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The U.S Reorientation and European Security

Priorities, Alliances and Power
A Document Study on European Security

Bachelor's project in European Studies

Supervisor: Viktoriya Fedorchak

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Kunnskap for en bedre verden

Abstract

In this thesis, I consider the US pivot to Asia and how their new strategy affects European defense and security policy. There are several factors that help to show how this is a relatively complex issue, with many variables. In this thesis, I look at factors such as the balance of power, the importance, and the issue of European autonomy for Europe and the United States. Europe has recently shown a desire to be more active in defense and security policy. This is well received by the U.S, but to what extent are they willing to let Europe grow into a potential international actor and take its place next to the U.S in the international order? The world is made up of an anarchic structure, and everyone wants to be at the top of the food chain. Today this structure is being challenged by both Russia and China. This dissertation will show how balance of power is an important part of maintaining this structure, as well as how it is challenged. The U.S, for example, must give up some of its place in this structure in order to allow Europe to emerge as a serious global player. This is nevertheless a challenge for the U.S, shown through the security dilemma. By doing this, they will have to give up some of their power and influence in Europe, and it is clear that this will change the interaction between the two parties. The U.S pivot to Asia also creates a situation where the geopolitical structure in Europe potentially can change. If this happens, the prospect of seeing a stronger Russia is present. Either way, one thing is clear. The U.S and Europe, if they develop as two more equal actors, will have a much stronger position in the international order to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Sammendrag

I denne oppgaven tar jeg for meg USA pivot to Asia og hvordan deres nye strategi påvirker Europeisk forsvar og sikkerhetspolitikk. Det er flere faktorer som er med på å vise hvordan dette er et relativt komplekst spørsmål, med mange variabler. I denne oppgaven ser jeg på faktorer som maktbalanse, viktigheten og problematikken rundt europeisk autonomitet for Europa og USA. Europa har den siste tiden vist et ønske om å kunne være mer aktive innenfor forsvar og sikkerhetspolitikk. Dette er godt mottatt hos USA, men i hvor stor grad er de villige til å la Europa vokse til en potensiell internasjonal aktør, og ta sin plass ved siden av USA i den internasjonale ordenen? Verden er bygd opp av en anarkisk struktur, og alle ønsker å være på toppen av næringskjeden. I dag ser man at denne strukturen blir utfordret av både Russland og Kina. Denne oppgaven vil vise hvordan maktbalanse er en viktig del av opprettholdelsen av denne strukturen, samt hvordan den blir utfordret. USA må for eksempel gi opp noe av sin plass i denne strukturen for å slippe Europa til, for å kunne vise seg som en seriøs global aktør. Dette er likevel en utfordring for USA, vist gjennom sikkerhetsdilemmaet. Ved å gjøre dette vil de måtte gi opp noe av sin makt og innflytelse i Europa, og det er klart at dette vil endre samspillet mellom de to partene. USA`s pivot to Asia skaper også en mulighet for at den geopolitiske strukturen i Europa kan endre seg. Om dette skjer er muligheten for å se et sterkere Russland tilstede. Uansett, så er det en ting som er klart. Det er at USA og Europa som to mer likestilte aktører vil ha en mye sterkere posisjon i den internasjonale ordenen til å møte morgendagens utfordringer.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Presenting the subject

The U.S pivot to Asia is a strategy one has heard of as early as the Bush administration, but it was not before 2018 one actually saw a change. The main priorities for the U.S (The United States of America) Defense Department are a long-term strategic competition with Russia and China (Mattis, 2018, s. 4). From the U. S` s standpoint they want to ensure stability and security by maintaining the freedom and openness of nations (Bonny Lin, 2020). China, on the other hand, opposes this in order to fulfill its own interest, which is why the U.S now has a reorientation to Asia. This has raised the question of how this will affect Europe's security and defense policy. Many argue that Europe must become stronger on the defense department to keep up with the changes that are taking place on the global stage.

Europe is prepared take on more responsibility, but how will this turn out? The U.S remains an active player in securing European defense and security policy. This is also to ensure their own security, as well as keep the European and global balance of power stable (Becker, 2021). But how will this lead to a more engaged Europe when one still has the U.S as a contributing and important factor in maintaining stability. And how will Europe be able to rise as a credible global actor if the communication is that the U.S still has "power" in Europe? By using empirical examples, the security dilemma and neorealism, I will take a closer look at how the balance of power contributes to influencing the international hierarchy, and thus how the U.S. pivot to Asia will affect European security and defense policy.

1.2 Research question

How does U.S pivot to Asia effect European defense and security?

In this dissertation I will specifically look at what U.S pivot to Asia mean, and find out if it has had an impact on European defense. Furthermore, I will use France and Germany as empirical examples to go in depth of Europe`s relationship with the U.S. and how this relationship brings different challenges on Europe`s cooperation.

1.2.1 Sub question

- How does American presence in Europe affect relations with Russia?
- Does power-balance have an impact on European Defense and Security?
- How is Europe`s new security and defense agenda affected by the U.S presence in Europe?

1.3 Methodology

The U.S. pivot to Asia is a relative new strategy and there has not been much research on the topic. In this thesis I will therefore rely on political actors' statements/interviews, as well as reports, analyses, and others' research, that is rooted in the US's strategy on the reorientation, and their actions based on this. Moreover, there is not much theory to pick on this topic since there is, in general, little written on the theme. Therefore, the thesis will be based on empirical information, where the balance of power concept helps explain interaction between states. This will provide an insight into how states are working to maintain their position in the international system, and will thus, give an image of the political anarchic structure of the international community. This, in turn, will help explain how the US shift will affect European defense and security policy. Further I will use the security dilemma and neorealism to present an understanding for how the international community operate.

1.3.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is a type of qualitative research that utilizes documentary evidence to answer a particular research question. Methods in qualitative research depend on reviews, assessment, and interpretation of the given data to apply empirical knowledge and understanding of the concept being studied (Gross, 2018, s. 545). In my dissertation I have chosen to use document analysis as my method since this will give me the breadth of empirical data that I need to consider the trends that are happening in Europe in defense and security matters. Further I am using a descriptive case study which will give me an in-depth view of the topic I am studying. However, there are little written on the topic. Even though I have based my research on articles and sites that are peer-reviewed, there are always a chance for this to lack some credibility. I have therefor tried to back the information on governmental reports and statements. By using two countries, France and Germany, as empirical examples I will get a more understanding of the significance they are to the new European defense and security agenda.

1.4 Theoretical framework

I have chosen to use the security dilemma and neorealism as theories in this dissertation. These will be a vital part in the discussion to show the connections in balance of power, and how states react to each other's policies. The security dilemma will show how states are influenced by other states decisions, while neorealism will give and understanding of why states act the way they do.

1.4.1 Neorealism

The Neorealists looks at the state as the primary actor to states security, where security is defined by Waltz as: "*The study of the threat use and control of military force*" (Waltz, 1979, s. 70). Simultaneously they emphasize the anarchical nature of the international system. This is shown by states seeking an offensive military strategy do defend themselves while expanding their sphere of influence. This is done through power which

is central in the Neorealist approach (Rudolph, 2003). Both Waltz and Gelb points to the importance of power in international relations, in the form of a strong military which will ensure self-preservation and survival in a possible war situation that can occur (Gelb, 2010). The Neorealist approach to state security can be summarized by Kenneth Waltz: *"The state amongst states, conducts its affairs in the brooding shadow of violence. Because some states may at any time use force, all states must be prepared to do so"* (Waltz, 1979, s. 102).

1.4.2 The security dilemma

"A structural notion in which the self-help attempts of states to look after their security needs tend, regardless of intention, to lead to rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others as potentially threatening" (Herz, 1951, s. 7). This was the way John H. Herz described the security dilemma in his book: *Political Realism and Political Idealism*". In this thesis, this dilemma will help to highlight Europe`s position in security and defense situations that have arisen after the US newly focus from Europe to China. This I will present later in this thesis.

1.5 Literature Review

The literature review will give a picture of the reports and documents I have used to discuss my problem. Not much has been written when it comes to this topic. Thus, the empire presented will be based on information obtained from various reports, other researchers' works and relevant updates from relevant and credible news sources. I have also used sites, such as, Rand corporations that present works and discussions where, among others, are written by political scientists.

To get further information on countries policies on the topic I have used white papers, and peer-reviewed articles. The French white paper was written in 2013 (Rèpublique Francaise, 2013) and is about France's primary focus area for the next few years. The world has changed a lot since then, but much of what emerges is confirmed through their active work through the EU and by reports from the European Commission. The article on German policy by Gisela Müller (Bocquet, 2019) are based on the question if Germany is headed toward European leadership and their evolving role. This is peer-reviewed, and I therefore see it as a credible source, since the last white paper on Germany was written in 2016 and did not contain information about the increase of German leadership in defense and security, which Angela Merkel has outed in the last several years and therefor indicated a change on policy.

The U.S reorientation was officially laid out in the U.S defense departments summary in 2018 (Mattis, 2018). This is a governmental institution and therefore a valid source to use. Here China was recognised as one of two primary threats to the international order and its stability, as well as their policy on this area. Together with the articles from Bonny Lin (Bonny Lin, 2020) on the Chinese and the U.S intentions in the Indo-pacific from Rand Corporation, and an article from strategic studies quarterly from Jordan Becker (Becker, 2021) on the future of America`s European strategy and competition with China, peer-reviewed. I get needed information to understand more of how the reorientation is a strategic move from the U.S side, here also from speeches and remarks

from Biden published by The White House, as well how this will have an impact on European defense and security.

To tie this together the articles by (Simòn, 2019), on the stability of the European power balance, and (Anstrén, 2021), on why the European future depends on the line in the Taiwan strait, will show how the power-balance in Europe, as well as in the international order is on the line if it becomes a conflict between the U.S and China over Taiwan. These are from sites, Atlantic Council and War on the rocks, which is developed and written by scientific scholars that focuses on political global and national changes, and war and conflict.

All these sources, among others, helps to fill the gaps in the missing literature. And together they paint a picture of how the European and the U.S relationship unfolds. As well as how the European defense and security are affected by both power-balance and U.S pivot to Asia. These sources are selected because of their contemporary approach and relevance to today`s situation. Therefore, most of the sources used are not published later than 2018.

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

At this point I have presented my chosen methodology, theoretical framework -which will be a vital part in the discussion- and evaluated my chosen sources that I find necessary to clarify the relevance of the research question. Further I will go in depth of the U.S defense strategy, and their reasoning for a reorientation to Asia. To understand how this potentially can have an impact on European defense and security, I have presented how the European power- balance unfolds today, so I can get a deeper understanding for how this can be compromised by global competitors like Russia, and China. Here the role of U.S also plays its part. The third chapter presents the relationship between U.S and Europe, and how this relationship, despite good cooperation, can be complicated. This is shown through two empirical examples, Germany and France, which now are the two largest players in EU, and Europe in general. Finally, I will link this together in my discussion before I present my findings in the conclusion.

2 The U.S pivot to Asia and their continuance of European Defense

The U.S pivot to Asia is a strategy/plan one has heard of as early as the Bush administration, but it was not before 2018 one actually saw a change (Mattis, 2018). A planned design laid the foundation for actions to take place. To understand why the U.S is planning a pivot to Asia, one must know the hard facts. Their broad plan is based on China's increasing influence during the last years, especially at sea, that so far has not met any great resistance, which led to an occupation of almost all of the disputed South China sea, where they managed to militarize (Cole, 2018). In other words, China has created a new status quo at sea. The world has now awakened: U.S and some of its allies, France, UK, Australia, and Japan had been involved by FONOP (freedom of navigation patrols) and the U.S reorientation to Asia has started (Cole, 2018).

2.1 The U.S Defense Strategy

As the summary of the National defense strategy by the department of defense in U.S specifies; *"The department of defense will be prepared to defend the homeland, remain the permanent military power in the world, ensure balance of power in our favor, and advance an international order that is most conducive to our security and prosperity (Mattis, 2018)"*. The 2018 defense strategy was the first U.S National Defense strategy to be released in a decade (Lange, 2018). Its two main goals were to:

1. Restore America`s competitive edge by blocking global rivals Russia and China from challenging the U.S and their allies (Lange, 2018), and
2. To keep those rivals from throwing the current international order out of balance (Lange, 2018).

As one can see the main priorities for the U.S Defense Department are a long-term strategic competition with Russia and China. Because of the significant threats these countries pose to the U.S. prosperity and security, U.S. will work towards sustained investments to ensure their position in the future based on the threat Russia and China pose today (Mattis, 2018, s. 4). In other words, U.S. wishes to maintain a regional balance of power in Europe, Western hemisphere, and the Indo-Pacific to mention some. To do this U.S is focusing on building a more lethal force and strengthening their existing alliances as well as attract new partners (Mattis, 2018). By building a stronger force, U.S. is seeking to create a joint force that will provide an advantage if any probability of any type of conflict arises. This force will, during day-to-day operations, prevent aggression in three key regions: Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East (Mattis, 2018, ss. 5-6).

To achieve these goals U.S. are also centering on strengthen their alliances and attract new partners. The aims presented in the summary from the department of defense does clarifies how important this is if one is to achieve these set goals (Mattis, 2018, s. 8). The

alliances will give a strategic advantage that the competitors will not be able to match if the strategy is to succeed. This is not an old strategy and has served the U.S. well throughout the years (Mattis, 2018, s. 8). Here one can look at events such as 9/11, where U.S. allies and partners, in the aftermath, came to U. S` s aid and contributed to every major U.S.-led military engagement since (Mattis, 2018, s. 8). From a U.S. perspective, the international order will maintain its balance and remain open if the allies and partners stand together to defend freedom, rules, and work to deter war (Mattis, 2018, s. 8).

2.2 The U.S pivot to Asia

Over the times American priorities have shifted. All through the cold war, American defense strategies wished to maintain a massive land force in Europe to keep the Soviet Union at bay. In the 2000`s, the attention was primarily on the Middle East as the U.S conducted its "war on terrorism" in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today the focus centers on China (Miyasaka, 2020). The question is: Why are U.S. pivoting to Asia in the first place? In terms of global power, the worry is that China will surpass North America and Europe combined by 2030. China`s has had a high rate of growth within economics, military, population, and technological investments. According to the European Council, China will have the largest economy within 2030 that will surpass U.S, as well as Russia, Japan, and Europe as a collective group (National Intelligence Council , 2012, s. iv).

Essentially, it is the vision of the Indo-Pacific that drive competition between China and the U.S. From U. S` s standpoint they want to ensure stability and security by maintaining the freedom and openness of nations. They also have their obligations towards their NATO partners in the region (New Zealand, Australia, Japan, and South Korea), not members. From China`s point of view the goal is to expand their power by creating an integration in the region where one is dependent on China (Bonny Lin, 2020). This will limit outside powers and open the opportunity to bring Southeast Asia under Beijing`s leadership. One example is Taiwan, who has an unofficial partnership with U.S., where they have supported Taiwan and sold them arms to defend themselves from Chinese aggression (Albert, 2020). Since 1949, Taiwan has been governed independently from China, but today China sees Taiwan as a province in China, where Taiwan sees themselves as an independent, detached territory with an elected government (Albert, 2020). Because of the rising tensions in the area, U.S are likely to interfere to hinder China in their aim. The council of foreign relations has now ranked the possibility of a crisis between U.S and China, over the situation in Taiwan, and therefore the Indo-Pacific as high, which will have consequences, also for Europe (Anstrén, 2021).

Robert O`Brien who was Donald Trump`s national security advisor said that: "*U.S. forces must be deployed abroad in a more forward and expeditionary manner than they have been in recent years*" (Miyasaka, 2020). This to counter the "*two great power competitors*" of China and Russia (Miyasaka, 2020). He also outed his opinion specifically on the Indo-Pacific where he was adamant that U.S. and its allies now face the most significant geopolitical challenge since the end of the cold war (Miyasaka, 2020). China has shown itself as a nation who is leveraging military modernization to influence

operations and gain more power through economic activities to force neighbouring countries to reorganize the Indo-Pacific region to China's advantage (Mattis, 2018, s. 2). By China asserting its power through an all-of-nation long-term strategy and works toward Indo-Pacific regional hegemony they actively try to displace U.S. to accomplish global preeminence in the future (Mattis, 2018, s. 2).

During the Obama administration it was prioritized a strengthening in bi and multi-lateral connections to allies and partners to face common threats, which continued with Donald Trump (Grossman, 2020). The summary published in 2018 on the U.S National Defense Strategy was the document that made the U.S reorientation official, where one saw a change in policy and military adjustments (Mattis, 2018). This is shown by the U.S. allies and partners effort to contain China in its bid for regional hegemony (Mattis, 2018). Further, the U.S has made it clear that they are ready to counter China's military orientation in Asia, and in the Indo-Pacific region. This agenda is bipartisan in Washington, and are likely to persist in future administrations, with variations in execution but steady in perceiving China as a global rival (Becker, 2021, p. 93). It does seem that Trump's successor, President Biden will follow up on this policy. *"We'll confront China's economic abuses: counter its aggressive, coercive action: to push back on China's attack on human rights, intellectual prosperity, and global governance"* (Biden, Remarks by President Biden on America's Place in the World, 2021). With Bidens clear statement one can see this pivot of focus to Asia as a long-term strategy moving forward for the US.

2.3 European power-balance, The U.S engagement in Europe, and Europe's mindset to the reorientation

The U.S. policy as it shows in the defense departments summary from 2018, specifies that Russia still is a high priority. They are pursuing to spread their sphere of influence and are working to shape the world according to their authoritarian model (Mattis, 2018, s. 2). Russia is pursuing to get an influence over nations on its border on the basis of their diplomatic and economic decisions. All in affect to disrupt NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and to change the security structure in Europe as well as the Middle East to its benefit (Mattis, 2018, s. 2). Earlier, one has seen how Russia is undermining Georgia, eastern Ukraine and the Crimean Peninsula, and their democratic processes. Together with Russia's modernization of nuclear arsenal and their obvious attempt of expansion, their position is clear, and they are still considered a big threat, not just for Europe, but also for the U.S. security (Mattis, 2018, s. 2).

The international order - an order created by the U. S to safeguard its allies and partners from aggression and coercion, and their liberty. This is being undermined from within the system by Russia and China. They are abusing the benefits and are trying to destabilize the orders principles, and "rules of the road" to gain more influence (Mattis, 2018, s. 2). U.S goal is therefor to continue to maintain favourable regional balances of power, and Europe is a priority (Mattis, 2018, s. 4). Here are the recent events in Ukraine a good example of the importance of maintaining this balance. This situation shows how Russia

is utilizing their power when they have the opportunity, and in their view, a legitimate reason to do so.

2.3.1 Russia`s threat to Ukraine

The triggering causes of the conflict are based on Ukraine bordering both Russia and the EU (FN-Sambandet, 2021). Ukraine thus has an initial interest in a good relationship with both parties. Nevertheless, various groups within Ukraine favours closer cooperation with only one of the parties. Identity plays an important role in which side one follows. Most EU supporters live in the west, and most Russia supporters live in the east. It was the choice between a relationship with the EU/West or Russia that created the crisis in Ukraine (FN-Sambandet, 2021). There are around 17 percent ethnic Russians living in Ukraine, and even more speak Russian as their first language (FN-Sambandet, 2021). The authorities in Russia, headed by President Vladimir Putin, argue that Russia has a responsibility to ethnic Russians in Ukraine, most of whom live in the East (FN-Sambandet, 2021). This is despite the fact that they are Ukrainian citizens. In short, this is thus some of the backing and facts Russia uses when they legitimate its actions against Ukraine. The level of conflict rose again in 2021. Russia's military presence in the border of Ukraine in April caused the U.S and the rest of NATO to react (FN-Sambandet, 2021). NATO reports that it has increased its military presence in the Black Sea region, with more air patrols and a greater presence at sea. Among other things, the United States is reporting that troops will be deployed to Germany. Which showed how Europe still relies on the US to establish a deterrent coalition, as well as support for Ukraine.

This conflict risks an escalation if Russia continues to expand their presence in Ukraine or seek to actively expand to NATO countries. East Europe is a priority for the stability in the region (Cfr, 2021). Even if Ukraine is not a NATO member, this has been up for discussion several times, they and other east European countries are vital to support (Cfr, 2021). Russia`s active agenda goes against essential principles in both NATO and EU. By helping, they maintain their premises, while sending a strong signal of non-acceptable behaviour. There will be consequences if they continue this strategy, which hopefully works as a deterrent (Cfr, 2021). This have nevertheless raised a concern of Russia`s intentions elsewhere in East Europe, and Russia`s actions are complicating possibilities of cooperation in other areas, such as arms control, terrorism, and political solutions in crisis-ridden areas (Cfr, 2021).

2.3.2 The European power-balance

An important factor for U. S`s reorientation to Asia is that the power-balance in Europe today is relatively stable. Even though it is true that Russia poses a military threat to this stability and are conducting hybrid activity to destabilize several European countries, they are not, at this point, capable of reaching regional hegemony (Simòn, 2019). They are simply too weak financially and isolated in the diplomacy area. Europe, however, is still military dependent on the U.S, and in that sense also in the security department. Actors like Germany and EU has collected a bigger financial and diplomatic influence over the last several years, but they are not close enough to be dominant in both areas to decline U.S military assistance (Simòn, 2019). Numerous security experts` states that it

isn't before one can maintain a power balance across of the military, political-diplomatic and the economical domain that one poses a threat for hegemony (Simòn, 2019).

In Europe today, the power balance is not endangered. Russia can threaten parts of Europe but not the West and EU as a whole. Here, NATO comes into play (Simòn, 2019). It ensures a terror balance and brings Europe and U.S together which strengthens Europe's security position, as the situation plays out at the current time. On the other side, this alliance also prohibits the growth of a European strategic autonomy. Due to NATO's extension to the central east and southeast Europe after the cold war, the NATO's defense line expanded further East, on both the continent and to the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Baltic Sea (Simòn, 2019).

U.S. together with their European allies are capable to constrain Russia's desire to expand their sphere of influence. Economically, Russia does not measure up to Europe and U.S on this field (Simòn, 2019). Germany, France, and UK are appearing as Europe's three great powers. Some sees Germany as Europe's economic hegemon, which the U.S. also admits to (Simòn, 2019). Here France and U.K becomes the stabilizing poles to Germany's economic leadership (Simòn, 2019). Despite this, it is unlikely that Germany will want to compete with the U.S. for the leading role in European geopolitics. This because Berlin leads a strategic subordination to Washington, which one can see through NATO (Simòn, 2019).

Through NATO, the U.S. has had an opportunity to prevent the EU from becoming a serious military or political player, to the extent that it constitutes a unified entity that meets the requirements of political, diplomatic, and economic independence required to constitute a serious challenger to the U.S. position in Europe (Simòn, 2019). On one side U.S is welcoming EU's efforts to strengthening their defense capabilities and take on more of the burden sharing, on the other side, when Europe agrees to this, U.S becomes more resistant to the idea (Wieslander, 2020). This is because U.S believes that this can be harmful to U. S's leading role in defense in the European market and transatlantic community. From a U.S perspective they find that they are facing three main powers that potentially can outplay U.S in the European anarchical Structure: A autonomous EU, Germany, and Russia (Becker, 2021, s. 97). As the situation is today, Europe is too fragmented when it comes to security, and therefore, a clear referee has not emerged in Europe. Now, smaller states look to different actors for security. Some look to the EU to withstand pressure from powers such as Russia, and in some cases, the U.S. Other countries, as the Central and Eastern European states, use their bilateral ties with the U.S to strengthen their political independence and security, and thus have more confidence in NATO (Simòn, 2019). In other words, nations look to different powers. Within EU it is Germany and France that stands out. Outside the EU, some look to Russia and other to U.K, and the U.S. The flexible balance of power in Europe works to U. S's advantage. Russia is still unpredictable and the U.S seems to be closely following the EU and Germany's economic development, and the aforementioned defense integration (Simòn, 2019). Based on this, it does not appear that the U.S is concerned, due to the lack of threat to the regional balance of power in Europe.

3 The U.S-Europe`s relationship and interdependence-Two cases: France and Germany

After world war two, U.S sought to organize European institutions to transcend authorities and coordinate policies so that normal market forces could operate. By doing this, with the right expert guidance, they hoped for a change where national interests would come through with the help to depoliticize diverse issues, which in the end would weld once rival states into an organic unit of economic and political power (Becker, 2021). The wide perception of this plan was to contain Soviet communism and U.S saw these efforts as a way to help stop the Soviet sphere of influence, and with a unitized Europe they would become an ally in this wider struggle (Becker, 2021). Now, Europe is entering a phase where European autonomy is discussed (European Commission, 2020). I have therefor chosen to define European strategic autonomy as they do in the Clingendael report, European strategic autonomy in security and defense : "*European strategic autonomy in security and defense is the ability of Europe to make its own decisions, and to have the necessary means, capacity and capabilities available to act upon these decisions, in such a manner that it is able to properly function on its own when needed*" (Dick Zandee, 2020).

A report from the center for strategic and international studies on the U, S., NATO, and the defense of Europe from 2018 made the conclusion, after an assessment of the NATO forces, the national contribution to the NATO forces and military balance, that it will take decades before Europe are at a level of military spending before Europe can be independent from the U.S. (Cordesman, 2018). The situation happening in Ukraine is one example of this.

3.1 France and Germany

The U. S has over the times been adequate to maintain Europe`s balance of power with their military, -economic, -and diplomatic engagement in the region (Simòn, 2019). Now when it is an increasing demand for them in Asia it raises the question of how they are going to preserve a favourable European regional balance? The U.S defense office has argued that Russia is seen as a declining threat, while China is a growing and long-time threat (Becker, 2021, s. 103). Washington is thus preparing on every scenario. U.S resources are limited, as every other nation, and since their strategy sees China as a bigger threat than Russia, Washington will have scarcer resources for a hands-on role in Europe. This will give room for other actors like Germany, France to increase their influence (Becker, 2021, s. 106). That does not mean that they won`t be present, but they are expecting that more of the defense burden is taken by e.g., EU, other NATO countries, France, and Germany. "*We cannot allow self- doubt to hinder out ability to engage each other or the larger world. The last few years have been hard. But Europe*

and the United States have to lead with confidence once more, with faith in our capacities, a commitment to our own renewal, with trust in one another and the ability of Europe and the United States to meet any challenge to secure our future together” (Biden, 2021).

3.1.1 France

France has several times taken the lead and stated the importance of a significantly stronger Europe. The policy is to develop a common European strategy that is dependent on the common European culture (Ministère De L`Europe Et Des Affaires Étrangères , 2019). At the same time, France is endorsing NATO`s role in the collective European defense (AIV, 2020). From a politico-military perspective France is an important actor based on their nuclear capability, armed forces, and permanent membership of the UN Security Council (AIV, 2020, s. 12). Now they are working to include the rest of Europe within an EU framework e.g., as Macron`s suggestion to create a strategic dialogue with France`s European partners on the theme of nuclear weapons and the role they play (AIV, 2020, s. 11). Paris is eager to strengthen the collective military position in Europe, but to do this they are dependent on EU member states that are inclined to take an extending move towards the goal.

It shines through that France and their European partners share a common destiny, from the French perspective. A revitalisation is important considering the financial situation of several European countries, and U.S pivot to Asia. Macron outed that: *“A European autonomy is in U. S`s interest, because when you look at previous decisions in NATO, U.S was the only one in charge, in a certain way, of our own security. And the burden sharing, as some of our former and current leaders pushes the concept, was not fair”* (Walla, 2021). NATO allies got access to the U.S army, which created a lose-lose situation, since Europe was not in charge of their own area, and by a European autonomy, Europe will have that ability, while the burden sharing will become more fairly distributed, and the burden will thus not just be on the U.S (Walla, 2021).

3.1.2 Germany

Today, Germany is seen as EU`s most influential member state. The expectations to Germany on the defence and security field has grown, and in the last German white paper, from 2016, it is emphasised that Germany is prepared to take bigger action and responsibility in this field (Bocquet, 2019). Germany is especially strong within the economic aspect of power. This does not just appeal to the national economy, but also to their ability to unite Europe within an economic area, as well as their commitment to European-economic politics where they are good at bringing both large and smaller partners together (Bocquet, 2019). Germany has not previously been the most prominent player in defense and security policy, due to their historical background, but since Trump's presidency one has seen a change of attitude from Germany. Angela Merkel has been criticized for lacking a long-term vision, but in 2018 she told the members of the European Parliament that: *“In the view of the developments in recent years we ought to work on the vision of one day establishing a proper European army. Yes, that`s how things stand”* (Bunde, 2021, s. 244).

At the beginning of Biden`s presidency he was set about correcting several of his predecessor`s decisions. One of these was to reinstate U.S troops to Germany by 500 additional personnel (Gehrke, 2021). Further President Biden has ensured Europe that they support the aim of a whole, free, and a Europe at peace. That they are committed to NATO and welcomes Europe`s growing investments in the military capabilities that enables U.S and Europe`s shared defense (Biden, 2021). Nonetheless, they still see e.g., France and Germany as a threat to their position in the anarchic structure in Europe. One example is Germany`s cooperation with Russia on NordStream2, where U.S sight is that a cooperation with Germany and Russia could lead to an unbalance or even upset the European balance (Becker, 2021, s. 97). This will potentially, from a U.S point of view, undermine their sphere of influence, and freedom of action. The fear is that Germany and Russia`s cooperation is bypassing Central and Eastern European countries and therefore exposes these countries to Russian influence, e.g., Ukraine. Moreover, they also fear that this could build up Russia's power by allowing them to, for valid reasons as a supplier, shut off gas supplies to eastern Europe without necessarily leading to a weakening of cooperation with other countries in Western Europe (Becker, 2021, s. 97). With this one can argue that it is not necessarily a coincidence that U.S. has chosen not to remove military troops from Germany at this moment (Gehrke, 2021). One interesting observation is that this is happening in the midst of their reorientation to Asia.

3.1.3 Europe`s agenda for global change

France has been the single actor in Europe who have preached the importance of an increase in European defense and security policy. Europe is now more assertive than ever and looks at the ongoing Covid19 pandemic as a chance to renew the transatlantic agenda for global cooperation (European Commission, 2020, s. 1). The new agenda is about rebuilding EU as self-reliant who is a stronger partner for the multilateral system and the transatlantic partnership, where the goal is to be mutually reinforcing and not mutually exclusive (European Commission, 2020, s. 1). Europe is in other words ready to take on the responsibility and rise in their role as a global leader, where they are seen as self-standing in the relationship with U.S, and that they are indispensable partners and allies (European Commission, 2020, s. 11). This meets the U.S demands of a burden-sharing, and will, in theory, make the EU-U. S relationship stronger, and more capable of meeting the current changes in power dynamics, geopolitical, and technological developments (European Commission, 2020). The question is, are Europe ready for this agenda to become a reality?

4 Discussion

4.1 The U.S Pivot to Asia and its impact on European security

Neorealism explains how powers use their military forces to maintain their own national security. But what exactly is the difference between the American, European, and Chinese strategies. Everyone pursues a form of defensive power policy to expand their sphere of influence. It is in this field that the great powers are perhaps more alike than one thinks. Everyone is looking for partners and allies to secure themselves in some way. Europe is an example of this. They want to be more active in security and defense policy, which is an indication that they need greater protection than before. This is where the term European autonomy often comes up, which I have presented in several places throughout this dissertation. Having gone deeper into the topic, it seems that the meaning of this concept is more a desire to have the opportunity to secure themselves through increased European integration and cooperation in the field. It is not about a direct liberation from the United States. If one thing is clear, it is that a larger coalition / alliance will lead to greater security. The difference is that Europe and the United States do this based on common values, not that Russia and China do not do this. But they use their power in a way where they acquire partners who have equal values and desires, but those who, on the other hand, do not have this attitude, and who are seen as an area desirable for their expansion are "threatened with an annexation". As one can see in the case of Ukraine and Taiwan.

The U.S reorientation comes with many dilemmas which one must consider. From a U.S perspective that actively works to maintain their position in the international order it certainly seems that way. The security dilemma which is a structural notion in which self-help within a nation or alliance, security, tends to rise insecurities for other nations or alliances and are considered as threatening (Herz, 1951, s. 7). When one look at U.S reorientation, one can see that this security dilemma, based on my research, tends to go in circles.

The U.S wants to hinder the development in the Indo-Pacific, by doing this they want to ensure their position as a great power in the international anarchic system, as well as their security (Miyasaka, 2020). With other words, prevent China in their quest to expand their sphere of influence. By doing this, Europe, which must take greater responsibility for its own security, becomes more prepared on their front by actively beginning to reinforce their own defense and security policies (European Commission, 2020). It seems that this in turn sends signals to Russia that they also must be rearmed since others are in motion. Today, this is shown with the Ukrainian crisis where Russia is showing face. This is due to their desire for expansion, but at the same time, also as a deterrent. And when you talk about defense and security, the security dilemma will be an explanation for how nations and alliances affect each other.

Since World War II, the United States and Europe have been close allies, which they remain to this day (European Commission, 2020, s. 1). If there is one thing that is clear, it is that although European countries now have a higher idea of becoming more engaged in defense and security policy, something that Germany and France have recently spoken out about. Europe is, at the moment, too fragmented for this to become a reality. The U.S. defense strategy clearly emphasizes that a big goal for them is to keep a close eye on their biggest competitors, Russia, and China (Lange, 2018). They have also stated that China is the largest competitor for the U.S today and is the player who is actively working to change the current international order and put it out of balance, as they show with their activities in the Indo Pacific (Mattis, 2018). America as a superpower cannot allow this to happen and it is therefore natural that their focus now has a shift. In recent years, it has come up several times that the U.S. government wants the EU to take a bigger role in its own defense and security policies. After the last four years of President Trump, Germany has also begun to engage with this idea (Bocquet, 2019).

This opens the possibility of an increased position of power in Europe, and even if the U.S have allies in this region, EU will nevertheless pose a threat if their position of power becomes too great, e.g., to the extent that the U.S can no longer pursue an open and active agenda where allies is easier persuaded because of their position, and involvement in Europe. This must therefore also be considered in the U.S. reorientation strategy to China. This is something one can see with Germany and the inauguration of the 500 extra troops (Gehrke, 2021). One reason for this decision can be that U.S is doing this because of the threat Russia poses to Europe and the stability of the balance of power and NATO. But on the other hand, it turns out that this strategic move will have an effect when it comes to the relationship between Germany and Russia. It is a way of showing presence to deter a potential threat to the position of the United States. It may also be a strategic move to prevent a resurgence of European autonomy and a referee or referees in Europe.

In order for the U.S to maintain its position in the world community and compete against other powers, as mentioned, it will be in their interest to hoist a stronger Europe that is determined to develop its defense and security strategy (Walla, 2021). In order for this to become a reality, the United States must thus facilitate this to happen. If the US continues in the same pattern, and fails to develop Europe because of its position today, one can argue that this will not happen. It comes to the point where one must be able to develop a defense alliance where Europe and the United States can work side by side as two powers, with a strong military providing opportunities to defend their regions. To make this a reality, the United States must be willing to risk some of its status.

Washington faces a long-status quandary with regard to European integration. To the degree that European integration fosters political cooperation, stimulates monetary growth, and helps balance Russian power while harnessing German power, it will be positive for U. S` s interests (European Commission, 2020). But there is always the risk of EU or another single power will become too strong. This will be negative for the U.S interests, and their position in the European balance will be at risk. Thus, the American presence in Europe is a positive factor for European security, but on the other hand it

puts brakes on European cooperation in this field since one ultimately ends up leaning on the United States, and their position in the international order. That does not mean that Europe isn't trying, they are now looking at a new transatlantic and global cooperation (European Commission, 2020, s. 11).

Europe is ready to take responsibility for own security as the European Commission presented in their report to the European Parliament (European Commission, 2020). Europe has a chance to become a global actor. But that means that they must make an active policy change. They are aware of the chances presented for them. After Covid19 it seems that Europe now is more alert to the challenges they have faced, and how dependent they are on other nations. The pandemic is one factor to this realization. This also puts Europe in a situation where they now have a chance to utilize the situation and become more present in the world community and present themselves as a Global actor. The will is there, but one cannot draw conclusions on this topic before one sees a change. Simultaneously, one has seen a development in the European will to invest in a more secure future. This means that Europe must try, when it comes to visibility, to promote a more active role and show support to partners and allies (Mogherini, 2016, s. 17). This will for one show the strength of the transatlantic relationship, and with Germany and France as an influencing factor, there is a good probability for other European countries to commit themselves to this agenda. They have mentioned that an EU presence in the Indo-Pacific together with the U.S will give a bigger chance for a democratic process in the area. Even though the two resolve such conflict differently, their combined strategies are, from an EU standpoint, a chance for clarification in the conflict.

4.2 Consequences of U.S presence in Europe

When it comes to the consequences all this can have on European security and defense, I would argue that Taiwan is a big factor here. So far, I have shown how the U.S shift is a necessary one. Taiwan is a good example of why. It highlights the importance of continuing to support this work to prevent the collapse of the world community's stability (Anstrén, 2021).

Nevertheless, it is clear that should a conflict occur between the U.S and China, this will have major consequences for Europe. There may be a probability that this shift will emerge more clearly than what we see today, and thus also go beyond European security and defense to a greater extent. This is an argument in itself when it comes to maintaining the ongoing strategy of a stronger Europe. Should this happen, a consequence could be an even stronger U.S focus in the Indo-Pacific, which could lead to a greater withdrawal from Europe (Anstrén, 2021). If this becomes a reality, there is a risk of seeing a reduced leadership role in NATO, as well as a blossoming of an even stronger Russia, if Europe itself does not take responsibility.

If one is to look at it from a side where the U.S does not choose to go into conflict with China, it will still have consequences. Although the U.S and Taiwan do not have a formal security agreement (Albert, 2020), the United States will lose credibility when it comes to

supporting its allies. It is clear that the United States has a commitment within NATO, but if something like this should happen in the Baltic-Sea, for example, it will give a signal to Russia that the U.S does not follow their communicated message.

With this, it is even clearer why it is time for Europe to take more responsibility of the security burden (European Commission, 2020, s. 10). If the U.S and Europe stand together in crises such as this, where Europe, as a diplomatic actor has the opportunity to help with solutions, it is likely that security in both Europe and the U.S will have much to gain (Anstrén, 2021). Arguably one can say that if the U.S pivot to Asia are going to be a success, the U.S must give room for European development in defense and security so they can stand strong as a global actor. To do this they must be able to trust their allies. The stationing of troops in Germany is a good thing when it comes to ensuring safety towards Russia and safeguard Ukraine. Simultaneously this gives an impression where U.S are playing a safe card just in case Germany decides to take their place and rise as a referee. If Europe is to become stronger in this field, they are obliged to give in to the security dilemma. Although, this will most likely lead to a rearmament in other states, and they will get a perception of Europa and U.S as a bigger "threat", according to theory, there is a greater chance of maintaining security if EU gets an even stronger cooperation with the U.S. This will show Europe and the U.S from a neorealist perspective where they are willing to use their power to secure themselves. It is nevertheless worth mentioning that both the U.S and Europe have a long history of diplomatic negotiations, so concluding that they are the first to enter into an armed conflict without a great legitimate reason is wrong.

5 Conclusion

To answer my problem How does U.S pivot to Asia effect European defense and security? I will say that there is no direct indication that the United States will withdraw from Europe. This means that in the current situation, there is a small probability that Europe's defense and security policy will be, to a large extent, affected by the U.S pivot to Asia. If there is one thing that influences a change, it is that the world is in constant motion and is constantly changing. The worldview today is characterized by growing powers capable of influencing the international order.

With a stronger and more visible Europe, they will stand stronger against these changes. For this to happen U.S needs to give Europe the opportunity to do so. In theory, yes, Europe and U.S will stand stronger if Europe becomes more committed in the security and defense department, in practise, these changes are yet to be seen. Europe are committed on paper, but it is still early days to see an actual change, to the degree, where one actually believes that Europe can rise as a global security actor in the same way one sees U.S and NATO. The probability that they will stand as a Europe liberated from the U.S is not huge. I would say that probability is virtually non-existent in view of our common history and commitment to each other. However, if Europe are following up on their strategy and make progress to take on more of the security burden, but this will most likely happen with U.S present.

Nevertheless, it is clear that this situation may change. If the U.S chooses to go into a conflict with China over Taiwan, it is likely that Europe's security will be somewhat affected. At the same time, the U.S and Europe are so connected that if something like this were to happen, there is a good chance that Europe will support the U.S and become an active participant. If this happens, and the EU stands as an actor together with a leading U.S and NATO, it is clear that they show a commitment to the agenda they have set, and one can thus be more confident of seeing a stronger Europe in the future.

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