Reflective of the hesitance of member countries to have issues of “high politics” and sensitive domestic issues such as crime and immigration become the domain of the supranational bodies of the EU, TREVI was never made part of the Single European Act. TREVI, therefore, developed on an alternative track from EU foreign policy and eventually led to the creation of the “Third Pillar” of the EU, Justice and Home Affairs. TREVI is credited with facilitating the kind of transnational cooperation that saw West Germany, France, and Italy jointly crush Hezbollah’s West European organizational infrastructure in 1987.¹⁵ The legacy of TREVI informs contemporary EU approaches to terrorism. It defines terrorism primarily as a criminal act within a political context, and its counterterrorism posture aspires to limit its occurrence as opposed to defeating it. Underpinning this effort is the European experience with terrorism, its unique threat perception, and the tools it has in its disposal to deal with terrorism.

Article 29 of the Treaty on European Union specifically refers to terrorism as a form of serious crime to be prevented and combated by, “closer cooperation between police forces, custom authorities and other competent authorities, including Europol; closer cooperation between judicial and other competent authorities of the Member States; approximation, where necessary, of rules on criminal matters.”¹⁶ In the historic document released by the European Commission just one week after 9/11 the only allusion to the role of the CFSP in combating terrorism is on the sixth page of the document:

¹³ IBID, p. 88.

¹⁴ Michael E. Smith, *Europe’s Foreign and Security Policy: The institutionalization of Cooperation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 142.

¹⁵ Bruce Hoffmann, “Is Europe Soft on Terrorism?” *Foreign Policy*, Vol. 115, (Summer 1999), p. 65.

¹⁶ Commission of the European Communities, *Proposal for a Council Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism*, Brussels, 19.9.2001 (2001/0217).

Without prejudice to the measures undertaken in the field of police and judicial cooperation, the addressing of all security aspects *may* call for complementary actions under, for example, the Common Foreign and Security Policy in order to enhance impact and ensure consistency of the Union's external relations.¹⁷

The Europeans have tried to insist that a terrorist act is distinguishable from an attack as defined in the North Atlantic Charter. In the 1999 NATO summit in Washington, the United States tried to no avail to expand NATO's counterterrorism role by broadening the definition of "attack" to include terrorism, sabotage, and organized crime. Similarly, after the attacks of 11 September some Europeans resisted yet again America's calls to reorient NATO towards anti-terrorism efforts.¹⁸

In crafting a Europe-wide approach to terrorism, the Office of Counter-Terrorism at the EU, led by Mr. Gijs de Vries, has to be sensitive to the differing legislative approaches of member states to counterterrorism. The EU Council Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism defines terrorist offenses as those that "can be defined as offences intentionally committed by an individual or group against one or more countries, their institutions or people, with the aim of intimidating them and seriously altering or destroying the political, economic, or social structures of a country." In France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, specific laws or legal instruments are reserved to acts of terrorism which are expressly typified and defined. In the rest of Europe, terrorist actions are treated as common offences.

The Council of the European Union released its Action Plan on Combating Terrorism on February 13, 2006. It is organized around four major pillars: Prevent, Protect, Pursue, and Respond. The first pillar seeks to disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals in Europe who draw people into terrorism. This includes both community policing but also tackling radicalization in religious institutions, published literature and the internet. This section also calls for fighting discriminatory policies and inequalities that exist within the EU and, "promote long-term integration where appropriate."¹⁹ The promotion of security, justice, and democracy also has an international dimension. The document calls for "the promotion

¹⁷ IBID, p. 6.

¹⁸ Smith, *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy*, p. 259.

¹⁹ Council of the European Union, *EU Action Plan on Combating Terrorism*, 5771/1/06 (February, 2006): 5.

of good governance, democracy, education, and economic prosperity outside of the EU.”²⁰

The second pillar seeks to ensure the protection of military assets, supply chain, transportation, and borders, through the promotion of common European standards and intelligence sharing. The third “P” is equally focused on police and judicial cooperation, but also concentrates on terror financing and limiting terrorists’ access to weapons and explosives. The latter section is possibly the least developed part of the entire document. It calls for “making the transmission of bomb-making expertise a crime under the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism,” and also for the adherence and enforcement of existing security and non-proliferation regimes. The international dimension of this section calls for the continued support of existing international legal regimes. This is emblematic of a legalist approach that permeates the entire document. The fourth and final approach, Respond, is focused on crisis management – how to deal with the aftermath of a terrorist attack.

Along with the measures outlined above the EU believes that, “a political response must accompany counterterrorism and preventive measures.”²¹ The European Council has stated that “the fight against the scourge of terrorism will be all the more effective if it is based on an in-depth political dialogue with those countries and regions of the world in which terrorism comes into being. The integration of all countries into a fair world system of security, prosperity and improved development is the condition for a strong and sustainable community for combating terrorism.”²² The “critical dialogue” policy finds its origins in the 1992 EU Summit in Edinburgh, where member states suggested that a constructive and sustained discourse combined with expanded diplomatic and trade relations, will help change Iranian behavior and strengthen “moderate forces.” French President Jacques Chirac suggested that “critical dialogue” can convey, “a number of ideas that are not always pleasant to hear, but which nevertheless maintain the ability to continue talking.”²³ Nicholas Burns, Acting Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs for Christopher

²⁰ IBID, p. 5.

²¹ William Wallace, “US Unilateralism: A European Perspective,” from Steward Patrick and Shepard Forman (eds.), *Multilateralism & US Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement*, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002, p. 153.

²² Extraordinary European Council Meeting Conclusions and Plan of Action, SIC (2001) 990 - Brussels, 21/09/2001 http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/doc/concl_21_09_01.htm

²³ As quoted in Bruce Hoffmann, “Is Europe Soft on Terrorism?”, p. 63.

Warren and Madeline Albright during the 1990s, criticized this approach, calling the “attachment of many [European] countries to the critical dialogue... puzzling.”²⁴

Terrorism and the United States’ Strategic Culture

The United States did not face the kind of domestic, separatist militancy that many European states had to cope with in the latter half of the twentieth century. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the different nature and perception of the terrorist threat have encouraged at times radically different responses to the problem. The United States saw international terrorism through the zero-sum structural realist prism of the Cold War. As Hoffman explains, “Many Americans regarded the disparate acts of terrorism occurring throughout the world as part of a vast Soviet plot, deliberately orchestrated by Moscow and directed against US and Western interests worldwide... confronted with a struggle perceived to be of global proportions, American policymakers advocated equally massive and unified counterterrorism efforts to be waged worldwide.”²⁵

Since its first encounter with international terrorism in the early 1970s, the United States has taken a distinctive approach than its European counterpart. The United States never accepted an appeasement strategy like the sanctuary doctrine. Instead it adopted what came to be known as the “no blackmail, no concessions” policy. If the Daoud affair is symbolic of the sanctuary policy, the United States’ refusal to negotiate with the Palestinian terrorists who took hostage six diplomats in March 1973 is illustrative of the American “hard-line” approach. The terrorists killed the Belgian and both American hostages.

In response to the September 2001 attacks, the United States declared a Global War on Terror (GWOT), a long war that utilizes an indirect and non-traditional approach, “the cumulative effect of which will initially disrupt, over time degrade, and ultimately destroy the terrorist organizations.”²⁶ The United States’ forward posture rests on a strategy that takes the battle to the enemy. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review suggests that to defeat terrorist networks the United States should engage in

²⁴ U.S. Department of State Daily Briefing, February 28, 1997 <http://www.fas.org/news/usa/1997/02/970228c.htm>

²⁵ Bruce Hoffman, “Is Europe Too Soft on Terrorism?”, p. 65.

²⁶ *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2003), p. 2.

“special operations...to conduct direct action, foreign internal defense, counterterrorist operations and unconventional warfare.”

The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism defines terrorism as, “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.”²⁷ The document, published in 2003, calls for a “4D Strategy”: Defeat, Deny, Diminish, and Defend. Quite distinct from the “Prevent” pillar of the EU approach, the American strategy aims to defeat terrorist organizations by attacking “their sanctuaries; leadership; command, control, and communications; material support; and finances.”²⁸ The Strategy seeks to deny terrorist networks safe-havens to operate by forging key alliances and partnerships and, “where states are unwilling, we will act decisively to counter the threat they pose and, ultimately, to compel them to cease supporting terrorism.” Finally, the United States seeks to diminish the “underlying conditions” that spawn terrorism and to defend the homeland.

Strategic and Tactical Divergence in Counterterrorism: What is the cause?

As the analysis above demonstrates, the disparate approaches to counterterrorism in Europe and the United States have existed from the beginning of the West’s modern experience with terrorism. During the Cold War, Europe was submerged in a fight with domestic terrorism of the radical and separatist bent. Therefore, “America’s pleas to take action against international terrorism were an inopportune distraction.”²⁹ Furthermore, the Europeans disagreed with the United States in regards to the extent of Soviet support for domestic Marxist/Leninist movements. This divergence was subsumed by the shared grand objectives of the cold war.

The new international order in the aftermath of the Cold War combined with the shifting priorities of both Europe and the United States brought this divergence to the fore. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a unipolar international order have led to “the effective end of Atlanticism – American and European foreign policies no longer centre around the transatlantic alliance to the same overriding extent as in

²⁷ IBID, p. 1.

²⁸ IBID, p. 11.

²⁹ Bruce Hoffmann, “Is Europe Too Soft on Terrorism?” p. 3.

the past.”³⁰ In fact, the very basis of the relationship, namely countering the Soviets and denying any country hegemony over the Eurasian continent, has passed with the Soviet regime itself. Once the Cold War ended, “the structurally determined need to mediate US and European foreign policy through the transatlantic prism effectively came to an end.”³¹

Ivo H. Daalder argues that the new order led to divergent shift in priorities for Europe and the United States. The European Union, “embarked on a fantastically ambitious phase, encompassing both deeper cooperation among existing members and enlargement of the overall Union to incorporate many of the neighboring countries in the east.”³² This inward looking, local project, seeks to eliminate the possibility of a return to the kind of internecine conflict that marred the continent throughout the twentieth century. As Kagan writes, “Post-Cold War Europe agreed that the issue was no longer ‘the West’. For Europeans, the issue became ‘Europe’. Proving that there was a united Europe took precedence over proving that there was a united West.” In fact, the Europeans saw in the post-Cold War relationship an opportunity to balance what was previously a rather unequal partnership.³³

Concurrently, the United States shifted its focus away from Europe towards a global project. The United States became less concerned about denying another power the ability to dominate the Eurasian continent. Instead, it became consumed with thwarting the disastrous mix of rogue states, terrorism, and modern technology. In the new security environment, as perceived by the United States, Europe shifts from being the object of US foreign policy to playing a supporting role. The new priorities and the disagreement about the terms of burden sharing in the new era, have contributed to a growing rift as Europe does not accept efforts by the United States to frame its interests as global interests.

The United States, spurred further by the attacks of 11 September, continued to operate under drastically different threat assessments and strategic assumptions. The transatlantic relationship, absent of shared objectives, began to drift. The “long war” approach was perceived by the Europeans as reflective of the preoccupation with the military dimension of

³⁰ Ivo H. Daalder, “The End of Atlanticism,” *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Summer 2003), p. 147.

³¹ *IBID*, 149.

³² *IBID*, 150.

³³ William Wallace, “U.S. Unilateralism: A European Perspective”, p. 153.

international politics, which they argued only risks provoking the very acts of terrorism the United States hopes to defeat. A global project would endanger Europe's priority of pursuing a local policy of EU enlargement and consolidation. The Europeans remained unwilling to undertake a global project, under the terms dictated by the United States, at a time when its own project was so fragile. Furthermore, the Europeans accuse the United States of being, "too prone to seeing global politics in geopolitical terms, without allowing for the subtleties of local conflicts and instabilities."³⁴ As opposed to engaging in difficult dialogue with its adversaries, the United States prefers to designate uncooperative regimes as "rogue states." For the Europeans, this concept, "conjured up implacable enemies to replace the lost Soviet threat, it exaggerated the military capabilities of several of the states thus listed, and it lumped together into a single category regimes with distinctive internal dynamics and external aims."³⁵

Daalder suggests that although the United States and Europe converge on several counterterrorism tactics, "there is no agreement on the broader strategic context of these efforts."³⁶ For the United States, the elevated threat perceptions from the risk of a mega-terrorist attack suggest that it must aim to "defeat" terrorism as opposed to engage in the European approach of "prevention". Therefore, "regime change – by force if necessary – represents the strategic thrust of this global war."³⁷ The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism mentions that the war on terror will not return to the criminal domain until al-Qaeda has been reduced to an isolated, local, less lethal threat.³⁸ Democracy promotion, it argues, is the best antidote to the pathologies that spawn in the toxic swamps of the Middle East. The Europeans prefer to focus their efforts on tackling, "the root causes of terrorism abroad – the seething conflicts, poverty and despair, and the constraints on liberty that supplies the terrorist army with its dedicated soldiers."³⁹ As opposed to a "long war" approach, Europe focuses on more "soft power" tools to supplement law-enforcement based counterterrorism initiatives at home. Hoffman insists that Europe's approach is misunderstood and unfairly criticized as "soft". While the American experience has prompted it to pursue a multi-theatre global war,

³⁴ IBID, p. 151.

³⁵ IBID, p. 151.

³⁶ Ivo H. Daalder, "The End of Atlanticism," p. 158.

³⁷ IBID, p. 158.

³⁸ Steven Bodzin, "Preemption vs. Prosecution: Strategies in Combating Terrorism" *Frontline*, January 25, 2005.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/special/pre.html>

³⁹ Ivo H. Daalder, "The End of Atlanticism," p. 158.

Europeans give a higher priority to combating terrorism that affects them directly at home.⁴⁰

In 1999 Peter Rodman, a White House Official lamented that, “Rather than joyfully falling in step behind our global leadership, [European Governments] are looking for ways to counter our predominance.”⁴¹ His fears are fed by some currents in the European Union that openly advocate for accelerating the demise of the unipolar moment. Pierre Lellouche, Jacques Chirac’s foreign policy advisor in the early 1990s, said that Chirac wants a “multipolar world in which Europe is the counterweight to American political and military power.”⁴²

William C. Wohlforth argues that “neither theory nor history suggest that a counterbalance is likely given today’s distribution of capabilities.”⁴³ Josef Joffe maintains that the balancing of the America has taken on internal, illicit, and implicit forms. While China and Moscow engage in internal balancing by trying to maintain or even expand their military capabilities, international terrorists and their state sponsors engage in illicit balancing, and the European Union engages in implicit balancing whose purpose is not to “countervail the United States in the ways of a classic alliance,” but rather to, “enhance Europe’s relative power vis-à-vis the United States with an asset that might increase European autonomy and/or diminish US preponderance.”⁴⁴ Robert Pape suggests that the balancing behavior is more “soft” than “hard.”⁴⁵ While “hard balancing” involves forming military alliances to curb a leading state, today’s second tier-powers have no hope of matching the latent and material power of the United States. Therefore, they must resort to “soft balancing,” or “use international institutions, economic leverage, and diplomatic maneuvering to frustrate American intentions.”⁴⁶

The most popular thesis on the post-Cold War divergence between Europe and the United States was presented by Robert Kagan in his

⁴⁰ Hoffman, “Is Europe Too Soft on Terrorism?”, p. 2.

⁴¹ Peter Rodman, “Prepared Statement for a Hearing before the House Committee on International Relations”, 10 November, 1999.

⁴² As quoted in Michael J. Glennon, “Why the Security Council Failed,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (May-June 2003), p. 25.

⁴³ William C. Wohlforth, “US Strategy in a Unipolar World,” from G. John Ikenberry, ed. *American Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, Cornell, Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 98.

⁴⁴ Josef Joffe, “Defying History and Theory,” in Ikenberry, p. 177.

⁴⁵ Robert Pape, “Welcome to the Era of ‘Soft Balancing,’” *Boston Globe* March 23, 2003, p. H1

⁴⁶ *IBID*, H1.

important book *Of Paradise and Power*. Kagan centers his explanation of the divergence between American and European outlooks on world affairs around the “all-important question of power.”⁴⁷ His realist treatise suggests that because of the tremendous gaps in the distribution of power between Europe and the United States they “see the world differently”:

A man armed with only a knife may decide that a bear prowling the forest is a tolerable danger, inasmuch as the alternative – hunting the bear armed with only a knife – actually is riskier than lying low and hoping the bear never attacks. The same man with a rifle, however, will likely make a different calculation of what constitutes a tolerable risk. Why should he risk being mauled to death if he doesn’t need to?⁴⁸

Thus how states perceive threats how they decide to address those threats is conditioned by their capabilities as opposed to any overlying ideational or normative beliefs on the utility of the use of force. As Alan Henrikson summarizes, “reality is seen, or not seen, in accordance with what one can do, and not as it really is.”⁴⁹ The divergence is not due to some transitory factors, but rather to deep systemic forces that cannot be overcome by policy preference alone. Europe’s “psychology of weakness” has “naturally produced differing strategic judgments, differing assessments of threats and of the proper means of addressing threats, and even differing calculations of interests.”⁵⁰

The power quotient does not fully explain the strategic divergence on counterterrorism. Kagan asks, “If Europe’s strategic culture today places less value on power and military strength and more value on such soft-power tools as economics and trade, isn’t it partly because Europe is militarily weak and economically strong?”⁵¹ The answer is yes. However, the psychology of weakness is not the primary explanation for Europe’s greater tolerance for threat or for its counterterrorism approach. This becomes apparent when Kagan suggests that Europe knows that “it is precisely America’s great power that makes it the primary target, and often the only target.” Europe has experienced serious terror attacks for quite

⁴⁷ Robert Kagan, “Power and Weakness,” *Policy Review*, (June-July 2002), p. 3.

⁴⁸ *IBID*, p. 8.

⁴⁹ Alan K. Henrikson, “Why the United States and Europe See the World Differently: An Atlanticist’s Rejoinder to the Kagan Thesis,” *European Union Studies Association Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Summer 2003), p. 4.

⁵⁰ Kagan, “Power and Weakness,” p. 3.

⁵¹ *IBID*, p. 8.

some time, and like the uncovered 1998 plot on the World Cup soccer games, has managed to avoid mega attacks as well. To suggest that Europe has taken a softer counterterrorism posture because it assumes the primary attacks will target American interests and the American homeland, is beyond lunacy. The fact is that over time Europe's trials with counterterrorism have coalesced into a strategic culture that does not resonate with the Kagan thesis.

In fact, Kagan himself seems to accept the role of an "idealist argument."⁵² Kagan argues that the particular historical experiences of Europe's states have produced in them a different ideology from that of America – one based on a Kantian vision of the world versus the Hobbesian counterpart embodied in the American approach. Though overstated and abused, Kagan's analysis would value the role of strategic culture in helping to explain why Europe and the United States, when faced with the shared threat of international terrorism, react differently.

The European Union owes its existence to institutionalization, a process by which norms (shared standards of behavior) are created and developed. In Smith's description of institutionalism we are introduced to how functional logic produces a logic of normative appropriateness which feeds into the socialization of these norms. Once this process reaches a certain level of formality and "bindingness," it becomes more difficult to redefine and reorient institutions. Thus we can see how the TREVI process and the initial cooperation based on the functional logic to match the nature of the terrorist threat to Europe has evolved into socialized norms. Over thirty years of dialogue and cooperation, Europe has certainly developed to some extent a "shared ideational milieu" in regards to counterterrorism. When the United States suggests that the new world order and security environments require working around institutions and outside of formal multilateral instruments, we should not be surprised to find Europe hesitant to join the struggle. It is so fundamentally opposed to their institutional and strategic culture.

On top of the power paradigm and the role of strategic culture, it is ill-advised to ignore the role of politics. After all, this paper proposes that structure is not destiny, and that strategic culture only informs the framework of decision-making. For Daalder, domestic American politics and the associated "hegemonist" foreign policy of the Bush administration, based on the belief in the fungibility of power, are a main causal factor. The systemic developments after the Cold War and the non-traditional security

⁵² Henrikson, "Why the United States and Europe See the World Differently," p. 5.

environment do not pre-ordain the evolution of the GWOT. Neither does the psychology of power. This strategy is imbued with political ideology of what some perceive as the new, and semi-permanent, conservative consensus in the United States. This political approach is coming into tension with the more “globalist” consensus in Europe, “one that relies on international cooperation as a means to deal with the multiple challenges and opportunities globalization creates.”⁵³

Conclusion

The future of transatlantic partnership and the global political order hinges on whether a shared approach to address the new security threats of the 21st century will emerge. There is some hope for optimism here. Bruce Hoffman predicts that the changing face of terrorism will slowly lead to a consensus perception of the balance of threat. The Europeans will recognize that Europe might indeed become the new battleground for al-Qaeda and their ilk and that this will necessitate the realization that their security, “now depends more than ever on developments beyond their borders.”⁵⁴ The United States, like its European counterparts, will slowly recognize the limits of an overly aggressive, existential conflict with global terrorism and will be more amenable to Europe’s legal/criminal tactical paradigm. The unsavory developments in Iraq might lead to a growing willingness to work through international bodies.⁵⁵ Michael Scheuer, who from 1993 to 1996 led the CIA’s task force tracking Osama Bin Laden, poignantly comments, “Friction between Europe and the United States is something that certainly benefits Osama Bin Laden, without a question.”⁵⁶ For indeed as Philip H. Gordon concludes, “the reality is that despite their differences, in an age of globalization and mass terrorism, no two regions of the world have more in common nor have more to lose if they fail to stand together in an effort to promote common values and interest around the globe.”⁵⁷ International terrorism, rather than leading to permanent divorce might paradoxically be the very thing that transforms the Atlantic relationship back towards a consolidated Atlantic community. This development will expose the weaknesses of the Kagan thesis and will reinforce the importance of strategic culture as an explanatory tool in the study of international relations.

⁵³ Ivo H. Daalder, “The End of Atlanticism,” p. 152.

⁵⁴ Philip H. Gordon, “Bridging the Atlantic Divide,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 1, (January/February, 2003), pg. 7.

⁵⁵ *IBID*, p. 7.

⁵⁶ PBS Frontline.

⁵⁷ Philip H. Gordon, “Bridging the Atlantic Divide,” p. 7.