

**Split or Cooperation? Contending Arguments on the Future of the
Transatlantic Relations (1991-2001)**

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Presented at the 2009

50th Annual ISA Convention

New York, NY

February 15-18, 2009

Panel: The Future of Transatlantic Relations I

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Introduction

Questions about the future of the transatlantic relations and the future of the West have generated much controversy and debates in the public sphere, spawning discussions about the past-present-future relations of the core North Atlantic countries during the “interim” period between the end of the Cold War and 9/11.¹ The political consequences of the end of the Cold War have been of great concern to many public

¹ By transatlantic relations, I mean U.S.-European relations. Some would argue that transatlantic relations are larger than the mere American and European relations, but the literature analyzed overwhelmingly uses this phrase to discuss the United States and Western European countries, and so will I. Furthermore, when I refer to Europe I mean mainly three countries: the United Kingdom, France and Germany. The question of the transatlantic relations has been widely addressed since the end of the cold war. See for example, Helga Haftendorn and Christian Tuschhoff, eds, *America and Europe in an Era of Change*, (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1993); Jarrod Wiener, ed., *The Transatlantic Relationship*, (New York, N.Y.: St. Martin’s Press, 1996); Werner Weidenfeld, *America and Europe: Is the Break Inevitable?* (Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann, 1996); Beatrice Heuser, *Transatlantic Relations: Sharing Ideals and Costs*, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1996); David C. Gompert and F. Stephen Larrabee, eds., *America and Europe: a partnership for a new era*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Paul Cornish, *Partnership in crisis: the US, Europe and the fall and rise of NATO*, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1997). Christopher Coker, *Twilight of the West*, (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1998); Jörg Monar, ed., *The New Transatlantic Agenda and the Future of the EU-US Relations*, (London-The Hague-Boston: Kluwer Law International, 1998); Richard N. Haas, ed., *Transatlantic Tensions: The United States, Europe, and problem countries*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999). More recently, see: Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power*; Werner Weidenfel [et.al.], *From Alliance to Coalitions: the Future of Transatlantic Relations*, (Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann, 2004); Dieter Mahncke, Wyn Rees and Wayne C. Thompson, *Redefining Transatlantic Security Relations: the Challenge of Change* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), Jürgen Habermas, *L’Occidente Diviso* (Bari, Italy: Laterza, 2005); Peter H. Merkel, *The Distracted Eagle: the Rift between America and old Europe*, (New York, N.Y.: F. Cass, 2005); Tod Lindberg, ed., *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America, and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, (New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 2005).

intellectuals (including theorists), especially those interested in security and international relations, international organization, and foreign policy. An attempt to get deeper into the public discussions of the U.S. and European countries has also shown a close relationship between transatlantic relations and “the idea of the West” in the face of the Cold War, the end of the Cold War and the reemergence of threats to the world order generated by global terrorism. Even though these problems have led to copious public discussions, there has been little interest in trying to clarify, synthesize and test out vis-à-vis related international developments the central argumentative positions taken in the debate on the future of the relationship between the United States and Europe. Because so much of the general International Relations theory in question (neo-realism and neo-liberalism) is not focused on the future of the transatlantic relations, I systematically evaluate the two main contending argumentative perspectives within those IR theories, which I found in my review of the field literature. In this paper, I discuss the central arguments of the neo-realists and the neo-liberal authors on the future of the transatlantic relations, from the period between 1990 and 2001. I then suggest less systematic comments on the post 9/11 debate

about transatlantic relations and offer a general methodological discussion of the challenges of evaluating contending arguments, in the process of which I define matched, mismatched and non-addressed arguments.

II. 1990-2000 Neo-realist account

Some observers have argued, as I mentioned earlier, that the end of the Cold War has removed the ideological “glue” that made for unity in transatlantic relations.² Most of those who reached such conclusions share a common set of basic assumptions such as that states are the main actors in international relations and their actions are motivated by their own survival.³ In addition, they also concur that states can be harmful or even destroy one another. Furthermore, they agree that the principle governing relations between states is anarchy (i.e. the absence of a central authority that can regulate their interactions and therefore protect them if another state threatens or attacks them).⁴ Finally, they share the belief that states live in an uncertain realm in which they do not know the intentions and capabilities of other states. Therefore, they claim that states are constantly insecure and war is always possible. Thus for these scholars it follows that security is one of the main concerns of the state.⁵

² Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future”, p. 52; Harries, “The Collapse of ‘The West’”, p.42; Kupchan, “Reviving the West”, p. 3; Walt, “The Ties that Fray” p.4.

³ See John Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 5-58 and Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*

⁴ See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* and Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

⁵ Stephen Walt, “The Precarious Partnership: America and Europe in a New Era.” In *Atlantic Security: Contending Visions*, edited by Charles Kupchan. (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998), p.8.

Within this neo-realist literature, one set of arguments is relevant to understanding the future of transatlantic relations vis-à-vis the end of the Cold War: the balance of power theory.⁶ These thinkers forecast a bleak scenario for the transatlantic core partners and they link it directly to the end of East-West rivalry. In essence, they predict a decline of military cooperation, which will lead to a decrease in economic cooperation and to an increase in ideological or political disagreements between the U.S. and Europe. This dynamic will thus produce a split in the transatlantic relations that is not likely to be reconciled because these scholars conceive such collaborative relations as a direct consequence of the existence of a perceived common threat: the Soviet Union.

The balance of power theorists claim that states seek to balance the power of threatening states.⁷ Balancing can take the form of unilateral action or military cooperation, but it could also lead to other forms of cooperation such as economic cooperation because the

⁶ This theory claims that states will seek to balance the power of threatening states. The most rigorous account of balance of power theory can be found in Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. Walt refined such argument by focusing on the role of threats, rather than power alone, in stimulating balancing behavior. See Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*.

⁷ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* and Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*.

economic advantages that they will gain would ultimately enhance their combined power.

Accordingly, the demise of the common external threat could undermine both military and economic cooperation. In this scenario, military cooperation will no longer be an overriding interest, and economic cooperation could be perceived as risky since the economic partner could enhance its relative military power thanks to the economic gains achieved through the partnership.⁸ These observers explain the future of transatlantic relations, in particular their cooperative efforts, as a reaction to the commonly perceived threat. Accordingly, they argue that the fear of the Soviet Union induced the United States and Europe to form a powerful military alliance, NATO. The economic cooperation between the transatlantic core states, they claim, was a consequence of the military collaboration. In short, it augmented their combined power. They seem to agree that the overriding security interest was the glue that kept the transatlantic core states together politically. In essence, during the Cold War the higher security interests superseded the divergences,

⁸ Joseph Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism." *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3, pp. 485-507.

which nonetheless existed.⁹ Thus the presence of the Soviet threat was seen as the leading cause for political unity. These arguments are summarily graphed in Figure 1. Although it is clearly a simplification of a complex line of reasoning, it does serve the purpose of distinguishing between levels of analysis, of identifying causal links as well as identifying the key causal claims for further analysis.

Some conceptualize the transatlantic relations within a bipolar context and further conceive the threat that had been constituted by the Soviet Union as the most important factor.¹⁰ Others depart from the state level to explain the causal relation between the presence of the Soviet Union and security cooperation. Furthermore, following the predicates of argumentation graphing, I have inserted a level of analysis that I call the socio-cultural level, adding elements such as cultural, ethnic and generational ties to explain the political cooperation between the U.S. and Europe. The figure represents the pessimists arguments extracted from works addressing the future of transatlantic relations.

⁹ A more detailed account of these arguments is offered in the following pages. Here I have prepared a graphic synthesis (Figure 2.1) of their understanding of what kept the United States and Europe together during the Cold War. My synthesis was inductively constructed thorough their arguments addressing the future of transatlantic relations. Giving quotations in the text would just constitute redundancy, thus sensible to parsimony I will provide the sources for which the arguments were extrapolated and the graph will illustrate the arguments.

¹⁰ See Mearsheimer (1990) in figure 2.1. John Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future", p. 52.

Table 1. Legend: Neo-realists Figure 1-Figure 4

Kagan (2002; 2003): Robert Kagan, *Power and Weakness*, *Policy Review*; Jun/Jul 2002; 113; Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power* (New York: N.Y.: Knopf, 2003).

Kupchan (1996): Charles Kupchan, "Reviving the West," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1996; 75.

Mearsheimer (1990): John Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War", *International Security*, vol.15, no.1 (Summer, 1990).

Walt (1998-99): Stephen Walt, "The Ties that Fray", *The National Interest*, Washington, Winter 1998/1999. Iss. 54.

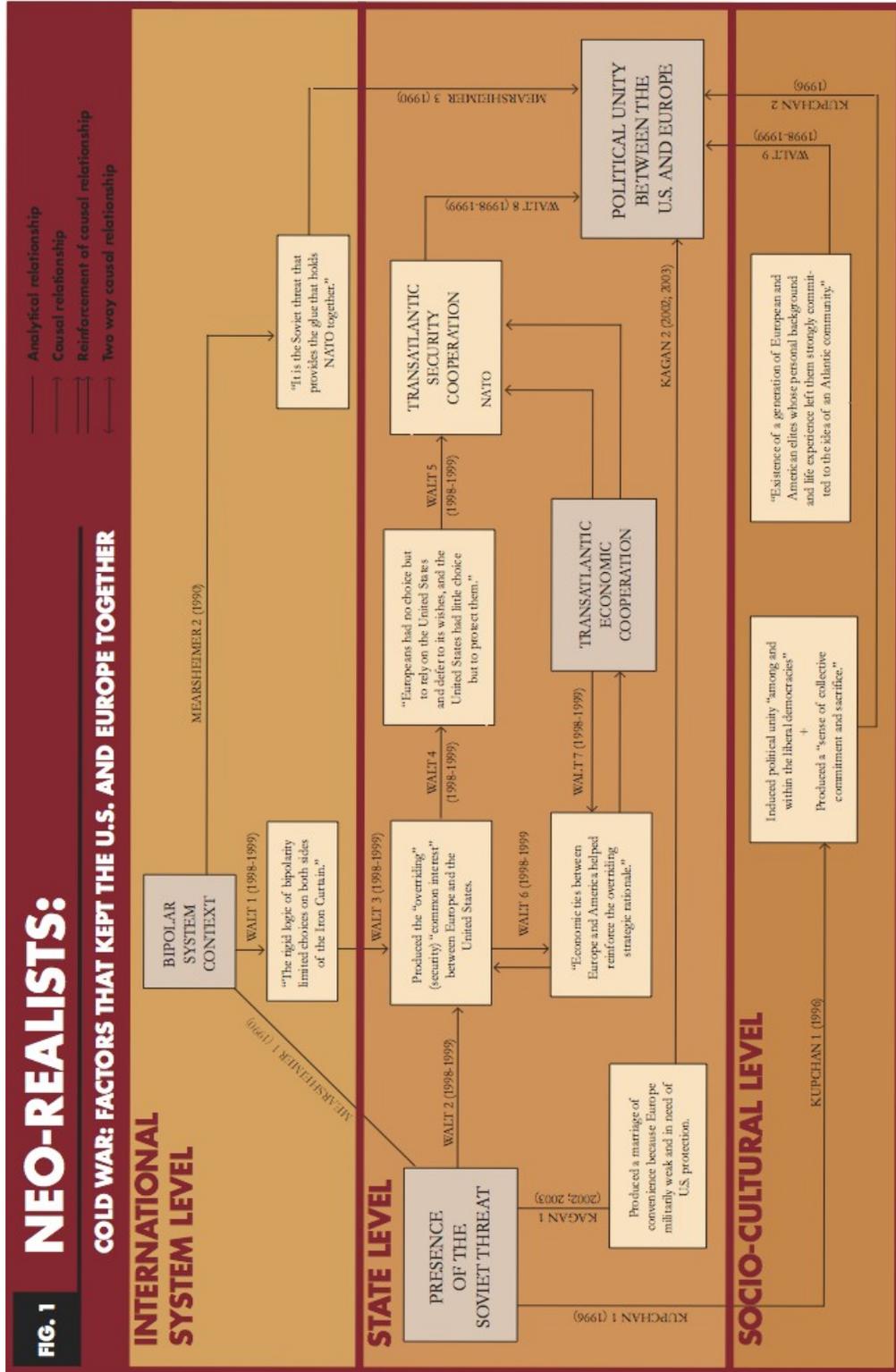
The following figure is the result of my analysis of the articles of the above-mentioned authors. I have examined the causal arguments that they have forwarded for the future of the North Atlantic relations. All of them depart from the idea that the disappearance of the Soviet Union will cause demise in the transatlantic relations. If their common denominator for the demise of the transatlantic relations is the absence of the Soviet Union, then it follows that they assumed that during the Cold War the presence of the Soviet threat was the unifying element. This

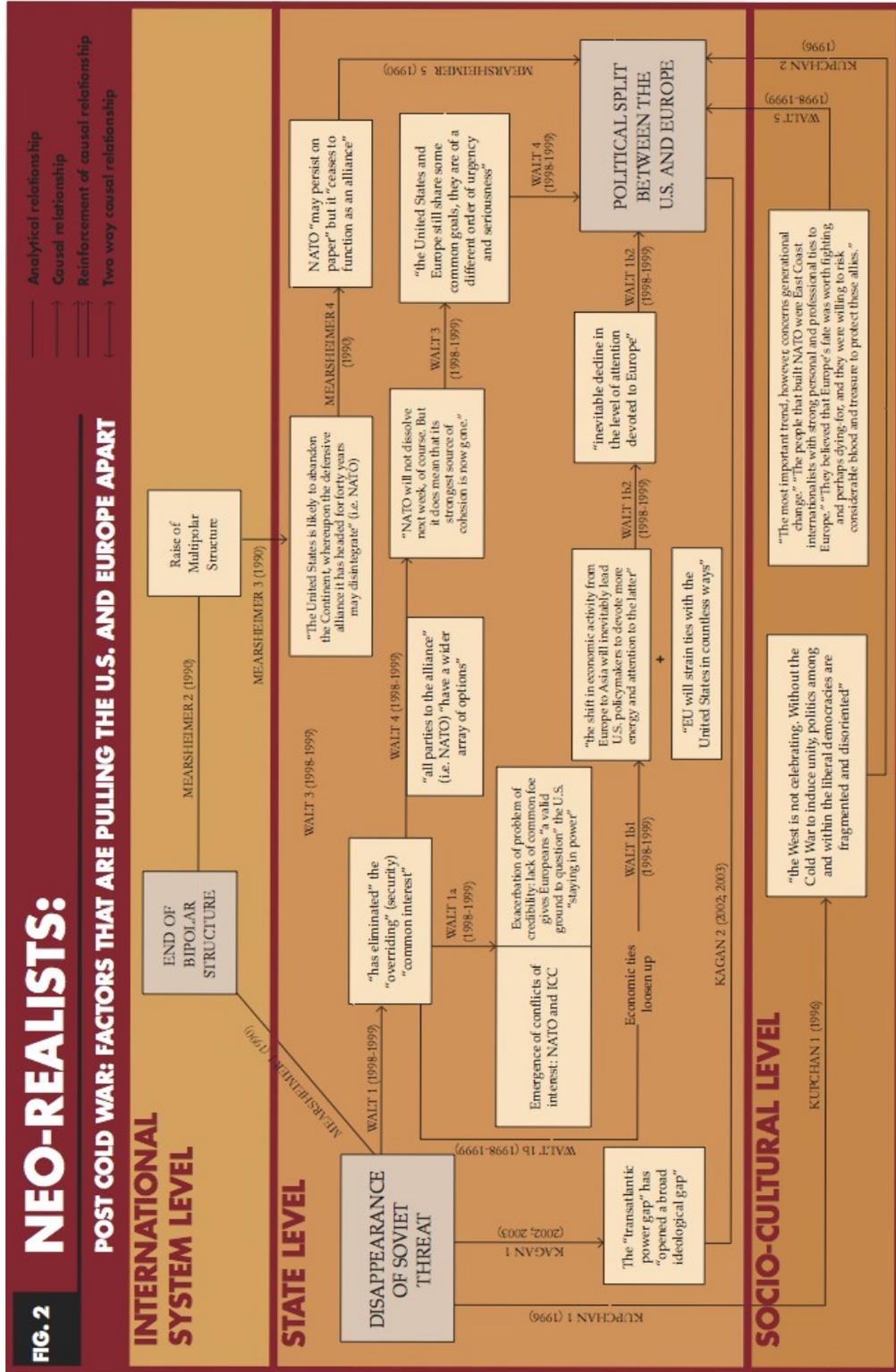
holds true for all of those included in the next figure. After having clustered them according to this common causal relation I further dissected their arguments to reveal the causal relation between the common threat and the political aspects of the transatlantic relations. Finally, based on the context they use to make their predictions and because it serves as part of the backing explicitly given to the warrants in their causal claims, I have located their arguments within the international system, the state and on a socio-cultural level. Arrows show the analytical relationship of their arguments. A box in the figure will further explain such relationships.

Because of the great importance given to the perceived common threat of the Soviet Union as the glue that kept the transatlantic partners together, the end of the East-West rivalry, in this view, is identified as the main cause of the uncertain cooperative future of the United States and Europe. The first and most relevant effect of the collapse of the Soviet Union is, according to these analysts, that the United States and Europe would not feel the need to prolong their military cooperation since the common threat against which the alliance was created no

longer existed; accordingly, they argued NATO would thus should cease to exist in the post-Cold War world. This is what John Mearsheimer envisaged. He claimed that it is “the Soviet threat that provides the glue that holds NATO together. Take away that offensive threat and the United States is likely to abandon the Continent, whereupon the defensive alliance it has headed for forty years may disintegrate. This would bring to an end the bipolar order that has characterized Europe for the past 45 years.”¹¹ (See Mearsheimer 4 (1990) and the corresponding analytical line and causal arrows in Figure 2)

¹¹ John Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future”, p. 52.





Owen Harries agrees with Mearsheimer and puts forward the idea that the “political ‘West’ is not a natural construct but a highly artificial one. It took the presence of a life-threatening, overtly hostile ‘East’ to bring it into existence and to maintain its unity. It is extremely doubtful whether it can now survive the disappearance of that enemy.”¹² He also argues, “Desperation and fear have been its parents, not natural affinities. They have been the forces that have driven Europeans to unite among themselves and to associate with the United States under the banner of ‘the West’”¹³ Other scholars offer remedies to prevent the demise of the transatlantic relations. Charles Kupchan, for instance, was preoccupied with the future of the West without the Cold War to induce unity and imagined fragmentation and disorientation within liberal democracies if they failed to create an institution that would protect their military and economic interests. He explains that the West is struggling because it does not have the same sense of collective commitment and sacrifice it experienced when it wrestled with communism (See Kupchan 1 (1996) and the corresponding causal arrows in Figure 2). In his recipe for building a new West, he suggests the construction of an Atlantic

¹² Harries, “The Collapse of ‘The West’”, p.42.

¹³ Harries, “The Collapse of ‘The West’”, p.47.

Union in which strategic and economic interests are linked together.¹⁴

Some scholars predicted a reduction of a U.S.-European economic cooperation because of the fear that the other could gain a relative advantage thus becoming a potential strategic rival.¹⁵ As we know, in this view, such prospects could increase the likelihood for economic conflicts of interests in the transatlantic. Stephen Walt agrees with the previously mentioned thinkers that the fear of the Soviet Union was the main reason for the transatlantic relations, but widens his argument by including economic and cultural factors into his analysis. He is adamant about the importance of the Cold War as a cause for unity, “Western Europe and the United States were brought together by the raw power of the Soviet Union, its geographic proximity to Europe, its large, offensively oriented military forces and its open commitment to spreading world revolution.”¹⁶ Nevertheless, he enriches the initial supposition by adding further elements to his analysis, he claims, “during NATO’s heyday, economic ties between Europe and America helped reinforce the overriding strategic rationale. U.S. policymakers

¹⁴ Charles Kupchan, “Reviving the West,” p. 3.

¹⁵ See Grieco, “Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation.”

¹⁶ Walt, “The Ties that Fray”, p.4.

recognized that Europe's economic recovery would contribute to America's own economic growth and strengthen the Western alliance as a whole... This source of unity is now also of declining importance as well. Asia surpassed Europe as the main target of U.S. trade as long ago as 1983, and U.S. trade with Asia is now more than one and a half times larger than trade with Europe".¹⁷

The main result of this trend, he says, is that "although economic connections do not determine security commitments, the shift in economic activity from Europe to Asia will inevitably lead U.S. policymakers to devote more energy and attention to the latter. This is especially the case since major security challenges are more likely to rise in Asia, and that is where the most likely future challenger to U.S. hegemony-the People's Republic of China- is located."(See Walt 1b1 (1998-99) and the corresponding arrow in Figure 2). Thus, he predicts a decline in American attention to Europe.¹⁸ An aspect of the argument for a continuing ideological unity in the West that he criticizes as being

¹⁷ Walt, "The Ties that Fray", p.6.

¹⁸ Walt, "The Ties that Fray", p.6. He also reminds us that former Secretary of State Warren Christopher took office warning against an overly "Eurocentric" foreign policy. "The Bosnian tragedy was thus something of a godsend for Europhiles, because it forced the Clinton administration to pay more attention to Europe than it had initially intended."

overestimated for understanding transatlantic relations is, in his words, “the existence of a generation of European and American elites whose personal backgrounds and life experiences left them strongly committed to the idea of an Atlantic community.”¹⁹ (See Walt 6 (1998-99) and the corresponding arrow in Figure 2). He warns that the attempt to justify transatlantic relations, based on ancestral ties between the United States and Europe, is often an overstatement. For he insists that, “cultural and ethnic ties between Europe and America did not prevent the United States from staying out of Europe’s conflicts during the nineteenth century, and did not make America’s leaders eager to enter either world war. And we should not forget that both wars were fought against Europeans as well as with them.”

However, he does not completely dismiss the argument for a continuing alliance based on cultural ties by adding, “to the extent that ethnic or cultural ties reinforced our interest in Europe, their effectiveness is probably declining. Not only is the percentage of U.S. citizens of European origin declining, but the original European immigrants arrived several generations ago and assimilation and

¹⁹ Walt, “The Ties that Fray”, p.3.

intermarriage have by now diluted the sense of affinity with the ‘old country’”.²⁰ (See Walt 6 (1998-99) and the corresponding arrow in Figure 2). Figure 2 is a schematic diagram of the pessimists arguments for the post-Cold War splitting of transatlantic relations. Along with the two major levels of analysis, the international system and the state, as in the previous representation, I have added what I called the socio-cultural level that engages with cultural elements. In this instance, the lack of cultural, ethnic and generational ties between the U.S. and Europe weakens transatlantic cooperation and contributes to the political split.

At the end of 1999, the discourse on the future of transatlantic relations seemed to broaden among those who conceived the relationship in terms of a balance of power, in that some of these theorists to attempted to bridge the gap between the realist and the liberal approaches.

Kupchan is the more evident *trait d'union* between the hard-core balance of power theorists and the liberals. In general, he seems to capture the relevance realists give to the end of the Cold War with the reality of institutional interconnections that the U.S. and Europe continue

²⁰ Walt, “ The Ties that Fray”, p.7-8.

to experience even as the USSR has disappeared. For example, Kupchan spells out that the “history suggests that a more equal distribution of power between Europe and the United States will bring with it renewed geopolitical competition. The emergence of rivalry among poles of power is after all, one of the few recurring truths of international politics”, he admits²¹. In addition, he claims, “when the power asymmetry comes to an end, so will European acquiescence. If, on the other end, a shared commitment to democratic values and a common vision of an open, multilateral order are the foundation of the transatlantic community, then the West should easily weather a more equal distribution of power across the Atlantic.”²²

However, he concludes that “power asymmetry *and* shared norms and institutions are working together to produce the cohesiveness of the transatlantic community.”²³ This is revealing of an attempt to understand transatlantic relations that seeks to go beyond the balance of power explanation and one that also tries to account for the cohesiveness from a broader perspective, factoring in norms and institutions as equally

²¹ Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p.78.

²² Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p.78.

²³ Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p.78. Italics in text.

important. Kupchan's approach in this article is also more optimistic than the rest of the balance of power theorists'.²⁴ This is also the reason why I kept my analysis of Kupchan's contribution to the debate for last. He has an in between approach that speaks to both the pessimists and the optimists. He in fact argues that, "the Atlantic democracies are far more than allies of convenience. They have succeeded in carving out a unique political space in which the rules of anarchic competition no longer apply. These states enjoy unprecedented levels of trust and reciprocity. It is hard to imagine that their interests would diverge sufficiently to trigger strategic rivalry. Indeed, armed conflict among the Atlantic democracies has become virtually unthinkable. These attributes of the Atlantic community are deeply rooted in the democratic character of its members and in the thick network of institutions they have erected to regulate their relations. The benign quality of the relationship between North America and Europe is thus unlikely to be threatened even by a quantitative shift in the balance of power."

The above 1990's literature thus expects the demise of the transatlantic core states relations, except for Kupchan who, although

²⁴ Because he seems to have an approach that is also close to optimists' positions, his work in this article will also be discussed in the optimists' framework in the following pages.

balance of power oriented, reaches out to other factors to envisage the future of the relations and, maybe because of it, he is not as pessimistic as the other neo-realists. Nonetheless, all the other authors cited trace back to the presence of a common threat as the central rationale for transatlantic unity. Thus it follows that by taking the “common threat” factor out of the equation, the axis that governed the relations disappears and so does the urge to stay united. Their pessimistic view thus is directly connected to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Figure 3 is an attempt to analytically synthesize the neo-realist complex arguments on transatlantic political unity during the Cold War. This figure, sorts out security as the main factor that led to transatlantic cooperation and reveals how economic cooperation is only a byproduct of the main interest: security. Figure 3 is a causal map of the arguments of transatlantic relations from the neo-realist perspective. U.S.-European relations are conceived within the anarchic system. The presence of the Soviet threat produced a bipolar structure. Such a structure offered very limited security options to the U.S. and Europe. The only option was in fact the North Atlantic Alliance. Economic ties strengthened security

cooperation. A strong NATO thus produced an increase in security cooperation that in turn increased economic cooperation. The arrows in the graphic go both ways because security cooperation increases economic cooperation and *vice-versa*. However, economic cooperation is not an endogenous factor, but rather depends on security cooperation. Ultimately, the need for security and economic cooperation between the United States and Europe produced political unity.

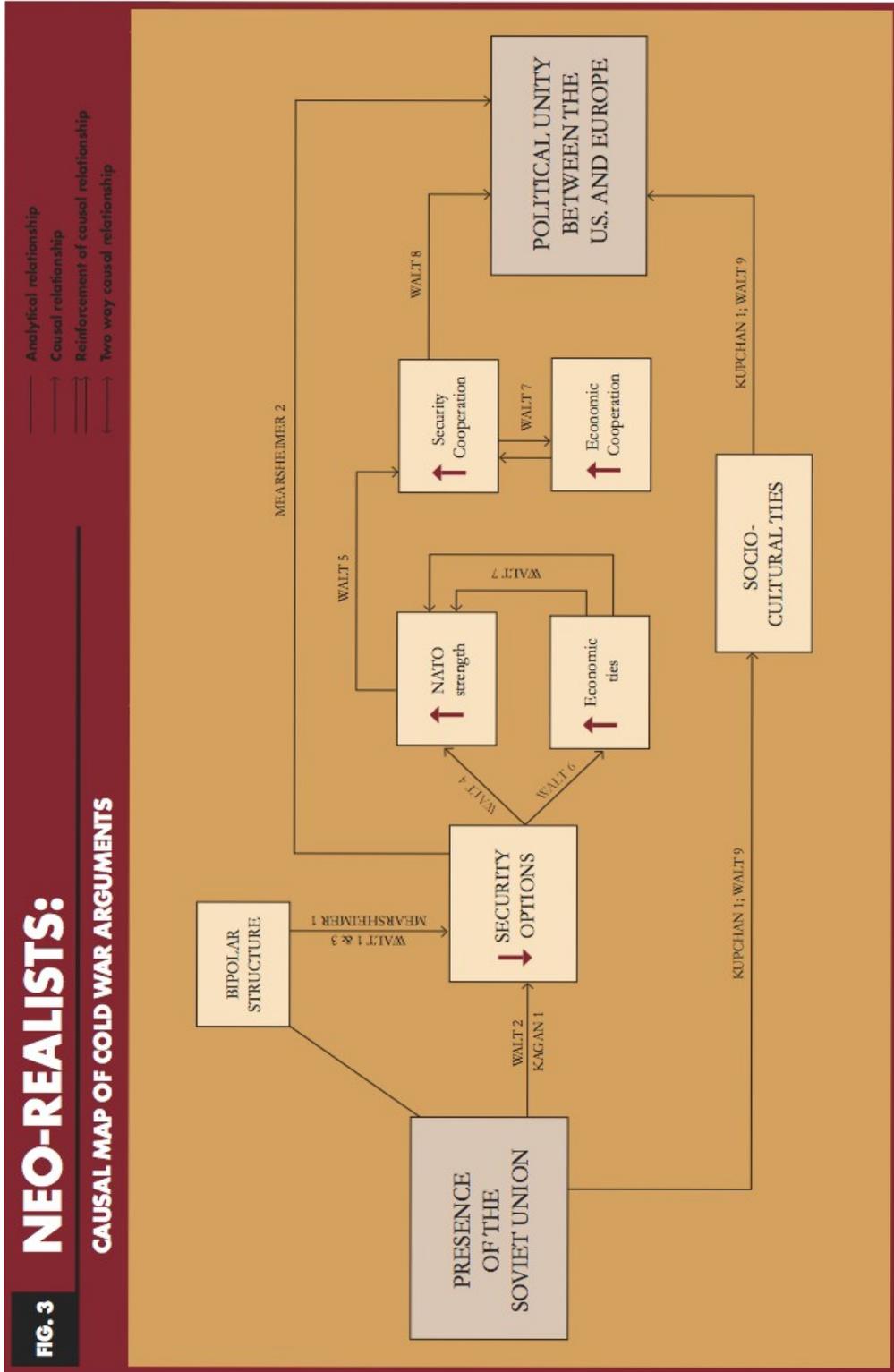


Figure 4 is a summary causal map of pessimist arguments about the future of transatlantic relations. With the disappearance of the Soviet threat, the system becomes multipolar. In such a system, security options increase because there are multiple centers of power. In essence, both the United States and Europe have multiple security options. In this scenario the importance of NATO decreases, NATO is no longer the only option for security purposes. Economic ties decrease because the essential dynamic from which they sprung (i.e. security) is declined. In their assessment, economic ties only reinforce security interest. Hence, if security interests shrink so do economic ties and interests. The decreased relevance of NATO brings a reduction of security cooperation and reduced economic ties lessen economic cooperation. In the end a diminished security cooperation and a declined economic cooperation will lead to a political split between the United States and Europe. However, the pessimist account for the post-Cold War introduces a new element as a result of the disappearance of the Soviet threat: the power gap.²⁵ The argument is that the fall of the USSR fostered a military capability gap between the transatlantic allies and this enhanced the

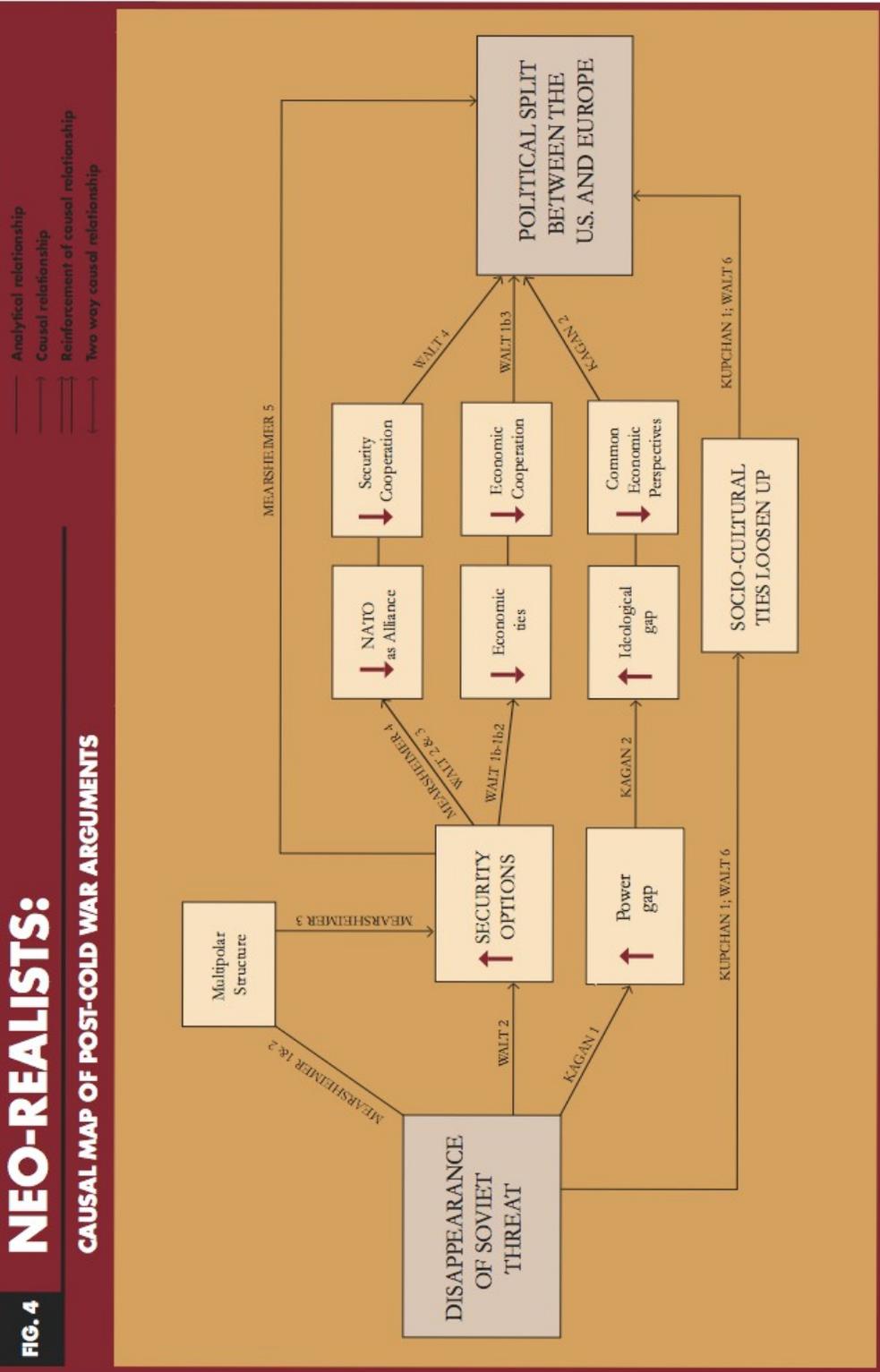
²⁵ Kagan, *Power and Weakness*.

ideological gap that has always existed across the Atlantic. Because the ideological gap shrinks the common strategic perspectives, it ultimately will lead to an irreparable political divide.

NEO-REALISTS:

CAUSAL MAP OF POST-COLD WAR ARGUMENTS

FIG. 4



III. 1990-2000 Neo-liberal account

The optimist intellectuals, who share the ideological orientation known as liberalism, believe that the United States and Europe will continue to cooperate even without the presence of a common threat, for the USSR was not the only factor to hold them together. Along with security interests, they considered economic interests and political affinity, which indeed, they argue, persists in the post Cold War era. They also claim that security interests continue to be part of their shared interests, for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism are the new security threats, and they suggests that these newer threats politically unite the United States and Europe, rather than divide them.

The intellectuals on the neo-liberal side of the debate, same as their neo-realist counterparts, consider states to be the most important actors in international relations viewing them as largely unitary and rational.²⁶ The neo-liberals optimists also accept the role of power and threats in shaping states behavior, but maintain that international relations are more than a struggle for survival, and to that extent, they

²⁶ Keohane, *After Hegemony*. See also Keohane and Martin, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*.

underline the role of international institutions.²⁷ Within liberalism, an approach that is promising in the understanding of transatlantic relations is institutional theory.

The starting point for this approach is that states could achieve considerable gains if they cooperate, but often they do not because of costs, uncertainty and fear of cheating among other things. When these problems are present, however, states can overcome them by joining international institutions, which aim at reducing costs, uncertainty, fear and other obstacles that may exist.²⁸ In this view, once created member states seek to maintain them and to comply with the rules they contain. The reason for such behavior is that member states want to maintain the benefits for which such institutions were originally established. Furthermore, even when situations change and the current institutions no longer seem to be efficient vis-à-vis the new conditions, states may find problems creating alternative structures (e.g. high costs) and often opt for adjusting the outdated institutions to meet the new challenges. Cases in which states decide to completely withdraw from an institution are

²⁷ Keohane, *After Hegemony*. See also Keohane and Martin, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*.

²⁸ Keohane, *After Hegemony*. See also Keohane and Martin, *The Promise of Institutional Theory*.

rare; nonetheless, they occur when the institution is indisputably dysfunctional.

Thus these authors do not identify the end of the Cold War as the cause for the possible downfall of transatlantic relations. To the contrary, they reject the idea that such a demise to transatlantic unity. They acknowledge disagreements; none of these authors would deny the Cold War disputes (i.e. the question of Germany in the 1950s, NATO strategy in the 1960s, détente and Vietnam in the 1970s, the Euro-missiles in the 1980s, which revealed major disagreements in the Atlantic area). Joseph Nye, for instance, argues that the United State and Europe are “bound to bicker”.²⁹ Nonetheless, these researchers tend to downplay such disagreements while, at the same time, highlighting the ties that will continue to keep them together. Hence, from this perspective the United States and Europe will maintain their relations in both the security and the economic realms.

These intellectuals do not reject the claim that the transatlantic partnership was founded within the NATO context. From this perspective, as with the previous one, security interests are relevant for

²⁹ The expression “bound to bicker” is borrowed from Nye, “The US and Europe”, p. 57.

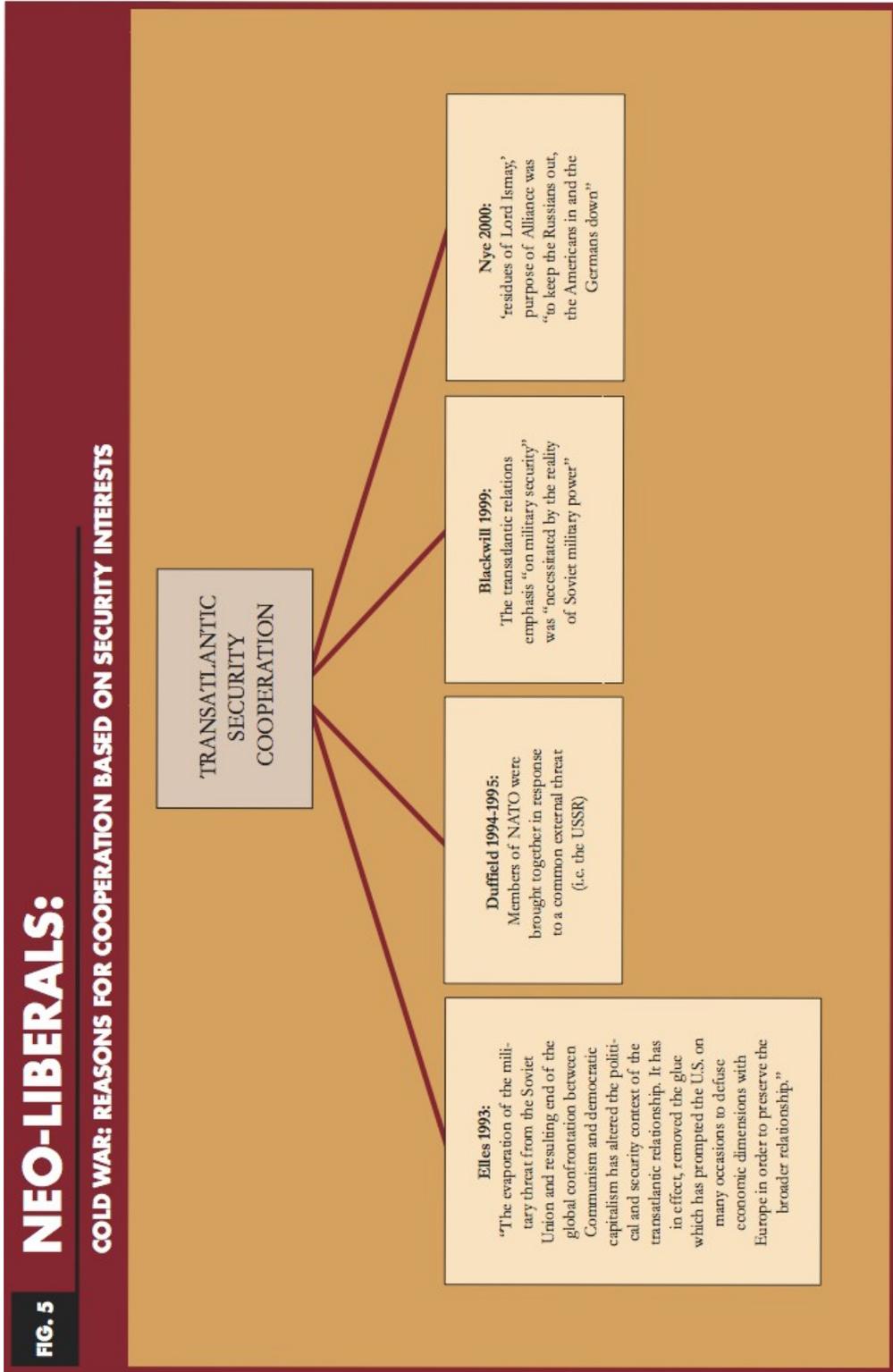
transatlantic relations, for during the Cold War security was one of the pillars holding the U.S.-European relations together. However, the authors that I have identified within the neo-liberal perspective see the Soviet threat as one of the elements that promoted cooperation in the Atlantic area. For these thinkers, the Soviet threat was not the key cause for having an alliance, but rather one factor among others. James Elles for instance acknowledges the USSR as the glue that kept the United States and Europe together (an argument to which the neo-realists also subscribe).³⁰ However, Elles is not the only one among the neo-liberals to stress the security interest. John Duffield emphasizes this point as well. He in fact claims that NATO members cooperated in the security realm because of the common threat.³¹ There are other examples of neo-liberals that highlight security. Robert Blackwill expresses the idea that the reality of the Soviet military power triggered transatlantic relations and Nye concedes that NATO is a very important part of the transatlantic relations.³² In essence, they all agree that security interests were relevant, but not fundamental for the dynamics of transatlantic

³⁰ Elles, "Towards a New Transatlantic Relationship", p. 35.

³¹ Duffield, "NATO's Functions after the Cold War".

³² Blackwill, *The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, p.8. See also Nye, "The US and Europe." p.54.

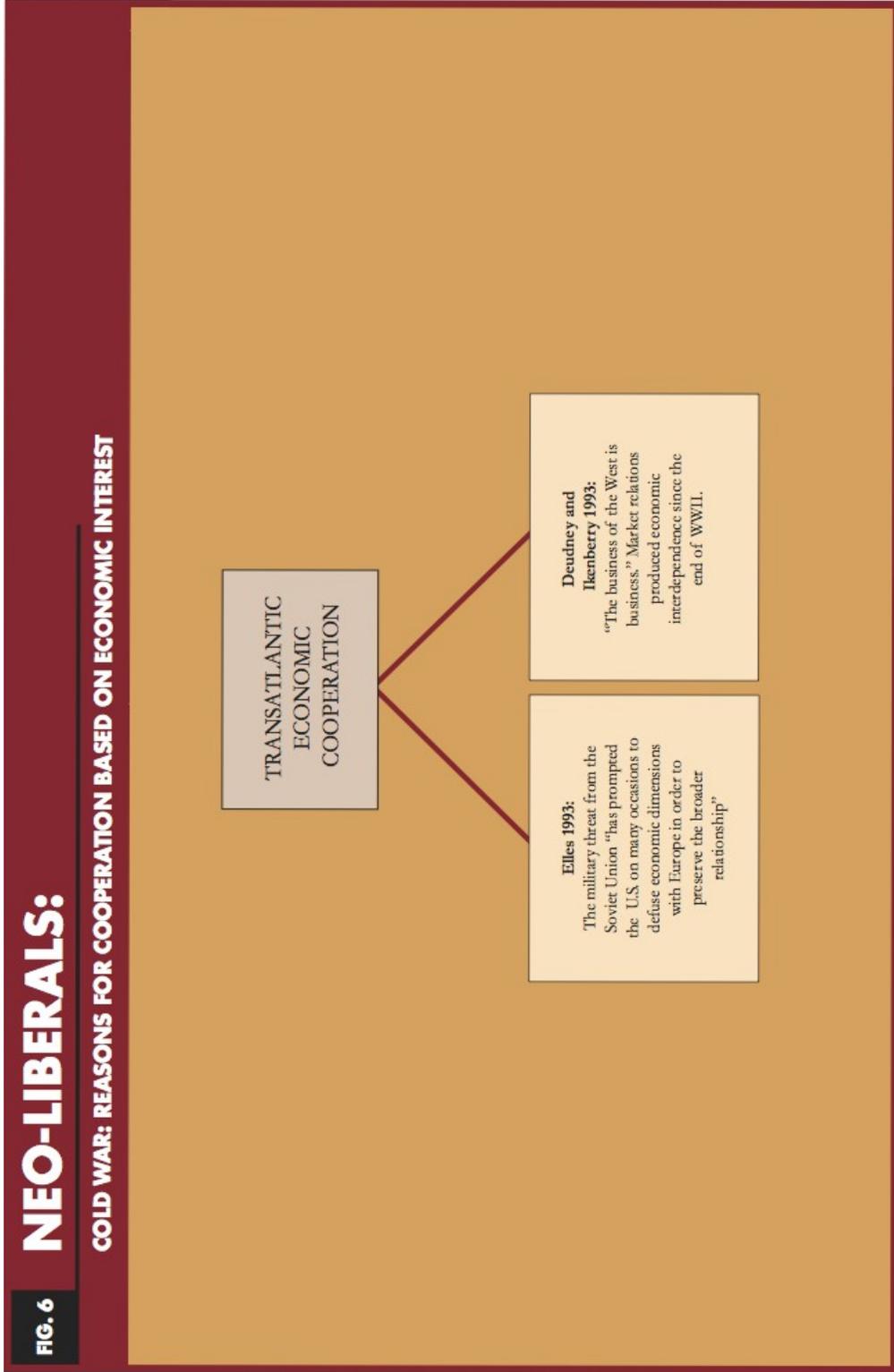
relations during the Cold War. (Figure 5 illustrates Elles, Duffield, Blackwill and Nye's arguments.)

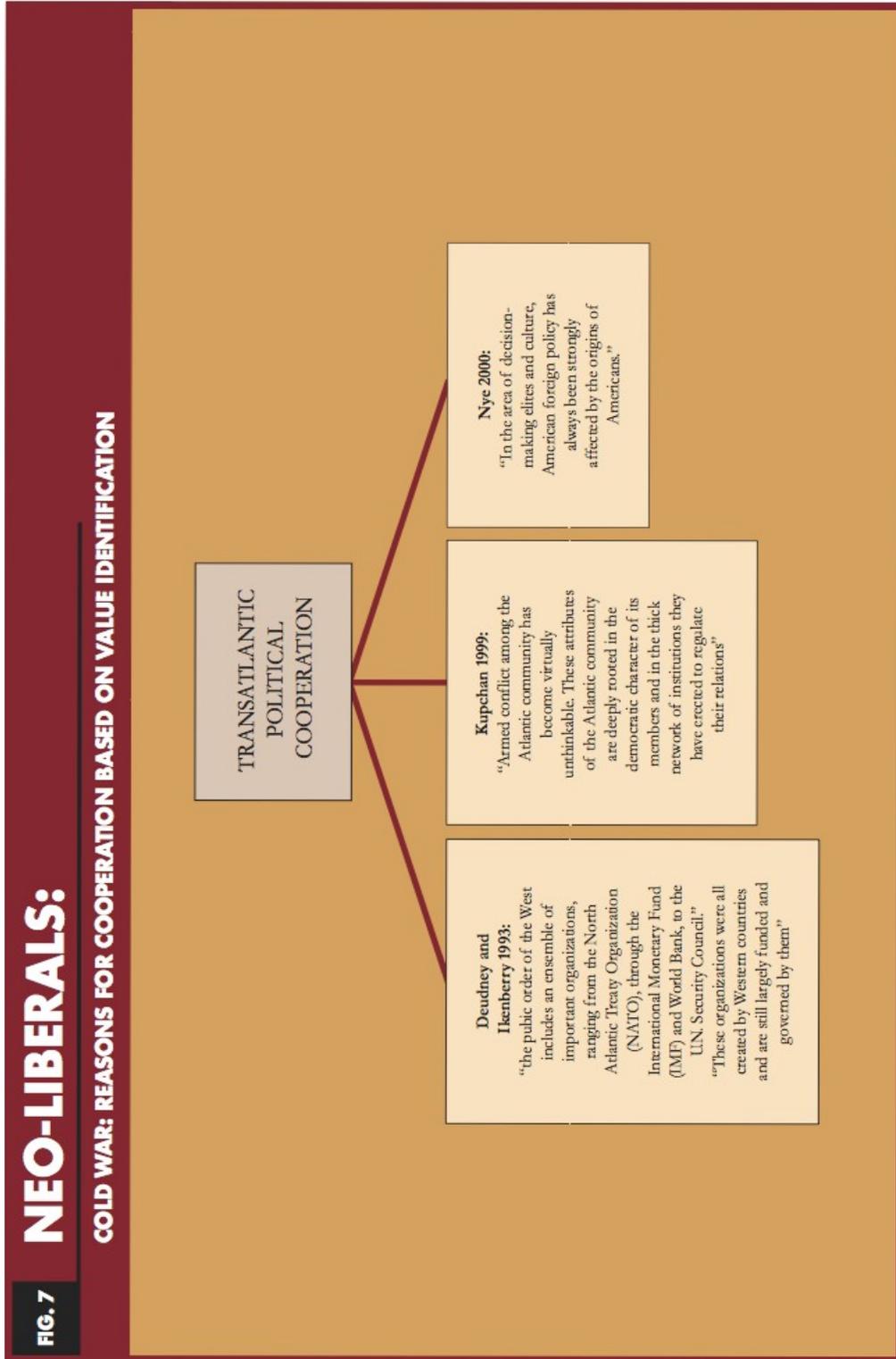


For the period of the Cold War, the economic argument is not particularly relevant but it becomes more so when neo-liberals discuss the post Cold War conditions. Elles for instance links economic interests with the presence of the USSR, which is an argument that is probably closer to a pessimist one, and Deudney and Ikenberry mention that market relations produced economic interdependence during the Cold War. However, this argument is not remarkably developed by the optimists for the period of the Cold War when discussing transatlantic relations. (Figure 6 illustrates this point. See Elles and Deudney-Ikenberry's arguments represented in the figure).

What the neo-liberals seems to develop and agree most clearly upon is that what brought the United States and Europe together during the Cold War was an overwhelming consensus in favor of political democracy. The shared value of democracy also triggered their participation in international organizations. Deudney and Ikenberry claim that “the West has a distinctive political logic. It is not a series of states in anarchy, but rather an integrated and functionally differentiated system.”³³ (See how this link works in Figure 7).

³³ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.18.





The West they claim is “bound together by a web of complex institutional links and association.”³⁴ They also claim that in part these institutions were prompted by the pressures of the Cold War, nonetheless they have produced what they call a “civic identity” in which “rational reciprocity dominates, and nationalism has been muted into pluralist ethnicity.”³⁵ Kuphan agrees and claims that the United States and Europe “have succeeded in carving out a unique political space in which the rules of anarchic competition no longer apply.”³⁶ He states that “these states enjoy unprecedented levels of trust and reciprocity.”³⁷ Thus, “armed conflict among the Atlantic democracies has become virtually impossible.” The reasons he offers for this view is that the members of the Atlantic community are democracies and belong to institutions, which they have created to regulate their relations. (See the related Kupchan link in Figure 7, which also shows the larger argument pathway linking this claim to a brighter prospect for transatlantic relations). Nye concurs with the idea that the United States and Europe share values. He states that “the United States shares the values of

³⁴ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.18.

³⁵ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.18.

³⁶ Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p. 79.

³⁷ Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p. 79.

democracy and human rights more thoroughly with the majority of European countries than with most other states.”³⁸ (Nye’s argument appears in the bottom part of Figure 7).

The neo-liberal arguments for cooperation during the Cold War are combined in Figure 8. I have constructed a multi-path causal map, which synthesizes the neo-liberal arguments. The figure represents the three main factors that they conceptualize as influential for transatlantic political cooperation during the Cold War.

The lack of the complexity of the argument that appears evident from Figures 5 through 7, synthesized in Figure 8, is quite striking. There is no causal effect between the Soviet threat and transatlantic political cooperation, not that there has to be one. But one is left wondering about the (absent) dynamics of causal relationships in their analysis. Security interests are present, along with economic ones and value identification, but their argument lacks a coherent articulation of all these elements.

³⁸ Nye, “The US and Europe”, p.55.

As for their analysis of the future of transatlantic relations in the post Cold War, they seem to agree that these relations will not undergo major changes since the Cold War. They expect that shared security interests, shared economic interests and value identification will preserve transatlantic political cooperation.

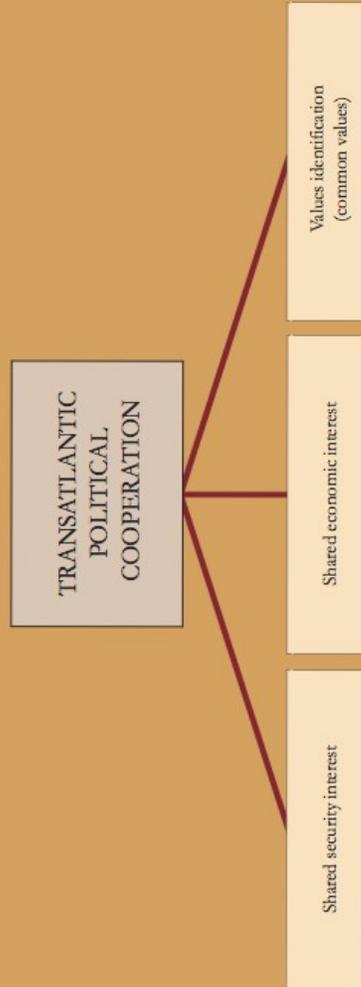
From a security standpoint, the disintegration of the USSR, some have claimed, did not wipe out U.S.-European common security interests. They cite that although establishing a contraposition to the countries of the Warsaw Pact constituted the most important goal of the alliance, others (i.e. stabilizing Europe) were nonetheless relevant and the end of East-West rivalry gave more prominence to those.³⁹ (See Elles and Duffield's arguments summarized in Figure 9).

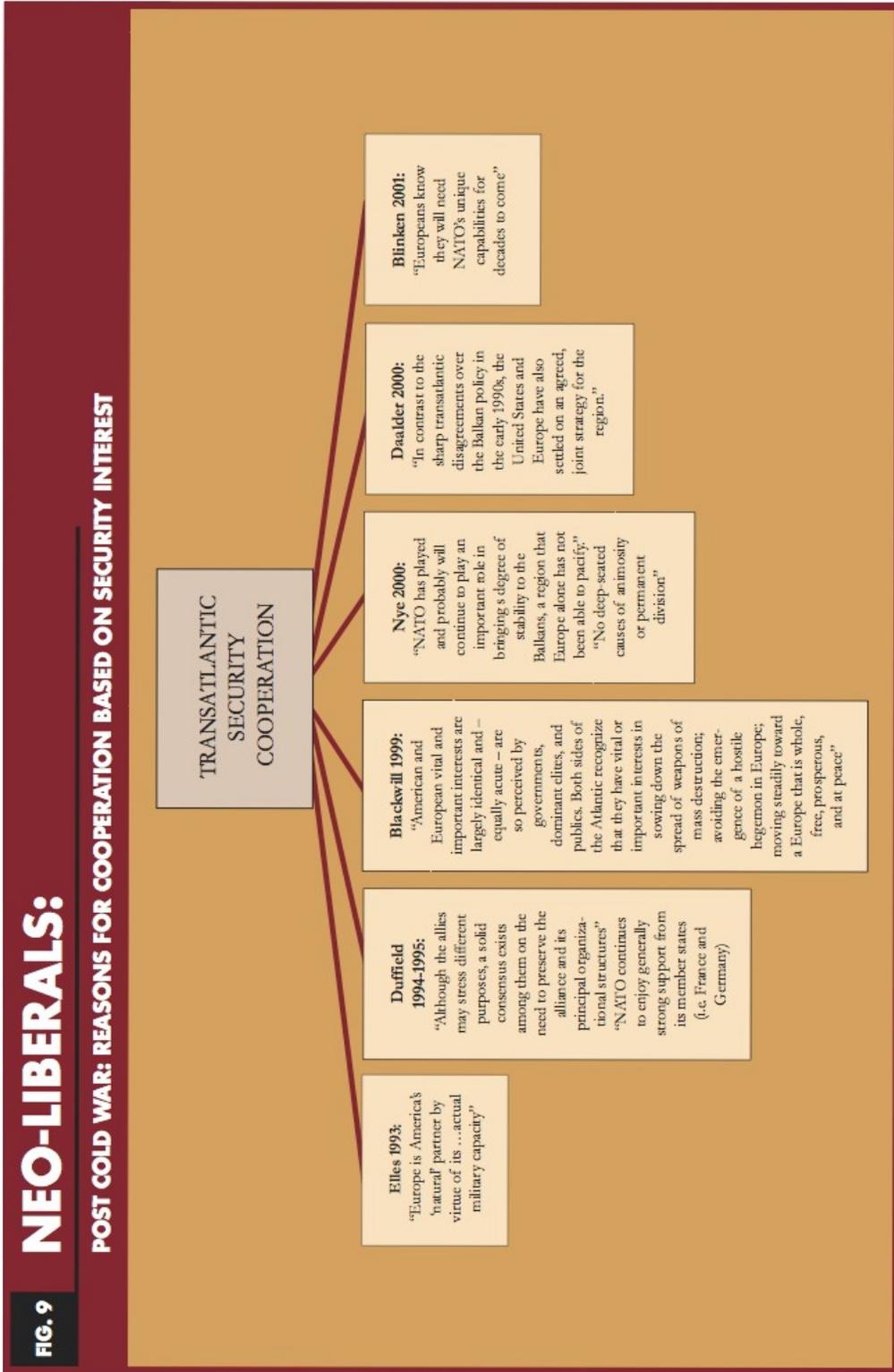
³⁹ Duffield, "NATO's Functions after the Cold War".

FIG. 8

NEO-LIBERALS:

CORRELATION MAP OF COLD WAR ARGUMENTS





In a very thoughtful report sponsored by the Council of Foreign Relations, Robert Blackwill highlights this very point by arguing that even with the end of the Cold War “the two sides of the Atlantic continue to share enduring vital interests and face a common set of challenges both in Europe and beyond. These challenges are so many and diverse that neither the United States nor the allies can adequately address these regional and global concerns alone, especially in light of growing domestic constraints on the implementation of foreign policy. Thus, protecting shared interests and managing common threats to the West in the years ahead will necessitate not only continued cooperation but a broader and more comprehensive transatlantic partnership than in the past.”⁴⁰ He explains that governments, dominant elites, and publics perceive such important interests as “largely identical and equally acute”.⁴¹ The common interests that he identifies are several: slowing the spread of weapons of mass destruction; avoiding the emergence of a hostile hegemon in Europe; moving toward a Europe that is whole and free, prosperous and at peace; maintaining the secure supply of imported energy at reasonable prices; further opening up the transatlantic and

⁴⁰ Blackwill, *The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, p.7.

⁴¹ Blackwill, *The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, p.10.

global economic systems and, finally, preventing the collapse of international financial, trade, and ecological regime.⁴² (See the Blackwill link summarizing this claim in Figure 9).

Blackwill's analysis however does not focus exclusively on common security and economic interests; he in fact also acknowledges that the United States and Europe share history, cultural affinity, and moral values and that, he claims, make the transatlantic partnership unique in the world. Joseph Nye seems to agree with the basic principle Blackwill puts forward that neither threatens vital interest of the other and thus we should not expect them to drift apart. He in fact stresses that the lack of conflicting interest is extremely important because "it means that despite the inevitable frictions that arise, there are no deep-seated causes of animosity or permanent division."⁴³ Contrary to the neo-realist view (e.g. Walt in *The Ties that Fray*), he points out that NATO is still popular, trade is good and the U.S. and Europe do share the values of democracy and human rights and puts a special emphasis on the relevance of values in foreign policy. (See the summary link labeled "Nye" in Figure 9). Nye claims, "values matter in American foreign

⁴² Blackwill, *The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, p.10.

⁴³ Nye, "The US and Europe", p.55.

policy, and the communality of values between the United States and Europe is an important force keeping the two sides together.”⁴⁴ Some expected that NATO members would try to use the Alliance’s highly organized structure to address new possible challenges in the region or even outside Europe.⁴⁵

Neo-liberals also claim that there are economic reasons for the continuation of transatlantic cooperation. Elles for example argues that the weight of American-European trade is such that it makes the two countries “natural” partners.⁴⁶ (This Elles argument appears in Figure 10). Daniel Deudney and John Ikenberry too stress the economic aspect of such relations, but they emphasize social networks, a distinctive political culture and identity, as well as shared public institutions. They claim that these factors form the complexity of transatlantic relations. They argue “make no mistake, the body of the civic union is capitalism. The business of the West is business...As the importance of the market grows in these societies, their characters converge.”⁴⁷ (See Figure 10).

⁴⁴ Nye, “The US and Europe”, p.55.

⁴⁵ McCalla, “NATO's Persistence after the Cold War”.

⁴⁶ Elles, “Towards a New Transatlantic Relationship”, p. 36.

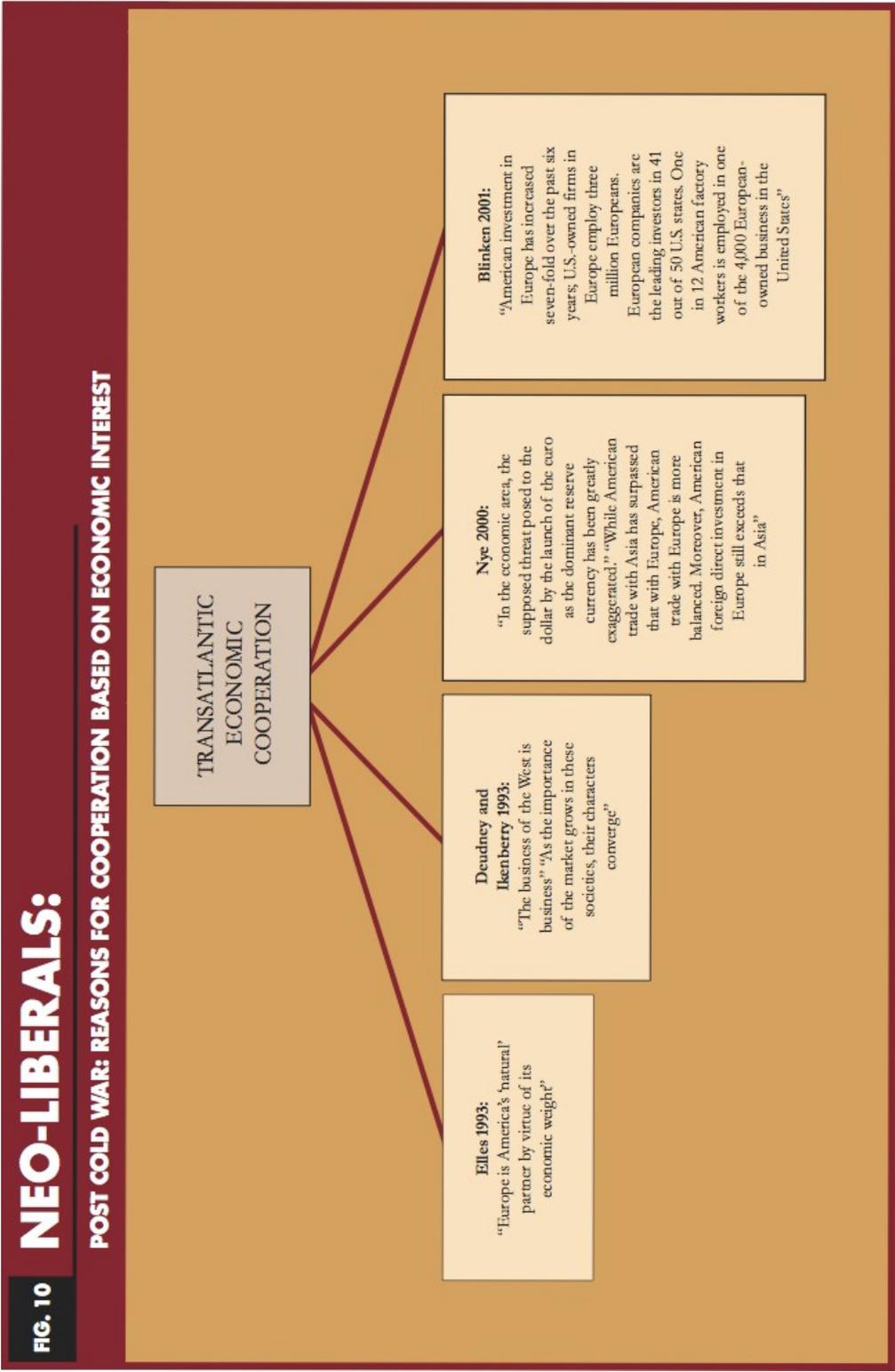
⁴⁷ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.18.

Nye also participates in the debate on the issue of economic cooperation. He claims that the hypothesis of rivalry between the Euro and the Dollar, as to which will be the dominant reserve currency has been exaggerated.⁴⁸ Furthermore, he points out that “Europeans will have an enlightened self-interest in maintaining good relations with the American economy, and direct foreign investment helps to knit economies together...In this regard it is worth noting that while American trade with Asia has surpassed that with Europe, American trade with Europe is more balanced. Moreover, American foreign direct investment in Europe still exceeds that in Asia.”⁴⁹ (This text supports the link in Figure 10). Finally, Blinken offers data on the extent of transatlantic cooperation to argue for the continuation of cooperation. He states that “American investment in Europe has increased seven-fold over the past six years; U.S. owned firms in Europe employ three million Europeans. European companies are the leading investors in 41 out of 50 U.S. states. One in 12 American factory workers is employed in one of the 4,000 European-owned business in the United States.”⁵⁰ (See Figure 10).

⁴⁸ Nye, “The US and Europe”, p.54.

⁴⁹ Nye, “The US and Europe”, p.54-55.

⁵⁰ Blinken, “The False Crisis Over the Atlantic,” p. 46.



Value identification within international institutions is another factor that, as in the analysis of the transatlantic relations for the Cold War, comes into play.⁵¹ Deudney and Ikenberry, as I said in the previous pages, claim that the West is not build by a series of states that are bound to face a common threat under anarchy, but rather they are “bound by a web of complex institutional links and associations.”⁵² They further claim that the West is a “civic union” which is defined by a structural integration of their organs of security, economy and society.⁵³ (See Figure 11)

They conceptualize capitalism as the “body” of the civic union. They claim that the West has its own “spirit” that is made of common norms, public mores, and political identities. Finally, they acknowledge that they too speak of the West as being made up of nation-states but they put forward the idea that states “exist in a complex political order made up of intergovernmental links and economic decision making processes as well as formal public organizations.”⁵⁴ In other words, they

⁵¹ Value identification is a term that I use to indicate that according to the reviewed authors the North Atlantic core states are bound together by common values. In other words, an identification with common values keeps will ensure continuing political cooperation.

⁵² Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.18.

⁵³ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.18.

⁵⁴ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”, p.20.

argue that the collapse of the Soviet Union will not spell doom for transatlantic relations. They acknowledge that although the Cold War helped prompt the construction of institutions like NATO, such international institutions have achieved an acceptability that goes beyond the processes that created them. They claim, “over the last half century, Western countries have come to view these institutions as a routine and regular part of domestic and international politics, and they find it difficult to imagine life without them.”⁵⁵ These institutions in fact, they argue, embody common values and are not merely instrumental.

Similarly, James Elles asserts that there are three basic reasons for being optimistic about the future. The first one is that the U.S. and Europe share both history and values. “There is no other possible combination of nations in the world which can embrace so many peoples committed to democratic institutions and the market economy. In addition, these countries have accumulated a long experience of working together in pursuit of common objectives. They have also developed mechanisms, procedures and institutional and personal relationships for coordinating positions and resolving their differences”.⁵⁶ (See Elles in Figure 11)

⁵⁵ Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West,” p. 21.

⁵⁶ Elles, “Towards a New Transatlantic Relationship”, p. 35.

Elles is not blind to U.S. and Europe rivalry in the global economy, however, he argues that if such rivalry “is channeled into agreements which rewrite global trading rules in favor of a more open system and which at the same time diminishes the points of conflict between Europe and the US...then a strengthened partnership will be rewarded by grater economic growth.”⁵⁷ Others continue to emphasize the issues that unite rather than divide. Ivo Daalder highlights that “both sides of the Atlantic share a commitment to market democracy and to the underlying values that have given rise to it over centuries. Both hold key economic and strategic interests in common (even if they often differ on how best to protect or advance them.) And cooperation between the two is necessary (and in many cases sufficient) to address many of the most important global issues.”⁵⁸ Kuchpan in 1999 seems to have abandoned the pessimism of his early article and writes “my own assessment is that power asymmetry *and* shared norms and institutions are working together to produce the cohesiveness of the transatlantic community.”⁵⁹

As I said earlier in the Chapter, Kupchan’s approach is difficult to categorize; what I intend to stress, however, is his emphasis on the idea

⁵⁷ Elles, “Towards a New Transatlantic Relationship”, p. 36.

⁵⁸ Daalder, “Europe: Rebalancing the U.S.-European Relationship”, p. 25.

⁵⁹ Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p.78.

that the Atlantic community will not face strategic competition because it is rooted in democracy and tied in “the thick network of institutions they have erected to regulate their relations.”⁶⁰(See Kupchan in Figure 11).

Nye reminds us that “the United States shares the values of democracy and human rights more thoroughly with the majority of European countries than with most other states.”⁶¹ He also draws attention on the relevance of values for keeping the U.S. and Europe together. He argues “values matter in American foreign policy, and the commonality of values between the United States and Europe is an important force keeping the two sides together.”⁶²

⁶⁰ Kupchan, “Rethinking Europe”, p.79.

⁶¹ Nye, “The US and Europe”, p.55.

⁶² Nye, “The US and Europe”, p.55.

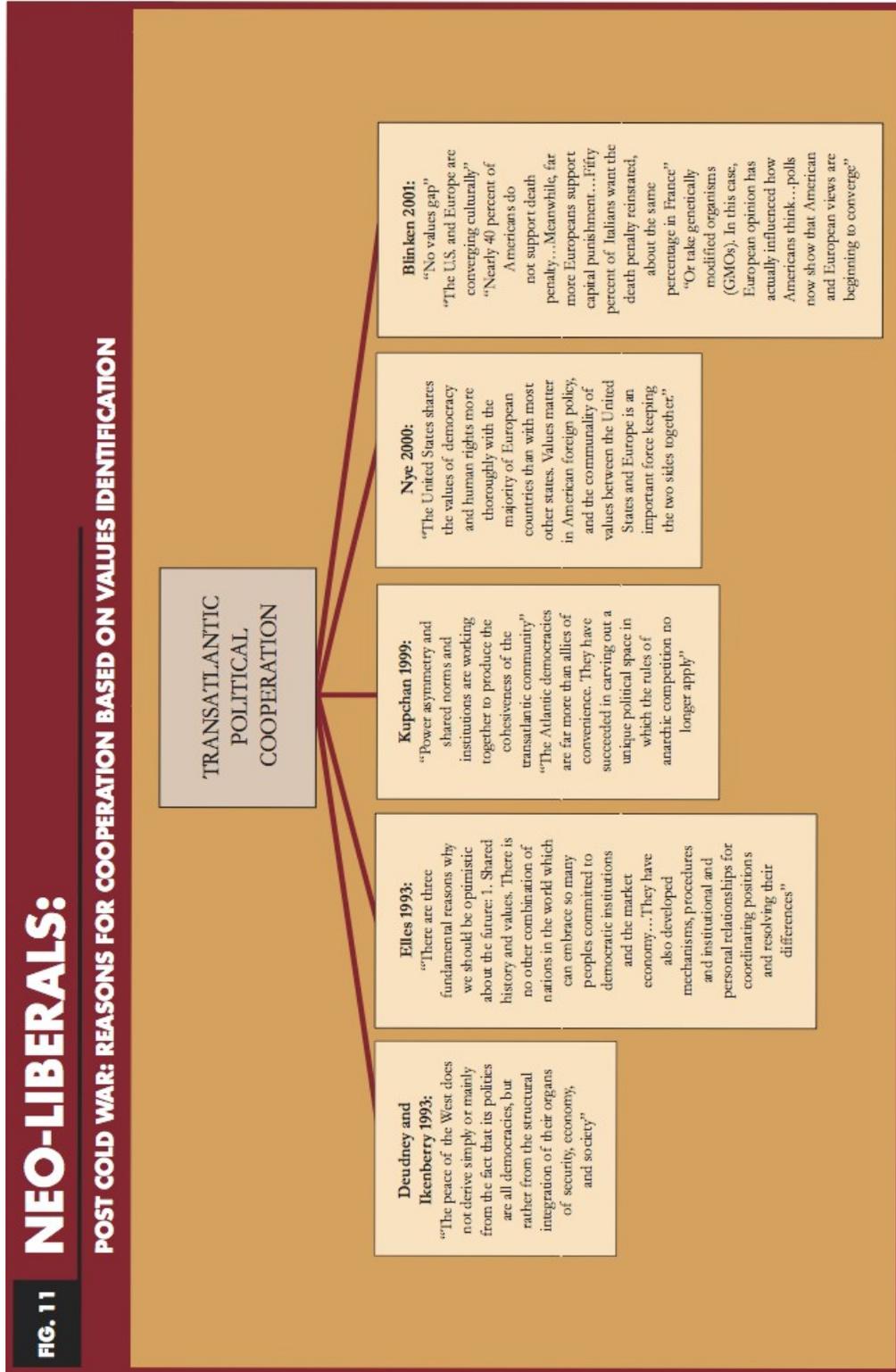


FIG. 11

Finally, Anthony Blinken argues that “the United States and Europe are converging culturally, economically, and with some effort, strategically.”⁶³ He claims that the “values gap” and the “strategic split” are arguments that rests within the minds of European and American elites and that in fact the U.S. and Europe are not growing apart. He maintains that there is no value gap on the death penalty and gun control. He asserts that there is a tendency to converge on the issue of genetically modified organisms and thus, concludes, “the United States are more likely to agree on the scope of an international criminal court, the sweep of a land mines treaty, or the sway of a U.N.”⁶⁴ (See Blinken in Figure 11).

The United States and Europe, continue to participate in international institutions that they have founded (e.g. NATO, WTO, IMF, the G 7, UN) and push their security and economic agenda through and within those institutions. Furthermore, they have adjusted them, mainly NATO, to address the security challenges within the region and outside of it. Thus, according to this argumentative perspective one

⁶³ Blinken, “The False Crisis Over the Atlantic”, p. 36.

⁶⁴ Blinken, “The False Crisis Over the Atlantic”, p. 46.

should expect that the United States and Europe will continue to cooperate on security and economic issues.

As noted previously, when addressing the optimists' arguments for transatlantic relations in the Cold War, I have constructed a constitutive and causal map for the post Cold War (Figure 12). The boxes in the figure indicate the factors that these observers have suggested as salient for transatlantic relations. Moreover, the authors being examined have claimed that the presence of these factors lead to the conclusion that there will be continued cooperation in the future of U.S.-European relations. At this point, I want to call attention to the similarity between Figure 8 and Figure 12. The similarity between the two Figures is conspicuous. There is no appreciable difference between the graphs for the two periods. Neo-liberals offer the same reasons for both periods and do not detect any major changes in transatlantic relations. Shared security interests, although different from the previous era, shared economic interests and shared values and identity originated a complex web of international institutions. Institutions allow the U.S. and Europe to pursue common interests and because they are linked

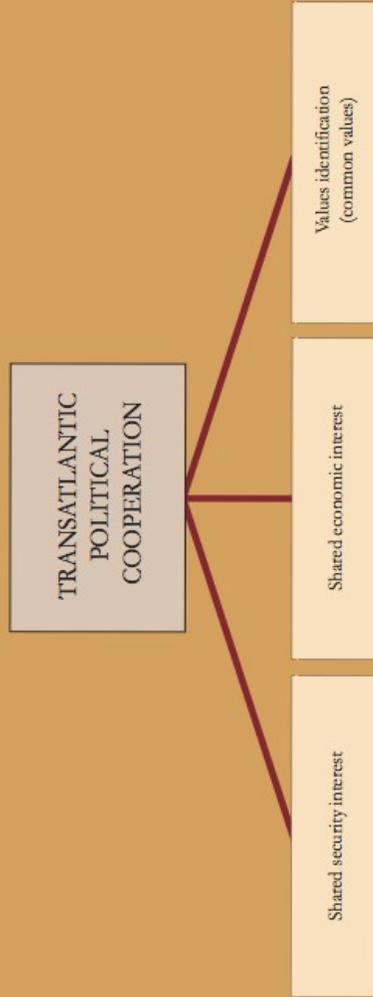
within those organizations in pursuing those interests they will keep cooperating.

These arguments, especially in the light of NATO enlargement, sounded to some extent convincing. Neo-realists, who conceived transatlantic relations mainly in strategic terms and who argued that the end of the Cold War would have brought the demise of such relations, for a while appeared to have offered certainly a sophisticated account for the future of the transatlantic relations. In the 1990s, disagreements on the transformation of NATO as well as political divisions on multilateral efforts such as the Kyoto Protocol, the Convention on the Anti-Personnel Mines and the ICC seemed to signal the accuracy of the neo-realist account while invalidating the neo-liberal one.

NEO-LIBERALS:

CORRELATION MAP OF POST COLD WAR ARGUMENTS

FIG. 12



Conclusions

The neo-realist and neo-liberal arguments are not fully comparable at all levels. Although some of their arguments can be paired and contrasted as contending arguments, there are a number of “mismatched arguments” or instances in which the two approaches direct past each other. There are also examples in which the critical arguments of one approach are not addressed by, or counter argued by, the other. Therefore, it is important to make a distinction between matched contending arguments, mismatched arguments, and non-addressed arguments.

The neo-realist perspectives presented in the figures are divided in three levels: international system, state level and socio-cultural level. The synthesis of the neo-realist arguments suggests that the majority of their arguments about the past and the future were made at the state and socio-cultural levels. Distinguishing between the levels and breaking down the arguments these authors make, allow us to determine which arguments are matched and which are mismatched. This is relevant for

testing purposes because the neo-liberals reject arguments made by neo-realists about the future of the relations at different points.

a. International system level

In my source material, this is the level at which only the neo-realists make claims about the past and future of transatlantic relations. While the presence or absence of the Soviet threat is an important element vis-à-vis the past and future of U.S.-European relations, the presence of the Soviet threat in a bipolar context is seen as a constraining element within security choices. The argument is that in a bipolar context the US and the Europeans did not have security choices. The only possible choice for Europeans was to follow under to protective umbrella of the US and the US did not have any other option but to protect them. The neo-liberals did not respond to such an argument. The bulk of their counterargument can be found in the state and socio-cultural levels. As for the future, the neo-liberals make the argument for the dissolution of transatlantic relations also at the international system level, which is again not addressed by the neo-liberals The neo-realists

claim that with the end of the Cold War and hence the disappearance of the bipolar structure and the rise of a multipolar structure, the US is likely to abandon Europe and NATO. This argument is not countered by the neo-liberals who, in the sources I have surveyed, do not make any of their arguments at the international system level.

b. State level

This level is where the majority of arguments, in our collection of sources, flourish and where we find many contending arguments that are mismatched. In substance, often the authors direct past each other; but not always. For instance, there is agreement on the neo-realist argument that the presence of the Soviet threat had produced an overriding security interest in the US and Europe (see Table 2). But while the pessimists predict the breakdown of the transatlantic relations as a result of the disappearance of the USSR, and thus the disappearance of the common security interest, neo-liberals claim that new threats, such as WMDs and terrorism, will constitute the new security glue for the endurance of the relations. Security is a very important factor and the cause behind the

cooperation between the U.S. and Europe from the neo-realist perspective. As for the post Cold War, to the neo-realist claim that the increase of security options in the post Cold War will reduce NATO strength, neo-liberals respond that there is consensus in Europe and the U.S. on the importance of NATO. This is a contending argument. In fact, the neo-liberals do not directly address the causal relation between the increase of security options and NATO strength. They argue that there is consensus on the importance of NATO. What makes them argue this and what is happening within NATO, which could justify either position, is what needs to be tested.

It should be clear by now that the neo-realists' argument revolves, and is built around, security. For them, security also effects economic relations. They argue that during the Cold War economic ties reinforced security interests and vice-versa. This argument is a contending one. In fact, neo-liberals respond that common economic interests within institutions and along with market relations were *per se* causes of closeness. This is part of the same problem for the neo-realists for whom

the economic aspects of the relations also descend from alterations in the security options.

The neo-realist claims that the military power gap between the US and Europe produced a marriage of convenience in the presence of the Soviet threat and the ideological gap, due to the absence of such a threat, is also not addressed by the neo-liberals.

c. Socio-cultural level

At this level, the analysis of the neo-realists arguments bring to light that the presence of the Soviet threat and the struggle against communism called up a sense of Western collective commitment toward the Atlantic community. The post Cold War is instead characterized by fragmentation and disorientation, in which there is no longer a sense of commitment to the Atlantic community because of the lack of a unifying force. This statement also encompasses the claim that while there was a generation of Europeans and Americans whose personal background and experiences left them committed to the Atlantic community during the Cold War, the fading away of such generational commitment in the post

Cold War era is causing a lack of cohesion in the larger western community. This is also a mismatched contending argument. Again, these arguments bypass each other. The neo-liberals in fact do not address these claims but rather, within this issue, look at the problem from a different angle. They focus on institutions and shared political as well as economic values as key elements of the Euro-American relations, for both the past and the future of the relations.

For the Cold War period, the neo-liberals generally claim that the North Atlantic core states were kept together by the structural integration of their organs of security, economy and society within institutions like NATO, WTO, IMF, G7, and the UN Security Council. They do not deny that such institutions were in part the result of the Cold War, but stress that the values of democracy and human rights produced the cohesiveness within the transatlantic community. Their view for the post Cold War does not substantially differ, but they further claim that the complex web of institutions the U.S. and Europe belong to, decreases the likelihood of conflict or split between them. The question that comes out of this mismatched proposition, which I will empirically evaluate as I

further develop this work, is the following: Is there evidence of the dissolution of the commitment to the Atlantic community or do institutions, norms and values keep the Atlantic community together?

