How Partners Become Rivals:

Testing Realist and Liberal Hypotheses

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Abstract:

Rivalries between great powers have a fundamental impact on the pattern and the substance of international interactions. Explaining their emergence is thus both a vital task and a crucial test case for systemic IR theories. The paper analyzes the explanatory value of two kinds of variables derived from two competing theoretical approaches: the impact of (a) the distribution of capabilities between states (as stressed by neorealists) and of (b) the compatibility of domestically determined state preferences (as emphasized by pluralist liberals). To this end, observations are derived from historical case studies which trace the evolution of four victorious great power coalitions. Specifically, it is asked why, at a given point in time, some particular allies became rivals while others remained security partners. I shall argue that domestic structures had a much greater impact on the emergence of new rivalries than did the distribution of power among states. Which particular allies became rivals was largely determined by state preferences generated by the *domestic* distribution of power and interests. The balance of power among states affected the nature of their security relations to a significant only when (a) the remaining war making potential was highly concentrated on very few victorious powers and (b) these powers had antagonistic political systems.

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Why some great powers cooperate while others confront each other as opponents is one of the most venerable questions of research in international relations. Indeed, it is the very issue which gave rise to the initial institutionalization of the field. Following World War I, peace negotiators at Versailles realized how little systematic knowledge they had on the preconditions of a durable peace system which would be immune against the reemergence of traditional great power rivalries. In the early 1920s, growing awareness of this lacuna directly led to the establishment of the Council on Foreign Relations in New York and the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London. Since then, both research institutions have been followed by numerous think tanks and university departments devoted to the study of international relations. The question, though, why some powers manage to coordinate their security efforts while others become rivals is still one of the most widely discussed subjects of the field.

In this paper, I want to contribute to this ongoing debate by comparing realist and liberal explanations of great power interactions. Contrasting the respective predictions of these two theories is especially intriguing because they emphasize different causal variables which in turn lead their adherents to propagate opposing world views: whereas for realists great power relations are chiefly determined by the distribution of power *among* states, liberals see them primarily shaped by the distribution of power and interests *within* states. Realists claim that the behavior of great powers is driven by their desire to maintain, if not expand their relative position within the international system. Since power is a relational good which one state can only expand at the expense of another, the realist view implies a world dominated by conflict and distrust. Thus, systematic cooperation among first rank powers can only result from a shared interest in maintaining one's position vis-à-vis a common threat. Liberals, on the other hand, expect that state policies primarily reflect the parochial preferences of powerful domestic actors. From their vantage point, therefore, the mix of conflict and cooperation between two particular states results from the compatibility of the interests pursued by influential groups. Unlike realists, thence, liberals see some scope for lasting progress in world politics. To the extent that domestic polities (processes) can be structured to discriminate against conflictual group preferences, relations among major powers can become more peaceful. Accordingly, which theoretical account is to be considered more adequate is not just an academic issue but has profound impacts on the assessment of policy alternatives confronted by political practitioners.[1]

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[1] Arguably, testable hypotheses with profound implications for practical politics might also be derived from two other prominent theories, i.e. institutionalism and constructivism. However, for various reasons this paper will not discuss their predictions of great power politics. Apart from space limitations, I shall not test institutionalist hypotheses because this school does not yield general and comprehensive predictions of state behavior. Most institutionalists regard international institutions as an intervening variable whose effects strongly depends on the involved states' preferences over outcomes. The latter, though, are usually treated as exogenous to institutionalist theory. Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variables," in: Krasner (ed.), *International Regimes*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 1-21; Robert O. Keohane/Helga Haftendorn/Celeste A. Wallander, „Conclusions," in: Haftendorn/Keohane/Wallander (eds.), *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 328p. Constructivists, on the other hand, so far have mostly denied that they have already come up with a comprehensive and thus testable theory of international security. Rather, they claim to have presented merely a new approach which stresses immaterial factors whose explanatory value has been systematically neglected by rationalist theories. See Ronald L. Jepperson/Alexander Wendt/Peter J. Katzenstein, „Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in: Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 36; John Gerard Ruggie, „What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Autumn 1998), pp. 856, 879-880. In his new book Alexander

In order to test the two theories I shall analyze four historical great power coalitions which have prevailed against a would-be hegemon. Tracking the relations among victorious powers provides a particularly useful data base because realist and liberal expectations will usually diverge in the absence of a unifying threat. Once the common opponent has been defeated, realists predict that security cooperation between the allied powers will erode until, finally, some of them turn into outright rivals. The more the remaining capabilities are concentrated on a few allied powers, the faster this process should proceed. In contrast, liberals do not foresee a gradual dissolution of existing security partnerships. In their view, there is no automatic trend whatsoever. Rather, the development of bilateral relations will always depend on state preferences emanating from domestic struggles for influence.

The four case studies cover the period between the demise of the common opponent and the reemergence of rivalry among some of the victorious powers. I have selected only the aftermath of those hegemonic conflicts where the coalition lasted until the very end of the war. Among the great powers, I reckon all states which were allowed to participate in the highest decision making bodies of the successful coalition. In the modern era, these criteria leave the following cases to be studied:

- the relations between Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia after the Napoleonic wars,
- the relations between Britain, France and Italy after World War I (in Europe),[2]
- the relations between Britain, Japan and the United States after World War I (in the Far East), and
- the relations between Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States following World War II.

In order to maximize the number of observations I shall use the cases for both synchrone and diachrone comparisons.

In the next chapter I will first develop criteria for differentiating between security partnerships and rivalries, i.e. the dichotomy which is my dependent variable. The second part of the chapter presents pertinent hypotheses derived from prominent versions of the realist and liberal school respectively. As basis for the realist propositions I will use the variant of structural neorealism put forward by Kenneth Waltz, Joseph Grieco and John Mearsheimer.[3] Liberal hypotheses will be derived form the pluralist version advocated by

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Wendt has now developed a fully fledged constructivist theory of the international system. He concedes, however, that constructivist reasoning is best at explaining long-term continuities in the international system. According to Wendt, cultural structures tend to reproduce themselves largely unchanged over time. Hence, changes, and especially those evolving over years rather than several decades, appear to be the explanatory domain of rationalist approaches stressing the impact of material structures. As a result, Wendt would hardly contend that his theory is well equipped to explain why two specific powers became rivals instead of remaining partners. See Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chap. 7.

[2] In the interwar period I distinguish between the European and the Far Eastern theaters because, at that time, the two regions were not yet part of the same security complex. Japan and the U.S. quickly withdrew from European security affairs, while France and Italy played only a minor role in East Asian matters. I do not include relations with Russia because in early 1918 that power defected from the entente only to slide into a civil war which for all purposes suspended its status as a great power. On the concept of „security complexes" see Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear. An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era,* 2nd edition (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), chap. 5.

[3] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979); Joseph M. Grieco, *Cooperation among Nations. Europe, America, and Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade,* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press,

Andrew Moravcsik, Helen Milner and Jack Snyder.[4] The following four chapters investigate how well the competing hypotheses match up to the evidence contained in the four case studies. The concluding chapter presents a synopsis of the empirical findings and discusses their implications for both the academic debate and United States foreign policy.

I shall argue that domestic structures had a much greater impact on the emergence of new rivalries than did the distribution of power among states. Which particular allies became rivals at what point in time was largely determined by state preferences generated by the *domestic* distribution of power and interests. The balance of power among states affected the nature of their security relations to a significant only when (a) the remaining war making potential was highly concentrated on but a few victorious powers and (b) these powers had antagonistic political systems. This finding increases the plausibility of liberal IR theory and weakens the credibility of realism in the very domain where it is presumed to have the greatest explanatory value. For political practitioners these results imply that they should not take the disintegration of victorious great power coalitions for granted. Rather, they are well advised to take active measures to preserve successful security partnerships. To that end they should aim at the spread of democracy while giving support to foreign elites which favor international cooperation.

Realist and Liberal Explanations for the Emergence of Rivalry

Before looking at realist and liberal explanations for shifts from „partnership" to „rivalry" I first need to clarify what I mean by the latter two terms. When can allies still be considered to behave like security partners, and at what point do we have to say that their relationship has turned into rivalry? I shall speak of partnership as long as allies maintain policy coordination and continue to engage in common activities even in the absence of a unifying enemy. Such a post-war partnership, thence, does no longer aim at defeating a common opponent but rather tries to contain a new threat, i.e. the danger that allies will (again) become rivals. Hence security partnership is characterized by common efforts to defuse both crises and long-term threats to the established international order, as well as by joint endeavors to avoid arms races and proxy wars. Partners forgo short-term gains offered by *faits accomplis* and other forms of secretive behavior in favor of the long-term benefits which come with a cooperative relationship. Instead of pursuing unilateral advantages they routinely adapt to the preferences of their partners, for they are well aware that the latter would not condone unilateral measures but would sooner or later reciprocate with uncompromising behavior of their own.

1990); John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 5-49.

[4] Andrew Moravcsik, "Liberalism and International Relations Theory," Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, Working Paper No. 92-6, Cambridge 1992; Moravcsik, „Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Autumn 1997), pp. 513-53; Helen V. Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire. Domestic Politics and International Ambition*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991). Conceivably, Snyder would object to be included among liberals instead of realists. Nevertheless, key assumptions of this theory of imperial overstretch can be readily integrated into liberal IR theory whereas they are alien to neorealism's focus on systemic variables.

From this ideal type of security partnership we can derive a scale of behavior which stretches from close partnership (top) to outright rivalry (bottom):

- coordinated activities to defuse crises, potential arms races or threats to the established international order
- common abstention from active measures
- inconclusive consultations followed by unilateral activities
- unilateral activities not preceded by consultations (*fait accompli*)
- reciprocal conflict behavior such as arms races, proxy wars and the construction of antagonistic alliance systems
- military conflict

This scale, however, does only distinguish between single acts as to whether they are compatible with partnership or rivalry. I does not yet discriminate between different types of relationships. My dependent variables are not single instances of cooperative or adversarial behavior but rather *patterns* of behavior that persist over a longer period of time. I do not aim at explaining particular actions which may be due to various kinds of idiosyncratic causes. Instead, I want to account for trends and shifts stretching over several years, i.e. for changes presumably shaped by structural factors.

So how do we distinguish a security partnership between two powers from a pattern of rivalry? I will code a relationship between erstwhile allies as „rivalry" if the two powers engage in reciprocal warfare, an arms race (or other forms of reciprocal conflict behavior) stretching over several years or cease to consult in several consecutive crises in order to pursue their interests with unilateral measures. On the other hand, a „partnership" may be said to persist as long as *faits accomplis* remain isolated instances which time and again are followed by successful consultations or negotiations on crises, arms control or questions of international order. The ultimate criterion is thence whether two powers continue to treat each other as part of the *solution* to their security problems or rather as part of that very *problem*, that is as potential enemy in an anticipated war. Obviously, there is also a gray area between these two categories. Some relationship may be difficult to code, especially for those time periods when there has been little interaction between two given powers.

REALISM AND THE REEMERGENCE OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY

Realists expect that alliances will start to disintegrate almost as soon as they have defeated their common opponent. Without a central authority able to protect states and enforce their agreements states operate in an anarchical self-help environment where each of them has to take care of itself. To survive in the international system states must above all protect their power and guard against being exploited by others.[5] Hence, close security operation can merely be based on a shared interest in keeping at bay a powerful foe: „mutual fear is the only basis of alliance".[6] Once the alliance has shattered its enemy's power, fear, distrust and competition for power will reemerge among its members.

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[5] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, chap. 6; Grieco, *Cooperation among Nations*, chap. 1.

[6] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War. A Theoretical Analysis*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 211. Waltz credits this insight to Thucydides.

Unable to predict the future intentions of their allies, state governments will again start to worry about the purposes to which the latter eventually might put their power (that is, their material potential for intimidation and waging war). For realists, therefore, the dissolution of a successful alliance is a foregone conclusion. The open questions merely are (1) how fast the victorious coalition will disintegrate and (b) which allies turn into rivals and which of them remain security partners.

Realist assumptions imply that the speed at which a successful alliance dissolves into rival camps to a large extent depends on the post-war distribution of capabilities. The quicker and more thoroughly the alliance has crushed the power of its erstwhile opponent, the sooner the alliance will fissure. In the wake of an absolute victory, fear of the common enemy will soon give way to concerns that one's allies will be tempted to use their increased power to threaten or attack their recent partners. The fewer great powers emerge from a great war, the more sensitive they will react to ongoing shifts in relative power. After all, a diminished number of great powers means that they have fewer potential allies for balancing against a rising power. With increasing concerns about relative gains, cooperation will become much more difficult as states will be more eager to ensure an equal distribution of expected benefits.[7] If, to give but an extreme example, just two great powers survive a great war, any relative gain for one of them means an increase of power for the only state which poses a potential threat to the other power. Because the latter will no longer be able to compensate major power shifts by skillful alliance diplomacy, it will become more dependent on its own resources. Accordingly, it will be much more interested in forestalling any developments which could weaken it vis-à-vis its former ally.[8] It will be less prepared to accept unequal gains and much more concerned about being cheated by its recent ally. Consequently, the potential for meaningful collaboration is greatly diminished.

For similar reasons, the speed of an alliances disintegration should also depend on the durability of the new distribution of power. *Ceteris paribus* it should be easier for the victorious allies to remain partners if their relative positions appear to be rather stable. If, on the other hand, ongoing or anticipated trends in material capabilities strongly favor some allies over others, then realists would expect the disadvantaged powers to try to arrest their relative decline. As a result, they should not only engage in more relative gains behavior but also look for any means and opportunities to increase their own resources. Since there are rarely untried measures to mobilize additional resources within one's own territory, declining powers will attempt to use international crises or multilateral conferences for enforcing territorial settlements that benefit them at the expense of a

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[7] Grieco, *Cooperation among Nations*, pp. 46, 228.

[8] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 170-175; Grieco, *Cooperation among Nations*, p. 228. To be sure, Waltz claims that bipolar systems are more stable than systems with more than two great powers. Yet, this hypotheses should not be confused with a proposition on the probability or intensity of great power rivalry. Waltz contends that, in a bipolar system, there is less scope for misunderstandings which might lead to a great war, for there is little ambiguity which power is an ally or an enemy. However, this greater security against a cataclysmic clash comes at a price: increased competition and less cooperation among the two poles: „Competition becomes more comprehensive as well as more widely extended...Miscalculation by some or all of the great powers is the source of danger in a multipolar world; overreaction by either or both of the great powers is the source of danger in a bipolar world." Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 171p. This crucial distinction is obscured in Benjamin Miller's discussion of neorealist theory. Benjamin Miller, „Explaining the emergence of great power concerts," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (October 1994), pp. 332-334.

rising ally. This again increases the potential for rivalry at the expense of opportunities for cooperation. In extreme cases, declining allies might even resort to preventive war against their former partners.

For realists, the distribution of power and its ongoing or anticipated shifts largely determine which allied powers remain partners and which allies become rivals. If only two great powers exist at the end of a great conflict, they are doomed to become rivals. If, on the other hand, just one ally emerges from the common campaign as much more powerful than all the others, the latter will turn away from it to form a new alliance which balances its superior capabilities. However benignly the paramount ally may wield its power at present, its weaker partners will always fear that sooner or later its behavior will change for the worse.[9] In this they usually are not mistaken because a surplus of power will always tempt a predominant state to shed decent and moderate conduct for „arbitrary and arrogant behavior“.[10] Sooner or later, therefore, the smaller allies will try to create a new balance of power.[11]

Moreover, it follows from realist logic that *ceteris paribus* victorious powers face greater incentives to balance against recent allies with greater opportunities for aggression. They will be more inclined to arm or build alliances against states with which they share a common border that is difficult to defend than to balance against powers separated by a great distance and many natural barriers. The same reasoning applies to states offensively armed in comparison to powers whose postures emphasize defensive capabilities.[12] Thus, in multipolar system in which several combinations of powers can create a rough balance, realists expect that mutually endangered neighbors rather than distant powers will become rivals.

Finally, if ongoing or anticipated power shifts among roughly equal powers significantly favor one ally over its partners, that ally is likely to turn into the latters’ rival. Not only do realists expect the stagnant powers to make every attempt that may arrest their relative

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[9] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 126p.; Waltz, „The New World Order,“ *Millennium*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Summer 1993), p. 190; Stephen M. Walt, "Why Alliances Endure or Collapse," *Survival*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Spring 1997), p. 159.

[10] Kenneth N. Waltz, „America as a Model for the World? A Foreign Policy Perspective,“ *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (December 1991), p. 669.

[11] For a somewhat dissenting view among realists on this point, see William Wohlforth’s recent article on the effects of unipolarity. However, Wohlforth’s argument that America’s current predominance will not induce balancing behavior is largely based on the claim that the United States enjoys a historically unique margin of superiority which suspends realism’s normal balancing logic. Since in my case studies the distribution of capabilities is more even, I see no pressing need to assess Wohlforth’s theoretical argument here. William C. Wohlforth, „The Stability of a Unipolar World,“ *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 5-41.

[12] Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 32. Although in his balance of threat theory Walt also includes perceived intentions as a variable affecting balancing behavior I shall ignore intentions in my discussion of realist theory.. While I do not doubt that Walt’s claim is correct, the inclusion of intentions transcends the realist paradigm. After all, one of Waltz’, Mearsheimer’s and Grieco’s central assumptions is that states do hardly rely on forecasts of foreign intentions. As Mearsheimer puts it, „intentions can change quickly, so a state’s intentions can be benign one day and malign the next." Mearsheimer, „False Promise“, p. 10. See also Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 105; Grieco, *Cooperation among Nations*, p. 47; and Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994) pp. 294, 301. For an argument that Walt’s inclusion of intentions betrays a degenerative trend in the realist research program see John A. Vasquez, „The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs: An Appraisal of Neotraditional Research on Waltz’s Balancing Proposition,“ *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (December 1997), 904 p.; and Jeffrey Legro/Andrew Moravcsik, „Is Anybody Still a Realist?“ *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), pp. 36-38.

decline; but also, the rising power will be less and less prepared to play by the rules. Instead, it will be increasingly tempted to use its growing capabilities for securing favorable political or territorial changes. The greater its relative growth, the more bearable this power finds the costs of such revisions and the more demanding it gets for the other states to defend the *status quo.* Hence, the rising power will be more inclined to bring about such revisions, either by applying its enhanced capabilities in negotiations or by the open threat or use of military force.[13]

In sum, realist logic implies the following hypotheses concerning the reemergence of rivalry among victorious allies:

1. Rivalry will reemerge the sooner (a) the more highly international power is concentrated among a small number of victorious allies and (b) the stronger ongoing or anticipated shifts in the distribution of capabilities are.
2. A security partner is more likely to turn into its partners' rival (a) if it enjoys either overwhelming power, or (b) has large offensive forces which can easily attack allies near-by, or (c) is significantly favored by shifts in the distribution of capabilities.
3. Following the defeat of a powerful opponent, new alignment patterns will tend to bring about a more equal distribution of power.

LIBERALISM AND THE REEMERGENCE OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY

For liberals such as Andrew Moravcsik or Helen Milner the defeat of a powerful would-be hegemon should not by itself affect the relations between its successful opponents. According to their version of liberal international relations theory,[14] the quality of state to state relations does not so much depend on the distribution of power among states but is rather due to the interaction of state preferences brought about by influential actors on the domestic level. If the preferences of predominant coalitions within two given nations are compatible or easily adjustable through bargaining, liberals anticipate harmony or cooperation between the two states. If on the other hand, ruling coalitions favor incompatible policies, liberals predict antagonistic relations.[15] According to this liberal theory, the distribution of capabilities among states does not influence the emergence of interstate conflicts but may only impinge on their outcomes.[16]

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[13] Edward H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939. An Introduction to the Study of International Relations,* 2nd edition (London: Macmillan, 1946), p. 190; Robert G. Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 55p.

[14] For classifications of different variants of liberal IR theory see Robert O. Keohane, "International liberalism reconsidered," in: John Dunn (ed.), *The Economic Limits to Modern Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 165-194; Arthur A. Stein, "Governments, Economic Interdependence, and International Cooperation", in: Philipp E. Tetlock (ed.), *Behavior, Society, and International Conflict,* Vol. 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 244-54; and Moravcsik, "Liberalism and International Relations Theory" p. 1; for an overview of classical liberal thought on international relations see Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism,* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), part 2.

[15] Moravcsik, "Liberalism and International Relations Theory"; Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information,* 61p.; Robert D. Putnam, „Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games," *International Organization,* Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 427-60.

[16] Moravcsik, "Liberalism and International Relations Theory"; on the importance of domestic preferences for the course of international conflicts see also Moravcsik, „Taking Preferences Seriously," p. 524; and Richard

In contrast to realist thinking, liberals contend that in external relations the chief aim of national decision makers is not the assertion of their state in the international system. Instead, their paramount goal is to preserve their personal influence within their own state. When forced to choose between protecting national power or their personal influence in domestic politics, chief executives will always opt for the latter. For liberals, therefore, the crucial factor determining a state's foreign policy preferences is the composition of the interest coalition which forms the domestic power base of the national ruler. The interests of these groups delineate the political constraints chief executives must respect to preserve their position vis-à-vis the rest of their society. In addition, groups outside of the central coalition may impose further constraints if they enjoy a veto position in a particular issue area. This may be due to special resources or institutional privileges which enable such groups to block certain measures by refusing to cooperate or consent.[17] Decision makers may only enjoy greater latitude if their supporting coalition lacks clear preferences concerning a particular issue or if their personal power is safeguarded by an effective security apparatus. In the latter case, chief executives can afford to implement their personal foreign policy preferences as long as the latter are compatible with the parochial interests of their repression apparatus.[18]

To what extent confrontational preferences of dominant groups will result in a confrontational foreign policy of their state significantly depends on the degree to which the central coalition has to respect the interests of the rest of society. Liberals assume that expansion and conflict rarely earn a net benefit for a whole society. Rather they expect the opposite. As a consequence, if political influence is shared quite evenly by most segments of society liberals anticipate a state to pursue cooperative policies in order to avoid the costs of international conflicts. Where, on the other hand, political influence is monopolized by just a few social groups those groups may be able to reap some material, political or ideational benefits from external conflicts without sharing in their costs. Deprived of political influence the disadvantaged groups can easily be made to bear a disproportional part of costs and risks. Accordingly, liberals contend that democratic states with broadly representative institutions usually are more concerned to avoid costly external conflicts than are oligarchies or autocracies.[19]

Another institutional feature which liberals regard as potentially moderating foreign policy behavior is centralization of authority within the dominant elites. *Ceteris paribus*

Rosecrance/Arthur A. Stein, „Beyond Realism: The Study of Grand Strategy“, in: Rosecrance/Stein (eds.), *The Domestic Basis of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 16-21.

[17] Andrew Moravcsik, „Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach,“ *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (December 1993), 483p.; Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information*, pp. 73-75; Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 31-55.

[18] Moravcsik, "Liberalism and International Relations Theory,“ p. 20; Moravcsik, „Preferences and Power,“ pp. 484, 488; Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, p. 54.

[19] Moravcsik, "Liberalism and International Relations Theory,“ pp. 8-17; Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 32-35. The impact democratic institutions have on inter-state violence clearly is the most researched topic of liberal IR theory. See Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); James Lee Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict: An Evaluation of the Democratic Peace Proposition* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1995); and Michael E. Brown/Sean M. Lynn-Jones/Steven E. Miller (eds.), *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996); Miriam Fendius Elman (ed.), *Paths to Peace: Is Democracy the Answer?* Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997); Spencer R. Weart, *Never at War: Why Democracies Will not Fight One Another* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998).

concentration of power among few groups will bring about more confrontational foreign policies if those groups do not have to face a strong chief executive. Without such a common leader the dominant groups are less inclined to compromise on their parochial programs in the interest of a coherent government policy. Rather, the groups forming the central coalition will be tempted simply to add up all their political programs, that is they will try to engage in „log rolling" without paying great attention to the danger that their combined programs may add up to an even more confrontational state policy. After all, these groups need not worry about the consistency and overall success of this policy, for they can shift its costs to the disadvantaged groups. On the contrary, a strong chief executive can force privileged groups to accept compromises on their aims. Furthermore, he is usually also keen on obtaining greater concessions from the dominant groups in the interest of a more coherent policy. As supreme decision maker and representative of his nation such a leader tends to have less parochial interests than have specific social groups.[20]

If domestic conditions indeed are as important as liberals claim, among a coalition of victorious powers only those allies can remain security partners which have no confrontational preferences – either because their dominant groups do not wish for conflict or because those groups cannot shift the burden of international confrontation on the rest of their society. Otherwise, states will be inclined to avoid the constraints which come along with consultations and multilateral action. Instead, they will guard their autonomy in order to pursue territorial expansion or wars which stabilize the predominance of the privileges groups, or they will do so simply because the dominant groups are so indifferent to the drawbacks of rivalry and war that they just shy away from the awkward procedures necessary for multilateral management of international security.

Accordingly, for the purposes of this paper, the following hypotheses can be derived from liberal international relations theory:

1. Security partnerships are likely to give way to increasing conflicts and *faits accomplis* among former allies if (a) in at least one of them dominant groups unchecked by democratic constraints begin to prefer conflict and expansion to international cooperation or if (b) those groups which have always opted for confrontational powers suddenly manage to increase their political influence.
2. The faster such domestic changes evolve and the less influence the chief executive wields, the sooner partnership between two powers will turn into rivalry.

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[20] Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 43-49, 52-55.

Reemergence of Rivalry in the Wake of the Napoleonic Wars

After the defeat of Napoleon his erstwhile opponents preserved their partnership until the early 1830s when, finally, Britain and Russia turned into rivals. That confrontation between the victorious allies did not reoccur at an earlier date was largely due to the specific interests pursued by ruling elites. Whereas continental monarchs and nobilities gave top priority to preserving their predominance over a rising bourgeoisie, Britain's powerful aristocracy insisted on cutting back public spending. As a result, none of the four allies could afford an arms race or other costs and risks associated with great power confrontations. Although the imperatives of power politics would have called for an Anglo-Austrian-Prussian block against France and Russia, balancing behavior hardly occurred. When, after 1832, the two paramount powers turned into rivals this confrontation was less due to mutual fear of the opponent's power. Rather, it was brought about by the social and ideological abyss which, following the liberal Reform Act, began to separate Britain from an increasingly reactionary Russia. Overall, this turn of events is much more compatible with liberal hypotheses than with realist expectations.

DISTINGUISHING PARTNERS AND RIVALS AFTER THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

Despite some ups and downs in the relations between the four allied powers, by and large Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia remained security partners until 1832. They did not start arms races but unilaterally reduced their forces to lower levels. Neither did they develop serious war plans for engaging each other, nor did they set up antagonistic alliances.[21] In the only case in which an ally proposed to form a new alliance against another great power, Austria's foreign minister Metternich was instantly rebuffed by his British colleague Lord Castlereagh.[22] In fact, prince Metternich soon was to appreciate that the tsarist empire was much less a threat to Habsburg interests than an indispensable bulwark of autocratic order. Instead of using sudden crises for opportunistic self-aggrandizement, the four powers repeatedly sought to defuse them through collective crisis management. Apart from occasional irritations and abstentions on the part of individual powers, most of the allies consulted and cooperated rather closely to contain the various crises set off by uprisings in Naples (1820/21), Piemont (1820), Spain (1820-1823); Greece (1821-1829), Poland (1830/31) and Belgium (1830-1831).[23]

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[21] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954), p. 3; F. Roy Bridge/Roger Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914* (London and New York: Longman, 1980), p. 8. For instructive overviews on the diplomatic events of this period see also René Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* (New York: Harper, 1958); Alan Sked (ed.), *Europe's Balance of Power, 1815-1848* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1979); and above all Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994). For a comprehensive account of the restoration period as such see Paul Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern World Society, 1815–1830* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991).

[22] Charles K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1815-1822. Britain and the European Alliance* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1925), pp. 100-118, 175-85.

[23] On the early southern European revolutions and the reactions of the great powers see the overviews listed in fn. 21 and also the following titles Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored. Castlereagh, Metternich and the Problems of Peace, 1812-22* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), chap. 14, 15, Webster, *Castlereagh, 1815-1822*, chap. VI; Roy Bridge, „Allied Diplomacy in Peacetime: the Failure of the Congress 'System', 1815-23," in: Sked, *Europe's Balance of Power*, pp. 34-53. On the Greek rebellion and its international implications see also Kissinger, *A World Restored*, chap. 16; Matthew Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations*, London: Macmillan, 1966).

After 1832 the Anglo-Russian partnership turned into a serious rivalry which continued until the beginning of the following decade when relations between the two powers again temporarily improved. To be sure, the ideological rift caused by various revolutions and the British „Reform Bill" also led to some alienation between Britain and the two German powers. However their quarrels did hardly escalate beyond some diplomatic arguments on the domestic confrontations in Spain and Germany. Although Britain's partnership with Austria and Prussia disintegrated, the three powers did not become genuine rivals.[24] On the contrary, from 1832 on England and Russia began to confront each other militarily and on quite a number of issues. They gave significant material and financial support to opposing factions in the civil wars on the Iberian Peninsula (mid 1830´s);[25] they became engaged in a maritime arms race (mid 1830´s),[26] they came very close to war in two crises over the Turkish straits (1833 and 1839/40),[27] and they undertook the first military expeditions in what later became known as the „Great Game in Asia" (1839/40).[28] In a nutshell, then, „alliance was transformed into rivalry."[29] By the middle of the 1830´s, British foreign minister Lord Palmerston already spoke of Russia as „the great enemy of England", just as tsar Nicholas came to the conclusion that his former ally was to be considered a threat rather than a trusted security partner.[30]

REALIST EXPLANATIONS

Realism is rather ill equipped to explain the pattern of great power relations after 1815. No doubt, as realists would expect, the great alliance against France eventually collapsed to be replaced by a rivalry between the two strongest European powers. Still, for a structural realist, many parts of that story are indeed puzzling. That the victorious powers

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The Polish uprising and its suppression are described in W. Bruce Lincoln, *Nicholas I: Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russians* (London: Penguin, 1978), pp. 135-43; John Shelton Curtiss, *The Russian Army under Nicholas I, 1825-1855* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1965), chap. III; and Harald Müller, „Die Krise des Interventionsprinzips der Heiligen Allianz. Zur Außenpolitik Österreichs und Preußens nach der Julirevolution von 1830," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte* 14 (1976), pp. 38-49; for details on the revolution in Belgium and its collective management by the great powers see Charles K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830-1841* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1951), Vol. 1, chap. II; Kenneth Bourne, *Palmerston. The Early Years, 1784-1841* (New York:: Macmillan, 1982), pp. 333-48; Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 670-91; and René Albrecht-Carrié, *The Concert of Europe* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 60-98.

[24] Bourne, *Palmerston*, pp. 367-374; Webster, *Palmerston*, Vol. 1, 222p.; Roger Bullen, „France and Europe, 1815-48: the Problem of Defeat and Recovery", in: Sked (ed.), *Europe's Balance of Power*, p. 134.

[25] Webster, *Palmerston*, Vol. 1, pp. 238, 245, 377, 423, 425, 428.

[26] Christopher J. Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power, 1815-1853* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), pp. 108-9, 116-28; John Howes Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain. A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion* (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1950), pp. 171, 217-220; and Philip E. Mosely, „Englisch-Russische Flottenrivalität", *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 1 (1936), pp. 549-68.

[27] Webster, *Palmerston*, Vol. I, chap. IV, and Vol. II, chap. VII-VIII; Gleason, *Russophobia*, chap. IX; Anderson, *Eastern Question*, chap. 4; Lincoln, *Nicholas I*, chap. 6; Vernon John Puryear, *International Economics and Diplomacy in the Near East: A Study of British Commercial Policy in the Levant 1834–1853* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1969), pp. 15-23.

[28] Webster, *Palmerston*, Vol. 2, pp. 738-52; Malcolm E. Yapp, *Strategies of British India: Britain, Iran and Afghanistan, 1798-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), chap. 4, 8; Gerald Morgan, *Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Central Asia: 1810-1895* (London: Frank Cass, 1981), pp. 20-30; Harold Norman Ingle, *Karl Nesselrode's Cosmopolitan Diplomacy and the Russian Rapprochement with Britain, 1836-1843*, (Diss. University of California, Davis, 1972), pp. 234-56.

[29] Gleason, *Russophobia*, S. 290.

[30] Palmerston's quote in Bourne, *Palmerston*, p. 562; see also Lincoln, *Nicholas I*, pp. 109f, 220, 224; Schiemann, *Geschichte Rußlands unter Kaiser Nikolaus I.*, Vol. 3, pp. 279, 282.

succeeded in preserving their partnership for such a long time, that the Anglo-Russian confrontation commenced just at the beginning of the 1830s, that the two German powers remained on the side lines and maintained their partnership with Russia – all this is hard to square with the logic of power politics as outlined in realist textbooks.

Had alignments after 1815 largely been determined by the international distribution of power, Britain and Russia would have become rivals many years before. Though at the time these two states were considered merely two of five great powers, they clearly were in a category of their own, if not even „super powers" by modern standards.[31] Both the strong concentration of resources on two powers and the ongoing shift favoring Britain over Russia should have led to increasing rivalry rather than to a continuation of security partnership. What is even more striking is that the weaker powers hardly tried to find a strong and committed ally. In particular, Austria and Prussia should have worked hard to lure Britain into an alliance against Russia. After all, even their combined armies did not equal half of the strength their Russian neighbor could have send into battle.[32] Hence, pure power politics would have called for an alliance with Britain against France and Russia. Such a combination would have secured a rough balance of power best suited to protect the weak center of the continent against possible expansion by Russia or France.

The powers' actual policies were hardly based on such an assessment of power realities; otherwise, alignment patterns would have evolved rather differently.[33] Defying the imperatives of balancing behavior, at the Troppau conference in 1820, the three eastern courts formed a loose conservative grouping which later was joined by reactionary France. Britain, on the contrary, for a couple of years withdrew from continental engagements because it disapproved of its allies' reactionary interventions.[34] By the mid 1820´s, none of the European powers seemed to care how to balance Russia's awesome land power. Hence, while the years since Napoleon's defeat progressed, considerations how to create a balanced distribution of capabilities did not become more salient among European statesmen; rather thinking along those terms became increasingly obsolete as the four continental powers put domestic interests and autocratic principles above the imperatives of power politics.

Realist hypotheses are not much better suited to explain the emergence of Anglo-Russian rivalry after 1832. Certainly, this development led to a conflict between the very two powers which, from a realist perspective, seemed to be destined for mutual confrontation. Moreover, both the object of their dispute as well as the timing of its beginning match realist assumptions because, in the early 1830s, the sultan's defeat by Egypt's powerful

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[31] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers. Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (London: Fontana Press, 1989), chap. 4; the term „super power" is applied both by Paul W. Schroeder, „Did the Vienna System Rest on a Balance of Power?," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (June 1992), p. 688; and Wolf D. Gruner, „Was There a Reformed Balance of Power or Cooperative Great Power Hegemony?" *American Historical Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (June 1992), p. 731. The preponderance of Britain and Russia is also confirmed by the quantitative assessment of William B. Moul, "Measuring the 'balances of power': a look at some numbers", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (April 1989), pp. 101-121.

[32] Kennedy, *Rise and Fall*, p. 197, table 8.

[33] See also Schroeder, „Did the Vienna System Rest on a Balance of Power?"

[34] Webster, *Castlereagh, 1815-1822*; Kissinger, *A World Restored*, chap. 14-16; Harold W. Temperley, *Life of Canning* (London: James Finch & Co., 1905); Temperley, „Canning and the Conferences of the Four Allied Governments at Paris, 1823-1826," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (October 1924), pp. 16-43.

autocrat Mehmed´ Ali increased an power vacuum already existing at the Turkish straits.[35] Nevertheless, the overall pattern of alignment remains puzzling. Although a rough balance of power emerged when a grouping of Austria, Prussia and Russia (the so-called Berlin Coalition) was confronted by a new quadruple alliance consisting of Britain, France, Portugal and Spain, these two coalitions were rather loosely knit as both of them lacked a general assistance clause committing members to mutual defense.[36] Moreover, as already pointed out, from a realist point of view, the resulting alignment pattern was far from perfect. Due to their composition, these groupings would have been unable to guard Britain, Austria and Prussia against their most powerful neighbors, i.e. against France and Russia resp. As seen from London, the strategic equation of the early 1830s even would have called for an anti-French alliance since, at the time, France had temporarily succeeded in regaining much of its previous power.[37] Finally, as a closer look at perceptions and interests will show, power politics mostly played a secondary role in the evolution of the Anglo-Russian confrontation. In many cases, decision makers did not act upon concerns about dangerous consequences of foreign capabilities but rather followed domestic necessities.

LIBERAL EXPLANATIONS

The liberal approach with its stress on domestic preference formation can more readily account for the shifts in great power relations following the Napoleonic Wars. In the autocratic monarchies of Austria, Prussia and Russia, the conservative interests of kings and aristocracies called for cautious foreign policies which aimed at princely solidarity against the political ambitions of the lesser classes. Britain's aristocratic oligarchy soon lost interest in this international cooperation of the ruling classes. However, it strongly insisted on cutting public spending, thereby ruling out any confrontational foreign policy. Thus, despite Britain's temporary alienation from its reactionary allies on the continent, England did not soon become the latters' military rival. As liberals would expect, a confrontation between Britain and one of its former allies did only evolve when major changes on the domestic scenes occurred as a result of the revolutions of 1830/31 and the reform policies of the new Whig administration. These shifts strongly aggravated the ideological and political rift between parliamentary Britain and a repressive Russia. Their ruling elites came to the conclusion that they were engaged in a transnational conflict between Europe's forces of progress and the forces of order, resp. This left little scope for cooperation and ample room for distrust and misunderstandings.

In the four decades after Napoleon's defeat, the multinational Habsburg empire was *the* land of political restoration and acted as the center of reactionary efforts allover

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[35] Anderson, *Eastern Question.*

[36] On the formation, legal background and cohesion of these pacts see Webster, *Palmerston*, Vol. 1; pp. 386-97; Edward Hertslet (ed.), *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. 2 (London: Butterworths, 1875), pp. 941-44; Harald Müller, „Der Weg nach Münchengrätz. Voraussetzungen, Bedingungen und Grenzen der Reaktivierung des reaktionären Bündnisses der Habsburger und Hohenzollern mit den Romanows im Herbst 1833," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte*, Vol. 21 (1980), pp. 52-58.

[37] During the 1820s France had systematically modernized both its army and navy. Thus, according to a recent assessment by William Moul, for a brief period at the turn decade France was almost as powerful as Britain and Russia. Bullen, „France and Europe," 130p.; Moul, „Measuring the 'balances of power'," p. 119.

Germany.[38] Ruled by an absolute monarch, Francis II., his bureaucracy and the nobility, Austria's official policy could only result in general stagnation. In the evolving age of nationalism and liberalism, any imaginative reforms would have endangered the fragile predominance of a multinational aristocracy. For Austria's external relations this domestic configuration implied a cautious and cooperative approach which aimed at autocratic solidarity against the rising forces of nationalism and rebellion.[39]

In this respect, Austrian elites could count on the preferences held by the dominant actors in Prussia. Although the other German power had undergone significant social and political reforms during the war, in the wake of Napoleon's final defeat, conservative forces regained their traditional predominance. As the need for the state's modernization had vanished, the king, his Berlin entourage and the old nobility increasingly feared for their political and social privileges. Between 1815 and 1822 they formed a predominant coalition centered around the desire for protecting the established order. In foreign policy this domestic priority called for the close alignment with the other conservative monarchies as well as for avoiding any external aggrandizement which could have destabilized domestic order. Prussia deliberately refrained from arousing German nationalism, although this could have improved its position vis-à-vis Austria. Moreover, the Prussian government strictly limited its outlays. This policy heavily constrained the power of his army, yet the king consistently shied away from new deficits because this would have required him to convene the estates of the realm which, in turn, might have confronted him with demands for serious reforms.[40]

In the immediate aftermath of the great war, Russian politics underwent a similar shift from reform to a policy of reaction and solidarity with other conservative monarchies. Unlike changes in Prussia, Russia's return to autocratic principles was largely due to the monarch's change of heart. Educated in the spirit of enlightenment, tsar Alexander I. originally had sympathized quite openly with liberal ideas. When, in 1819/20 a number of rebellions seemed to shatter monarchial rule both in Russia and abroad, Alexander thoroughly changed his opinions. To the relief of his influential and conservative nobility the tsar quickly abandoned all his languishing projects for domestic reform and worked to intensify political cooperation with the other conservative powers.[41] Alexander's successor Nicholas I. largely continued along the lines of his brother's cautious policies. Only with regard to the crisis of the Ottoman empire he acted more forcefully. Under

[38] Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800–1866: Bürgerwelt und starker Staat*, 6th edition (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1993), p. 340; Reinhard Rürup, *Deutsche Geschichte im 19. Jahrhundert: 1815-1871* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984), p. 134.

[39] Nipperdey, op.cit., pp. 337-340; Heinrich Ritter von Srbik, *Metternich. Der Staatsmann und der Mensch*, Vol. 1 (Munich: Verlag F. Bruckmann, 1925), pp. 438-440; Carsten Holbraad, *The Concert of Europe: A Study in German and British International Theory, 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1970), pp. 23-33.

[40] Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte, Zweiter Band: Von der Reformära bis zur industriellen und politischen „Deutschen Doppelrevolution" 1815–1845/49* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1987), pp. 298-316, 331-44, 383-91; Nipperdey, op.cit., pp. 328-29, 334, 361; Thomas Stamm-Kuhlmann, *König in Preußens großer Zeit: Friedrich Wilhelm III. Der Melancholiker auf dem Thron*, (Berlin: Siedler, 1992), pp. 458-59, 463, 475-76; Reinhart Koselleck, *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution: Allgemeines Landrecht, Verwaltung und soziale Bewegung von 1791 bis 1848* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1967, reprint 1987), pp. 325-330 and *passim*; Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), pp. 65-81.

[41] Janet M. Hartley, *Alexander I* (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 147-94; Alan Palmer, *Alexander I.: Tsar of War and Peace* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974), chap. 20; Patricia Grimsted, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy, 1801-1825* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 252-53, 279.

the pressure of nobility, clergy and the military he declared a war on Turkey which briefly aroused serious concerns among Austrian decision makers.[42]

Until the beginning of the 1830´s, Britain's ruling elites shared their allies' preference for risk-averse foreign policies. During that period British politics were largely determined by England's aristocracy and its wealthy *gentry*. After the great outlays during the wars against France, both these classes demanded strong reductions in public spending and an abstention from costly involvements in continental affairs.[43] Impressed by violent public disturbances in the early post-war years, at first British elites sympathized with the anti-revolutionary policies implemented on the continent. However, as such unrest faded in Britain and more liberal politicians gained ground both in parliament and within the Tory administration, official London became more critical of repressionary activities and interventions by its European allies. During the 1820´s this led to a temporary alienation between Britain and its three continental partners. In light of the elite's mentioned priorities, however, this estrangement never escalated to the level of antagonistic power politics.[44]

By turning Britain and Russia into military rivals, the revolutionary changes which Europe experienced in the early 1830´s put an end to that state of affairs. The wave of uprisings in France, Germany, Italy and Poland naturally alarmed the conservative elites in the Eastern autocracies. Consequently, they increased their repressionary efforts and intensified their anti-revolutionary cooperation.[45] In combination with Britain's parliamentary Reform Act of 1832 these measures deepened the ideological rift between London and the Eastern capitals. The British reform coalition of Whigs and radicals, not without some reason, considered itself challenged by a conservative offensive from the „Tory party of Europe" (Lord Palmerston), that is from ideological opponents both in Britain and from abroad. Hence, the British government sought the support of constitutional France in its efforts to contain the despised Russian autocracy which it suspected of expansionistic designs. Palmerston ignored his brother's advice to build an alliance with Austria and Prussia. Although such a pact would have allowed to balance both France and Russia, it would have foundered for domestic reasons. Whigs and radicals would have never consented to an alliance with the German autocrats against a France which, following its recent revolution, had introduced representative political institutions.[46]

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[42] Lincoln, *Nicholas I*, pp. 115-116, 147; Schiemann, *Kaiser Nikolaus*, Vol. 2, 210p.; Curtiss, *Russian Army under Nicholas I*, chap. II.

[43] On the links between domestic and foreign policies see particularly Norman Gash, *Lord Liverpool: The Life and Political Career of Robert Banks Jenkinson, Second Earl of Liverpool, 1770–1828* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 115-119, 126-38, 197-98; Wolf D. Gruner, *Großbritannien, der Deutsche Bund und die Struktur des europäischen Friedens im frühen 19. Jahrhundert. Studien zu den britisch-deutschen Beziehungen in einer Periode des Umbruchs 1812-1820* (Habilitation: University of Munich, 1979), pp. 493-517; Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, pp. 13-17; also Norman Gash, *Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815–1865* (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), chap. I; and J. E. Cookson, *Lord Liverpool's Administration: The Crucial Years 1815–1822* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1975), pp. 116-29; W. R. Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism, 1820 to 1827*, 2nd edition (London: Frank Cass, 1967).

[44] Kissinger, *A World Restored*, chap. 14-17; Gash, *Lord Liverpool*, pp. 171-90, 231-232; Webster, *Castlereagh, 1815-1822*, pp. 21-23, 241-242.

[45] Lincoln, *Nicholas I*, pp. 135-48 and chap. 6; Müller, „Krise des Interventionsprinzips"; Müller, „Weg nach Münchengrätz".

[46] On the domestic background of those policies see especially Webster, *Palmerston*, Vol. 1, pp. 222-223, 290, and Vol. 2, pp. 532, 604, 785-86; Bourne, *Palmerston*, pp. 351-52, 551; Roger Bullen, „Party Politics and Foreign

In reality, the tsarist empire's foreign policy was still much more focused on preserving the *status quo* than on territorial aggrandizement. Indeed this preference was required by its overall priority to protect the feudal system. For Russia's European relations this priority apparently called for close cooperation with the German powers in order to contain all liberal dangers emanating from further West. This, in turn, aggravated Russia's disputes with Britain and, even more so, with the latter's new partner, i.e. „revolutionary" France. In its dealings with the Turkish straits crisis, Russia's conservative preferences urged it both to contain Mehmed´ Ali (whom the tsar considered a French influenced propagator of rebellious ideas) and to strictly enforce the commercial shipping rights on which economic survival of Russia's southern nobility hinged.[47]

In sum, both the long persistence of the allies' security partnerships and the eventual emergence of Anglo-Russian rivalry can be more readily explained with liberal hypothesis than with realist power logic. As shown above, significant shifts in these relationships were always linked to changes in domestic coalitions or priorities. Thus the improvement of the Eastern powers' partnership which occurred after 1819/20 was a direct consequence of tsar Alexander's conservative conversion brought about by the various rebellions of those years. On the other hand, Britain's growing estrangement from the continent cannot be understood without the consolidation of its parliamentary oligarchy or without the influence subsequently gained by more liberal circles. Likewise, both Britain's later break with its three continental allies and its growing rivalry with Russia were primarily caused by the ideological and political chasm which then opened between East and West. They were consequences of the new wave of revolutions to be followed by increased repression on the part of the Eastern courts as well as of the inauguration of the Whig administration with its subsequent polarization of British foreign and domestic politics.[48]

Europe and the Reemergence of Rivalry after World War I

The period of partnership between the three European victors Britain, France and Italy continued until 1925.[49] To be sure, Anglo-French relations cooled off in the early 1920´s

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Policy: Whigs, Tories and Iberian Affairs, 1830-6," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Vol. 51, No. 123 (May 1978), pp. 37-59.

[47] Lincoln, *Nicholas I*, pp. 109, 197-224; Schiemann, *Kaiser Nikolaus*, Vol. 3, pp. 211-212, 279-82.

[48] The Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen, prime minister and foreign secretary, respectively, in the preceding Tory administration, later declared that, without being turned out of office, they would have pursued close cooperation wit the eastern powers to contain revolutionary France. See Christoher J. Bartlett, „Britain and the European Balance, 1815-48," in: Sked, *Europe's Balance of Power*, 154p.

[49] For broad overviews of the diplomatic history of that period see Albrecht-Carrié, *Diplomatic History of Europe*; Raymond Cartier, *Le monde entre deux guerres: 1919-1939* (Paris: Larousse, 1974); Gottfried Niedhart, *Internationale Beziehungen 1917-1947* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1989); Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace. International Relations in Europe 1918-1933* (London: Macmillan, 1976); Graham Ross, *The Great Powers and the Decline of the European States System, 1914-1945* (London: Longman, 1983); and William J. Newman, *The Balance of Power in the Interwar Years, 1919-1939* (New York: Random House, 1968). For an overall account see Raymond J. Sontag, *A Broken World. 1919-1939* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

when both powers quarreled over the post-war settlement in the Near East,[50] disagreed on the enforcement of German reparations[51] and had some acerbic exchanges on the designs behind French procurement of war planes and submarines.[52] Nevertheless, the two powers did not become real rivals. Even at the low point of their relations, London and Paris did not become engaged in an arms race or a competition for allies. Neither did they exchange threats of war. Instead, governments in both London and Paris assumed that their countries would fight the next war again as allies.[53] Not surprisingly, then, their estrangement did not last for long. Most of the controversial issues were soon resolved at the conferences in Washington (1921/22), Lausanne (1922/23), and Locarno (1925) that successfully dealt with the naval, Near Eastern, and German problems, respectively.[54]

In contrast, by the mid 1920´s, Franco-Italian relations changed for the worse. Despite its grave disappointment about the outcomes of the Paris Peace conference, for a number of years Italy by and large had pursued a low profile in foreign policy and had remained a loyal security partner of its allies. In most crises and at the major international conferences Rome had played a constructive role in line with the requirements of allied solidarity.[55] In late 1925, however, Italy started to pursue a much more assertive policy. This shift brought about a rivalry with France which only in 1933 gave way to a brief détente soon to be followed by yet more intense confrontation. Whereas Rome's relations with London remained good throughout the 1920´s, after 1925 Mussolini initiated a great number of diplomatic and clandestine activities to undermine French political predominance in the Balkans. Thus, in the words of a leading diplomatic historian of the period, „France – and by extension France's allies in central and southeastern Europe – emerged as Italy's chosen enemy and prey."[56] Increasingly, Italy began to call for the revision of the Versailles peace order so dear to France. In addition,

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[50] Henry H. Cumming, *Franco-British Rivalry in the Post-War Near East. The Decline of French Influence* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938); Harold Nicolson, *Curzon: The Last Phase, 1919-1925. A Study in Post-War Diplomacy* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1934, reprint 1974); F. S. Northedge, *The Troubled Giant. Britain among the Great Powers, 1916-1939* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1966), chap. VI.

[51] Wm. Laird Kleine-Ahlbrandt, *The Burden of Victory. France, Britain and the Enforcement of the Versailles Peace, 1919-1925* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1995); Marc Trachtenberg, *Reparation in World Politics. France and European Economic Diplomacy, 1916-1923* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); Stephen A. Schuker, *The End of French Predominance in Europe. The Financial Crisis of 1924 and the Adoption of the Dawes Plan* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976).

[52] John Robert Ferris, *Men, Money, and Diplomacy: The Evolution of British Strategic Policy, 1919-26* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 127-32, 149; Georges Suarez, *Briand. Sa vie. Son œuvre, Tome V: L'Artisan de la Paix, 1918-1923* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1941); chap. VII.

[53] Anne Orde, *Great Britain and International Security, 1920-1926* (London: Swift Printers, 1978), pp. 13-36, 66, 157; Judith M. Hughes, *To the Maginot Line. The Politics of French Military Preparation in the 1920's* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 57, 95-96.

[54] On the Lausanne conference and the settlement of the Near Eastern problems see Nicolson, *Curzon,* chaps. X- XI; Cumming, *Franco-British Rivalry,* pp. 189-208; and Roderic H. Davison, "Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne," in: Gordon A. Craig/Felix Gilbert (eds.), *The Diplomats, 1919-1939* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), pp. 202-205; on the naval aspect of the Washington conference see Stephen Roskill, *Naval Policy Between the Wars. Volume I: The Period of Anglo-American Antagonism, 1919-1929* (London: Collins, 1968), chap. VIII; as well as Harold Sprout/Margaret Sprout, *Toward a New Order of Sea Power. American Naval Policy and the World Scene, 1918-1922,* 2nd edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), chaps. IX-XIII.

[55] See preceding footnote as well as Alan Cassels, *Mussolini's Early Diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970); Maxwell H. H. Macartney/Paul Cremona, *Italy's Foreign and Colonial Policy, 1914-1937* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938).

[56] Cassels, *Mussolini's Early Diplomacy,* p. 391. See also Kevin Kenyon, *Italy, Hungary, and the Dissolution of Yugoslavia* (Diss. Indiana University) 1993, pp. 180-227; William I. Shorrock, "France, Italy, and the Eastern Mediterranean in the 1920s," in: *The International History Review,* Vol. 8, No. 1 (February 1986), pp. 70-82.

both countries became engaged in a naval arms competition which threatened French lines of communication in the Mediterranean.[57] Gradually, France and Italy perceived each other as potential enemies. This assumption was reflected in the work of military planners who began to design detailed plans for the anticipated military confrontation.[58]

The chief cause behind that shift from partnership to rivalry was not a significant change in the distribution of capabilities but rather, as would be expected by liberals, a transformation of the domestic distribution of power and interests. During the dirst years in the aftermath of World War I, all three powers were dominated by bourgeois coalitions whose main concern was to stabilize the established internal order rather than to revise the international order. The beginnings of Mussolini's dictatorship put an end to that state of affairs, for it led to a radicalization of Italy's foreign policy which could not be condoned by its northwestern neighbor.

REALIST EXPLANATIONS

The distribution of capabilities did not exert a decisive influence on the pattern of security relations which evolved between the three powers. By itself, Europe's balance of power hardly forced the three allies to preserve their cooperation. The power of Germany and of its allies had been thoroughly shattered. Hence, for the foreseeable future they posed no threat to the continental equilibrium even if Russia's paralysis is taken into account.[59] Japan and the United States showed little interest in European security affairs. None of the European powers intended to balance against the United States. Rather, Europe's victors were concerned about Washington's retreat into military isolation.[60] As a result, the management of European security issues was largely left to Britain, France and Italy. Since among those three states the former two clearly predominated, the distribution of power should have led to Anglo-French rivalry rather than a continued partnership. From a realist point of view, confrontation between the two countries must have seemed even more likely if also their geographic proximity and the post-war revival of French power are considered.[61] Accordingly, realist hypothesis seem to be of little use in explaining the trilateral partnership prevailing until 1925.

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[57] Roskill, *Naval Policy Between the Wars II: The Period of Reluctant Rearmament, 1930-1939* (London: Collins, 1976), pp. 27, 183-84; Macartney/Cremona, *Italy's Foreign and Colonial Policy*, pp. 137, 263-67; Christopher Hall, *Britain, America and Arms Control, 1921-1937* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), chap. 4.

[58] Brian R. Sullivan, *A Thirst for Glory: Mussolini, the Italian Military and the Fascist Regime, 1922-1936* (New York: Diss. Columbia University, 1984), pp. 200-202; Edward David Keeton, *Briand's Locarno Policy. French Economics, Politics, and Diplomacy, 1925-1929* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), pp. 100-101, 290, 310-311; William I. Shorrock, *From Ally to Enemy. The Enigma of Fascist Italy in French Diplomacy, 1920-1940* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1988), 60p.

[59] Thus, in January 1923, the influential general secretary of the French Foreign Ministry, Berthelot, expected France to preserve its superiority over Germany for more than another decade. Similar assessments predominated in the national assembly and the general staff. See Richard D. Challener, "The French Foreign Office: The Era of Philippe Berthelot," in: Craig/Gilbert, *The Diplomats*, p. 77; Hughes, *Maginot Line*, pp. 81, 119, 128.

[60] Of course, U.S. isolation from Europe was much less pronounced in the economic field. Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919-1933* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[61] On the European distribution of power after World War I see Kennedy, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 6, and the figures in Moul, „Measuring the 'balances of power'," p. 121.

Neither does the break between France and Italy easily fit realist expectations. To be sure, during the mid 1920's Italy managed to narrow the gap between French and Italian resources. Hence, in theory at least, cooperation between the two powers should indeed have become more difficult, while, at the same time, challenging French political predominance should have become more tempting for Italy. Yet, Italy's power never approached a level which made a challenge look promising.[62] Moreover, in 1925 France had just improved its relations with Germany. Italian leaders thus had less grounds than ever to hope that a great deal of French resources might be tied down by its wartime opponent. Due to this serious imbalance between the two Latin powers, thence, Rome could have hardly hoped to prevail against Paris while the latter could have serenely observed Italy's revisionist challenge. Inspite of Italy's gains in power, a competition for primacy between the two countries was not to be expected. Although Italy was generally considered a great power, it was still too weak to be regarded a serious contender for equal status.

LIBERAL EXPLANATIONS

In comparison to the effects of the distribution of power, the preferences of dominant domestic actors had a much greater impact on the evolving pattern of great power relations. During the period of trilateral partnership, the coalitions dominating the three states primarily sought to consolidate the bourgeois order which seemed to be endangered by the burdens of war and the revolutions that had followed.[63] In that context, cooperation with the recent allies appeared to be the best approach. It seemed to be the most promising means both to restart European trade, as British elites desired, as well as to enforce the German reparations and disarmament steps demanded by the groups dominating French politics. The establishment of Mussolini's personal tyranny suddenly put an end to this common interest in collaboration. The fascist regime strengthened the influence of radical nationalists at the expense of the liberal-conservative establishment and also enhanced the political impact of the dictator's anti-French resentments.

The conservative-bourgeois groups dominating Italian politics during the first post-war years had little to gain from a conflict with Britain or France. They lacked both the incentives as well as the power and cohesion to force such a costly policy on the rest of their society. Moreover, at the time, wide spread civil unrest almost paralyzed Italian politics, thus leaving scant attention and energy for international issues. Stabilization of middle class predominance absorbed the post-war coalitions almost completely. In this context, confrontations with the allies would not have helped at all. At first, Mussolini's seizure of power (October 1922) brought little change in this regard. For some years, the

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[62] According to Moul's figures, during the 1920's French power always surpassed Italian resources by a factor of 2.5 or more. Moul, „Measuring the 'balances of power'," p. 121.

[63] Charles S. Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe. Stabilization in France, Germany, and Italy in the Decade after World War I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

domestic distribution of influence remained largely unchanged because the new prime minister still required the support of the old bourgeois elites.[64]

The coalition dominating French politics could also be hardly interested in initiating confrontations with the allied powers. In the eyes of the dominant bourgeois parties, the perceived threat from the left, the enormous suffering during the war and the economic and demographic inferiority vis-à-vis Germany called for continued cooperation with the allies. The common priorities of the great bourgeois coalition consisted in the defense of the existing social order (which, in the aftermath of both the Russian revolution and war-time political agitation, seemed to be endangered by massive strikes), the reduction of the huge public deficit caused by the war effort, the reconstruction of the war-ravaged regions in the north-east and the reintegration of Alsace-Lorraine. The costs of this ambitious program were meant to be shouldered by two groups which were not part of the coalition: French workers and German citizens („L´Allemagne paiera"). For the latter purpose, France obviously required the support of its allies. To be sure, the reparation issue also led to temporary arguments between Paris and London. However, the two pivotal groups then dominating French politics, the business community and the centrist parties, soon were to realize that the limited advantages of the Ruhr invasion did not justify the estrangement this move caused between French political and economic elites and their counterparts in Britain and the United States. Consequently, the French government soon returned to more compromising policies which eventually paved the way for the understanding reached at Locarno.[65]

The driving force behind the Locarno peace project was Britain whose dominant post-war coalition had early demanded reconciliation between victors and vanquished. During the 1920´s, British politics was largely directed by an alliance of the middle classes and the business community residing in the City. By and large, this coalition consisted of the same groups which had already dominated pre-war politics and now aspired a return to pre-war conditions. The coalition wanted, above all, the protection of the established order, the preservance of empire, renewed fiscal discipline and the restoration of free trade. In light of the limited means at the disposal of an exhausted country, Britain's priority was not to fight for new markets and spheres of influence. Instead, London had to confine itself to efforts aimed at maintaining traditional political institutions and trade relations. Trade with Russia and Germany was seen as imperative to restore growth and to fight high unemployment which appeared to threaten domestic stability. As early as the 1920´s, then, the government's policy of choice was reconciliation and appeasement.[66]

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[64] Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe*, pp. 305-350, 427-29, 547; Christopher Seton-Watson, *Italy from Liberalism to Fascism, 1870-1925* (London: Methuen & Co, 1967), chap. 13; Adrian Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power. Fascism in Italy, 1919-1929*, 2nd edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), chaps. 2-3.

[65] Jean-Marie Mayeur, *La vie politique sous la Troisième République, 1870-1940* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984), pp. 251-69; René Rémond, *Notre siècle de 1918 à 1988* (Paris: Fayard, 1988), pp. 46-94; Philippe Bernard, *La Fin d'un monde, 1914-1929* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975), pp. 108-174; Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe*, pp. 100-109, 404-420, 464-80.

[66] Kenneth O. Morgan, *Consensus and Disunity. The Lloyd George Coalition Government, 1918-1922* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979); Charles Loch Mowat, *Britain Between the Wars, 1918-1940* (London: Methuen, 1955); Paul Kennedy, *The Realities behind Diplomacy. Background Influences on British External Policy, 1865-1980* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), chap. 5.

As expected by liberal theorists, the break in Franco-Italian relations occurring in 1925/26 was preceded by a fundamental change in domestic distributions of influence. In this case, the transformation affected Italy. The establishment of Mussolini's personal dictatorship, brought about by the so-called Matteotti crisis of 1924/25, reshaped Italian politics in a direction which favored anti-French policies. The influence of radical fascists increased while the francophile elites of the foreign ministry became marginalized.[67] Both shifts fostered a growing Italian assertiveness directed against French primacy in the Balkans.[68] Above all, Mussolini's evolving dictatorship increased his personal power over foreign policy. In contrast to the first years of his government Italy's fascist prime minister could now implement policies which followed the personal resentments he harbored against France and its Yugoslav ally.[69]

For reasons of domestic politics, French politicians could not afford to ignore this challenge. Giving into Mussolini's ambitions would have endangered the heterogeneous coalition which, at the time, the centrist parties had formed in parliament. The administration of the *Union nationale* could not comply with Mussolini's open demand to crack down on Italian emigrants who used France as base for their anti-fascist activities. Such complicity with the fascist dictator would have angered the parties of the moderate left whose support the government cherished.[70] Neither could the *Union nationale* tolerate the weakening of its ally Yugoslavia or accept Italian naval superiority in the Mediterranean. In both cases the government would have met heavy criticism from more conservative parties. Moreover, the fragile consensus in favor of the draft reduction demanded by the moderate left probably would have been distorted.[71] The French government thus had little choice but to accept the Italian challenge. Rivalry became inevitable.

To sum up, the rivalry which developed between France and Italy is more in line with liberal than with realist hypotheses. The latter can neither explain the timing of the break nor that it occurred between those very two countries instead of pitting Britain against France. Both these facts can be more easily explained with liberal hypotheses: the trilateral partnership enduring up to 1925 can be readily attributed to the predominance bourgeois groups temporarily enjoyed in the three countries, while the rupture between France and Italy can be seen as a direct consequence of the transformation of Italian politics which resulted from Mussolini's evolving dictatorship.

The Far East and the Reemergence of Rivalry after World War I

During the inter-war period security affairs in East Asia and the Pacific theater were largely determined by the interaction between the three maritime powers Britain, Japan

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[67] Cassels, *Mussolini's Early Diplomacy*, pp. 283-87, 342-45; Lyttelton, *Seizure of Power*, chap. 11 and pp. 127, 250-52, 269.
[68] Kenyon, *Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, p. 183; Seton-Watson, *Italy*, p. 693.
[69] Cassels, *Mussolini's Early Diplomacy*, pp. 259, 356; Kenyon, *Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, 178p.
[70] Mayeur, *Troisième République*, pp. 284-86; Keeton, *Briand's Locarno Policy*, p. 289.
[71] Keeton, *Briand's Locarno Policy*, pp. 100-101, 290, 311; Clemens A. Wurm, *Die französische Sicherheitspolitik in der Phase der Umorientierung 1924-1926* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1979), pp. 39-40, 212-213, 300-306.

and the United States. Up to the early 1930´s, these three states preserved a long, if at times somewhat fragile security partnership. After some initial misgivings between Tôkyô and Washington, the three powers reached a broad settlement for their disputes on China and maritime armaments. The ensuing Washington agreements gave rise to a decade-long period of collaboration.[72] In war-torn China the maritime powers refrained from exploiting the existing power vacuum. Instead, they often cooperated in protecting the extra-territorial privileges of their local concessions.[73] Competitive procurement of capital ships had effectively been laid to rest by the Washington agreements. Even in the unlimited classes (i.e. cruisers, destroyers and submarines) the three powers managed to avoid an arms race.[74] As late as 1930, they succeeded in closing also this loophole. After an abortive attempt in 1927, Britain, Japan and the United States agreed on the extension of the arms control regime to those smaller types.[75] At the turn of the decade, thence, diplomats in Washington and London were rather optimistic that their partnership with Japan was bound to continue.[76]

Instead, the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 brought the period of great power partnership to a sudden end.[77] Although, in the years thereafter, Japan continued on its path of continental expansion, the two western powers at first refrained from active containment policies. Nor did they substantially increase their naval armaments. As a result, Anglo-Saxon estrangement with Tôkyô did not at once lead to outright conflict.[78]

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[72] On the arms control measures resolved at the Washington conference see Ian H. Nish, *Alliance in Decline. A Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations 1908-23* (London: Athlone Press, 1972, chap. XXII; Roger Dingman, *Power in the Pacific. The Origins of Naval Arms Limitation, 1914-1922*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), chap. 12; Roskill, *Naval Policy,* Vol. I, chap. VIII; Sprout/Sprout, *Toward a New Order*, chaps. IX-XIII.

[73] Akira Iriye, *After Imperialism. The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921-1931* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 45-46, 69-70, 80, 86-87. See also Wm. Roger Louis, *British Strategy in the Far East, 1919-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 120p.; Richard Dean Burns/Edward M. Bennett (eds.), *Diplomats in Crisis. United States-Chinese-Japanese Relations, 1919-1941* (Santa Barbara: Clio Press, 1974); Dorothy Borg, *American Policy and the Chinese Revolution, 1925-1928* (New York MacMillan, 1947).

[74] Hence, the subtitle of Roskill's first volume on *Naval Policy between the Wars* („The Period of Anglo-American Antagonism") is quite misleading. Even in the unconstrained ship classes, London and Washington abstained from great procurement projects. Furthermore, the two Anglo-Saxon powers systematically neglected modernization of their Far Eastern bases. See Robert Gordon Kaufman, *Arms Control during the Pre-Nuclear Era. The United States and Naval Limitation between the two World Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 78-82, 206; Roskill, *Naval Policy,* Vol. I, pp. 420, 460-66, 564; Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (London: Allen Lane, 1976), pp. 273-74 u. 278-79; James Neidpath, *The Singapore Naval Base and the Defence of Britain's Eastern Empire, 1919-1941* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), chap. V.

[75] On the London conference of 1930 see Kaufman, *Arms Control*, pp. 129-38; and Stephen Roskill, *Naval Policy Between the Wars. Vol. II: The Period of Reluctant Rearmament, 1930-1939* (London: Collins, 1976), chap. II.

[76] Paul Haggie, *Britannia at Bay. The Defence of the British Empire against Japan, 1931-1941* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), p. 5; Christopher Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy. The West, the League and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931-1933* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1972), 43p.; Gary Ross, "W. Cameron Forbes: The Diplomacy of a Darwinist," in: Burns/Bennett, *Diplomats in Crisis*, p. 60; Thomas Buckley, "John Van Antwerp MacMurray: The Diplomacy of an American Mandarin," in: op.cit., pp. 42, 44.

[77] Sadako N. Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria: The Making of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1931-1932* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964); James B. Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy. National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930-1938* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), chaps. II-III; Ian Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism: Japan, China and the League of Nations, 1931-3* (London: Kegan Paul, 1993), chaps. 1-4.

[78] Dorothy Borg, *The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-1938. From the Manchurian Incident Through the Initial Stage of the Undeclared Sino-Japanese War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964); Ann Trotter, *Britain and East Asia, 1933-1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Stephen Lyon Endicott, *Diplomacy and Enterprise. British China Policy 1933-1937* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975); Roskill, *Naval Policy,* Vol. II, pp. 161-62, 175-78, 187; Haggie, *Britannia at Bay*, p. 73; Stephen E. Pelz, *Race to Pearl Harbor. The Failure of the Second London Naval Conference and the Onset of World War II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 76-82.

Rivalry, as defined in this paper, did only evolve after 1935 when first Britain started to confront the expansion of Japanese power. To this end, London began to give increasing financial and logistical support to nationalist China in its gradually escalating conflict with Japan. In addition, the British government finally shed its reluctant arms policy when in 1936 it authorized the procurement of 16 capital ships and 23 cruisers to meet the challenge of Japan's accelerated arms procurement.[79] At first, the United States did not participate in British containment efforts. Washington waited until 1938, when it finally began serious naval rearmament and commenced a policy of cautious support for China. During the subsequent years, the U.S. increasingly installed economic sanctions against Japan. After the fall of France, Washington at last initiated a huge naval arms program to address the threat from the axis powers.[80]

The long partnership and the subsequent shift to alienation and rivalry between the three maritime powers were largely a consequence of preferences originating in the domestic distribution of power and interests. Seen from a realist perspective, the decade of security partnership is indeed puzzling. Both the power vacuum in China and the uneven distribution of capabilities should have rather led an earlier confrontation between Britain, Japan and the United States. Such an outcome, however, would have hurt the domestic and economic interests of the bourgeois coalitions which dominated within the three countries during the 1920´s. Only when the armed forces in Japan marginalized the political influence of party cabinets and *zaibatsu*, i.e. the great economic trusts, trilateral security partnership gave way to Japanese new expansionism. Because, for a number of years, powerful groups in Britain and the U.S. shied away from the political costs of active containment, Anglo-Saxon rivalry with Japan evolved not before the mid 1930´s.

REALIST EXPLANATIONS

Realist hypotheses can account for the pattern of security relations between the three maritime powers only to a very limited extent. As realists would expect, at the end of World War I, Japan and the U.S. indeed entered a period characterized by diplomatic disputes and mutual suspicion. However, this ambivalent phase shortly gave way to a long period of partnership (1921-1931) which does hardly fit realist logic. Given the distribution of power, cooperation between the three states should hardly have improved. Rather, the enormous economic preponderance of the U.S. should have called for Anglo-Japanese efforts to balance Washington's power. A declining Britain lacking the resources to match U.S. naval spending should have eagerly looked for allies to arrest the ascent of

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[79] On Britain's „forward policy" in China see Trotter, *Britain and East Asia*, pp. 210-211, 217; Endicott, *Diplomacy and Enterprise*, pp. 122-23, 161-62, 170, 181; Bradford A. Lee, *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1939. A Study in the Dilemmas of British Decline* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), pp. 17-18, 48-49, 85-87, 162-65; Peter Lowe, *Great Britain and the Origins of the Pacific War. A Study of British Policy in East Asia 1937-1941* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), pp. 41-42, 53, 58-62; Louis, *British Strategy*, pp. 253-55. On British rearmament see Roskill, *Naval Policy*, Vol. II, pp. 216-219, 279; N. H. Gibbs, *Grand Strategy. Vol. I: Rearmament Policy* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1976), pp. 333-338.

[80] Roskill, *Naval Policy*, Vol. II, pp. 469-70; Pelz, *Race to Pearl Harbor*, pp. 204, 209-210; Jonathan G. Utley, *Going to War with Japan, 1937-1941* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1985); Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War. The Search for Economic Security, 1919-1941* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987).

the United States as the world's leading economic and maritime power.[81] Yet, instead of counteracting Washington's ever increasing capabilities, at the Washington conference in 1921 London gave up its alliance with Japan and readily relied on U.S. assurances that the latter would not use „the greatest resources of the world" (Prime Minister David Lloyd George) to the detriment of the Empire. In contrast to realist expectations, Britain therefore tended to bandwagon rather than to balance against the potential hegemon.[82]

Realist theory does not shed much more light on Japan's later turn against the Far Eastern order which had been established at the Washington Conference. At the beginning of the 1930´s, Japan's inferiority vis-à-vis the Anglo-Saxon powers had hardly declined to an extent which made such a challenge look very promising. To be sure, the impact of the great depression had hit the U.S. much harder than both Japan and Britain. However, this shift in relative economic performance clearly failed to bring about a new balance of power conducive to Japanese rivisionism. Even in the year 1932, when U.S. economic performance reached its lowest point, Japan's industrial output did only approach one ninth of American and one third of British production.[83] Neither had Japan's naval power made significant advances. As a result of the Washington naval treaty, procurement of capital ships had been effectively curtailed. The agreed formula of 5-5-3 for Britain, the U.S., and Japan, respectively, had frozen the latter's battlefleet in a state of inferiority which left it with merely 30 % of combined Anglo-Saxon strength. Although Japan had tried to compensate this by procurement of some extra cruisers and destroyers, this only improved its options for naval engagements in home waters where it had always enjoyed a commanding superiority.[84]

By contrast, the timing of the British and American responses is somewhat more in line with realist expectations. Hitler's victories in Europe and the imminent collapse of the British Empire gravely endangered the global balance of power. Historical evidence shows that this shift contributed significantly to Washington's decisions to tighten sanctions against Japan and accelerate U.S. naval rearmament.[85] However, the evolution of relative capabilities does hardly explain why Washington and London did not take active countermeasures much earlier, notably in the early 1930´s when Japan started its

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[81] Sprout/Sprout, *Toward a New Order*, pp. 289, 292; Warren I. Cohen, *Empire Without Tears. America's Foreign Relations, 1921-1933* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), pp. 5, 22.

[82] Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (London: Methuen, 1972), pp. 254. The same observation holds true, even when the influence of the dominions is taken into account. London's decision to abrogate the Anglo-Japanese alliance was substantially influenced by the dominions' desire to accommodate Washington and Tôkyô. Yet, whereas Australia wanted to preserve the existing alliance to stabilize relations with Japan, Canada insisted on its demise to improve relations with the U.S. Thus, in this case also the three dominions preferred bandwagonning to balancing. See Louis, *British Strategy*, pp. 58-76; M. G. Fry, "The North Atlantic Triangle and the Abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (March 1967), pp. 46-64.

[83] In 1932, the American share of world industrial output was 31.8 %, Britain's amounted to 10.9 % and Japan's to a mere 3.5 %. Even more puzzling is the Japanese turn to expansion when contemporary Soviet capabilities are also taken into account. Between 1929 and 1932, the Soviet Union which at the time played an increasing role both in the Far Eastern region and in Japanese strategic calculations managed to increase its share of world output from 5.0 % to 11.5 %. Hence, its economy was both larger and more dynamic than the Japanese. For the figures see Kennedy, *Rise and Fall*, p. 426, table 30.

[84] H. P. Willmott, *Empires in the Balance. Japanese and Allied Pacific Strategies to April 1942* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1982), p. 38; Sprout/Sprout, *Toward a New Order*, p. 290. On naval building programs during the inter-war period see Roskill, *Naval Policy*, Vol. I, pp. 580-85 (appendix c); and Kaufman, *Arms Control*, pp. 206p. (appendix c).

[85] Utley, *Going to War with Japan*, p. 57.

expansionary policy. Although they may have lacked security incentives for taking more drastic steps, it remains puzzling why Britain and the U.S. for many years refrained from fine-tuned measures to contain Tôkyô´s advancement. For instance, curtailing of Western credits could have severely hurt both the Japanese economy itself and the industrial development of Manchuria.[86] Accordingly, Western reluctance to use such options must be due to factors other than the distribution of capabilities.

LIBERAL EXPLANATIONS

Liberal theory with its emphasis on changes in the domestic distribution of power and interests offers a much better clue for understanding the inter-war relations between the three naval powers. That the ambivalent post-war years soon were to be followed by a long period of trilateral partnership must be largely attributed to the fact that, for a decade, social groups interested in economic cooperation, rather than territorial expansion or arms races, became predominant in all three countries. Accordingly, this cooperative period came to an abrupt end when the Japanese exponents of these policies lost their influence to the Imperial Army. Western countermeasures against Japanese expansion, however, were not initiated at once, but had to wait until the late 1930´s when pacifist and isolationist groups finally lost their hold over western governments.

The period of security partnership which lasted from 1921 until 1931 was primarily due to domestic changes in the U.S. and Japan. Whereas British elites early on had opted for arms reductions and the restoration of their valuable trade relations, leading groups in Japan and the U.S. at first pursued somewhat conflicting aims, both with regard to naval procurement and concerning post-war arrangements for the Far East. Since the beginning of the 1920´s, however, American politics was primarily shaped by two social groups which, though they conflicted on a number of issues, concurred at least in their aversion to conflicts with the two other great naval powers: the business community whose interests were chiefly represented by the „Old Guard Republicans" and the farm-block.[87] Both groups shared not only an interest in a reduction of taxes and public spending and thus significantly contributed to the „popular revolt against navalism" at the turn of the 1920.[88] They also had more parochial priorities which ruled out confrontational policies. The congressional farm-block was largely made of representatives elected by inland states whose voters felt little inclination for overseas entanglements.[89] The business community, not surprisingly, after the Wilson presidency favored a return to a more pragmatic foreign policy which would not use economic relations for grand political designs. This preference applied above all to the great majority of industry that was focused on the American market and disapproved of U.S. engagement in international organizations. Yet also the internationalist minority within the business community, the great banks and trading firms with their profitable overseas

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[86] For Japanese and Manchurian dependence on western capital see Cohen, *Empire Without Tears*, pp. 32-35.
[87] Robert K. Murray, *The Politics of Normalcy. Governmental Theory and Practice in the Harding-Coolidge Era* (New York: Norton & Company, 1973), chaps. 3, 6; Cohen, *Empire without Tears*, pp. 18-19, 35.
[88] Sprout/Sprout, *Toward a New Order*, chap. 7; Joan Hoff Wilson, *American Business & Foreign Policy, 1920-1933* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1973), pp. 31-50; Cohen, *Empire without Tears*, pp. 14-15, 46-48.
[89] Cohen, *Empire without Tears*, pp. 14-15, 56.

ties, would not have approved of a confrontational policy. Instead they called for economic cooperation with Britain and Japan as both countries were attractive debtors.[90]

In the early 1920´s American preferences for business and arms control were increasingly shared by Japan's elites. At the time, the empire experienced a crucial political transformation. The military and the traditional Meiji oligarchs that had ruled Japan for decades were marginalized by a coalition political parties, bureaucrats and great economic trusts.[91] With regard to foreign policy, a symbiotic relation between political parties and big business became predominant.[92] Both groups wanted to put an end to the privileged position of the military whose officers insisted on costly overseas interventions and arms programs. The *zaibatsu* disliked military expansion for the tax increases which went with it and for the threat it would have posed to their international business ties. In light of their dependence on overseas markets and western capital the big trusts, such as Mitsui and Mitsubishi, worried that military interventions would cost them dearly, notably as regarded their trade with the U.S. and China. As a consequence of these preferences, Japan's foreign policy was primarily an „economic diplomacy" (Storry) which emphasized both cooperation with the West and peaceful penetration of the Chinese market.[93]

Tôkyô´s break with the Washington system was the direct result of a political come back staged by the military elites. Japan's role as a „trading state" (Rosecrance) had never been favored by all domestic interest groups. Already during the late 1920´s military circles had increasingly become restive with a foreign policy they could only call weakly.[94] The unauthorized intervention of Manchuria initiated by the Kwantung army then acted as a catalyst for drastic changes in domestic and external politics. Terrorism and political

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[90] Wilson, *American Business*, pp. 207-218; Thomas Ferguson, „From Normalcy to New Deal: industrial structure, party competition, and American public policy in the Great Depression," *International Organization*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Winter 1984), pp. 63-67. On economic ties with Britain see Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion*, chaps. 2-5; Michael J. Hogan, *Informal Entente. The Private Structure of Cooperation in Anglo-American Economic Diplomacy, 1918-1928* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977), chaps. 2-3. On the importance of U.S.-Japanese business relations see Cohen, *Empire without Tears,* pp. 24-25, 32-35, 38, 42; Mira Wilkins, "The Role of U.S. Business," in: Dorothy Borg/Shumpei Okamoto (eds.), *Pearl Harbor as History. Japanese-American Relations 1931-1941* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 348, 353.

[91] For the ascent of political parties at the expense of the oligarchs see Robert A. Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement in Prewar Japan. The Failure of the First Attempt* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1953, chaps. V-VI, p. 268-70; Peter Duus, *Party Rivalry and Political Change in Taisho Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 104-5, 112, 244-45; Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, 26p. On the rise of the *zaibatsu* see Takafusa Nakamura, *Economic Growth in Prewar Japan* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1983), chap. 7; Kozo Yamamura, "The Japanese Economy, 1911-1930: Concentration, Conflicts, and Crises," : Bernard S. Silberman/Harry D. Harootunian (eds.), *Japan in Crisis. Essays on Taisho Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 299-328; John G. Roberts, *Mitsui. Three Centuries of Japanese Business* (New York: Weatherhill, 1973), p. 200.

[92] Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, p. 21; Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement*, pp. 254-57, 260-62; Roberts, *Mitsui*, 210p.; Arthur E. Tiedemann, "Big Business and Politics in Prewar Japan", in: James William Morley (ed.), *Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971, pp. 267-316; Gordon Mark Berger, *Parties out of Power in Japan, 1931-1941* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 9, 12, 26-27; Duus, *Party Rivalry and Political Change*, pp. 90-92, 139, 228, 247.

[93] Richard Storry, *Japan and the Decline of the West in Asia 1894-1943* (New York: St. Martin's Press,1979) 129p.; Iriye, *After Imperialism*, pp. 37, 184-85; Hugh T. Patrick, "The Economic Muddle of the 1920's," in: Morley, *Dilemmas of Growth*, p. 261; Roberts, *Mitsui*, p. 318; C. J. Bartlett, *The Global Conflict. The international rivalry of the great powers, 1880-1970* (London: Longman, 1984), pp. 131, 149, 153-54; Akira Iriye, *Across the Pacific. An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), p. 139; Dingman, *Power in the Pacific*, chaps. 8, 11, and 217p.; Duus, *Party Rivalry and Political Change*, pp. 136, 245.

[94] Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, pp. 28-29, 56-57; Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy*, pp. 29-36, 41-50, 105-108.

pressure caused by the growing radicalization of army and navy destroyed the political symbiosis between parties and *zaibatsu* which so far had stood for Japan's „economic diplomacy". While *zaibatsu* and political parties continuously lost political influence, acts of violence committed by extremist officers strengthened the hand of the military.[95] With the demise of the party cabinets, a return to a more cooperative foreign policy became ever more unlikely. Instead, the military's preference for larger budgets, more arms and territorial expansion increasingly shaped Japan's policy. Unconstrained by a strong chief executive, army and navy engaged in logrolling by piling up ever more ambitious policies that left the country with an incoherent overall policy which eventually provoked Japanese self-encirclement.[96]

At first, however, the western powers acquiesced in Japanese expansion. Britain responded only in the second half of the 1930´s, after domestic opposition against rearmament had faded and its great companies had begun to insist on a more forceful policy in China. Before, the „National Government" consisting of Tories, Liberals and the small group of MacDonald Labourites had preferred Japan's appeasement to British rearmament. Due to wide-spread pacifism and the tense social conditions prevailing in the early 1930´s the government worried that such a policy would only bring Labour back into office.[97] Yet the electorat's pacifism declined towards the middle of the decade, after Hitler and Mussolini had displayed their expansionist ambitions in Spain and Ethiopia. Moreover, in the wake of the general election in November 1935 – which still had been won with prime minister Baldwin's public promise that „there will be no great armaments" – the government could also afford to pay less attention to middle class sentiments. Economic recovery further increased the government's range of options. It allowed the cabinet to embark on a big naval arms program without additional deficits or taxes which at the time were still strongly opposed by the government's backers in the City. In early 1936, thus, the „National Government" had finally gained the freedom of maneuver it needed to meet the escalating military threats.[98] At the same time, resistance against Japan's advances was increasingly called for by influential business interests. By giving up threatened British positions in central and southern China, London would not only have hurt the economic interests of its China lobby. It would have also estranged the American and Chinese governments. But above all, a point was finally reached where continued acquiescence would have severely damaged British prestige with unpredictable consequences for the future of the empire and British global economic interests.

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[95] Patrick, "The Economic Muddle of the 1920's," 262p.; Roberts, *Mitsui*, pp. 270-77, 283-86; Nakamura, *Economic Growth in Prewar Japan*, pp. 250-252; Hugh Byas, *Government by Assassination* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1945), chaps. I-II; Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, pp. 99-100, 150, 175, 190; Yale Candee Maxon, *Control of Japanese Foreign Policy. A Study of Civil-Military Rivalry, 1930-1945* (Berkeley; Ca.: University of California Press, 1957), 102p.; Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement*, pp. 368, 381.

[96] Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy*, pp. 180, 194-95, 290, 296-97, 390; Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, p. 192; Chihiro Hosoya, "Retrogression in Japan's Foreign Policy Decision-Making Process," in: Morley, *Dilemmas of Growth*, pp. 88-99; Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, S. 142-45.

[97] G. C. Peden, *British Rearmament and the Treasury: 1932-1939* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), p. 70; Roskill, *Naval Policy*, Vol. II, pp. 145, 151; Robert Paul Shay, Jr., *British Rearmament in the Thirties: Politics and Profits* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 57-58, 133, 286-88. Keith Middlemas/John Barnes, *Baldwin. A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), pp. 744-47, 753; Gustav Schmidt, *England in der Krise: Grundzüge und Grundlagen der britischen Appeasement-Politik (1930-1937)* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1981), chap. IV and conclusion.

[98] Shay, *British Rearmament in the Thirties*, pp. 16, 57-58; Peden, *British Rearmament and the Treasury*, p. 70; Pelz, *Race to Pearl Harbor*, pp. 180-87.

Needless to say that no conservative government could expect its supporters to tolerate such a prospect.[99]

At the same time, in the United States powerful isolationist groups still prevented a more active Far Eastern policy. Neither president Hoover nor his successor Franklin Roosevelt could have prevailed against these wide-spread sentiments. Roosevelt in particular depended on the political support of the mid western progressives who represented the inland interests of farmers and businessmen west of the Mississippi. Without their congressional votes the president could not have enacted his „New Deal" legislation. Many congressional progressives, however, were among the most persistent opponents of all attempts to improve the offensive capabilities of the U.S. Navy. Besides, they blocked all initiatives to introduce new neutrality legislation which would have allowed economic sanctions discriminating between aggressors and their victims. The need to preserve the cohesion of his reform coalition thus denied Roosevelt the best instruments for resisting Japanese expansion.[100]

The eventual shift from American acquiescence to forceful resistance against Japanese expansion was a consequence of both domestic changes and the dramatic transformation Germany's conquest of France implied for the global balance of power. It required the public outcry against both Germany's expansionary policy and Japanese bombings of Chinese civilians to bring about a shift in public attitudes which gradually weakened isolationist influence. While their hold on public opinion weakened the isolationists also lost much of their influence on the administration. By the late 1930´s the „uneasy alliance" between Roosevelt and mid-western progressive republicans started to disintegrate. Consequently, by 1938 the administration was able to initiate a more forceful foreign policy which included the first economic sanctions and the beginnings of naval rearmament.[101] Tight sanctions against Japanese expansion and massive rearmament programs, however, the administration implemented only after the fall of France appeared to threaten the very existence of the British empire on whose survival the global balance seemed to hinge.

In sum, both the decade of partnership and its eventual eclipse by Anglo-Saxon rivalry fit liberal hypotheses much better than realist ones. According to the latter, the evolving distribution of power with its shift from British to American predominance should have

[99] Endicott, *Diplomacy and Enterprise*, pp. 95-103, 184-85; Louis, *British Strategy*, S. 228-30; Trotter, *Britain and East Asia*, 213p.; Antony Best, *Britain, Japan, and Pearl Harbor: Avoiding War in East Asia, 1936-41* (London: Routledge, 1995), 199p., and *passim*; Lowe, *Great Britain and the Origins of the Pacific War*, p. 286.

[100] On Roosevelt's dependence on the mid-western progressives see Wayne S. Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-45* (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), chap. 10, , and pp. 76-78, 266; Manfred Jonas, *Isolationism in America, 1935-1941* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 17-18, 22-23, and chap. V; Thomas N. Guinsburg, *The Pursuit of Isolationism in the United States Senate from Versailles to Pearl Harbor* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1982), pp. 149, 163, 286-87; Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 70-71, 96, 136, 152-53, 158-60; Pelz, *Race to Pearl Harbor*, pp. 70-71; Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, S. 283-84. On isolationist opposition to offensive naval armaments and modernization of overseas bases see Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists*, pp. 76-78, 266; Jonas, *Isolationism in America*, pp. 129-35, Pelz, *Race to Pearl Harbor*, pp. 76-82, 204; Dallek, *Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, pp. 75-76, 89-90; and Roskill, *Naval Policy*, Vol. II, pp. 175-178. On the debate on neutrality legislation see Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists*, chaps. 6,12; Jonas, *Isolationism in America*, pp. 175-205; Guinsburg, *Pursuit of Isolationism*, chap. VIII; Dallek, *Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, chaps. 5-8.

[101] Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists*, chap. 14, and pp. 243-44, 294-95; Jonas, *Isolationism in America*, chap. VII; Dallek, *Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 194p.

led to an ever closer Anglo-Japanese alliance rather than to a decade of trilateral partnership later to be followed by Japanese expansionism. By contrast, the interplay of preferences held by predominant social groups largely matched the observed pattern of relations. The only weak spot in the liberal account is the late intensification of U.S. containment policies which can be more easily explained with realist variables.

Reemergence of Rivalry after World War II

The fast disintegration of the grand coalition which defeated the axis powers is certainly a very telling example of a victorious alliance immediately splitting up into rival camps. From 1947 on, the uncompromising Soviet reaction to the Truman doctrine and the Marshall Plan divided Europe into two separated spheres of influence which were closely guarded by their dominant powers.[102] This turn from partnership to rivalry was caused by both domestic conditions and the distribution of capabilities between the leading powers. Certainly, the early split of the coalition is well in line with realist expectations. The strong concentration of resources on just three great powers, the technological and economic lead enjoyed by the United States and the power vacuum in continental Europe were all factors which fostered the break-up of the Grand Alliance. National preferences stemming from the domestic distribution of influence were of equal importance. This applies especially to the extent to which Soviet preferences shaped by marxism-leninism and Stalin's personal role foreclosed continued cooperation among the „Big Three".

REALIST EXPLANATIONS

Realist hypotheses are very useful to explain the disintegration of the Grand Alliance yet fail with regard to the evolving alignment pattern is concerned. With the total defeat suffered by the axis powers a unique distribution of power had come into being: Due to the conspicuous weakness of all other states, a potential threat to any one of the „Big Three" could only originate from one of the other two powers.[103] From a realist point of view, this made it almost inevitable that rivalry and a security dilemma would emerge

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[102] For a recent overview of cold war history and historiography see John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know. Rethinking Cold War History,* Oxford (Clarendon) 1997. See also Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War,* 2nd edition (New York: Penguin, 1990. On the U.S. role in the evolution of the Cold War see, above all, Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power. National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1992); but also Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment. A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); and John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972). As of now, there is no comparable evaluation of Soviet sources as the latter are not yet fully accessible to historians. So far, the best monograph based on new sources is Vladislav Zubok/Constantine Pleshakov*, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Krushchev* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996). On the British part of the story see especially Alan Bullock, *Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); but also Elisabeth Barker, *The British between the Superpowers, 1945-50* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) as well as Victor Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War, 1941-1947* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1982).

[103] According to the Major Powers Capabilities Index developed in the Correlates of War Project, in 1945 France controlled only 3 % of the global capabilities. The figure for China is even lower. The United States, by contrast, controlled more than 36 %, the Soviet Union 16 % and Britain 11 %. William Curti Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions during the Cold War,* Ithaca (Cornell University Press) 1993, S. 60; for a detailed assessment of the balance in the late 1940's see also Kennedy, *Rise and Fall,* pp. 459-80.

among the three. Moreover, the power vacuum existing in Europe could only aggravate such tensions. The western countries worried that all over the continent eastern infiltration or even a mere economic collapse would give rise to communist regimes which would then follow Moscow's lead (orders). To counteract such an extension of Soviet influence the western powers supported liberal and conservative politicians with political propaganda and economic support programs. Such initiatives, however, Soviet leaders perceived as moves to expand western influence. As a result, the Kremlin, in turn, felt compelled to respond with anti-capitalist propaganda and communist-led strikes in Western Europe, thus intensifying western concerns.[104] Finally, the growth of U.S. power was bound to complicate a cooperative condominium of the „Big Three". According to realist theory, America's nuclear monopoly and its unprecedented industrial superiority could only worry its former allies. It had to foster their interest in balancing activities which could prevent U.S. global hegemony. Historical studies prove that actually all these factors exerted a crucial influence on decision makers.[105]

In many respects, however, U.S. predominance in 1945 complicates realist accounts of the origins of the Cold War. In fact, balance of power logic implies that American superiority should have induced Moscow and London to convert their bilateral Anti-Hitler alliance into an Anti-American pact. Yet actually the two weaker powers did just the opposite: Instead of wooing for British support, the Kremlin soon began to threaten British spheres of influence in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.[106] British decision makers, on the other hand, displayed little concern about the growth of U.S. power but were rather worried about a possible revival of American isolationism. Instead of balancing American power London called upon Washington to shoulder greater responsibilities in Europe and the Middle East.[107] Along with many other still independent states in Asia and Europe, Britain thus enabled the U.S. to create what later was to be called an „empire by invitation".[108] Apparently, their governments did not assume that Washington would use its preponderant power to realize threatening intentions. Rather, as a British memorandum of 1944 put it frankly, some western governments even had hopes to „mak[e] use of American power for purposes which we

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[104] Thomas G. Paterson, *On Every Front: The Making of the Cold War* (New York: Norton & Company, 1979, pp. 23-27; Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, pp. 143, 180, 502-517, and chap. 5; Scott D. Parrish, *The USSR and the Security Dilemma: Explaining Soviet Self-Encirclement, 1945-1985* (New York: Diss. Columbia University, 1993), pp. 161-68, 209-247.

[105] Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, pp. 96-99, 157-64; David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 90-94, 131-133; John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), chaps. 2-3.

[106] Bruce Robellet Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Louise L'Estrange Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: the Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Wm. Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Postwar Imperialism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984).

[107] Christopher John Bartlett, *'The Special Relationship': a Political History of Anglo-American Relations since 1945*, London (Longman) 1992, p. 16; Christopher John Bartlett, *The Long Retreat: A Short History of British Defence Policy, 1945-70* (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 34; Anthony Gorst, „British Military Planning for Postwar Defence, 1943-45," in: Ann Deighton (ed.), *Britain and the First Cold War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), p. 95; Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War*, p. 262. Realists might claim that British alignment with the U.S. is not surprising given the Soviet Union's greater proximity. However, inspite of this geographic asymmetry Britain was much more vulnerable to American than to Soviet military power. Its dense population was not only exposed to U.S. superiority in bombing but also to the U.S. Navy's capacity to threaten Britain's vital lines of communication.

[108] Geir Lundestad, „Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1986), pp. 263-77; see also Gaddis, *We Now Know*, chap. 2.

regard as good".[109] This confidence could only stem from factors which do not figure prominently in structural realism, such as cultural or ideological affinities, political transparency or complementary configurations of preferences.

LIBERAL EXPLANATIONS

In line with liberal expectations, the rapid transformation of partnership into rivalry which occurred in the wake of World War II was to a great extent due to incompatible preferences of domestic elites. Stalin's personal role proved crucial in this context. Both Stalin's confrontational personality and his ideological expectation of new global conflicts made him averse to any sacrifices needed for long-term cooperation with the western powers. Rather, these attitudes called for opportunistic expansionism which, in turn, could not be tolerated by the Anglo-Saxon powers. In particular, supporters of the British Labour government would not have acquiesced in another appeasement policy, even when this time it was meant to accommodate a leftist regime. A pro-Soviet policy eventually would have resulted in the early loss of the Empire and would have ruled out American credits and dollar transfers from the colonies. Thence, it would have conflicted not only with British self-esteem but would also have jeopardized the construction of the welfare state which Labour's supporters expected. The charge of being „soft on communism" would have also estranged the Truman administration from many parts of its „New Deal" coalition. Consequently, Washington had little choice but to openly confront Soviet expansionism. The great resolve the administration applied to this task from 1947 on, however, was not due to political pressure exerted by its supporters. Instead, it was a consequence of concerns about possible shifts in the global distribution of power. In this respect, thence, any liberal explanation of Cold War rivalry must remain incomplete.

Stalin, by far the most powerful actor in Soviet politics, was not interested in genuine cooperation with the western powers because he was convinced that such cooperation could not last for long. As a committed marxist-leninist, the Soviet dictator thought it inconceivable that a world driven by antagonistic contradictions between classes could be managed by a condominium of the „Big Three". As long as there still were powerful capitalist states, international understandings could not guarantee long-term stability, neither between capitalist and socialist states nor among capitalist states alone. Actually, durable partnership among capitalist states had to be called outright impossible. According to Lenin's theory of imperialism, the expansionary impetus of capital would again and again bring about military conflicts for foreign markets and raw materials. Consequently, new clashes between imperialist powers were only a question of time. Even if the Soviet Union were to make every effort to accommodate Britain and the U.S., Soviet ideology thus predicted new rivalries and military confrontations.[110] Seen from this

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[109] Quoted in David Reynolds, "Great Britain", in: Reynolds (ed.), *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 90.

[110] Wohlforth, *Elusive Balance*, pp. 61-87; William O. McCagg, *Stalin Embattled, 1943-1948* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), chap. 7. As late as 1952, Stalin was to insist that contradictions among the capitalist states themselves were even deeper than those between socialist and capitalist states. Iosif Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.* (New York: International Publishers, 1952), chap. 6. On Soviet post-war expectations of imminent western crises and clashes see William Taubmann, *Stalin's American Policy: From Entente to Détente to Cold War* (New York: Norton & Company, 1982), S. 135-39; Zubok/Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, pp. 34-35, 104;

perspective, Soviet foreign policy could only aim at increasing Soviet power wherever possible to enable the country to win the inevitable and decisive World War III.[111] To that end, the Soviet Union had to expand its steel and arms industries, to break the U.S. nuclear monopoly and to expand Soviet controlled territory so that it would achieve both depth in defenses and a good basis for striking back in the moment of opportunity. In a nutshell: Stalin was convinced that the Soviet Union would need in order to make good use of the coming years to prepare for the final clash.[112]

An uncompromising stance vis-à-vis the was also in the interest of Stalin and the Soviet *nomenklatura* in as much as it stabilized the communist regime. Confrontation facilitated internal repression and the defense against western ideas.[113] On the other hand, an open accommodation to western pressure might have encouraged internal opponents, both actual and imagined ones.[114] Moreover, such a policy would have been absolutely incompatible with the dictator's character. After all, Stalin was not only extremely suspicious and hostile to all things foreign, he was also used to defeat any opposition that might confront him. For Stalin fighting cold wars was not just a political necessity, it was a way of life.[115] As long as he determined Soviet foreign policy, genuine détente could have been brought about by little short of western surrender.

Full scale retreat, however, would not have been tolerated by the British voters on whose support the Labour government depended. For one thing, closing down the Empire would have run against the self image of victorious Britons; for another, it would have cost the country crucial resources the Labour government deemed necessary for restarting the economy. Joining forces with the Soviets to confront a predominant America was also unthinkable, for it would have forfeited the dollar credits Labour required for the desired welfare state. In the final analysis, both the standard of living and the global role which the government's supporters demanded[116] could only be had in cooperation with the United States. Washington's dollar credits, its collaboration in occupied Germany and its support for Britain's position in the Eastern Mediterranean were indispensable.[117] Unlike the U.S., the Soviet Union seemed to determined to make use of Britain's temporary weakness by reckless expansion which, among other things, was bound to

Parrish, *USSR and the Security Dilemma,* pp. 192-204; Gavriel D. Ra'anan, *International Policy Formation in the USSR: Factional „Debates" during the Zhdanovschina* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1983), chap. 6.

[111] Albert Resis (ed.), *Molotov Remembers: Inside Kremlin Politics: Conversations with Felix Chuev* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993), p. 63; David Holloway, „The Atomic Bomb and the End of the Wartime Alliance," in: Ann Lane/Howard Temperley (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance, 1941-45* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1995), p. 217.

[112] Zubok/Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War,* chaps. 1-2; Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb,* pp. 168, 217.

[113] Robert Conquest, *Stalin – Breaker of Nations* (New York: Penguin, 1991), pp. 271-81; Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 24, 191; Edvard Radzinsky, *Stalin* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), p. 517 and chap. 26.

[114] Wohlforth, *Elusive Balance,* 86p.

[115] Radzinsky, *Stalin,* p. 517; Gaddis, *We Now Know,* pp. 292-294.

[116] Henry Pelling, *The Labour Governments, 1945-51* (London: Macmillan, 1984), chaps. 5-6 and pp. 261-66; Kenneth O. Morgan, *Labour in Power, 1945-1951* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), chaps. 3-4 and pp. 194, 278-79; Peter Hennessy, *Never Again: Britain, 1945-1951* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993, chaps. 3-4; Bullock, *Bevin,* pp. 52-53, 126, 844.

[117] Morgan, *Labour in Power,* pp. 145-51, 272; Pelling, *The Labour Governments,* pp. 54-60, 130-31; Bullock, *Bevin,* pp.309, 348-51, 389-92.

undermine London's balance of payments.[118] In this situation, a temporary (as it seemed at the time) dependence on the United States clearly was to be preferred to appeasement of yet another dictator. Whereas the reigning communist ideology let the Kremlin's policies appear opportunistic and unpredictable, the democratic system of the United States seemed to ensure a cautious and peaceful foreign policy.[119] Seen from London, the open question was not so much whether Washington might behave with moderation, but rather if American society would accept close political cooperation with Britain.

In the United States, the eventual shift to containment was just partially motivated by domestic imperatives. During the first years after the war, a great part of the administration's supporters did not confront their political leaders with strong demands for a firmer approach. In fact, the groups within the „New Deal" coalition did not soon agree on the countries post-war foreign policy. In particular, there was no consensus on how to treat the Soviet Union. To be sure, the Kremlin's activities in Eastern Europe and in the middle East quite early provoked public demands for a firmer policy, especially among internationalist republicans, but also among some groups which, as the Polish-American congress, usually supported the democrats.[120] Yet in the first two years after the war such voices still met heavy opposition from influential liberal democrats, such as Henry Wallace, who favored cooperation with Moscow. In addition, more forceful steps were also controversial among the republican opposition controlling congress after the mid-term elections of 1946. The nationalist wing among them clearly preferred tax reductions to both costly foreign engagements and military spending.[121] Accordingly, until spring 1947 the Truman administration responded to growing calls for a firmer policy merely with some military gestures and diplomatic warnings against possible consequences of further Soviet advances.

Given these domestic divisions it is hardly surprising that the crucial measures which finally made the trend to confrontation irreversible resulted from international threat perceptions within the administration and not, as liberals might expect, from some political pressure brought to bear by powerful domestic groups. Although anticommunism clearly was on the rise among the republican majority in Congress, Truman harbored grave doubts as to whether he could find a congressional majority for costly containment policies, such as the Marshall Plan and financial support for Greece and Turkey. Since republican demands for tax reductions and spending cuts were strong

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[118] John Kent, „British Policy and the Origins of the Cold War", in: Melvyn P. Leffler/David S. Painter (eds.), *Origins of the Cold War: An International History* (London: Routledge, 1994), 148p.; John Saville, *The Politics of Continuity: British Foreign Policy and the Labour Government, 1945-46* (London: Verso, 1993), 158p.; Partha Sarathi Gupta, „Imperialism and the Labour government of 1945-51," in: Jay Winter (ed.), *The Working Class in Modern British History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 105-111.

[119] Joseph Frankel, *British Foreign Policy, 1945-1973* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 193; Gaddis, *Long Peace*, p. 69.

[120] Ralph B. Levering, *The Public and American Foreign Policy, 1918-1978* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1978), p. 97; Fraser J. Harbutt, *The Iron Curtain: Churchill, America, and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 204p.; Gaddis, *United States and the Origins*, chap. 9 and p. 289; Robert L. Messer, *The End of an Alliance. James F. Byrnes, Roosevelt, Truman, and the Origins of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), pp. 170-71, 212; Robert J. Donovan, *Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1945-1948* (New York: Norton & Company, 1977), pp. 196, 228, 231, 234; Peter H. Irons, „'The Test is Poland': Polish Americans and the Origins of the Cold War," *Polish American Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Autumn 1973), pp. 56-63.

[121] Alonzo L. Hamby, *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), chap. 4; Harbutt; *Iron Curtain*, pp. 153-59, 204-205.

as ever, the president did not anticipate an easy going for his program. Instead, he felt compelled to rely on strong anticommunist rhetoric and political support from prominent businessmen.[122] The president's decision in favor of containment thus did not spring from short or medium term desires to preserve or enlarge the government's domestic support. Rather, it was motivated by the administration's conviction that the U.S. could not tolerate Soviet rule over Eurasia unless it was prepared to see itself transformed into a besieged garrison state.[123]

In short, the origins of the Cold War provide partial support for both realist and liberal hypotheses. Realist expectations were confirmed in that a strong concentration of power that went together with a very fluid situation indeed led to an early shift from partnership to rivalry. However, the composition of the two resulting „camps" is puzzling because balancing hardly occurred against the strongest and most dynamic power but rather along ideological divisions. Liberal theory with its stress on domestic distributions of power and interests is much better equipped to explain the emerging Anglo-Soviet confrontation, yet its hypotheses cannot fully account for the American turn to containment.

Conclusion

My case studies show that, following a great conflict, the interaction of domestic distributions of power and influence had a far greater impact on the timing and pattern of new great power rivalries than did the international distribution of capabilities. This finding supports both liberal IR scholars who emphasize the causal importance of domestic politics and political practitioners whose grand strategies include the transnational promotion of democracy. By comparison, realist hypotheses received much less support. The balance of power and its dynamic rarely influenced the pattern of relations in the direction expected by structural realists. The data presented here thus compromise the plausibility of that theory in the very domain its adherents consider as its vital core. While this is bad news to many realists, it is good news to contemporary citizens and politicians. The explanatory problems of realism imply that great powers do not have to become rivals once their common opponent has been defeated. Instead, they can remain security partners as long as the parochial preferences of their most influential domestic actors are compatible. In contrast to structural realism with its stress on relative power, the nature of these dominant interests cannot be predicted by liberal theory but has to be empirically analyzed for each case by itself. Hence, liberalism's greater explanatory power comes at the expense of parsimony and theoretical elegance.

Realism, to be sure, correctly predicts that all victorious coalitions eventually dissolved and thus gave way to new rivalries among their members. Its standard explanations of this process, though, fail to convince. For one thing, different time-spans did hardly

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[122] Donovan, *Conflict and Crisis*, p. 281; Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p. 145; Thomas G. Paterson, *Soviet-American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), p. 199; Kim McQuaid, *Big Business and Presidential Power: From FDR to Reagan* (New York: William Morrow, 1982), pp. 151, 154.

[123] Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p. 51, 162, 180, 200; Gaddis, *Long Peace*, chaps. 2-3.

correlate with the distribution of power. Great polarizations did not always go along with a rapid reemergence of rivalry. After World War II, American predominance contributed to the demise of the Anti-Hitler coalition, yet following World War I American supremacy did not prevent a decade of trilateral security partnership in the Far East. Likewise, the relative superiority enjoyed by Britain and Russia certainly helped to bring about their rivalry; however, this confrontation occurred only after ideological divergence had estranged both governments. Even more puzzling realists must find the alignments which developed after the dissolution of those war-time alliances. Thus, the two groupings confronting each other in the 1830´s (England and France versus Austria, Prussia and Russia) were indeed of roughly equal power. Still, the gravest military threat to the two German powers was posed by the huge Russian army and not by the two western powers. In the wake of the two world wars, not even a rough balance of power came into being. In the aftermath of the second war, Britain should have sticked to its Soviet alliance, in the wake of the first one it should have preserved its pact with Japan. In both cases London refrained from balancing superior U.S. capabilities by opting for bandwagoning. The mere fact that the global hegemon of the nineteenth century never tried to balance against the rising hegemon of the century thereafter is indeed hard to understand for structural realists. If ever a dog failed to bark in accordance with realist assumptions, it happened during the transfer from British to American supremacy.

The most plausible explanation of these puzzles, it seems, is that decision makers rarely comply with the Waltzian premise that governments always feel unable to predict each others' intentions. In fact, governments always try to make mid or long term forecasts or they simply assume that a given power will not become a threat either because inertia and transparency of its decision making procedures make a surprise unlikely or because its dominant groups apparently lack an interest in expansion and intimidation. Yet, if governments assume that they can reliably assess future intentions of foreign powers, a fundamental pivot of realist theory is broken. For in this case governments are no longer compelled to balance against each and every power with superior capabilities but only against those states whose intentions seem unpredictable or actually hostile. Balancing would thus be rational only in those instances where specific conflicts are known or where there are additional facts which make unbalanced foreign power an unacceptable risk. The latter could be the case whenever a foreign power whose intentions cannot be predicted could cause irreparable harm by using its capabilities. Under such circumstances, prudence calls for precautionary measures even when there are no hostile intentions to be detected. This may explain why in 1940 and 1947 the U.S. suddenly intensified its containment efforts even in the absence of specific threats form Japan and the Soviet Union, respectively. In both cases Washington was led to assume that it could not bet on those countries benign intentions, for otherwise all of Eurasia might fall into the hands of hostile powers before the U.S. had mobilized its power.

Yet even if governments in fact were unable to predict each other's intentions structural realism could rarely forecast or explain emerging rivalries. This constraint is partly due to the obvious fact that in some multipolar systems several alignments can create a rough equilibrium. Hence, a mere trend to equilibrium would hardly determine which powers will become enemies instead of remaining partners. Moreover, material factors do not always decide on the borders of subsystems or security complexes (to use Buzan's

concept). Therefore, realist variables alone rarely tell us whose power's capabilities should form part of the balance and whose resources can be ignored. To give but one example: U.S. isolationism between the two wars may have been partly due to the absence of a potential hegemon in Eurasia; yet it probably was even more a consequence of domestic factors. In short, which power gets involved in which region is often indeterminate – which is another reason why pure balance of power logic often fails to specify partners and rivals. Real explanatory power thus requires theories that address not only the means but also the substance of conflicts.

In contrast to the international distribution of capabilities, the interaction of state preferences resulting from domestic distributions of interests and influence had a significant impact on the emergence of new great power rivalries. As predicted by liberal hypotheses, in almost all dyads the nature of security relations showed a strong correlation with aggregate interests of dominant domestic coalitions. Somewhat weaker correlations were only observed with regard to evolving rivalries between Britain and Russia after 1832, between Japan and the United States after 1940, as well as between the Soviet Union and the United States after 1947. In those three cases, apparently the high concentration of capabilities and ideological misgivings between the powers were also quite significant. Combinations of high polarity and low transparency obviously induced decision makers to seek an extra margin of safety by intensifying containment policies beyond the level then demanded by their supporters. Under these circumstances chief executives may find it rationale to risk some short term opposition from their power base in order to maximize long term support.

My findings on the conditions governing great power relations in the aftermath of hegemonic conflicts can thus be consolidated in the following three hypotheses:

1. If state preferences generated by predominant domestic actors do not conflict, allied powers will preserve their security partnership even in the absence of a common threat.

2. To the degree those preferences are incompatible rivalry will reemerge between the powers concerned.

3. In dyads where (a) state preferences are ambiguous, (b) power resources are highly concentrated on very few preponderant powers and (c) intransparent decision making together with ideological differences makes future preferences hard to predict, the preponderant powers will become rivals.

These hypotheses imply rather optimistic predictions for security relations after the Cold War. A serious conflict between those powers which cooperated in containing the Soviet Union by no means appears as inevitable as realist hypotheses would suggest. According to my findings, the United States, Japan and the west European powers can be expected to remain security partners at least as long as these states stay democratic market economies. Democratic decision making will not only guarantee mutual transparency; it will also ensure that there will be no powerful domestic coalitions which have both a

parochial interest in international conflicts and also the capacity to shift the latters' costs on other parts of society.

More likely is the development of rivalry between the United States and China. After their „quasi alliance" (Garthoff) during the Cold War American-Chinese relations have already cooled off, especially in the aftermath of the massacre on Tienanmen square.[124] So far a genuine rivalry has not yet developed. This could change, however, if Chinese economic growth continues at the pace of the last decade. Should this trend continue, it is only a question of time until China will overtake the United States and become the second post-Cold War super power.[125] According to hypotheses No. 3 such a bipolar structure would bring about rivalry unless China fails to modernize its political system in a way which would increase political transparency and dampen ideological distrust. To avoid this prospect the democratic countries should pursue a cautious policy which fosters slow democratization and strengthens those groups within the elite which favor cooperation with the West.

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[124] On security partnership during the Cold War see Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1985), pp. 690. According to Robert Ross, China was even a „key strategic ally" for the United States. Robert S. Ross, *Negotiating Cooperation: The United States and China, 1969-1989* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 259.

[125] Fei-Ling Wang, "To Incorporate China: A New Policy for a New Era," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Winter 1998), p. 68; Richard Bernstein/Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), pp. 57-60.