

Hegemony and Regional Security Cooperation-
US Approach to Security Regionalization under Unipolarity-
Comparing Europe and East Asia

Galia Press-Barnathan

Department of International Relations
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Email: msspress@mssc.huji.ac.il

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Introduction

In the aftermath of WWII and the emergence of bipolarity, the United States adopted a regional-multilateral strategy to manage its security concerns in Europe (-the creation of NATO), but a hub-and-spokes bilateral strategy to manage its security concerns in Asia (-the bilateral alliances). With the shift to a unipolar global system after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, we have witnessed an expansion and deepening of security regionalization in Europe, with the expansion of NATO as an American project, and the development of ESDP as the European regional security project. In Asia we have seen both a growth in regional interest in regional security cooperation, and on part of the US- a change from rejection of regional security arrangements to a growing acceptance of such arrangements. These observations lead to the following question: What explains the variation in the hegemon's interest in investing in regional security arrangements across regions and across time? And more concretely for this paper: What explains the variation in American support for regional arrangements in Europe and Asia, and more specifically- what explains the changes in the level of American support for regional arrangements in Asia after the end of the Cold War?

I suggest that the systemic shift to unipolarity (i.e., the change in global distribution of material capabilities) has created a dual incentive to invest in regional security arrangements. The systemic change has created incentives to promote security regionalization both on part of the hegemonic state, the US, and on part of its regional partners. While a full understanding of the process of security regionalization requires an examination of the incentives of both the hegemon and the regional states, this paper will focus only on one dimension- namely, the changing incentives for a hegemonic state to

invest in regional security frameworks. I will examine what are, in my opinion, the driving forces that are likely to push the hegemon to invest in such arrangements, and what factors can explain the variations in the degree of support it offers to such developments in different regional settings. This framework, in turn, will be applied to examine the changing American policy regarding regional security cooperation since the end of the Cold War in Europe and Asia. Since I have written about Europe elsewhere¹, a greater proportion of this paper will focus on American Asia policy.

Security Regionalization

There are various ways to discuss regional security as well as security regionalization. We can think of security regionalization in terms of a change in the scope of security externalities, wherein the security externalities emanating from regional security threats or challenges become more and more confined to the region itself. This was the most noted shift after the end of the Cold War, as regional problems and crises no longer translated automatically to the global competition between the US and the Soviet Union.² The events of 911, however, once again expanded the perceived security externalities of various “regional” problems. Understanding security regionalization this way implies a change at the level of the nature of international politics and the conditions within which states operate.

¹ Galia Press-Barnathan, (September 2005). “The Changing Incentives for Security Regionalization- From 119 to 911,” *Cooperation and Conflict* Vol.40 (3): 281-304; Galia Press-Barnathan “Managing the Hegemon: Alliances under Unipolarity”. *Security Studies*, (May/June 2006).

² David Lake (1997) ‘Regional Security complexes: A Systems Approach’ in D. A. Lake and P. M. Morgan (eds) *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, pp. 45-67. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, p.48; Arthur Stein, and Steven Lobell, (1997) ‘Geostructuralism and International Politics: The End of the Cold War and the Regionalization of International Security’ in D. A. Lake and P. M. Morgan (eds.) *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, pp. 101-124. (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press), p. 113.

Security regionalization can also be understood in terms of expansion and deepening of regional institutions, that is, as a change in the type of strategies and nature of institutions that manage security in the region. When looking at regional security dynamics we should ask: Are regional security challenges dealt with by individual states within the region? Are they dealt with in concert with an external power, or collectively by the regional states? To the extent that there has been external power involvement, are the institutional structures that manage security more hierarchical (-that is, focus on the relations between the great power and regional states) or horizontal (-that is, linking among the regional states)? Based on this criterion one could identify a security regionalization process as one through which there is a shift to or a deepening of such horizontal regional institutions for the management of security affairs. Unlike the previous definition of security regionalization, this understanding focuses on the level of foreign policy; States *choose* to pursue/not regional strategies. The two approaches are linked, as demonstrated below, but not identical. As I argue below, systemic changes raise the merits of regional strategies but do not determine on their own their final adoption or success.

A third understanding of security regionalization can be derived from the growing Constructivist literature on regions and regional security communities, which focuses on the ideational changes and developments that come to define a region. Those range from the concept of a regional identity to the concept of a regional pluralistic security community to a focus on unique regional norms for managing security. From this perspective we can identify security regionalization by identifying any such developments of regional security norms, of regional practices or of a regional identity.

In the Asian context, scholars like Acharya, Kang, Goh, Hemmer and Katzenstein, have suggested that regional security dynamics vary across regions due to different regional norms of security management (e.g., a balance of power norm, as opposed to a norm of accepting hierarchy as the natural state of the international system). Most of these works focus on the development of regional collective identity, which is less directly relevant to the question posed here. Hemmer and Katzenstein, however, focus on the importance of collective identity between regional states and the extra-regional actor in order to explain the latter's choice of ML or BL. I briefly refer to this argument later in the paper. While this is a fascinating topic, I do not fully explore it here, nor did I find any clear evidence of such considerations in current American rhetoric regarding Asia.³

Why the systemic shift to unipolarity creates incentives for the hegemonic state to invest in regional security arrangements?

A hegemon can actively promote security regionalization by bearing a disproportionate share of the burden of creating new institutional arrangements for the management of regional security, providing side-payments to regional states that are reluctant to participate, or giving greater legitimacy and allure to new regional institutions by backing them with both its power and prestige. This is what the US did in

³ For examples of such research see: Amitav Acharya, 2000. *The Quest for Identity: International Relations of Southeast Asia* (. Oxford:Oxford University Press) *Constructing A Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*. (London: Routledge, 2001); David C.Kang,. (2003) "Getting Asia wrong: the need for new analytical frameworks", *International Security*, 27(4), 57–85; Evelyn Goh, Hierarchy and the role of the United States in the East Asian security order" *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* Vol. 8 No. 3 (2008); Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Why is there Why is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism" *International Organization* 56, 3, Summer 2002, pp. 575–607; Emanuel Adler and Patricia Greeve, "When security community meets balance of power: overlapping regional mechanisms of security governance" *Review of International Studies* (2009), 35, 59–84. For research offering a synthesis of all the various components of regional security see: Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver, *Regions and Powers*; Gil Merom, "Realist Hypotheses on Regional Peace", *Journal of Strategic Studies* Vol. 26 (1) (2003).

Western Europe after WWII. Conversely, a hegemon can also undermine or thwart security regionalization either by actively opposing it or by passively not supporting such attempts. This is closer to the role played by the US in Asia after WWII, with a few exceptions. However, what shapes the hegemon's interest in investing in such institutions? More concretely, what shapes the American interest in supporting regional security institutions? During the Cold War what we called American hegemony was embedded in a broader structure of bipolarity, and the incentives to manage and control regional issues stemmed from that global structure.⁴ The literature on Hegemonic Stability Theory as well found it difficult to disentangle the "hegemonic" incentives stemming from its preponderant position within its camp and those stemming from its competition with the other "pole". In that context, investing for example in regional institution-building in Europe via the creation of NATO was understood as part of a broader Realist strategy of balancing the Soviet threat. This type of regionalist strategy can be termed "competitive regionalism", as it was geared, at least in part, to better dealing with external threats. The Soviet Union, for its part, promoted its own form of regional cooperation in Eastern Europe.

But what happens under unipolarity? Ironically, just at the time when the system became unipolar (according to most authors), the interest in HST has declined, so not much theoretical research on this matter has been done. Empirically, in the post-Cold War world, the United States appeared less interested in policing the globe, so why invest in regional institutions? Alternatively, in the post-911 world it appeared that the

⁴ For a thorough review of the possible motivations for the hegemon to support regional or multilateral cooperation arrangements see: Galia Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World- The US and Regional Cooperation in Asia and Europe* (Routledge, 2003).

pendulum has shifted to the other side, with the US perceiving its security so threatened that it prefers to go it alone. In that case as well, regional solutions did not appear attractive. And yet, we still see a growth in regional security institutions in the post-Cold War era, both in Europe and in Asia, which is supported (though not always initiated), by the United States. Why?

I suggest that a hegemonic state in a unipolar world has a high stake in maintaining its power position. While different schools of thought differ on the means that should be used in order to maintain predominance, they do not really argue about this basic end goal. This ultimate goal is translated into three more focused goals (or, into three strategies): maintaining regional stability, prolonging the unipolar “moment” and reducing the costs of managing the system. I elaborate on each of these later, but at this point I should only note that these goals can be promoted through encouraging regional security arrangements. Such regional security arrangements, in part, reflect a different type of logic than the competitive logic of bipolarity, and may be called “cooperative regionalism”, which focuses more on managing security risks, maintaining stability, reducing costs and reassuring allies.

This being said, there are many pressures undermining the stability of unipolarity, and a growing number of scholars and practitioners (much more noticeably in Asia) suggest that the world is shifting toward a multipolar structure. This essay does not address this debate, but argues that the very existence of the debate reflects the changing perceptions of the stability of the unipolar system. This potential shift is most evident in Asia due to the rise of a potential challenger in the form of China. While China may or may not be challenging American global preponderance, it is clearly challenging

American hegemonic position in Asia. This trend adds an additional dimension to the dynamics of security regionalization and American interest in it. Consequently, to the cooperative regionalism described before is added a new competitive security regionalization dimension: support for such arrangements may stem from the desire to balance Chinese activities within the same institutions, to enhance American influence and voice vis-à-vis China, or to react to exclusionary regional arrangements that do not include the US. This mixed bag of motivations reflects a mixture of Realist and Liberal motives and tools.

But how can regional arrangements help maintain the hegemon's power position in a unipolar system? Let me elaborate.

Preserving regional stability as the hegemon's vital interest- The creation of regional security management institutions:

In a unipolar system power disparities between the hegemon and other states are so broad that no immediate existential threats need to be dealt with. At the same time the hegemon has a strong interest in maintaining regional stability. This is important in Europe, where great power politics, WMDs and global trade are intertwined, in the Middle East, the world's largest source of energy, and in Asia, where it faces the dangers of nuclear proliferation and a potential challenger in the form of China.⁵

Maintaining stability is complicated by the fact that major systemic shifts inject a high level of uncertainty into the international system. Greater uncertainty is typical of

⁵ Walt, S. M. (1989) 'The Case for Finite Containment: Analyzing U.S. Grand Strategy, *International Security* 14 (1), p.13; Gholz, E., Press, D. G. and Sapolsky, H. M. (1997) 'Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation', *International Security* 21(4), pp.25-28; Art, R. J. (1999) 'Geopolitics Updated: The Strategy of Selective Engagement', *International Security* 23(3), pp.83-95.

any period of transition. However, one could also argue that relative strategic uncertainty was low under bipolarity, with its relatively clear dynamics. Multipolar systems are more fluid in nature and thus hold higher levels of strategic uncertainty. What happens though under unipolarity? Several scholars have recently acknowledged the centrality of the strategic uncertainty problem for smaller states in the current system, and especially for the states of Southeast Asia.⁶ One could think that for the hegemon, unipolarity hold a relatively high level of strategic certainty, due to its overwhelming power preponderance. However, this is not the case. Despite its power preponderance, the hegemon does not control the world, or regional dynamics, or unforeseen crises. This high level of uncertainty is very obvious in the Asian front, as elaborated later. If indeed the system is shifting toward multipolarity, then strategic uncertainty (both regarding the accurate power distribution and about the motivations of various key players) is likely to grow further. To reduce uncertainty the hegemon needs to devise strategies to deal with allies, undecided states and challengers.

The primacy of the goal of maintaining stability and reducing uncertainties rather than the goal of dealing with an eminent threat leads to a greater emphasis on what Keohane and Wallander (1999) call “security management institutions” that would deal with security risks rather than threats. Such institutions require the development of rules and procedures to solve security dilemmas among the members, rather than to aggregate

⁶ See: Yuen Foong Khong, “Coping with Strategic Uncertainty- The Role of Institutions and Soft Balancing in Southeast Asia’s Post-Cold War Strategy”, in: J.J. Suh, peter J. Katzenstein and Allen Carlson (eds.), *Rethinking Security in East Asia- Identity, Power and Efficiency* (Stanford University Press, 2004), pp.172-208; Evelyn Goh, “Great powers and hierarchical order in Southeast Asia”, IS 32(3).

capabilities to deter a concrete enemy.⁷ This of course builds upon standard Neoliberal Institutional arguments, which stress the role of institutions in enhancing transparency and increasing symmetric information among members. This approach suggests that on a regional level more horizontal links should be developed among the regional states in order to maintain stability. Such institutional ties are likely to reduce the risk of having to get involved in regional, non-strategic conflicts, both by ameliorating regional security dilemmas and by creating/ enhancing regional capabilities to deal independently with regional problems. Ensuring such stability, in turn, will reduce the risk that a challenger may take advantage in a time of regional crisis and turbulence to increase its power. Such horizontal institutional links would help to mitigate or resolve conflicts among the regional states.

Preserving the Unipolar moment:

According to the logic of balance-of-threat theory (Walt, 1987), a hegemonic state can preserve its unipolar position by using policies of accommodation and reassurance in its dealing with status quo states. The dominant state should reinforce their sense of security and should also provide opportunities for these states to demonstrate power or enhance prestige without challenging the existing order. It should also try to take steps to integrate 'undecided' states more fully into the existing order, thus turning them into status-quo states.⁸ Multilateral frameworks of cooperation are an ideal means of reducing threat perception of allies and partners and reassuring them of the hegemon's

⁷ Wallander, C. A. and Keohane, R. O. (1999) 'Risk, Threat, and Security Institutions' in H. Haftendorn, R. O. Keohane and C. A. Wallander (eds.) *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space* (NY: Oxford University Press), pp.25-33.

⁸ M. Mastanduno, (1999) 'Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy After the Cold War' in E. B. Kapstein and M. Mastanduno (eds.) *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies After the Cold War* (NY: Columbia University Press), pp.148-149.

commitment- providing security through a framework that appears more egalitarian and democratic, where smaller states have some voice, and which also demonstrates the hegemon's strategic restraint.⁹ Furthermore, such ML regional frameworks may allow the hegemon to better engage regional states that were not previously its official allies. This way it is less likely to bring about counter-balancing (as balance-of-power theory would predict).¹⁰ This is the logic behind regional security arrangements that include the hegemonic state.

Preserving its dominance, however, can also lead to a more competitive dynamics of regional security institution building. The same rationale would also suggest that the hegemon would be less supportive of regional exclusionary arrangements, which exclude its participation. The US was always suspicious regarding regional cooperation initiatives that excluded it. This was the case both in Europe and in Asia. An interesting dynamics of security regionalization can occur if potential regional challengers choose to adopt a policy of promoting security regional cooperation, along similar lines. This, in turn, can lead to a process of *competitive security regionalization*, in which the hegemon is pushed to invest in regional security arrangements largely in order to counteract similar moves by potential challengers. Because under unipolarity classic balancing against the

⁹ John Ruggie, (1993) 'Anatomy of an Institution' in J. G. Ruggie (ed.) *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of An Institutional Form*(NY: Columbia University Press), p.11; G. J. Ikenberry, . (2001) *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars.*(Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp.45-46. Ikenberry later on suggests that a liberal grand strategy is based upon opening up, tying down and finally binding other states via ML institutions. See: G. John Ikenberry, "The political foundations of American relations with East Asia" in: G. John Ikenberry and Chung-In Moon (eds.,) *The United States and Northeast Asia- Debates, Issues, and New Order* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), p.24.

¹⁰ For an alternative argument which views regional integration as a mean to manage hegemonic decline see: Charles Kupchan, (1998) 'After Pax Americana: Benign Power, Regional Integration, and the Sources of a Stable Multipolarity', *International Security* 23 (2), pp.42; 59-62.

hegemon is a difficult and risky strategy¹¹, potential challengers as well are more likely to explore such regional options in order to build their regional influence and perhaps as a pre-balancing strategy. We are therefore likely to see a growth in such competitive security regionalization. This type of dynamics is identified by Kai He as “institutional balancing”, which includes both inclusive institutional arrangements and exclusive institutional balancing. He rightly notes that this strategy of institutional balancing reflects a combination of Realist and Neoliberal elements. He stresses the impact of interdependence as a key factor in leading to the use of this strategy (rather than merely the wide power disparities).¹² This strategy is also related to the popular concept of “soft balancing” vis-à-vis the United States. While most scholars tend to focus on the smaller states balancing against the US, a balance-of-power is a relational concept, and therefore we need to remember that the US finds itself as well playing in the same game. The recent competitive security regionalization in Asia reflects in part a similar dynamic also on part of the great powers themselves

Reducing the costs of hegemony- System maintenance at the lowest cost:

In a unipolar system, where no clear and present danger faces the hegemon, it is likely to search for the cheapest means to maintain the system. This is important strategically, since as historian Paul Kennedy (1989) established, the main cause of eventual decline of great powers is the overstretch of their resources. This strategic logic is amplified when dealing with a democratic hegemon, facing domestic pressures. The public, which has the power to vote in or out of office its elected officials, is more sensitive to its domestic

¹¹ See William Wohlforth, “Stability of the Unipolar Moment”, Schweller ????

¹² Kai He, “Institutional Balancing and International Relations Theory: Economic Interdependence and Balance of Power Strategies in Southeast Asia” *European Journal of International Relations* 2008; 14; 489

needs rather than to international order goals. In the United States this tendency has found its clearest expression in the traditional tension between the White House, more internationally oriented, and Congress, which represented domestic interest groups and tried to control foreign policy expenses.¹³

The promotion of security regionalization, or in other words- of regional-multilateral arrangements, can serve the goal of cost-reduction in three ways:

a) By enticing greater burden sharing from other states through the **pooling** of their resources. The idea behind this notion of pooling is that the effect of the combined resources of the regional partners is greater than the mere sum of their individual potential contributions. Such an effect can be achieved, for example, by encouraging greater military standardization, coordinated strategic and logistic planning or a division of labor among the allies based on comparative advantage. This will make military or other security cooperation more efficient and cost effective.¹⁴ **Variations in the expected potential of pooling can help explain the scope of security regionalization incentives in different regions or on different issue areas.** This is demonstrated in the second part of this paper.

b) By assisting in the creation of regional institutions to manage conflicts it can avoid its own future entanglement in them.¹⁵ This is less likely to be a viable option when

¹³ Lindsay, J. M. (1994) *Congress and the Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp.18-19.

¹⁴ Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World*, chapter 1.

¹⁵ on encouraging regional cooperation as a way to create an exit opportunity for the US, see: Mark S. Sheetz, (1999) 'Exit Strategies: American Grand Designs for Postwar European Security', *Security Studies* 8 (4): 1-43

regional conflicts pose a potential real threat upon the hegemon itself, in which case it will be more willing to use its own powerful resources to meet such threats.

c) A more legitimate arrangement can reduce the hegemon's governance costs.¹⁶

The issue of legitimacy is also likely to acquire greater importance in the future, in light of the American "discovery" after 9/11 that its "soft power" was not as strong as presumed. Legitimacy is also more likely to become central when the hegemon faces regional contenders it has to compete with.

Supporting regional security arrangements, however, may entail costs as well. Compared to bilateral strategies (or the design of a regional hub-and-spokes model), the hegemon is likely to have a diminished bargaining leverage in a regional ML forum, and other regional partners are likely to have greater "voice". These costs will be higher or lower depending on two factors, both related more directly to the potential regional partners: 1. whether regional partners want/not to pursue a regional strategy, and 2. whether partners' goals are perceived to be compatible with those of the hegemon. The costs of supporting a regional arrangement will be lower if regional partners are self-motivated to invest in such an arrangement, therefore requiring less intervention and less side-payments from the hegemon. Not less important though, if their goals are perceived to be compatible with those of the hegemon, then the risk of giving them greater voice is smaller. Conversely, if their goals are perceived to be incompatible, the hegemon is unlikely to support institutionalizing their relations. I noted at the outset that the hegemon needs to deal with three types of states: allies, undecided and challengers. Among allies

¹⁶ David Lake, *Entangling Relations: American Foreign policy in this Century*. (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1999), pp.35-77.

the problem of goal compatibility should be lowest. In dealing with undecided states there is a greater risk of encouraging effective regional cooperation, coupled with the promise of co-opting these states. In dealing with challengers the risk of encouraging regional cooperation (including them) is the greatest. Consequently, we can either expect a watered-down but persistent support for inclusive regional arrangements, a stronger support for regional arrangements excluding the challenger, and active opposition to exclusive regional arrangements excluding the hegemon.

Finally, even in dealing with allies, there is a built-in limit or danger in using the regional strategy. Given similar goals, it makes sense to strengthen one's partners so they could bear a greater burden. The hegemon wants to encourage greater regional independence and burden sharing, but only as long as it does not run the risk of promoting interests conflicting to its own. At the same time, the main incentive for regional states to invest in developing regional security capabilities is to enhance their autonomy vis a vis the hegemon, i.e., their ability to make independent foreign policy decisions. If such regional capabilities are indeed created, then they will create this desired policy autonomy, which in turn can lead to policy choices not approved by the hegemon. This is a risk the hegemonic state has to take into consideration. Hemmer and Katzenstein argue that the US would promote multilateral regional security cooperation only when it shares a sense of collective identity with regional states¹⁷. Such a collective identity existed with Europe (common religion, values, race), and did not exist with the states of Southeast Asia. This argument can contribute to the argument presented here regarding the impact of perceptions of partners' motivations and goal compatibility on US strategy choice.

¹⁷ Hemmer and Katzenstein, "Why no NATO in Asia?"

Alternative strategies and their limits

In designing its regional strategy, the hegemon needs to consider two other types of strategies: unilateral and bilateral. These strategies do not promote and may also undermine processes of security regionalization. One may rightly ask why is it that since September 2001, or more so since the coming into office of the Bush Jr. administration, the United States has exhibited a policy emphasizing much more unilateral and risky strategies. I suggest that, given the above-mentioned reasons, a unilateral strategy can only be attractive in the short run and is bound to become too costly in the long run. This issue is especially salient for a liberal-democratic hegemon where congressional scrutiny and public opinion are important, as explained before. The cost of a unilateral strategy will rise over time not only because the burden of global engagement will fall on the hegemon's shoulders alone, but also because such a strategy is likely to create greater resentment and to heighten threat perceptions among other states and will increase the likelihood of an attempt to balance against the hegemon. This also seems to be the working assumption of the new Obama administration in Washington.

The unilateral strategy is more likely to be adopted by the hegemon in cases where there is a very high threat perception, followed by a domestic willingness to bear the costs associated with this strategy. These are unusual circumstances, such as those prevailing in the aftermath of 911.¹⁸

Selective bilateral deals can also be a useful tool for the hegemon to achieve its security goals in a more selective, need-based approach. This approach was apparent

¹⁸ For a different interesting interpretation see Benjamin Miller, "Rise of Offensive Liberalism", forthcoming.

during the early phases of the “War on Terror”, as the US bilaterally rewarded states that supported its cause (e.g., Pakistan). A bilateral strategy may also find expression in the upgrading or adjusting of pre-existing bilateral security arrangements so as to enhance the partner’s burden-sharing responsibilities (as was the case vis-à-vis Japan). In that case, these are not merely ad-hoc cooperative ventures, but rather there is a strengthening of bilateral institutionalized cooperation. Bilateral deals can be politically and financially costly if many of them need to be negotiated. Also, as already mentioned before, if the goal is to increase burden sharing and reduce the costs of system maintenance, then the contribution of a bilateral approach is limited. **We are likely to find this strategy used in cases where the target partner has a specific asset to offer the hegemon, that is, in cases where the logic of ‘pooling’ is weaker.** Also, **upgrading pre-existing bilateral deals may have a significant added value when pre-existing bilateral arrangements clearly left immaterialized burden-sharing capacities** (e.g., the US-Japan alliance).

States are unlikely to choose one of these strategies on its own, but rather adopt a mix of strategies. What we can try to identify though is the relative importance of the regionalist strategy within this mix over time and across regions.

Explaining variation in support for security regionalization- Main Hypotheses

The previous discussion elaborated why with the shift to unipolarity we should expect an underlying interest in promoting regional cooperation arrangements, but also what are the potential costs of such arrangements and which factors can raise/ decrease them. To further sharpen this point, the three factors that are likely to influence the degree to which the hegemon will be interested and willing to support and invest in promoting regional security institutions are the following:

1. The degree of support for security regionalization will vary depending on whether there are significant pooling effects involved.

Since as explained before promoting regional security cooperation entails costs and may also create certain risks for the hegemonic state, it is likely to support such cooperation only if it perceives a significant pooling effect. If its security goals can be advanced by enhancing its bilateral ties, then promoting regional solutions is less attractive. The value of pooling is also an important factor in regional states' interest in such arrangements.

2. The degree of support for security regionalization will vary depending on the perception of regional interest in such arrangements, and more so, on the perception of the degree of compatibility of their goals with those of the US

Because successful regional cooperation can enhance the influence of regional allies and provide them with tools to develop a better coordinated regional security policy, the hegemon will be reluctant to support or promote regional arrangements when it perceives a potential conflict in goals and interests with regional partners. Not less important is the perception of regional states' own willingness to invest in such regional arrangements. Such willingness is important if these are to become effective tools for cost-reduction for the hegemon. The interesting twist here comes in a scenario of increased independent regional interest in building regional cooperation. In such a case a hegemon may be forced to choose between staying out and thus risking losing influence, or joining in order to stay involved (-reactive security regionalization). Staying out becomes less of an option if potential challengers choose to promote regional arrangements and generate regional interest. This can lead either to competitive exclusionary regional institution building, or to an attempt to join such institutions to preempt any exclusionary trends

3. The degree of support for security regionalization will vary depending on the nature of pre-existing security arrangements

Security regionalization does not happen in a vacuum. The degree of support for such institution-building will also depend on the nature of the pre-existing security arrangements, both among the regional states (if any) and more so between regional states and the hegemon. Here of course the difference between Europe (and the highly institutionalized ML NATO) and Asia (with its US-centered hub-and-spokes model) is striking. The nature of pre-existing arrangements will influence the perceived costs of building/expanding regional arrangements.

The second half of this paper will explore both the common implications of the systemic shift for US policy regarding regional cooperation in Europe (briefly) and in Asia, and the factors that explain why the American shift from rejection to acceptance of RL in Asia is still quite constrained.

The end of bipolarity, the United States and regional security arrangements in Europe

With the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the Soviet threat, the American administration faced both a challenge of growing domestic pressures to reduce the costs of foreign policy, and the challenge of maintaining international stability in the face of uncertainty and various potential threats. As the framework discussed before suggests, this combined challenge indeed led to a growing emphasis on a regional defense strategy in American planning, both under Bush Senior and under Clinton.¹⁹ Similarly to the timing of policymaking in the aftermath of WWII, the US initially paid most of its attention to the consequences of the new strategic environment in Europe. In contrast to the meagerly-institutionalized security scene in Asia, Western Europe has already enjoyed a high level of security regionalization, the consequence of the creation of NATO after WWII. It also enjoyed high levels of economic and political institutionalized cooperation, via the long and successful process of European integration. Further investing in such arrangements was thus cheaper and easier. The project of NATO expansion, which was viewed in Europe as an American project, was an expression of this strategy of expanding reliance on a regional framework. NATO expansion served the hegemonic goals discussed before. It was a means of maintaining and expanding America's grip on the foreign and military policies of European states and reasserting American international leadership (i.e., extending unipolarity), and of maintaining regional stability via the process of democratic enlargement. It was also perceived as a relatively cheap way to maintain the system by using and expanding pre-

¹⁹ Gebhard, P. R. S. (1994) 'The United States and European Security', *Adelphi Paper* 286, p.8.

existing successful institutional arrangements. Sensitivity to cost also led to a greater American willingness to accept a more independent European role within NATO, as it found expression in the role of the WEU and the creation of the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) concept.²⁰ The willingness (though not enthusiasm) to accept greater independent European security cooperation was also linked to the impact of the events of September 11 2001. These events indeed did not lead to an additional systemic power shift, as did the demise of the USSR. They did however change significantly American threat perceptions.

Initially, the combination of high threat and the huge power disparities between the US and its allies made the pursuit of a unilateral strategy possible and attractive, at least in the short run. This found expression in the initial stages of the war in Afghanistan, where the US ignored allies' offer to help, and more so in Iraq, when the US chose to go to war in face of significant international opposition from some of its traditional allies.

The dramatic events of September 11 temporarily made the cost issue become less politically salient, as the American public was willing to bear whatever necessary cost in face of the new and dangerous threat of terror. This reduced the domestic political cost of pursuing a unilateral strategy. Eight years later, after two wars that were fought almost

²⁰ Haftendorn, H. (1997) *The Post-Cold War Atlantic Alliance*. Bar Ilan University: The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies; Howorth, J. (1997) 'National Defence and European Security Integration: An Illusion inside a Chimera?' In J. Howorth and A. Menon (eds.) *The European Union and National Defense Policy*. London: Routledge; Smith, M. A. (1999) 'The NATO Factor: a Spanner in the works of EU and WEU enlargement?' in K. Henderson (ed.) *Back to Europe: Central and Eastern Europe and the European Union*. (London and Philadelphia: UCL Press) .pp. 53-67; Kirchner, E. and Sperling, J. (2002) 'The New Security Threats in Europe: Theory and Evidence', *European Foreign Affairs* 7p.39; Waltz, K. (2000) 'NATO Expansion: A Realist's View' in R. W. Rauchhaus (ed.) *Explaining NATO Enlargement*, special issue of *Contemporary Security Policy* 21 (2), p.29.

unilaterally, and still no victory on “terror”, the American public and its congressional representatives are again less willing to tolerate these high costs of unilateral policy. The American experience since 911 has brought home clearly the realization that the cost of maintaining the system alone is prohibitive. While the Bin Laden challenge does not pose an existential threat on the United States, it does highlight the importance of maintaining regional stability and of sharing the burden of system maintenance- the two key elements that regional cooperation can advance.

Following the events of 911 the Bush administration developed a greater understanding of the relevance to American national security of regional problems like failed states, which become harbingers of terrorist activities. To deal with such problems the 2002 National Security Strategy clearly stated the need to rely on regional groupings. “With our European allies we must help strengthen Africa’s fragile states...to deny havens for terrorists”. And similarly, on the need to deal with the negative spillovers of regional conflicts, the document stressed that “the US should invest time and resources into building international relations and institutions that can help manage local crises when they emerge.”²¹ Already before 2001 the US was entertaining the hope that a more coherent European security structure could better deal with regional crises such as those that took place in Bosnia and in Kosovo (which did necessitate American involvement). After 2001 the American interest in assuring European burden sharing beyond the context of defending Europe,(i.e., NATO’s out-of-area operations, or EU operations) further increased. This was the case since the Western European allies are the primary potential source of multilateral diplomatic and military support for American regional security

²¹ National Security Strategy, White House September 17 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nssalll.html>

policies around the world.²² Certainly before the war in Iraq, but even today in my opinion, underlying American and European strategic goals are compatible enough to make such a European military capability not threatening for the US.²³ The American need to rely on such aid to achieve its foreign policy goals found its clearest expression in the working of the ISAF force in Afghanistan. While the US has eventually sent over 45,000 troops to the force, Europe has sent a little over 33,000 troops, i.e., about 40% of the force. In recent years we have witnessed quite clearly how the US has grown more and more dependent on NATO cooperation to sustain its operations in Afghanistan.²⁴ The fact that eventually NATO took over this operation in Afghanistan strengthens the logic described before behind the continued American nourishing of this regional framework.

As for regional security within Europe itself, during the 1990s the US held an ambivalent approach towards the European security regionalization project embodied in ESDP. After 911, while the ambivalence of the Americans towards the development of independent European capabilities did not disappear, the increased cost of the war on terror made the Americans more likely to “swallow the frog” of greater security regionalization in Europe. Given the broad stretch of American military activity and especially its further re-orientation away from Europe, the US was more willing give the

²² Gebhard, 1994: 14-17. Note later on that this emphasis on actual burden sharing did not exist when it came to Asian regional multilateral frameworks.

²³ Even here though, the Americans remained very hostile to attempts to create a European defense planning capability that excludes the US.

²⁴ For data see : “Troops contributing nations,” NATO- International Security Assistance Force, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/ec/troop-contributing-nations-3.html> This number includes the contribution of Turkey (1755), which is a NATO member but not a member of the EU. (January 26 2010)

EU a leading role in crisis management in Europe.²⁵ At no point in time though was the US enthusiastic about independent European military cooperation.

The fight against terror also highlights the importance of burden sharing on issues beyond the traditional battlefield. Acknowledging the importance of such cooperation, the US has negotiated and signed agreements with the EU's Europol on exchange of police data, and an agreement on judicial cooperation with the EU.²⁶ This may appear less dramatic than the dropping of state-of-the-art bombs on the Afghan desert, but may be no less useful. Multilateral cooperation of decision-makers, intelligence agencies and law enforcement agents can effectively fight the phenomenon of terror in the long run. Overall then, such developments would have been unlikely under a bipolar system: not enough incentive on the European side, and too much opposition on the American side. The transatlantic synergies under unipolarity were thus crucial in the promotion of regional security cooperation within Europe²⁷.

The US and the dynamics of security regionalization in East Asia

Evidence of security regionalization in post-Cold War East Asia

In comparison to the significant level of institutionalization in Europe, security regionalization dynamics in Asia are clearly more superficial and a much more recent

²⁵ Schake, K. (2003) 'The United States, ESDP and Constructive Duplication', in J. Howorth and J.T.S. Keeler, *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, (N.Y.: Palgrave), p.112.

²⁶ Mitsilegas, V. (2003) 'The New EU-USA Cooperation on Extradition, Mutual Legal Assistance and the Exchange of Police Data', *European Foreign Affairs Review* 8: 515-536.

²⁷ As noted in the outset, a fuller understanding of these developments require an examination of the changed incentives within Europe, also in part a result of the systemic change. This, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

phenomenon. In Europe the US has played a significant role in creating the central post-WWII regional multilateral security arrangement in the form of NATO. Conversely in Asia the US also played a crucial role in building a stable postwar security architecture, but that architecture in turn was based on a hub-and-spokes model of bilateral American alliances (with Japan, the ROK, Taiwan, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand.) This is partly the reason why the cross-regional comparison is so interesting, because of the wide variation in terms of pre-existing regional cooperation arrangements.²⁸

And yet, on the Asian front as well we find a notable increase in the number and scope of regional security cooperation institutions and initiatives after the end of the Cold War and the shift to global unipolarity. Around ASEAN: the creation of APEC in 1994, the creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1993, the creation of the ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China and ROK) in 1997, the East Asia Summit in 2005. Beyond ASEAN we are witnessing greater regional cooperation among the great powers of Northeast Asia, greater Chinese involvement and initiation of regional cooperation, exemplified most clearly by the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Beyond the level of official institution-building, we can also note changes in individual states' attitudes toward regional cooperation. Most notably, we can discern a shift in Japanese foreign policy from a full reliance on their bilateral security alliance with the US and very little interest in regional cooperation, to a more active foreign

²⁸ On the logic behind this variation in regional architecture see Galia Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World- The US and Regional Cooperation in Asia and Europe* (Routledge, 2003). For an alternative ideational argument see Hemmer and Katzenstein, "Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective identity, Regionalism, and the origins of Multilateralism" *International Organization* Vol.56(3) (Summer 2002): 575-607. For another interesting cross-regional comparison, suggesting the major impact of the US on the lack of regional security arrangements in Asia, see: Mark Beeson, "US hegemony and Southeast Asia: the impact, and limits to, American power and influence", *Critical Asian Studies* 36(3), and Beeson, "Rethinking regionalism: Europe and East Asia in comparative historical perspective" *Journal of European Public Policy* 12(6) (2005), pp.969-985.

policy in general and a more active policy of promoting and exploring various regional cooperative fora- from the ARF, via the US-Japan-South Korea Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group, the six-party talks since 2003 on the North Korean problem, and finally its joint declaration on security cooperation with Australia in July 2007 and the Trilateral Security Dialogue (TSD) with the US and Australia. At the same time though, this greater emphasis on regional ML has also been paralleled by a greater development of the bilateral alliance with the US.

That all these developments occur since the 1990s is not a coincidence. Many of these processes stem from the changing incentives of regional states themselves in face of the shift to unipolarity (concern over American commitment to regional security, revived security dilemma between China and Japan, concern regarding China's intentions in the region). These changes are also related to other, regional, processes (-growing economic interdependence and especially the formative impact of the Asian financial crisis on regional cooperation). However, it is also clear that the nature of American attitudes toward such regional cooperation is very significant. Consequently, it is worthwhile focusing in this paper on an analysis of American policy. In the following pages I apply the conceptual framework elaborated before in order to explain American policies regional security institutions in Asia.

The changing American incentives regarding security regionalization in Asia

As noted before, with the exception of its short-lived interest in creating a Pacific Pact in the early 50s, and the creation of SEATO, the US has consistently resented the development of regional security arrangements in Asia, creating a stable hub-and-spoke security network in the region. In fact, whereas in Europe the US played a crucial role at

the initiation and maintenance of regional security cooperation via NATO, in Asia it actually served as a spoiler that frustrated any such initiatives. As Beeson nicely puts it, the US undermined the leadership potential of the two important East Asian powers, Japan and China.²⁹

With the end of the Cold War we can find similar pressures exerted on the US Asian policy as those we find in its European policies. The systemic change has injected a high level of strategic uncertainty into the Asia-Pacific region, in fact a much higher level of uncertainty than that facing the US and its allies in Europe. As opposed to Europe, in Asia there were two great powers with an unclear agenda- China with its dramatic growth rate and military buildup, and Japan, which did not yet fully come to terms with its past, and which was not considered yet to be a “normal” state. Each one of these powers posed a challenge for the US at the time, and their mutual suspicions and volatile security dilemma posed an even greater challenge.³⁰ Among ASEAN members as well there was still a limited level of mutual trust, and lingering territorial disputes persisted. These unknowns posed potential challenges for two of America’s central goals in the post-Cold War period: to maintain regional stability in Asia, and to preserve the American position.

In Tokyo on November 22, 1991, Secretary Cheney affirmed to America’s regional allies that US security policy in Asia continued to be guided by six basic principles:

- Assurance of American engagement in Asia and the Pacific.

²⁹ Beeson, “Rethinking Regionalism”, [find exact page](#). This, however, was not the case in the late 40s and early 50s, when it was the US that tried to push forward regional arrangements in Asia, and the regional states which opposed it. See Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World*, chapters 3,6,7.

³⁰ See Thomas J. Christensen, “The US-Japan Alliance and the Security Dilemma in East Asia”, *International Security* Vol.23(4) (Spring 1999): 49-80.

- A strong system of bilateral security arrangements.
- Maintenance of modest but capable forward-deployed US forces.
- Sufficient overseas base structure to support those forces.
- Our Asian allies should assume greater responsibility for their own defense.
- Complementary defense cooperation.³¹

With the demise of the Soviet Union the US had to readjust its regional strategy in Asia from one focusing on a balance of power vis-a-vis the USSR and its allies to a strategy of managing regional security.³² This sense of a wider and more open-ended security mission in the region was strengthened after 911, which brought with it new and very volatile security threats. Consequently, the *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (30/09/2001) noted that “the approach shifts the focus of U.S. force planning from optimizing for conflicts in two particular regions - Northeast and Southwest Asia - to building a portfolio of capabilities that is robust across the spectrum of possible force requirements, both functional and geographical.”³³

A consensus existed among American decision-makers and military officials that the preservation of regional stability in Asia required the continued American military presence. The complexity of managing regional security stemmed to a large extent from the vast size of the region.³⁴ Consequently, the US had to retain a forward presence close to potentially unstable areas in the region. The number of such potential areas has significantly grown, especially after the events of 911, which pushed forward various

³¹ Cited from: A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim Report to the Congress 1992, <http://www.shaps.hawaii.edu/security/report-92.html> (entered February 2009) See also Cheney's 1993 Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy.

³² Evelyn Goh, “The ASEAN Regional Forum in United States East Asian Strategy”, *The Pacific Review* Vol.17(1):47-69. **Later though, the balance-of-power logic reappeared vis-à-vis China, so discussing current American security policy in the region merely in terms of security-management is somewhat misleading.**

³³ *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (30/09/2001- find source

³⁴ The area of responsibility of the USPACOM covers 43 countries.

nontraditional security threats in the region, such as terrorism, drug-associated violence, weapons proliferation and instability from failed states.³⁵

Doing all of this, of course, is a costly matter. As explained in the conceptual part, the shift to unipolarity has created new pressures on the US government to reduce the costs of managing global security, and Asian security as part of it. As reflected in Secretary Cheney's six principles cited above, the American Congress was pushing for the reduction of US military costs in Asia and for greater burden sharing on part of America's allies in the region. This cost-reduction goal found its immediate application in the 1991 decision to downsize American troop presence in the region.³⁶ The 1990 East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI) announced by the Bush administration planned a 10 to 12 percent reduction in troops over the following three years. This was directly related to Congressional pressures, and described as "preempting haphazard congressional cuts through a process of controlled reductions."³⁷ It led to an intense debate in Washington regarding its appropriate future strategy in the region, which was reflected over the pages of *Foreign Affairs* in the well-known debate between Joseph Nye, and Chalmers Johnson with E.B. Keehn.³⁸ In fact the initial hostility of the Bush administration to any regional security frameworks in Asia in early 1991 stemmed in part from the fear that

³⁵ Virgil S.L. Williams, "United States Security Strategy for the Asia-Pacific Region", United States Army, US Army War College, May 2004., p.3.

³⁶ See data on force-reduction plans in: *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim Report to the Congress 1992*, <http://www.shaps.hawaii.edu/security/report-92.html> (entered February 2009)

³⁷ Former ambassador to Japan Michael Armacost, cited in: Yoichi Funabashi, *Alliance Adrift* (Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), p.249.

³⁸ See Chalmers Johnson and E.B. Keehn, "East Asian Security: The Pentagon's Ossified Strategy", and Joseph S. Nye, "East Asian Security: The Case for Deep Engagement", *Foreign Affairs* July/August 1995.

such regional multilateral security institutions would provide Congress with an excuse to press for further draw-down of US forces in the region.³⁹

What then was the best strategy chosen to advance these partially conflicting goals of maintaining regional stability, preserving American regional dominance and at the same time reducing costs of security management? When looking at the evolution of American policy regarding security cooperation in Asia, as well as in Europe, one can clearly see the impact of the pre-existing security arrangements on later policy choices. These are clearly path-dependent. The initial American response was to rely solely on the pre-existing network of bilateral alliances in the region, with the alliance with Japan being the linchpin. The bilateral strategy appeared attractive and able to accommodate American goals largely because it was not yet maximized. Throughout the Cold War era US-Japanese relations were highly a-symmetric. By 1990 however, it became clear that Japan could, potentially, offer a dramatically higher level of burden-sharing for the US. Consequently, most of the American energy in the mid-90s was put into redefining and upgrading the bilateral alliance with Japan.

The multilateral-regional option at the time was not on the American agenda. It is interesting that when Japan came up with a proposal, known as the Nakayama Proposal, in July 1991, to promote a regional security forum based on ASEAN, the American reaction was cool. Secretary of State James Baker responded by saying that “We ought to be careful about changing those arrangements (i.e., the bilateral alliance- G.P) and

³⁹ Goh (2004), pp.50-1.

discarding them for something else unless we're absolutely certain that the something else is better and will work",⁴⁰

A serious discussion regarding the purpose of the alliance was conducted via the Nye Initiative, which in turn led to the September 1997 new guidelines for US-Japan Defense cooperation that, for the first time, stated that Japan would aid the US to deal with situations in the region (rather than in Japan itself).⁴¹ In the aftermath of 911 this bilateral relationship has further intensified, with Japan providing military support for the American activity in Afghanistan, and, for the first time since 1945, with Japan's dispatch of an armed unit to the war in Iraq.

The limits of the bilateral strategy: The bilateral strategy, however, had its limits and costs. **a.** limits to how far can/will the US push the Japanese military. The ability to re-shape the alliance into a truly symmetric, "normal" alliance was complicated by the lack of consensus (both within Japan and within the US) regarding the meaning and implications of a "normal" Japan for the US and for the rest of Asia. ; **b.** another break on turning the alliance into a full-fledged symmetric alliance stemmed from the fact that greater Japanese military burden sharing may on the one hand reduce American costs, but on the other hand further undermine the main American objective of maintaining regional stability. As Christensen demonstrates, increased Japanese military capacity was seen as a real threat for China and thus a potentially destabilizing factor;⁴² **c.** the pre-existing bilateral security agreements were becoming insufficient for the US to

⁴⁰ Cited in Paul Midford, "Japan's leadership role in East Asian security multilateralism: The Nakayama proposal and the logic of reassurance" *Pacific Review* 13(3) (2000), p.24.

⁴¹ See Funabashi, *Alliance Adrift*, chapter 12.

⁴² Thomas J. Christensen, "Fostering stability or creating a monster? The rise of China and US policy toward East Asia" *International Security* 31 (1) (Summer 2006):81-126, especially p.110.

prepare for dealing with various scenarios of regional instability (especially in the face of force reductions). To be able to react quickly and effectively to such scenarios the US had to be able to station forces and facilities in a wider array of locations. For this purpose the US indeed put emphasis on signing new access agreements to allow it access to facilities, ports and airfields in countries beyond Japan, ROK and the Philippines⁴³, such as Singapore.⁴⁴ This in turn implies that more bilateral agreements need to be signed, which in turn can make the bilateral strategy more costly; **d.** perhaps the most serious downside of a full reliance on the pre-existing bilateral arrangements in the early 90s stemmed from the fact that this strategy failed to convey to states in Asia the necessary sense of *reassurance* that the US indeed intends to remain committed to regional security! In 1991 the plans for cutting down defense spending and for troop reduction caused anxiety in Asia about the reliability of the American commitment to the region.

In light of these anxieties, the Bush administration decided to explore the option of a regional security dialogue as a means to reassure America's friends and allies about its continued commitment. This delicate shift found expression in the American endorsement of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Even then, however, it was made clear that such multilateral dialogues would only supplement the bilateral alliances and not supplant them.⁴⁵ A similar process occurred also on the economic front. On that front as well the US has been long hostile to regional economic arrangements in Asia. This only changed in the late 80s when the US came to endorse the creation of APEC. Here as well the Americans were well aware of the concern in Asia that in light of the

⁴³ The American bases in the Philippines were closed in 1992.

⁴⁴ Williams, "United States Security Strategy", pp.9-10.

⁴⁵ Goh (2004), pp.52-53.

end of the Cold War and the strong US domestic criticism surrounding American trade deficits there was a need to signal that the US was committed to ongoing engagement with the region.⁴⁶ It is important to stress that both ARF and APEC were regional initiatives. The US reacted to these initiatives, rather than initiated them!

By late 1991 then the US has begun to cautiously support regional multilateral security cooperation. From Baker's hesitant statement cited above, we can see a gradual shift in rhetoric. Already in 1995 Joseph Nye pointed to the importance of a "new element" in American security policy in Asia, namely the regional security dialogue via ARF.⁴⁷ In 1997 Secretary of Defense Cohen reflected upon the ARF: "For the first time ever in Asia, we are seeing serious multilateral dialogue on security issues...Through these and other efforts we are creating new regional security structures to confront common challenges. As President Clinton noted, these arrangements are like overlapping plates of security armor, working individually and together to protect our mutual interests and reinforce peace."⁴⁸

The official acknowledgment of the importance of this and other emerging regional institutions appeared in the 2006 National Security Strategy, which read:

"Existing institutions like the APEC forum and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum can play a vital role. New arrangements, such as the U.S.-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership, or others that are focused on problem-solving and action, like the Six-Party Talks and the PSI, can likewise bring together Asian nations to address common challenges. And Asian nations that share our values can join us in partnership to strengthen new democracies and promote democratic reforms throughout the region. This institutional framework, however, must be built upon a foundation of sound bilateral relations with key states in the region."⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ellis S. Krauss, "Japan, the US and the Emergence of Multilateralism in Asia" *The Pacific Review* Vol. 13(3) (2000), pp.481-2.

⁴⁷ Joseph Nye 1995 -FULL CITE

⁴⁸ IMMEDIATE RELEASE No. 308-97 -June 11, 1997- Remarks Prepared for Delivery by William S. Cohen Secretary of Defense - Asia Society June 11, 1997

⁴⁹ NSS 2006- FIND FULL CITE, p.40.

Most recently, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted that: “In recent years, discussions about a “new security architecture” in Asia have assumed more prominence. We certainly share an interest in institutionalizing various forums to deal with region-specific problems, and we intend to participate in their evolution. In the meantime, we will continue to depend on our time-tested Asian alliance architecture.”⁵⁰

What we can see here is the clear anchoring of policy in the pre-existing bilateral alliance framework, accompanied by a growing acceptance of and positive view of regional security frameworks.

Dealing with strategic uncertainties: If initial support for RL was driven by the need to reassure allies, current US interest in supporting regional cooperation schemes in Asia is also closely link to the desire to reduce the high strategic uncertainty in the region, in face of rapid changes taking place within it. As opposed to the early 90s, the strategic scene in Asia is more complex today in face of the dramatic rise of China, making the need for greater transparency, communication channels, and other uncertainty reducing mechanisms much greater. This sense of uncertainty and the risks involved in it is illustrated in a recent statement (April 2009) by James B. Steinberg - Deputy Secretary of State. Steinberg, discussing the big question of how to engage Asia, noted that the rapid changes in Asia in the past 20 years have indeed opened up remarkable opportunities, but also pose two new kinds of dangers, which in turn pose significant risks for the US itself:

“The first is *the risk that Asia will fail to develop the structures of cooperation that are necessary both to seize the opportunities and to master the threats that come with globalization and interdependence.* The second is that the emergence of new, more powerful economic and military actors will generate rivalry and even conflict in *manifestation of the classic security dilemma* that has characterized much of history.. Both dangers pose real risks for the United States. *If Asian countries are unable to develop the structures of cooperation to deal with transnational problems ranging from the global economy to climate change to nonproliferation, then the United States will be that much weaker and less able to protect our own security and economic future.*For this reason, the United States has a profound interest in how Asia navigates this post-

⁵⁰ International Institute for Strategic Studies (Singapore), As Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Singapore, Saturday, May 31, 2008, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1253>

Cold War transition characterized by rising powers and emerging transnational threats. Our strategy, therefore, has three elements: to sustain the traditional bilateral ties that have brought peace and prosperity for generations; to build new, cooperative ties to the emerging powers of Asia; and with our Asian friends, to build new structures of cooperation.” [emphasis added]⁵¹

Reduction of strategic uncertainties is also important in order to reduce the danger of regional instability. Various regional security institutions help build trust and confidence and facilitate the flow of information among regional states. This in itself is an American interest. Curtis even argues that this is such an important goal that the US should not be concerned about exclusionary regional arrangements because those as well promote this important interest.⁵²

Participation in the ARF was also seen in the US as a tool to enhance US regional legitimacy- another crucial security management tool.⁵³ Achieving such broad legitimacy and engaging more states in the region is important to preserve American position in the region, in face of the increasing Chinese competition. This leads us to the next issue:

Cooperative and Competitive security regionalization: Inclusive regional security arrangements play different roles in facilitating and enhancing cooperation with and among allies, in reassuring and luring undecided states, and in containing challengers. Support of the ARF allowed the US to advance two additional goals in this respect. By the late 90s as the China challenge appeared to be greater, ARF was seen by the US (as well as its allies) as a useful tool to promote the two contradictory goals of engaging China, potentially socializing it and turning it into a responsible status-quo actor, and at

⁵¹ James B. Steinberg - Deputy Secretary of State –“Engaging Asia 2009: Strategies for Success”- Remarks At National Bureau of Asian Research Conference Washington, DC - April 1, 2009. <http://www.state.gov/s/d/2009/121564.htm> [entered June 2009].

⁵² Gerald Curtis, “The US in East Asia: Not Architecture but Action”, *Global Asia* Vol.2 (2), p.48.

⁵³ Krauss, pp.54-55.

the same time also containing any potential future Chinese threat or bid for regional hegemony. This is reminiscent of the American logic behind promoting inclusive regional arrangements in Europe, seen at the time as allowing it both to allow German recovery and growth, and at the same time to engage and contain Germany within a European framework. Unlike post-WWII Germany and Europe, in this case Chinese power trajectory was not in American hands. This helps to explain the lower level of commitment to the Asian regional institutions, an issue I turn to next.

Why, however, is there more limited support for RL in Asia compared to Europe on part of the US?

Despite the American involvement with ARF, it is important to note that the US has no interest in promoting deeper regional security institutionalization in Asia following the European model. Paul Wolfowitz's comment on this specific issue is quite telling: "*I certainly don't envision a NATO-like security structure in East Asia. NATO has a unique history.... At the same time, I do believe, in an Asian way that partly through the initiative of ASEAN, with the Asian Regional Forum, but in many other initiatives, including now this initiative by the IISS, people are discovering that without formal structures as structured as NATO, nevertheless, multilateral discussion and coordination on security issues can be very important.*" [emphasis added].⁵⁴ This comment is reminiscent of the American efforts in the mid-50s to clarify that the emerging SEATO

⁵⁴ Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, at the Foreign Press Center , May 29, 2002 12:00 PM, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=3471> [entered May 2009].

was in no way equivalent to NATO.⁵⁵ Can the framework suggested here explain this limited support?

I suggested in the theoretical section that the hegemon's interest in pursuing RL arrangements will vary depending on the size of the expected pooling effect, the perception of regional interest in cooperation and of the degree of compatibility of goals with the hegemon, the existence of competitive regional initiatives, and the nature of pre-existing security arrangements. Starting from the end, I have already shown the enduring impact of the pre-existing bilateral alliance framework, especially due to the perception that Japan could do much more. In Europe, by contrast, by the end of bipolarity there has already existed a well-institutionalized security arrangement including the US, i.e., NATO. Consequently the option of NATO enlargement was an attractive tool to reduce uncertainty in Eastern Europe and manage future security threats.

Partners' interest in regional arrangements and degree of perceived goal compatibility:

In the early post-WWII years a central difference between Asia and Europe was the fact that in Western Europe America's allies were very much interested in pursuing regional cooperation, whereas in Asia there was little regional support for such regional schemes (both on the security and the economic fronts). This lack of local support for regional cooperation played a significant role in lowering American interest in promoting such schemes. This is no longer the case, as the initiatives for regional cooperation forums are now emerging from within the region and not from the US. This growing regional interest in regional cooperative frameworks means that the US cannot

⁵⁵ John Foster Dulles, Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate, 83d Congress- The SEA Collective Defense Treaty, part 1, November 11 1954, pp.16-17.

completely ignore these processes (see my previous comment on competitive security regionalization). However, a second crucial factor is the perception of goal compatibility. Whereas in Europe there is an underlying assumption of shared strategic goals (despite acrimonious sounds in recent years), this is by no means a working assumption regarding Asia. This is especially the case for regional security forums in which China is a member, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum. China is a rapidly growing regional power, perhaps an aspiring regional hegemon, whose future intentions and relations with the US are not quite clear. The stakes involved in building a new security architecture are thus much higher on the Asian front. Because regional arrangements can facilitate regional collective action and increase regional leverage, a hegemon is unlikely to promote regional ML arrangements unless it is convinced that the regional states involved will pursue goals compatible to its own. In this case because the US is not sure about China's future orientation, it could not be sure that a regional forum like ARF will actually promote pro-American goals in the long-run. This implies that while the US has an interest to play along in ARF, it also has no interest in pushing for greater institutionalization or giving greater power to the institution itself that may be used against it at some point in time.

Exclusionary Competitive regional initiatives: Any scenario of other regional security arrangements excluding the US was obviously even more disturbing for the Americans, as they were interpreted as strategic moves against the US. Thus, while ESDP was reluctantly greeted by the US in Europe, any equivalent development in Asia (i.e., exclusionary regional forums) would have been met with clear American opposition. This point is well exemplified by the harsh American reaction to the 1994 report of

prime minister Hosokawa's Advisory Commission on Defense issues (a.k.a. the Higuchi report), which placed a special emphasis on the promotion of ML security cooperation, stressed the need for enhancement of autonomous defense capabilities, and (in a first draft) mentioned the possibility of a US withdrawal from East Asia.⁵⁶

The logic of competitive security regionalization is most evident in the context of the regional competition between the US and China. This competition has a dual impact on the building of regional security institutions. On the one hand, it creates a dynamics of competitive security regionalization, with each of the two states making an effort to promote forums through which they can exercise influence and limit the influence of the other. On the other hand, this same competition is also likely to water down any significant impact that such regional forums may have, beyond their more limited (though still very important) role of managing this great power competition. This duality appears in the operation of the ARF and in other regional forums, both security and economic ones. On the economic front T.J. Pempel argues that the Chinese observed the strong American opposition to Japan's effort to create an Asian financial mechanism in face of the Asian financial crisis, and concluded that regional financial cooperation could stop American influence. It therefore promoted regional financial cooperation⁵⁷.

This growing regional involvement is evident on the security and political front as well. China has initiated the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which although dealing with Central Asia, is worth noting as a security organization that not only

⁵⁶ See: Takeshi Yuzawa, "Japan's changing conception of the ASEAN Regional Forum: From an optimist liberal to a pessimistic realist perspective" *The Pacific Review* Vol.18(4) (December 2005), p.481. American opposition to purely regional cooperation initiatives was more apparent in the economic field, where indeed such initiatives emerged after the 1997 financial crisis.

⁵⁷ Pempel, T. J.(2008) 'How Bush bungled Asia: militarism, economic indifference and unilateralism have weakened the United States across Asia', *The Pacific Review*, 21: 5, p.573.

excludes the US but that carries an anti-NATO tone (especially in times of tension between the US and Russia).⁵⁸ It is also illustrated in the evolving new forum of the East Asia Summit (EAS). The EAS initiative of Malaysian prime minister Badawi in 2004 won the strong backing of China, which saw in it an opportunity to influence East Asian multilateralism to serve its broader strategic goals and to weaken US influence. This found more explicit expression when on the eve of the Summit China proposed that the ASEAN-plus-three (APT) states would take the lead in this new forum (i.e., excluding the US from the driver's seat). This proposal, in turn, met the opposition of Japan and Australia.⁵⁹ Five years later the US is still not a member of the EAS, but the issue of accession is again on the table. While skeptics argue that EAS is a meaningless forum, and still the US should find a way to enter, others view this as an American mistake that has led to diminished American influence in the region.⁶⁰ One can conclude that if the Chinese choose to continue a high profile activity in regional fora in Asia, it would become increasingly difficult for the US to sit them out.

The US thus for its part seeks to advance regional security arrangements while making sure that they are not exclusionary. Exclusionary or limited regional security arrangements appear to be a code word for those excluding the US and thereby potentially organized to limit or challenge its influence. This concern is well expressed in

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.574.

⁵⁹ See: M. Malik, "The East Asia Summit", *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 60(2), pp.208-211

⁶⁰ See the debate between Pempel (fn 49) and Michael Green,(2008) 'The United States and Asia after Bush', *The Pacific Review*, 21: 5, 583 — 594. Also: Prashanth Parameswaran, "The US and the East Asia Summit", *World Politics Review* June 2 2010 <http://worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/print/5675> [entered July 15 2010]. Overall though, the lack of a strategic appreciation of the EAS is reflected in the centrality of the explanation of "time constraints" in explaining why it would be hard for the US to join...

a talk given in May 2008 in Singapore by Robert Gates, US Secretary of Defense. Gates noted the following:

“The United States notes the stirrings of a new regionalism, a pan-Asian search for new frameworks to encompass and thereby moderate inter-state competition. We welcome the resulting search for a “new security architecture,” a search that is still provisional and, by its nature, complementary to the peace and order that prevail today with the help and support of so many of our friends...*However, we do have some benchmarks.* For starters, we should *avoid an approach that treats the quest for a new security architecture as some kind of zero-sum game.* The fact is the region as whole has benefited in recent decades because of cooperation on issues of common concern. The collaborative reality of Asia’s security today is to *the exclusion of no single country* ...It is instead a continuously developing enterprise undertaken with allies, friends, and partners. But it can only succeed if we treat the region as a single entity. There is little room for a separate “East Asian” order. Our second benchmark is a willingness to work with partners and friends to facilitate the evolution of security arrangements *suitable to our common needs.* We will work to ensure that the United States continues to be welcomed in coming years in this part of the world, as we have been in the past. “ [emphasis added].⁶¹

In post-WWII Europe the tremendous project of building regional security arrangements via NATO was clearly related to competition with the challenger, the Soviet Union and the need to reassure and strengthen Western allies. The role of this competition in American motivation to build NATO cannot be underestimated. In the aftermath of Soviet collapse and the apparent transition of the new Russia to democracy, there were no clear challengers to the US. The main regional security threats in Europe that became relevant during the 90s were managing instability in the Balkans. For that purpose there was much to be gained for the US by promoting or at least going along with a better integrated European military capacity. Today as well, in Europe we do not observe equivalent dynamics of competitive security regionalization. The strong anchor of

⁶¹ International Institute for Strategic Studies (Singapore), As Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Singapore, Saturday, May 31, 2008
<http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1253>

NATO mitigates potential concerns about EU independent security cooperation. It would be interesting to observe the American reactions should Russia decide to pursue a more active regionalist path (as it did with China via the SCO). Ironically then while regional security cooperation in Europe is more advanced and institutionalized, the US may afford to be less attentive to regional security developments on that front than to regional developments in Asia.⁶²

The impact of the expected pooling effect in the creation of meaningful regional cooperation:

Another significant difference between the dynamics of regional security arrangements in Europe and Asia stems from the economic logic of cost-reduction associated with enhancing regional cooperation. As I noted earlier, this argument rests on the logic of a *pooling effect*, i.e., that the combined efforts of the regional partners will be more significant than the individual contribution of each state. In Europe this logic of pooling worked quite well. After WWII the Americans were interested in creating joint regional capabilities to meet to Communist threat, and after the demise of bipolarity the Americans were interested in creating an effective European military force to support American operations around the globe, via NATO's new concept of out-of-area operations. In Asia-Pacific, on the other hand, the logic of pooling was less attractive. As I argued, the main American goal of joining the ARF was to reassure regional partners of US commitment, and to use the forum as a means of engaging China. There was no

⁶² It is indicative that in the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association it is much easier to find panels on regional security in Asia than on ESDP, with the latter usually populated by European scholars...

significant military pooling involved. Furthermore, in military terms I explained before that the key contribution of regional partners to US security strategy was to provide it with access to local facilities. Given this goal, pooling was not very relevant. Consequently, while the costs involved in going along with this multilateral framework were low, the expected benefits in term of cost-reduction were also very low. And on the same note, the low level of institutionalization of the ARF, and the spirit of the ASEAN Way that guided its operation, to begin with made it clear to the US that supporting ARF was in no way advancing an “exit strategy” for the US from Asia-Pacific!

A real potential added value for a regional approach appeared only after 2001, when counter-terrorism came to the forefront. Unlike the issue of access agreements, combating transnational terror groups in Asia had much to gain from working via a regional multilateral framework such as the ARF. Consequently the US did invest more energy in designing and upgrading cooperation with ASEAN members in the joint combating of international terrorism. On August 1 2002 it signed the *ASEAN-United States of America Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism*. In the declaration all sides acknowledged “the transnational nature of terrorist activities and the need to strengthen international cooperation at all levels in combating terrorism in a comprehensive manner” and called for greater cooperation on intelligence and terrorist financing information sharing on counter-terrorism measures, including the development of more effective counter-terrorism policies and legal, regulatory and administrative counter-terrorism regimes, enhancing liaison relationships amongst their law enforcement agencies to engender practical counter-terrorism regimes, strengthening capacity-building efforts through training and education; consultations between officials,

analysts and field operators; and seminars, conferences and joint operations as appropriate and more.⁶³ This was further enhanced in the joint declaration of 2005 to create the US-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership, which would also “promote closer cooperation on combating transnational crimes, including inter alia, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and enhancing maritime and border security.”⁶⁴ The intensification of US-ASEAN cooperation in recent years is intertwined with the American global war on terror. At the same time though, the goal of counter-terrorism also led to the upgrading of some of America’s old bilateral regional ties, namely with the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore. The latter being an active partner in counter-terror efforts and the Philippines enjoying active American military support in its domestic fight against the Jemaa Islamiya.⁶⁵ The US has also promised counterterrorism funding for Indonesia, and even improved relations with Malaysia.⁶⁶

Beyond these factors, קצת תקוע כאן. מה לעשות עם זה לסיכום?]

Conclusions and suggestions for future research

⁶³ ASEAN-United States of America Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism - Bandar Seri Begawan, 1 August 2002

⁶⁴ [Joint Vision Statement on the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership](http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/11/20051117-4.html), November 17, 2005 - <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/11/20051117-4.html>

⁶⁵ See the report by Prepared Statement for the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, House International Relations Committee Hearing: U.S. Security Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region By Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Peter Rodman, June 26, 2003, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/congress/2003_hr/index.html

⁶⁶ On this see Alice Ba, “China and ASEAN: re-navigating relations for the 21st century Asia”, *Asian Survey* Vol.43(4), 2003, p.644.

Both in Europe and in Asia the global shift to unipolarity has created significant strategic uncertainty. Both the European partners and the Asian partners of the US were initially concerned about possible American abandonment, and it was this initial concern that was the significant trigger for the development of regional security cooperation. The scope and depth of such cooperation was significantly more impressive in Europe, but this of course needs to be considered in light of the dramatically different starting points of the two regions in terms of pre-existing levels of regional institutions. On the European front there was much more concern over the danger of entrapment and possible American domination, and this concern pushed forward security regionalization so as to develop a meaningful counterweight that could offer a significant burden sharing for the US and speak out in a louder voice. While there were some concerns over entrapment in Asia, mainly during the Bush era, interestingly, such concerns were less dominant. Here the main concern driving security regionalization was the need to increase transparency and reduce the uncertainty regarding the future trajectories of the US, China and Japan.

The focus of this paper, however, was on the American reaction to these trends of security regionalization. In the beginning of the paper I raised the following hypotheses:

- The shift to unipolarity is likely to create a basic interest in supporting regional security arrangements in order to maintain regional stability, reduce systemic uncertainty and reduce the costs of managing the system.
- The degree of support for security regionalization will vary depending on whether there are significant pooling effects involved.
- The degree of support for security regionalization will vary depending on the perception of regional interest in such arrangements, and more so, on the perception of the degree of compatibility of their goals with those of the US.

- The degree of support for security regionalization will vary depending on the nature of pre-existing security arrangements.

In Europe there was no significant change in American regional strategy, which was already reliant on the multilateral element, though we could trace the logic of the argument in the American motivation to expand NATO. The incentives to invest more in regional cooperation in Europe were more evident among the European states, a dimension not addressed in this paper. In East Asia, on the other hand, there was a more significant change, where, as opposed to American post-WWII European policies, the US had previously advanced a hub-and-spokes regional security network. This paper traces the changing official rhetoric of the American administrations regarding the potential value of such regional horizontal security frameworks like the ARF. It is clear that the US still puts greater weight on its bilateral alliances, but the regional multilateral option is clearly on the menu at this point. This change of approach was traced to the growing strategic uncertainties facing the US on its Asian front, and the need to balance its somewhat conflicting goals, such as the goal of strengthening Japan and giving it a greater regional security role without at the same time disturbing the delicate balance between Japan and China, which in itself is seen as crucial for regional stability.

Evidence in the paper points to the importance of the potential pooling effect in explaining the variation in level of interest in regional arrangements. Whereas in Europe the US was interested in military burden sharing, making pooling of resources crucial, in Asia its main interest was in access agreements and burden sharing only from its main ally Japan. Thus there was no strong pooling logic involved.

It is perhaps the combination of the pre-existing strong bilateral alliance framework that continued to dominate any discussion of “real burden sharing” (especially in the US-Japan alliance), as well as the accepted weakness of the emerging regional security framework (most notably the ARF), that made any talk of serious regional burden sharing with the US irrelevant. The only issue area on which such regional cooperation was considered was the war on terror. This highlights the important and lingering effect of pre-existing regional arrangements. It also points to an important question to further explore: To what extent is the strong hub-and-spokes framework created in Asia an irreversible spoiler for increased horizontal security cooperation? On this issue we should note that on the economic front East Asia has been able to develop impressive regional cooperation, especially in the aftermath of the 1997 financial crisis. Will these significant developments have any spillover effect in the future to the security front? After all, many of the regional states view security to begin with in comprehensive terms, so that the economic-hard security distinction may be misleading.

In terms of perceived goal compatibility, the paper showed that the Americans are aware of the potential dangers of encouraging too much independent regional security cooperation. In both regions the US somewhat reluctantly came to support these post-cold War processes of security regionalization, and in both regions the US mainly reacted to regional initiatives (the case of NATO expansion being a bit different). In both regions the US remained very sensitive to any initiatives of regional security cooperation that excluded its presence. I suggested though that with Europe, despite what appear to be quite significant policy disagreements, the US still perceives a basic underlying strategic goal compatibility, which does not exist on the Asian front. Chinese

intentions are unclear, a fully independent and militarily equipped Japan is still not a scenario Americans feel fully comfortable with, and the attitudes of Southeast Asian states as well cannot be taken for granted to be pro-American.

Related to this point, we should also consider the impact of different regional strategic setting. One must keep in mind the fact that in Europe, as described before, the US currently faces mainly security management challenges. Conversely, in Asia-Pacific the end of the Cold War and the breakdown of the USSR left the US to deal both with security management challenges, but also with a serious rising challenger, China. Consequently, on the Asian front the logic of security management and the more traditional logic of balancing and containment were intertwined. This in turn made the continued role of the bilateral alliance system much more important. Future research also points to an interesting comparison to make will be between the role of China in Asia's emerging security architecture and the role of Russia in Europe's new regional security architecture. It is interesting to note that while China is perceived as a much more significant challenge than Russia, China is a member of most regional security frameworks in Asia, whereas Russia is excluded from most of the regional security frameworks in Europe.

Last but not least, the paper has pointed to a variety of motivations that may lead to support regional security arrangements. I made a distinction between cooperative security regionalization, aimed mainly to facilitate security management under unipolarity, and competitive security regionalization, which is much more a reflection of power politics and appears as a reaction to regional initiatives of challengers. This latter concept can be further refined to distinguish between exclusive regional arrangements,

which exclude/ try to exclude the hegemon (or the potential challenger/s) and inclusive regional arrangements, which include to potential challenger and is aimed at containing it from within. These are all quite distinct motivations to promote security regionalization, some based on a Neoliberal approach, and some based on a Realist approach. While the final observation may appear similar- i.e., growing interest in regional arrangements, its implications for regional cooperation, peace and stability may be quite different. Furthermore, the phenomenon of competitive security regionalization suggests that even if the system now shifts to multipolarity, the dynamics of regional security cooperation is not likely to disappear. The shift to unipolarity may have pushed it forward, but its future no longer hinges upon unipolarity. These observations, naturally, should be further explored in future research.