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"*Bringing Back Bilateralism?* An Analysis of the US-UK 'Special Relationship' in the 21st century"

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Table of Contents

I. Introduction

The theoretical concept of bilateralism can be said to be quite understudied. Particularly since the fall of the Iron Curtain, multilateralism seems to have been the dominating organising form of the international system and bilateralism has therefore been rather neglected by scholars of International Relations (IR). However, due to an increase in multilateralism and its growing complexity, bilateralism has become a considerable alternative in our complex globalised world in recent years (Heydon & Woolcock 2009: 9; Renard 2016: 18-19).

On the 23rd of June 2016, a slight majority of voters in the United Kingdom (51.9 percent (Electoral Commission 2016)) opted in a referendum about the country's membership of the European Union (EU) against a continued remaining inside the union and for a so-called and often stylised 'Brexit'. Subsequently, the government of the United Kingdom formally triggered Article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) in March 2017, which addresses the possibility of such a withdrawal from the EU. About six months after the Brexit vote, the outspoken EU-sceptic and critic of multilateral organisations and arrangements, Donald Trump, won the presidential elections on the 8th of November 2016, in the USA. In developments such as these two, one might detect a moving away from multilateralism towards an increasing bilateralism. According to Thompson and Verdier (2014: 1), such a move has not just happened out of thin air very recently but has manifested itself over the last few years or maybe even decades.

Not only due to these developments, it might be worth revisiting the theory of bilateralism and attempting an application to our (formerly?) multilateral world. Since the relationship between these two states, the US and the UK, is often attributed with the word 'special' and since their connection is said to be of sentimental as well as political value, the aim of this Master's thesis is to approach the 'special relationship' with the theoretical background of bilateralism. The thesis attempts to find an answer to the research question whether this relationship can be said to exist as a political reality in the 21st century. Five 'spheres', in which US-UK relations are assessed, always with the theoretical concept of bilateralism in mind, have been selected for this endeavour. The first sphere is the arena of international politics: Here the United Nations, and in particular the General Assembly of the United Nations, have been chosen as the level of analysis for the examination of the voting behaviour of the two states. The other four spheres selected for this thesis are the realms of economics, defence relations, intelligence cooperation, as well as the business of state and official visits.

In chapter II, this thesis first aims at addressing the matter of the 'special relationship' and its origins, nature and scope, before then moving on to a discussion of the theory framework chosen for the thesis in chapter III: bilateralism. There the central features of bilateralism as well as multilateralism are discussed as they are of further relevance in the chapters following the explanation of the combination of methods used (Chapter IV). Chapters V to IX then each provide an analysis of the state of the 'special relationship' in one of the five spheres mentioned above: Chapter V is dedicated to the level of the United Nations; chapter VI is concerned with the economic relations between the two states, chapter VII deals with the representation of the relationship in the sphere of military matters and defence relations; chapter VIII is concerned with the highly delicate field of intelligence cooperation, which is considered to be a core aspect of US-UK relations; and chapter IX finally surveys the statistics behind US and UK state and official visits undertaken by US presidents, UK prime ministers, US secretaries of state and UK foreign secretaries in the 21st century.

II. What is the ‘special relationship’?

The already mentioned ‘special relationship’ between the United Kingdom and the United States of America did, according to Wallace and Phillips (2009: 263), play an important role in British foreign and defence policy in the past. Presumably, it did so particularly as a normative and rhetorical construct, underlining shared values and partnership between the two states. Wallace and Phillips (2009: 263) describe the nature of the relationship as “a political and ideological super-structure and an embedded military and intelligence substructure”. The political dimension mainly manifests itself in an alleged “privileged access for British politicians and diplomats in Washington” as well as in “the perception that British and American interests are – or should be – closely aligned, and, furthermore, in more “sentimental assertions of shared values” (Wallace & Phillips 2009: 263).

Reynolds (1986: 1) recounts an old and rather amusing anecdote, which quite humorously describes the ‘sentimental’ and ‘shared values’ aspect of said relationship: The story goes that when Winston Churchill came to the United States two weeks after Pearl Harbor and staying at the White House, immersed himself in a series of extended informal conversations with President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Presumably to pick up on one of their previous conversation topics, the president had just entered his guest’s room one evening and was astonished to find a wet, freshly bathed and naked Churchill coming out of the bathroom. Slightly bewildered, FDR immediately made attempts to steer his wheelchair out of the room again, when Churchill stopped him and allegedly said, “The Prime Minister of Great Britain […] has nothing to conceal from the President of the United States” (Reynolds 1986: 1).

Churchill later denied that anything of the sort had actually happened. If it had, however, it would have, as Reynolds (1986: 1) points out, illustrated an apparently close and intimate bond between two statesmen founded on the close and intimate relationship between their two countries, which mostly surfaces in celebrations of state occasions, minced “with suitably hyperbolic prose” (Reynolds 1986:1). The term ‘special relationship’ was indeed popularised and possibly even coined by Sir Winston Churchill. The concept as such had, nonetheless, emerged some decades earlier and could be seen as an important premise in British foreign policy since the beginning of the 20th century (Reynolds 1986: 1-2).

According to Reynolds (1986: 2) the possibly most accurate notion of what British politicians meant when they referred to this speciality of the relationship can be read out of an anonymous poem written in 1945, when the United Kingdom was negotiating with the United States to get a post-war loan:

In Washington Lord Halifax
Once whispered to Lord Keynes:
It's true *they* have the money bags
But *we* have all the brains.

Reynolds uses this poem to explain one principle aspect of the relationship, namely that the British goal was to use it as a device "by a declining power for trying to harness a rising power to serve its own end" (Reynolds 1968: 2).

While the Churchill-anecdote, as well as this poem, might capture some of the 'essence' of the relationship between the two countries, they are both products of the 1940s and their validity in the year 2018 can therefore not be guaranteed so easily. It is true that, due to their interwoven history and because they share the same language, the UK still understands itself as a 'transatlantic bridge' between Europe and the US. However, the world has changed significantly in these last few decades: Old powers have declined, new ones have risen and fallen, European integration has transformed the continent and provided a blue-print for other projects of regional integration around the world. But while the importance of the 'special relationship' and the significance of Britain as a 'transatlantic bridge' can sometimes be slightly exaggerated, the UK doubtlessly is still an important player in transatlantic relations (Oliver & Williams 2016: 547), as is also discussed in terms of transatlantic economic relations in chapter VI.

Yet, as Oliver and Williams (2016: 547) argue, if we maintain that there is some form of 'special relationship' between the two countries, the USA's relationship with the rest of Europe could, in addition, also be said to be somewhat 'special', since it is also "rooted in shared ideas", with "deeply entwined economic and security interests, multilateral and bilateral institutional links, international pressures, and commitments by individual leaders". Furthermore, scholars, such as Dumbrell (2009: 65), highlight that the attribute 'special' to this relationship cannot be taken as self-evident and that this does not have to mean that – at least on the surface – the relations between the two states are much more special than those among some other friendly nations. However, most authors - Dumbrell (2009: 65) included - sustain that this construct does exist and does show its uniqueness in certain policy areas.

This importance of the ‘special relationship’ is particularly said to manifest itself in fields such as security and military relations, intelligence cooperation, in the countries’ economic ties, and in cooperation on the international level (Dumbrell 2009: 65; Oliver & Williams 2016: 547). However, according to Oliver and Williams (2016: 547), one central aspect of the ‘special relationship’ is the UK being rooted in Europe, more precisely in the European Union. With the country having voted to leave the EU, the authors are certain of a noticeable change in transatlantic relations, as well as in European geopolitics and cooperation in NATO (Oliver & Williams 2016: 547).

While the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama, warned Great Britain pre-referendum that the country would, as a non-EU member, have to wait its turn in possible negotiations of trade agreements, since the – now paused - negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the EU would take precedence for his administration (Akhtar 2017: 1), Donald Trump, his successor, is a quite outspoken EU-sceptic. This means that scope conditions have perceivably changed, firstly, on account of the Brexit vote in June 2016 and, secondly, due to the election of Trump as the 45th US president. Statements with regard to negotiations of a future trade deal between the two countries have been issued from both sides, which then leads to the question of whether the special relationship could play a more prominent role in the UK’s foreign and economic policies than it has previously. Since EU members cannot, for instance, bilaterally close favourable trade deals with third countries (Lange 2018; Hamilton& Quinlan 2017: 1), as is discussed in more detail in chapter VI, the attribute ‘special’ was, in some areas, formally and legally confined by Britain’s EU membership in the last few decades. As only a crystal ball could answer questions regarding the possibilities in future relations of the two states, however, this thesis does not attempt to provide an answer in these regards but rather focuses on the state of the relationship in the 21st century in order to establish the status-quo of UK-US relations, upon whose fundament future relations can then be built.

When on the 23rd of June 2016, a slight majority of voters in the United Kingdom (51.9 percent (Electoral Commission 2016)) opted against a continued remaining inside the European Union, the UK turned into an alley named ‘Brexit’, meaning a British exit from the EU. Subsequently, Article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) was formally triggered by the government of the United Kingdom on the 29th of March 2017. This article explicitly addresses the possibility of such a withdrawal from the EU and was only incorporated as a real and legal option in the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) for the first time in the history of the EU (and the European Communities (ECs) for that matter). Since Article 50 does not prescribe any specifics about the exact nature of the future relationship between the exiting country and the rest of the European Union and does not address any “substantive conditions” (European Parliament 2016: 1) but simply lays down procedural requirements. Therefore, it depends on the negotiations of a withdrawal agreement between the EU and the UK what shape future relations between the two entities might take (European Parliament 2016: 1).

While the result of the referendum came somewhat surprisingly, when one takes into account a series of opinion polls published before the vote, in which most of the trends suggested a win for the ‘Remain’ or ‘In’ campaign, the onset of the UK’s ambivalence towards the European project cannot be found in recent years. One can argue that such an acquiescence towards European integration can be traced back to the beginning of the creation of the European Communities and even before then. With this background, the political scientist Stephen George – quite fittingly – introduced the notion of the UK as the ‘awkward partner’ in the EU in his 1998 book *An awkward partner: Britain in the European Community*. It can, however, only be speculated about the reasons for the persistence of British scepticism towards the EU. As explanations for its origins, most scholars list a variety of possible ‘diagnoses’, mostly including Great Britain’s perceived ‘island mentality’ and comparative geographical ‘isolation’ as well as its historical links with Commonwealth countries and, finally, the ‘special relationship’ the country is said to enjoy and have enjoyed with the USA (Startin 2015: 313). This last factor is of concern in this Master’s thesis, which examines the existence of the ‘special relationship’ in the 21st century and seeks to establish whether its existence can merely be classified as a construct of sentiment and wishful-thinking, mostly from the British shores (Dumbrell 2009: 65), or whether it can be categorised as a form of cooperation existing in the real world of material interests.

As can already be deduced from the three main ‘hints’ with regards to the special relationship given in this chapter, namely that it has been a premise of British foreign policy for decades, that it seems to stem from a basis of “sentimental assertions and shared values” (Wallace & Phillips 2009: 263) and that it is a rather contested construct, the relationship is not rooted in an institutionalised form of cooperation per se. But both states are, of course, part of broader schemes of international cooperation, such as NATO, encompassing a number of other states as well. The existence of the relationship also seems, as mentioned previously, to be concentrated in certain political spheres, such as in cooperation on the international level, in the countries’ economic ties, in security and military relations and in intelligence cooperation, as well as in ‘privileged access’ in Washington for British officials (Dumbrell 2009: 65; Oliver & Williams 2016: 547; Wallace & Phillips 2009: 263), which is examined from chapter V onwards.

III. Theoretical background – bilateralism

The theoretical approach chosen for this endeavour is one which can be considered quite understudied and - particularly in recent years – neglected, namely the theoretical concept of bilateralism. The explanation the author of this thesis finds most likely to apply here is that, as commented on above, the recent decades have seen a remarkable process of European integration, with worldwide emulations, as well as the establishment of a trade regime headed by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Such processes fall into the category of 'multilateralism' and are ergo said to be quite the opposite of bilateralism. With the UK exiting the EU, however, and the US having elected the Republican Trump, who has expressed scepticism towards multilateral organisations, bilateralism could possibly be of greater relevance in the coming years in order to understand international politics. Another point here is that, as argued by Heydon and Woolcock (2009) and Renard (2016), for example, the increase in multilateralism and its growing complexity have made bilateralism a considerable alternative in our complex globalised world.

The following chapter therefore attempts to approach bilateralism by first examining how multi- and bilateralism are viewed in the theories of International Relations, before moving on to multilateralism, a phenomenon studied slightly more extensively than bilateralism. This will serve as a contrasting foil to the final part of the chapter which then explicitly focuses on bilateralism and its central characteristics, which will consequently be of relevance when the 'special relationship' is examined in the five aforementioned spheres from chapter V onwards.

In order to approach the topic 'special relationship' and in order to appropriate towards answering the research question posed for this thesis, namely whether such a relationship could be said to exist as a political reality in the 21st century, this chapter seeks to define and explore notions of bilateralism and multilateralism in International Relations. One central argument in this thesis is that in the UK's announced departure from the European Union and the USA's election of President Donald Trump and his more or less open criticism, or in the case of the EU, outright scepticism for organisations such as the aforementioned European Union or NATO, one might be able to detect a moving away from multilateralism towards an increasing bilateralism. This development has, however – especially in the case of the USA- not just started to surface recently but has manifested itself in the course of the last few years and decades (Thompson & Verdier 2014: 2).

As mentioned, the phenomena of multilateralism and bilateralism can be considered to be somewhat understudied from a theoretical point of view (Caporaso 1993: 51). The first section of this chapter therefore attempts to establish a better understanding of these two concepts from this angle.

Since, in general, there does not exist much scholarship on bilateralism (or multilateralism), this theory chapter rests – to a large extent - upon the concepts and definitions established by John Gerard Ruggie, whose – albeit influential - works on multilateralism (1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997) could possibly be said to stand alone, as, particularly in the 21st century, publications on this approach are more than scarce. Another much cited author in this chapter is James A. Caporaso (1993), who has linked the understudied concepts of multilateralism and bilateralism to the theories of International Relations, on which, evidently, much scholarship has been done.

1. Multi – and bilateralism in the Theories of International Relations

The central feature distinguishing multilateralism from other forms of coordinating relations and behaviour among three or more states is that generalised principles of conduct form its backbone (Ruggie 1993: 14). In International Relations Theory, however, the concept of multilateralism could, according to Caporaso (1993: 51), generally not be said to be in the focus of the major theories of IR and tends to be neglected. This does not necessarily mean that multilateral activities within the international system, for example in multilateral organisations etc., have been understudied, but rather that multilateralism has yet to be anchored in the scholarly debate as a theoretical category and an explanatory concept. While tomes have been written about the United Nations or multilateral negotiations of a complex nature - such as, for instance those on GATT, as well as the ones on the Law of the Sea - the focus of much of the research has been directed towards concepts such as cooperation or institutions, with multilateralism as such taking a backseat. Caporaso (1993: 51-53) finds this astonishing, since our world increasingly faced with border-transcending problems - he names pollution, energy, managing of airline traffic, and maintaining rules for trade and investment as examples – which cannot be addressed and solved by singular states alone within their national arena but whose tackling would require coordinated multilateral action (Caporaso 1993: 51-53).

That multilateralism is or has been, according to Caporaso (1993: 52), only treated marginally in the scholarly international relations literature, despite its “observed importance in the world” (Caporaso 1993: 52) could have a variety of reasons: Firstly, some scholars second-guess this just mentioned importance and maintain that multilateralism, in fact, only plays a rather little role in international relations. Proponents of this thesis underline their argument by pointing out that the importance of the United Nations is – seemingly - in decline.

Secondly, Caporaso (1993: 52) cites one scholar (Masefield 1988: 11-14) who opines that the United States as well as the Soviet Union had become quite used to seeing the solutions of their problems only in bilateral approaches and thereby did not turn to Europe, for example, as an additional partner of cooperation in the late 20th century. This can be seen as a slight contradiction to the “consensus” on the importance of expanding multilateralism on the European continent with the helping hands of the USA, as Morgan (1993: 332) describes it and as is discussed in section 2.2.2 of this chapter. Furthermore, one opinion presented by Caporaso (1993: 52) is that the USA could be said to have increasingly employed bullying tactics when it comes to the configuration of the world trading system. According to Niskanen (1989: 531-38, cited in Caporaso 1993: 52), this was accomplished “by ‘unilaterally redefining ‘unfair’ trade’”. Additionally, since there is no ‘world government’ watching over the actions of each and every state, the international system is somewhat decentralised and much importance is credited to a balance of power, which, in fact, then consequently depends on the relations among and between powers. Multilateralism does, following this line of argumentation, not find itself at the centre of concern at the stage of world politics and global power relations (Claude 1989: 77-86, cited in Caporaso 1993: 52). Realists, for example, have, according to Thompson and Verdier (2014: 2), noticed a shift from multilateralism towards bilateralism as well as unilateralism and attribute this to the end of the Cold War and, coincidingly, to the expansion of the United States’ power to a level at which it cannot be met by any rivals.

Thirdly, Caporaso (1993: 52-53) considers the ideational level as a further possible reason for explaining why multilateralism seems to have been neglected in the scholarship of International Relations Theory. The already existing theories of IR are equipped with certain premises and principles, which are at the core of their ‘identity’ and which are also making it difficult to utilise a certain theory to describe phenomena that are at odds with the presuppositions of said theory. Therefore, proponents of certain schools of theories have come to avoid engaging and trying to elaborate on matters for which their theory would almost certainly fail to deliver adequate explanations. One striking example Caporaso (1993: 53) lists is that it appears nearly comedic to imagine theoretical realists resting their argumentations upon "community spirit" or "goodwill", "or a state's desire to minimize its power", when this would go against the core principles of the theory, namely that the international system is anarchic and that states are generally interested in maximising their power and in doing so, they act rationally and not ideologically or driven by a humanist ethic. Yet, it is not only phenomena which are merely impossible for a theory to explain which tend to be left out, but also certain 'grey areas', or 'problematic' areas (Caporaso 1993: 53). These lie between what the theory supposes to be natural and obvious, on the one hand, and what is virtually impossible, on the other hand, and are thus likely to be rather worked around than dealt with explicitly. One example for such a problematic topic for the theoretical school of realism is the aspect of cooperation. And, "why there is ever war, protection, autarky, and Pareto-inferior behavior (sic) is often a puzzle so exotic as to discourage inquiry" for proponents of the liberal theory of IR (Caporaso 1993: 53).

2. The phenomenon of multilateralism

Returning from the realm of IR theory to the phenomenon of multilateralism as such, it can already be deduced from its Latin name that the term *multi*lateralism is used to describe cooperation and relations between three or more states. More specifically, according to Ruggie (1993: 8), whose scholarship on matters of multilateralism and bilateralism can probably be considered as the most influential, it "refers to coordinating relations among three or more states in accordance with certain principles". Even this (general) definition remains, however, rather vague, which means that there can be different configurations of multilateralism. But the aspect in which it can be said to be unambiguous is its distinction from bilateralism, which, as the name suggests, refers to relations between only two states. Caporaso (1993: 53) also emphasises that the ending 'ism' hints at multilateralism being more of an ideology than "a straightforward state of affairs", as he calls it. In accordance with Ruggie, Caporaso (1993: 53) conceives of multilateralism as an "architectural form", as a foundational principle of organising international life. The three characteristics by which it can be differentiated from other organising principles are, firstly, indivisibility, secondly, the existence of generalised principles of conduct, and thirdly, the diffusion of reciprocity. Caporaso (1993: 53) sees these features quasi as a package-deal and maintains that this package itself should be regarded as indivisible, as opposed to these characteristics merely serving as indicators of multilateralism.

By indivisibility one can understand the scope - geographically as well as functionally - “over which costs and benefits are spread, given an action initiated in or among component units” (Caporaso 1993: 54). Consequently, the question arises whether the experience of recession in one country - Caporaso (1993: 54) has chosen Germany as an example here – would lead to consequences for this country (Germany) alone or would also the French, or other members of the Eurozone, the EU or even nationals of countries far away from Europe feel the effects of such a hypothetical recession? In other words, in multilateralism phenomena are not confined to one specific region, but since the partners are linked and have become somewhat ‘indivisible’, using Caporaso’s diction, they have become increasingly interconnected and problems affecting one state are likely to have an effect on the others (Caporaso 1993: 54).

The second feature, generalised principles of conduct, are usually universal conventions laying down how one state should conduct its relations with other states. The best word to generally describe this characteristic feature is probably “non-discrimination”, as used by Martin (1993: 91). The opposite here would be a differentiation in such relations according to case-by-case assessment based on “individual preferences, situational exigencies, or a priori particularistic grounds” (Caporaso 1993: 54).

The third property of multilateralism refers to the adjustment of “the utilitarian lenses for the long view” of diffuse reciprocity (Caporaso 1993: 54), which means that reciprocity is diffused temporally as well as in terms of issues. Consequently, an expectation within the actors concerned is created “to benefit in the long run and over many issues, rather than every time on every issue” (Caporaso 1993: 54).

Since multilateralism can be defined as being constituted by “distinct normative principles possessing a generative logic of its own” (Kratochwil 1993: 444), approaching this concept therefore, however, also requires taking into account the climate in international politics in addition to “nominal definitional exercises such as defining it as cooperation among more than two members”, as Kratochwil (1993: 444) formulates it. This means that it is difficult to give a de-contextualised definition of multilateralism, since there are different understandings of multilateralism in different regions of this world and since the concept can be seen as enshrined with said normative principles. What, according to Kratochwil (1992: 444), can be seen as the effect of multilateralism, is, however, a modification of forms of sovereignty.

2.1. Multilateralism and multilateral organisations

After having already given an – albeit rather simplistic- definition of multilateralism and elaborated on its core features, there still remains the question of the configuration of multilateralism in multilateral organisations and whether the design of multilateral organisations necessarily goes hand in hand with the institution of multilateralism as such. Caporaso (1993: 54) clearly distinguishes between multilateral institutions, on the one hand, which are palpable entities, and the institution of multilateralism, on the other hand, which may or may not be embodied in a certain organisation. Yet, according to Morgan (1993: 333), multilateralism can exist without being institutionalised in an organisational structure. Similarly, organisations with a multilateral surface and configuration but with member states which do not actively and actually promote and maintain multilateralism can exist as well, resulting in this organisation to be multilateral in name only (Morgan 1993: 333).

Ruggie (1993: 10) draws on Keohane's definition of institutions (1990: 732), who conceives of them to be "persistent and connected sets of rules, formal and informal, that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity and shape expectations" (Keohane 1990: 732, cited in Ruggie 1993: 10) and maintains that the adjective *multilateral* can serve as a modifier to the noun *institution*. According to his definition of multilateralism, by which it is an institutional form of coordination of relations among at least three states, the basis upon which it is built is, as already mentioned, formed by generalised principles of conduct. Ruggie (1993: 11) refers to them as "principles which specify appropriate conduct for a class of actions, without regard to the particularistic interests of the parties or the strategic exigencies that may exist in any specific occurrence". In the economic sphere treatment on the basis of the principle of the 'most favoured nation' (MFN) is a classic example. Following this principle, discrimination among countries which produce the same product is unequivocally forbidden. MFN's counterparts in the realm of security relations could be so-called collective security schemes, which are in the focus of the following section of the thesis. By the rules of these schemes, states are obliged to "respond to aggression whenever and wherever it occurs- whether or not any specific instance suits their individual likes and dislikes" (Ruggie 1993: 11).

What also has to be mentioned here but is only indirectly related to this topic is that in addition to bilateralism and multilateralism, Ruggie (1993: 11) sees imperialism as a third type of an institutional form of states. The main difference between this third category and the other two is that imperialism as an institution certainly does not coordinate relations between groups of states by treating each partner as a sovereign state, but is marked by clearly vertical power relations, meaning that the sovereignty of the subject states is withheld (Ruggie 1993: 11).

2.1.1. Ideal types of multilateral organisations - collective security systems

One institutional arrangement, which Ruggie (1993: 9), for instance, describes as one characterised by distinctively incorporating multilateralist principles, is a collective security system. However, such a system has, indeed, never come to exist in its pure form. But nevertheless, the foundations of such a construct are relatively clear: The indivisibility of peace forms the pillar upon which the concept rests, which means that waging war against one party would be considered a war not only against this one party but against all. Hand in hand with this premise, the international community's first means of reaction – within this model - to threatened as well as actual aggression is always diplomacy, followed by economic sanctions, and only as a last resort by a collective use of force. The logic behind this approach is that any possible aggression coming from rational actors could be averted, as such a community-wide response would be likely to discourage them from acting according to their original intentions. Subsequently, according to Ruggie (1993: 10), a decline in the frequency of incidences of war would be generally and gradually noticeable.

Having just stated that collective security schemes have yet to be created in their pure form, they do exist and have existed in different forms and constellations. Such alliances can broadly be defined as schemes coordinating "security relations among three or more states" (Ruggie 1993: 10). But, what sets them apart from other forms of cooperation is their inherent permanence and lacking specifity on who the potential enemy and who the potential victim might be. The core institutional difference between a collaboration along the lines of a collective-security scheme and a 'simple' bilateral alliance is, using Ruggie's (1993: 10) mode of explanation, that in collective-security as well as in bilateral alliances "state A is pledged to come to the aid of B if B is attacked by C". However, in schemes of collective-security, A has not only pledged to help B, but also to aid C, in case C is attacked by B. Hence, A is no more of an ally to B than to C in a collective-security scheme, "because theoretically it is an open question whether, if an act of war should occur, B or C would be the aggressor" (Hudson 1968: 176-77, cited in Ruggie 1993: 10). Furthermore, each state which is part of this scheme of cooperation has "indeterminate obligations" towards the other states (Hudson 1968: 176-77, cited in Ruggie 1993: 10).

2.1.2. NATO as a 'truncated' ideal type?

When reflecting on the core principle of such a collective security system and looking for existing organisations which could possibly fall into that category, the first one that comes to mind for many Westerners is, arguably, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). According to Ruggie (1993: 10), this organisation could be categorised as a "truncated version of the model, in which a subset of states organized (sic) a collective self-defense (sic) scheme of indefinite duration, de jure against any potential aggressor though de facto against one". With the geopolitical situation of the second half of the 20th century in mind, it can be quite easily deduced that the author there refers to the Soviet Union as a potential aggressor, without literally naming it.

In contrast to Ruggie's understanding of NATO as a (truncated) collective security system, other scholars believe it to be more of a 'collective defence system', as also stated in the organisation's Article 5, where it names collective defence a "unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance" (NATO 2017). In fact, Deni (2017) argues that NATO has, indeed, in recent years moved more towards collective defence, with a newly "enhanced forward presence initiative", which entails routine placements of combatants in its newest member states in Central and Eastern Europe. Deni thus also observes a more territorial approach to defence, which has, in the past, been mostly associated with the Cold War, since the organisation's focus in the last 25 years has been one concentrated more on "cooperative security beyond member states' territory" and crisis management (Deni 2017).

Originally, NATO was created in 1949 as a defensive alliance against a possible invasion by the USSR. Weber (1993: 233) calls this organisation a "peculiar mix" with regard to its placement on the multilateralism-bilateralism continuum, since it has shown itself as characteristically non-multilateral on the formal institutional level but has simultaneously assured its members' security according to principles unequivocally reflecting multilateralism through most of its history.

The foundation of such an organisation can be seen against the background of the perceived security threat of the Red Army, as already mentioned, which is why the United States saw the sphere of security more at risk than those of money, trade etc. (Weber 1993: 233). However, according to Weber (1993: 233) the pillars upon which NATO was built are, firstly, a set of political ideas, and secondly, military considerations. What is important to note in the context of the discussion of multilateralism is that the first pillar was based on "fundamental beliefs about the relationship between the number of powerful actors in the international system ("polarity") and stability, as well as peace" (Weber 1993: 233). This lead to U.S foreign policymakers pursuing the search for a system which would, in addition to preventing Soviet attacks, boast an institutional configuration "for peace management, cooperation, and progress that would promote long-term stability in international politics" (Weber 1993: 234).

2.2. The EU as a multilateral organisation?

Within the discussion of multilateralism, the organisations of the EU and NATO are only briefly categorised here with the definition and core principles of multilateralism in mind. A thorough discussion of their institutional structure and competences is not being attempted, since taking such a route would entail diverting from the actual topic of the thesis and the research question to be answered. What has to be discussed here, however, is that according to the already laid out definition of multilateralism, the European Union could certainly be said to have a multilateral core.

Morgan (1993: 333), for example, calls multilateralism "elaborate and demanding compared with many other cooperative endeavours among states". Furthermore, "recurring interaction among a set of states (at least three) on the basis of some generalized (sic) principles of conduct rather than by considerations linked to specific situations or particular conditions and concerns" (Morgan 1993: 333) is one of the main features, which can undoubtedly be said to apply to the elaborate institutional framework of the European Union. Hence, the EU could, following the previously cited theorists' scholarship on multilateralism, be viewed as a multilateral organisation. However, due to the EU's evolution and singularity, theorists have come to categorise the European Union as a political system sui generis (see for instance Phelan 2012). Since this thesis does not attempt to focus on definitional debates regarding the nature of the EU, here it is henceforth conceived of as a political system sui generis exhibiting features and incorporating principles of a multilateral organisation as it was defined above.

Morgan (1993: 333), furthermore, stresses that multilateralism is not simply distinguishable due to “the existence and application of norms per se but rather the fact that the states involved seek to use them to push cooperation among themselves to an unusual level”. This, arguably, applies to the European Union with its normative underpinnings and unprecedented steps of regional integration taken in the last few decades. Another factor mentioned by Morgan (1993: 333) is that multilateralism stretches the umbrella of cooperation out into “realms of interaction where it is usually absent”. Applying this to the European Union, one could say that it might have seemed a bit alien at the beginning of the 20th century, for example, that sovereign states would nowadays – and have done so since after the disastrous turmoil of the Second World War and the atrocities committed by the Nazi regime – bestow a certain degree of their sovereignty onto a higher instance. The ‘awards’ they get are economic gains as well as increased political influence as they are part of a larger construct, and expanded cooperation also in the sphere of security.

The Brexit vote of the UK voters and the official triggering of Article 50 at the end of March 2017 means that Britain will, in the foreseeable future, ‘gain back’ some of this sovereignty, as was propagated by those campaigning for a ‘Leave’ vote. The UK will therefore step out from under the multilateral EU-umbrella into a world where it will certainly have to organise its relations and affairs in a slightly different way. Since it was already mentioned previously that Britain has always been a fairly ‘awkward’ partner in the European Communities and the European Union (George 1998), the following section seeks to give a very brief overview of Euroscepticism in the UK, since this can be seen as a piece of relevant context information for approaching the question of the special relationship before the background of an upcoming Brexit and a seemingly unpredictable US president. The section following after that takes a plunge across the Atlantic Ocean and a leap backwards in time in order to highlight the USA’s previous attitude towards European integration and cooperation on the ‘old’ continent.

2.2.1. The UK and the EU – ‘awkward’ partners?

When examining the UK’s positions towards the EU throughout the last few decades, it is helpful to keep in mind that the United Kingdom only joined the European Union in 1973 and is therefore not one of its founding members. Furthermore, the relationship between the country and the EU has probably never been entirely harmonious, with the British having always been fairly critical of further vertical integration. Even though opposition to the

European project as such was traditionally viewed as peripheral and was thought to be the exception and not the norm (Daddow 2012: 1219), the mood towards Europe took a turn from "permissive consensus to destructive dissent" in the British media with Euroscepticism also becoming mainstreamed in the British population (Brack & Startin 2015: 241).

As stated by Brack and Startin (2015: 241), this tacit acquiescence towards the European Community – as it was then called – seemed to have evolved into quite open dissent in Great Britain during the mid-1980s. This change occurred in the context of the discussions for the adoption of the Single European Act and the programme for the internal market. The authors identify Margaret Thatcher, the UK's conservative Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990, and particularly her famous 'Bruges speech' as the "catalyst for diverging views" which were developing among the European elites (Brack & Startin 2015: 241). In this speech Thatcher assured her fierce opposition towards a political and economic union for which Britain might have to transfer powers from the national to the supranational level. The "watershed" moment, was, however, according to Brack and Startin (2015: 241), the Maastricht Treaty, which was adopted in 1992 and formally created the European Union as it is still known today. The signing of the treaty brought to the surface a seemingly latent Euroscepticism, especially in the UK (Brack& Startin 2015: 241).

When talking about Britain and some of its political parties as Eurosceptic, one also has to recognise the not insignificant role of the British media in shaping party positions: The mainstream media, and in particular most of the tabloids, have, in the course of the last few decades, very often displayed a "vigorously partisan hostility bordering on a nationalist and in some areas xenophobic approach" when it comes to covering European (Union) affairs (Daddow 2012: 1219).

Another factor which has contributed to the centre-right Conservative Party becoming seemingly more and more Eurosceptic by the years is the success of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). This party's main – and some might even say – only aim has been to get the UK out of the EU. One explanation for UKIP's success – and also the reason why the Tories seemed to have followed their example and echoed some of their proposals and demands directed at the EU- is a "fusion strategy" applied by UKIP, linking Britain's membership in the EU with immigration (Dennison& Goodwin 2015: 172). Even though the UK's status as an EU member has probably never met with any heartfelt enthusiasm on the British islands, there was, as explained before, a prevailing "permissive consensus". Through this linkage with the topic of immigration – which can be considered as an issue of valence in the UK, which means that there is a basic consensus on that topic in the population- the matter of the EU membership has become a question of high salience. UKIP has thus managed to gain “ownership” of the issue (Dennison& Goodwin 2015: 172-175 & 183).

George’s (1998) notion of the United Kingdom as the ‘awkward partner’ in the European Union has come to seem even more fitting in the aftermath of the EU referendum. The United Kingdom will be the first country to leave the European Union and as preparations for the ‘divorce’ are made on both sides, the question of how the special relationship will manifest itself between a post-Brexit Britain and the USA seems increasingly important but also, as of April 2018, unanswerable to this point.

2.2.2. Under the banner of multilateralism? – The USA’s promotion of European integration

While the other half of the ‘special relationship’, the USA, as a non-European power, is not directly involved in matters of European integration, the fall of the iron curtain and the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought the emergence of a consensus that there should be a stronger institutionalisation of cooperation on the European continent. This was supported by the United States (Morgan 1993: 332). And, this idea of enhancing cooperation and integration on the European continent and among its states can be quite clearly attributed with multilateralism as one principle it goes hand in hand with.

Accordingly, NATO should be adapted “into an all-European security framework”, and the European Community – as it was then still called – should be expanded, the Council of Europe should be enlarged and strengthened, a new version of the Marshall Plan should be launched and an all-European parliamentary assembly should be created (Morgan 1993: 332). While the EU has developed, evolved and expanded – vertically as well as horizontally – some of the ambitious, and possibly too idealistic, goals have, even in the second decade of the 21st century not been realised. It is, however, interesting to see that such a “consensus”, as it was phrased by Morgan (1993: 332), seems - at least in parts of the two countries of main concern in this Master’s thesis - to have lost its appeal for a populist, and outspoken EU-sceptic American president and a Britain having decided to try its luck outside of the EU framework.

The USA has, in fact, always been quite hesitant to itself engage in too close alliances or to get immersed in “the continuous jostling of European power politics”, a circumstance Ruggie (1997: 89) attributes to the US being geographically separated from other states and continents, both East and West through oceans, and bordering “relatively weak and usually friendly” neighbouring states to the south and north (Ruggie 1997: 89). However, historically, after the First as well as after the Second World war the US has, according to Ruggie (1994: 555), been averse to bilateral arrangements, on which states had previously depended upon but favoured “more comprehensive and institutionalized security arrangements: a League of Nations in 1919 and a universal security system through the United Nations in 1945”.

3. Bilateralism

As already maintained, imperialism, multilateralism and bilateralism are organising forms of the international system. Martin (1993: 91) describes these forms as patterns which can be chosen by the states. She argues that “the power and interests of state actors in different situations” are factors which are kept in mind when forms of successful cooperation are sought by state actors. However, bilateralism and multilateralism differ to a greater extent than just in the rather superficial observation that they form the bases of different forms of organisations and cooperation between states. They could even be said to present divergent alternatives for how our world ought to be organised (Caporaso 1993: 54).

3.1. Nazi Germany’s approach to international trade – exemplified bilateralism?

According to Ruggie (1993: 8), Nazi Germany serves as an example for the development of a “pure form of bilateralism into a systemic organizing (sic) principle”. After the Nazis had won the German elections in 1933, soon a scheme of clearing arrangements and bilateral trade agreements were crafted. Central to Nazi Germany’s approach to international trade was the principle of ‘reciprocity’, which means that the state negotiated such agreements with its trading partners, which laid down which services and which goods should be exchanged and to which quantities and at which price this should happen. Germany frequently did not export as many goods to its trading partners as it imported, which then required its partners to “liquidate their claims on Germany through investment there or by purchasing deliberately overpriced German goods" (Ruggie 1993: 9). With this process, Germany could shape a relationship with its partners, in which they were doubly dependent on the Nazi regime (Ruggie 1993: 9).

Another important element of Nazi Germany's trade regime was its link to bilateralist monetary clearing arrangements. This meant that it was not necessary for a German importer to pay money to the foreign source for the obtained goods and services but instead pay the German Reichsbank for its imports. This way, the foreign trading partners would get paid in their own currency from their own central bank. The same system, but vice versa, was also applied to manage payments for German exports. It was possible for the Germans to bypass foreign exchange markets due to these arrangements, and hand in hand with this, artificial exchange rates dominated (Ruggie 1993: 9).

Ruggie (1993: 9) states that one typical aspect of Nazi Germany's bilateralism was that rather, though not exclusively, smaller and weaker states, mostly in East-Central Europe, the Balkans, and Latin America, were targeted as trading partners, with the type of exchange typically being primary commodity import for manufactured exports. This system was not confined to one geographical space, but could have been "geographically universalized", as Ruggie (1993: 9) calls it, resulting in the weaving of an "enormous spider web of bilateralist agreements radiating out from Germany".

3.2. Bilateralism and multilateralism – a difference in essence?

The main difference between the 'classical form' of bilateralism as made use of by the Nazis and multilateralism, which was the subject of the previous sub-section of this chapter, is that this form of bilateralism could be said to be "inherently and fundamentally discriminatory" (Ruggie 1993: 9). While also negotiation for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) took place bilaterally, the outcome was that the tariff reductions negotiated on a bilateral basis would then also be extended to all other parties, which were and are supposed to be treated on the basis of the principle of the most-favoured nation (MFN). Germany's bilateral deals, on the other hand, could only be said to hold on a product-by-product and case-by-case basis, even a spider web spanning over all parts of our planet would not have made this scheme any more multilateral because of its discriminatory underpinnings (Ruggie 1993: 9). Simply put, bilateralism could be described as a "dyadic relationship", which can be asymmetric (Renard 2016: 19).

Summing up Ruggie's (1993) arguments, one can notice that in his elaborations on bilateralism the focus is very much put on the economic level. In choosing Nazi Germany as his prime example for bilateralism in International Relations he even more strongly underlines the conceptional differences between bilateralism and multilateralism. However, it is important to highlight here that the adoption of Ruggie's example in this chapter does in no way seek to establish parallels between the current leaderships of the two countries in the focus of this thesis, but merely serves as a very illustrative example.

Another important argument to make here is that bilateralism does not always equal bilateralism. According to Ruggie (1994: 557), the USA's bilateral trade arrangements of the 1930s showed considerable differences compared with those drafted by the "architect of Nazi Germany's economic order", Hjalmar Schacht. The American trade agreements were put in place with the intention of creating open and largely non-discriminatory trade relations, and are therefore, "deemed to have been compatible with multilateralism" by Ruggie (1994: 557).

While multilateralism and bilateralism might at first appear as distinct opposites, which might possibly not go hand in hand, Saggi and Yildiz (2010: 26) argue that in today's international trade system, they actually do. At the same time, however, they do not lose their inherent contradiction. Even though the World Trade Organisation, and specifically the major multilateral trade agreement GATT, states that members ought to liberalise their trading practices according to the principle of the most favoured nation and form them into relations of a strictly non-discriminatory nature, WTO members do, and are permitted to have, so-called PTAs (preferential trade agreements). Saggi and Yildiz (2010: 26) estimate that an average member state has concluded approximately six such agreements. This means that the states are allowed to seek PTAs "under which participating countries grant tariff (and other trade policy) concessions to each other that they do not have to extend to all member countries of the WTO" (Saggi & Yildiz 2010: 26). These PTAs can now be said to be of high importance in matters of international trade diplomacy and their number has, according to Heydon and Woolcock (2009: 9) increased in the 21st century, averaging at 20 notifications to the WTO annually, compared to less than three under the GATT. One possible explanation for this is that multilateral negotiations are becoming progressively complex and intricate, which means that trade deals between a small number of selected participants seem to be a shortcut on the way to the goal of comprehensively improving market access and establishing rules for trade and investment (Heydon & Woolcock 2009: 3).

Regarding free trade, Saggi and Yildiz (2010: 27), who approached the matter of bilateralism and multilateralism in international trade with an equilibrium analysis, maintain that “when countries are symmetric with respect to their endowment levels, global free trade is the only stable equilibrium under both bilateralism and multilateralism”. Their argument hereby is that when symmetry between the participating countries applies, there seem to be no consequences whatsoever concerning the upholding of global free trade, even if the purest bilateral agreement was chosen by the participants (Saggi & Yildiz 2010: 27). Following this argument and moving back to Ruggie’s explanation of Nazi Germany’s exemplified bilateralism, one can deduce that the trading partners back then did not seem to be symmetric in their endowment levels, since the Nazis created a scheme of double-dependency, as also pointed out by Ruggie (1993: 9). One can, furthermore, also deduce that while bilateralist agreements might be discriminatory to third parties, which are not included in this form of cooperation, they do not have to be discriminatory between the states pursuing such an agreement, as long as their endowment levels can be considered to be symmetric.

Moreover, Saggi and Yildiz (2010: 27) have also found that even with asymmetric endowment levels, global free trade can be stable under bilateralism. Under some conditions “global free trade is a stable equilibrium *only if* countries are free to form bilateral FTA” (Saggi& Yildiz 2010: 27, original emphasis). In general, they argue, however, that being permitted to form bilateral agreements discriminatory to third parties in itself is an argument and driving force towards multilateralism, since states which chose not to form part in multilateral trade liberalisation are at a greater disadvantage to the others under a bilateral FTA in comparison to a multilateral solution. Consequently, the inducement to become part of multilateral trade liberalisation is greater if a non-participation means being subjected to a discriminatory bilateral agreement with the other countries, in contrast to a multilateral, non-discriminatory, agreement being concluded between them (Saggi& Yildiz 2010: 27).

Similarly, Thompson and Verdier (2014: 1) argue that transaction costs and member surplus are two factors which ought to be considered in the analysis of international regimes taking either multi- or bilateral form. Accordingly, they claim that, firstly, multilateralism is considered as the most attractive alternative when the transaction costs are high and when member surplus is low. Secondly, bilateralism is said to be most attractive when, conversely, “transaction costs are low and the member surplus is high” (Thompson& Verdier 2014: 1). Thirdly, combinations of multi- and bilateralisms are more likely when transaction costs and the member surplus are both high (Thompson& Verdier 2014: 1).

3.3. Bilateralism in (multilateral) orders, regimes and organisations

In addition to distinguishing between multilateralism and bilateralism, one can also group institutional domains of inter-state relations into three categories: Firstly, so-called international orders, secondly, international regimes, and thirdly, international organisations. According to Ruggie (1993: 12) none of these forms has an inherent multilateral nature - meaning that one type necessarily goes hand in hand with the principle of multilateralism - but they can, nevertheless, take a multilateral form. Beginning with the type mentioned last, the main characteristics of international organisations are that they are concrete, real-life entities with “headquarters and letterheads”, with “generous pension plans” and with their own voting procedures (Ruggie 1993: 12). Ruggie (1993: 12) here mentions the Comintern (later called Cominform) as an example of an international organisation whose organisational structure was certainly not a multilateral one.

Of the aforementioned three types, orders and regimes are very interesting to be considered in this Master’s thesis about the ‘special relationship’ between the United States and the United Kingdom, since they do not require the palpable entities of an organisation, as mentioned above, in accordance with Ruggie’s (1992: 12) description. The most common types of international orders are probably international economic orders, international security orders and international maritime orders, although there can be a greater variety of types. Whenever an international economic order can be regarded as ‘liberal’ or ‘open’, the order corresponds with a multilateral form, according to Ruggie (1993: 12). The same applies to maritime orders based on the principle of mare liberum (Ruggie 1993: 12). In the sphere of security relations, multilateralism would then be ascribed to an order when it is ‘collective’, which means that the participants have been granted “equal access to a common security umbrella” (Ruggie 1993: 12).

3.3.1. EU bilateralism and multilateralism

While, as already discussed, much of the scholarship conducted on bilateralism is related to the economic sphere, and will therefore be of further relevance in chapter VI of this thesis, Renard (2016) distinctly addresses the political dimension of bilateralism with regard to the international relations of the European Union. He specifically names the EU’s ESS (European Security Strategy) as “a milestone in the development of a specific European Union (EU) approach to international relations” (Renard 2016: 18). While the ESS faced criticism for not being concrete enough on *what* to do but rather focusing on *how* to do it, its main premise for the EU's global politics programme can be labelled as 'effective multilateralism', which is given out as the Union's "preferred means or mode of engagement" (Renard 2016: 18).

This route presented by the EU is not unambiguous and can also be understood as a reaction to the 2003 Iraq war, after which the European Union was adamant to underline the importance of multilateralism. As explained by Renard (2016: 18), the centrepiece of the idea of 'effective multilateralism' are the United Nations with their "universal and legally binding multilateral system". Additionally, however, 'effective multilateralism' also promotes a concept of forms of multilateral organisations which "can be 'effective' to deal with contemporary challenges, notably due to their ability to enforce commitments" (Renard 2016: 18). Furthermore, the ESS's 'effective multilateralism' is also rooted in a system of regional governance. This means that it, in line with the EU's approach to promote itself as a blueprint for regional integration to be emanated in other regions of the world, again endorses that role. Moreover, the ESS also advocates a deepening cooperation with 'key actors' or 'strategic partners' such as the United States, Canada, China, India, Japan and Russia (Renard 2016: 18-19).

Renard concludes from this that in its foreign policy approach the EU applies multilateralism, (inter-)regionalism and bilateralism at the same time. Generally, he sees bilateralism at the centre of international relations and as the norm rather than the exception, since bilateral relations have existed long before states organised into international regimes or a more complex nature (Remard 2016: 18-19). This argumentation goes, therefore, hand in hand with the one of Heydon and Woolcock who have seen a 'rise of bilateralism' (2009: 3) in recent times due to the increasingly complex nature of multilateralism.

3.3.2. Bilateralism and the 'special relationship'

As was the attempt to show in this section, the matter of bilateralism is not as easy as it might seem at a first glance. While it is usually considered to be systematically discriminatory, levels of such discrimination can vary, also depending on the question of symmetry or asymmetry of endowment levels, as discussed before. Although one can generally speak of the rise of multilateralism, especially in the 1990s, when Ruggie studied the matter intensively, the new complexity which was developing alongside multilateral agreements and organisations (Heydon& Woolcock 2009; Renard 2016) might also have paved the way for bilateralism as a ‘shortcut’ to a desired outcome.

The question to be asked here is what this all means for the ‘special relationship’ which is examined in this thesis. In general, one can certainly say that the United States and the United Kingdom have enjoyed friendly and close relations over the last few decades. Whether one can observe bilateralist tendencies such as a certain preferential treatment in comparison to, for example, other European states is analysed in the course of this paper. Another central aspect which was raised in this section are the concepts of symmetry and asymmetry. These concepts are also of major concern in the following sections and are thus instrumentalised so as they are not confined to the economic sphere but are also applied to the political one and the fields which are of interest in this thesis.

IV. Methods

The five spheres in which the 'special relationship' is to be tested in this thesis can be said to be quite different from each other, with some being more closely connected to one or some of the others than others. Due to these differences, this thesis cannot apply one method or one set of methods to the paper as a whole, with each sphere constituting its own mini-thesis. Therefore, different approaches have been chosen for the individual topics. A common denominator, however, is that in each chapter the question of what the data and information presented can reveal about the 'special relationship' is posed and an answer is attempted. Furthermore, and most importantly, since the theory of bilateralism was chosen as the theoretic framework of this thesis, questions of multilateralism and bilateralism are addressed throughout the chapters. In addition, sub-sections whose aim it is to categorise and discuss the US-UK relationship in these five spheres in terms of multilateralism and bilateralism are included at the end of each of the following five chapters.

The chapter following immediately after this one, which deals with the 'special relationship' at the level of the United Nations, applies a purely quantitative focus and analyses the voting behaviour of the United States and the United Kingdom in the General Assembly of the United Nations and seeks to establish the levels of cohesion. For this, two different methods were used: Firstly, a dataset was created using voting records (of resolutions passed from the 55th to the 72nd session of the General Assembly, including March 2018 as the most recent month) and information on the resolutions provided by the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS 2018) and the United Nations (2018). The states whose votes were included in this dataset are the two at the centre of this thesis, the US and the UK, as well as three other large European EU-members, France, Germany, and Italy.

These states were chosen because of their relative similarity to the UK, since they and the UK are (as of 2018) the four biggest EU members and previous studies (see for instance Young & Rees 2005: 199) have shown that they are the member states with the highest percentages of votes against the 'EU norm' in the General Assembly. According to Young and Rees (2005: 199) they account for over 10 percent of the isolation votes of EU states. In order to test whether a 'special voting relationship' between the UK and the US can be deduced from the voting records, these countries therefore represent the best sources of comparison to the UK's voting behaviour. The sample of resolutions, which were surveyed, was limited to two categories: The first one includes matters concerning multilateralism and the second one comprises questions of arms control, (nuclear) disarmament, arms trade, etc. It has to be stated here, however, that the two categories do not have approximately the same number of items, with the category concerning matters of arms control being considerably larger. This is due to the overall distribution of UN resolutions to different topics, with some issues featuring on the agenda more prominently. The voting behaviour of the states in the resolutions selected in each of the issue categories was coded into three categories (‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘abstention’ (with non-voting being counted as an abstention)), which each received a different letter in the coding process. For the analysis, the frequencies of two states recording the same vote on resolutions, opposite votes, as well as ‘almost’ the same votes (meaning that one of them abstained while the other voted ‘yes’ or ‘no’) were then counted and percentages of voting alignment were calculated.

Secondly, ‘distances’ between the voting behaviour of the United States and that of the other states were calculated in order to determine whether the UK’s voting behaviour was indeed the ‘closest’ to that of the US. In order to put the results into a better context, a sixth country was factored into the analysis here (as a sort of control variable): the Russian Federation. For this calculation, the voting behaviour of the US was taken as a ‘basis category’ and the other states were allocated values of zero (same vote as the US), 0.5 (either the US or the state in question abstained) or 1 (‘yes’ vote to US ‘no’ vote and vice versa) for their voting behaviour in every resolution in the sample. The values were then added up for each country in each of the two categories, indicating the ‘distance’ of the votes.

The chapter following the next one (chapter VI) then deals with the economic relationship of the US and the UK. In order to establish that relationship, it also surveys quantitative data, which was mostly provided by Hamilton and Quinlan (2005; 2017) as well as by the Congressional Research Service (Morrison 2018; Akhtar 2017). Similarly, the chapter afterwards (chapter VII), dealing with military affairs and defence relations surveys different data provided by, among others, the British Ministry of Defence, the Royal Army (2018), the US Department of Defense (2018), NATO (2017) or United Nations Peacekeeping (2018b). The common aim of the chapters is to, first, analyse the subject matter of the chapter and then (or in some instances similarly) discuss it with reference to, firstly, the concept of the special relationship, and secondly, along the lines of multilateralism and bilateralism.

The chapter on intelligence cooperation (chapter VIII), which follows the one on military issues, mostly consists of a literature analysis, due to the lack of concrete data and information from official sources in this matter. The whole issue of intelligence relations is, however, also embedded into the framework of bilateralism, and the prevalence of the ‘special relationship’ in this sphere is reviewed.

The last area in which the question of the existence of the ‘special relationship’ is investigated is the matter of state and official visits. For this chapter, the general parameters, as well as purposes and effects of state visits are surveyed and statistics comprising the numbers of US and UK official visits by US presidents, UK prime ministers, US secretaries of state as well as UK foreign secretaries have been compiled and the purposes of the visits categorised into visits of bilateral as well as visits of multilateral nature. The visiting records were provided by the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in the United Kingdom (2018), the Office of the Historian (2018) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2010 &2013/2017).

V. A ‘special relationship’ at the UN?

When trying to examine whether the special relationship could be said to exist at the level of international politics, the first arena or body which springs to mind, within which international relations are played out, is the United Nations. This chapter of this thesis therefore analyses the voting behaviour of the United Kingdom and the United States in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with the intention of finding out whether a form of ‘special voting relationship’ presents itself in the chosen samples, and seeks to establish the levels of cohesion in two topical categories as well as in comparison with the behaviour of three other European states, France, Germany, and Italy.

In addition to the Russian Federation, the People’s Republic of China, and France, the United Kingdom and the United States are P5 members – i.e. permanent members – of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which is in total composed of 15 states. The voting behaviour in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has been studied more intensively, even in recent years and decades, than that of the UNSC. This might be the case because the data could be said to be slightly more revealing, since none of the P5 has the power of veto in the UNGA, which means that decisions can be made and results published in spite of one of the P5 voting ‘no’, which is not the case in the UNSC. These studies have shown that percentages of cohesion among member states of the European Union as well as those of cohesion between the UK and France as well as the UK and the US, France and the US and the European nations and the US tend to be on a very high level and closely aligned (Luif 2003a; Luif 2003b; Young & Rees 2005; Kartal 2010; Lucas 2012).

The General Assembly cannot pass legally binding decisions but only recommendations. Luif (2003a: 13) therefore even considers the decision-making processes in the UNGA as part of ‘low politics’, and, according to him, the voting behaviour there could be best described as a “’routine’ presentation of the interests of the member states”. Following a more ‘traditional’ or conventional distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics than Luif (2003a: 13), which means that the UNGA is an area where issues belonging to both, the ‘high’ (for instance international security) as well as the ‘low’ (mostly technocratic matters) category, are attended to, Lucas (2012: 13) has found that voting cohesion is generally lower in areas of ‘high’ politics than it is in more technocratic matters which are not considered to be as divisive.

From a solely analytical point, such a ‘routine’ representation of interests, as Luif labels it, is exactly what is of interest in this chapter of this thesis: Since the overall topic of the thesis is an analysis of the ‘special relationship’ with the help of the theory of bilateralism, this chapter is mainly focuses on the voting behaviour of the UK and the US in the General Assembly in matters which are ‘relevant’ to the focus of the thesis.

Therefore, only the voting records of resolutions in the areas of, firstly, arms control and, secondly, questions regarding the multilateralism of the United Nations have been chosen for analysis. The first matter is an issue of ‘high’ politics with an expected greater diversity in the voting behaviour even among democratic Western states than is expected in ‘low’ topics. In this thesis this first category includes issues concerning nuclear weapons, disarmament in general or questions of a possible arms race in space (and the prevention of such). The matter of nuclear disarmament is also, arguably, a fitting area to include here, since both the UK and the US are states with nuclear weapons.

There have already been a number of studies dedicated to the overall voting behaviour and voting cohesion of different groups of states (e.g. the EU) in the UNGA (see for instance Luif 2003a, Luif 2003b, Young & Rees 2005; Kartal 2010; Lucas 2012). There is, consequently, not much new knowledge to be gained here. A general analysis of the voting behaviour in the UNGA would therefore not benefit the provision of as focused an answer as possible to the research question posed for this thesis. These two categories were chosen because of their relevance to the topic of the paper. One of the categories – the question of multilateralism –is connected to the thesis’ theoretic framework, and the other one is more indirectly related to the topic: The matter of arms control falls into the realm of the military, which is one sphere, where the ‘special relationship’ is said to exist beyond the realm of words and statements. For this analysis the issue of arms control has, as mentioned above, included resolutions dealing with nuclear disarmament, as well as such on conventional arms, arms trade, and the possibility of weapons in outer space etc., but excluded broader matters of ‘general security’, since these were ascribed to the realm of the UNSC, where the vetoes were analysed separately.

In order not to entirely disregard the UN Security Council and its role in international politics, the list of vetoed resolutions in the UNSC is analysed. Since the relationship between two P5 powers, the US and the UK is at the centre of analysis, looking at this list of vetoes in the UNSC can be said to be much more fruitful in this respect than surveying passed resolutions, as a passed resolution in the UNSC already indicates either a consensus among the P5 powers or a form of 'half-consensus' with one or more of the P5 nations abstaining or not recording a vote.

1. Voting cohesion in the UNGA - results of previous studies

All member states of the United Nations participate in the General Assembly, the UN's "main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ", with each of the 193 states having one vote (United Nations Peacekeeping 2018a). Every year, the UNGA holds a regular session. In addition, 'special' or 'emergency special' sessions can also be assembled. The regular session starts every year in September, on the Tuesday of the third week. It is then suspended in late December, reconvened in February and finally concluded the day before the next session begins in the third week of September the following year (Dag Hammarskjöld Library 2018b).

In order to be passed, decisions on questions of "peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters" need a two-thirds majority, while decisions on other issues are adopted by simple majority (General Assembly of the United Nations 2018). According to the Council on Foreign Relations (2018), the UNGA is the most representative organ of the UN, or even "the only universally representative body of the United Nations". The UNGA elects the non-permanent members of the UNSC as well as those of other UN bodies (e.g. the Human Rights Council). Based on the recommendation of the UNSC, the UNGA appoints the secretary general. In addition, "[i]t considers reports from the other four organs of the United Nations, assesses the financial situations of member states, and approves the UN budget, its most concrete role" (Council on Foreign Relations 2017).

Historically, the voting behaviour of the EU (or formerly EC (=European Community)) member states became much more aligned in the 1990s than in the decades before, having reached up to 70 percent. While up to the 1970s and 1980s, two major blocks, namely a liberal and a conservative one, had been formed (especially in regard to questions relating to the issue of decolonisation) (Luif 2003a: 21; Young & Rees 2005), the voting behaviour could be described as having become more and more cohesive over the years. According to Young and Rees (2005: 194) and Luif (2003a; 2003b), France and the United Kingdom, the two European P5 members in the UNSC, are the ones which deviate from the European norm most frequently, with the UK slightly ahead of France. However, these deviations can in general be considered to be rather small in number, since most of the time the member states of the European Union vote as part of the EU block (Young & Reese 2005: 199).

One reason for this apparent increase in voting alignment from the late 1980s onwards is the EU's (or then still EC's) objective to establish 'an ever closer union' and to strengthen its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Kartal 2010: 330). Since the 1980s, there have only been a number of exceptions when a clear EU/EC voting block was not identifiable. The four biggest EU members (still including the UK), France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom have been responsible for over 10 percent of these isolation votes (Young& Rees 2005: 199). Another aspect raised by Young and Rees (2005: 201) is that in the UNGA, most votes are phrased positively. This means that a 'yes' vote very often indicates a progressive stance on a certain matter. And while there are still different levels of conservativism and progressiveness within the EU member states, the group as such could, overall, be rather counted towards a progressive camp (Young & Rees 2005: 201).

Having now reviewed results of and tendencies discovered in previous studies, this chapter's aim has not been to conduct a similar analysis but to apply a more focused approach: Rather than look at overall patterns in the voting behaviour, the focus was put on the two states at the centre of this thesis and the sample of voting results was, as mentioned above, limited to resolutions belonging to one of the two chosen categories. In order to keep a narrow focus on the topic of the thesis, this does mean, however, that other, arguably very important issues, such as human rights issues, decolonisation matters, as well as questions regarding the conflict in the Near East (including the Palestinian Question) have to be disregarded here. The following section is now concerned with the vetoes in the UNSC since 2000, while the section following it will then present the results of the analysis of the UNGA data.

2. Vetoes in the UN Security Council

The UNSC is one of the six main organs which were established in the UN Charter. Its primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security. The four purposes, according to the UN Charta, are "to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" (United Nations Security Council 2018). The difference between the Security Council and the other organs of the UN is that while the others make recommendations to member states, the

UNSC "has the power to make decisions that member states are then obliged to implement under the Charter" (United Nations Security Council 2018).

In this sub-section, the vetoes put in at the UNSC are surveyed. The data for the analysis was provided by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (2018a). As of the 1st of April 2018, there have so far been 32 vetoed draft resolutions in the UNSC in the 21st century. All of these vetoes were put in by either the USA, the Russian Federation or the latter state and China together. The statistics are as follows:

- 11 draft resolutions were vetoed by the Russian Federation
- 8 were vetoed by the Russian Federation and China
- 12 were vetoed by the USA

This means that Russia has, in this century, so far recorded 19 vetoes, the USA 12 and China 8. The other two P5 powers, France and the UK have not made use of their right of veto in this century. Most of the issues on which such vetoes were recorded were concerned with the conflict(s) in the Middle East. 23 out of the 32 vetoed draft resolutions were on the topic of the Middle East. 13 of them were vetoed by either the Russian Federation or the Russian Federation plus China and 11 were vetoed by the USA. All of these US-vetoed Middle East draft resolutions were centred on the Palestinian question (Dag Hammarskjöld Library 2018).

What is interesting to observe is that when the US vetoed, it was only directly opposed by the UK 3 times. Since there is no voting record of the session of the 14th of October 2003, when the US registered a veto, the number of US vetoes has been shortened to 11 in this paragraph in order to ensure a correct calculation of percentages. Since the UK only voted 'Yes' 3 times in the 11 times there are complete voting records of resolutions vetoed by the US this century, this means that the UK only voted 'against' the US in approximately 27 percent of the times the US put in a veto. So, in around 73 percent of the United States' vetoes, the UK abstained. In comparison, France 'opposed' the US 9 times, ergo in ca. 81 percent of the US's vetoes, meaning it only abstained twice, or in ca. 18 percent of the US's vetoed resolutions. Other EU members, which are only alternating members of the UNSC and do therefore not have the right of veto, directly 'opposed' the US in 9 instances, but in different constellations and with overall seven EU members putting in these votes. For this statistic all votes 'against' a US veto by any non-permanent UNSC member that has already been a member of the EU at the time of its UNSC membership were added up. With this number, one has to keep in mind, however, that the composition of the non-permanent members of the UNSC changes constantly and non-P5 states are only in the council for one or two years at a time, which means that this number has to be taken with a grain of salt, since the factor of continuity is absent here.

So, when looking at these numbers, there is at least the hint of a special relationship between the UK and the US when it comes to their voting behaviour in the UNSC. While the UK has not chosen to support any of the US' vetoes in putting down a vote of veto itself, it has – mostly – refrained from directly voting against the US when the latter one registered a veto. France has, as shown above, done quite the opposite. The number of the EU votes is, on the other hand, difficult to interpret, since, as mentioned, the factor of continuity is missing and the other two big EU states, Germany and Italy, have, for instance, only been UNSC members in four and three years (respectively) since 2000.

3. US-UK voting cohesion in the General Assembly

Before the results of the next part of the analysis- namely those of the United Kingdom's and the United States' voting behaviour in the UNGA in the aforementioned two categories - are presented, it is important to state that each year, many resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly are reached by consensus and without even recording a vote. According to Luif (2003a: 22), usually only between 20 and 30 percent of the resolutions in a year "are passed by a 'recorded vote', where each member state votes openly with 'yes, 'no' or 'abstaining' (or is 'absent' from the vote)". In the current (as of March/April 2018) 72nd session of the UNGA, 89 of the 275 resolutions (ergo ca. 32 percent) passed by the UNGA were done so with recorded votes, the others with consensus. For an analysis of the voting behaviour, taking all resolutions and decisions adopted by the UNGA (including those without a vote) into consideration, would not be very expedient, since these consensus decisions would "artificially increase the extent of agreement among member states" (Luif 2003a 22). This chapter, therefore, also only focuses on those resolutions and decisions which were adopted with a vote and does not take the other ones, for which methodically a 'yes' vote would have to be ascribed to every country, into account. Furthermore, in this analysis only resolutions which have been passed and whose results were subsequently published are considered. Since only the voting records of resolutions that were passed are published by the United Nations, those resolutions which were rejected by a majority could not be taken into account.

As described in the previous chapter, the voting data (taken from resolutions passed from the 55^{th} to the 72^{nd} session) was coded in two different ways: Firstly, 'yes'-votes, 'no'-votes and abstentions (failing to register a vote or absence at the time of the vote were also counted as abstentions) were coded with different letters to allow for an analysis of the numbers and percentages of voting cohesion. Secondly, the voting behaviour of the United States was then taken as a sort of 'basis category' and the 'distances' of the other countries' votes from the US vote were calculated: Scoring the same vote as the US on a resolution, the country received the value zero for this resolution, voting differently from the US (either yes or no), the country received the value 1 for this resolution and if either the US or said other country abstained or did not register a vote, it received the value 0.5 for this resolution. In the end, the values each state had received were added, which then resulted in different 'distances' from the US vote for the individual countries. The two categories of resolutions regarding multilateralism, on the one hand, and those concerning matters of arms control were analysed separately, which is why they are presented in different sub-sections.

3.1. Matters of multilateralism

As mentioned before, the items considered for the analyses are not evenly divided over the two categories, since the number of resolutions dealing with matters of arms control, disarmament, etc. is comparatively much higher than the ones focusing on questions of multilateralism. Due to this, the 'borderline' cases of resolutions calling for 'the promotion of multilateralism' in the area of arms control were put into the category of multilateralism, as were resolutions calling for 'multilateral negotiations' on the matter of nuclear disarmament. Other items in this category do not necessarily have the word 'multilateral' in their title but are concerned with, for instance, 'strengthening' the United Nations (and therefore indirectly multilateral action) in issues such as 'global economic governance' or in the 'promotion of a democratic and equitable international order'. Since the voting behaviour as such is of interest here, the option of abstention (or non-voting due to absence) was included in the analysis and abstentions were therefore treated as a sort of third voting option and were not coded as missing values.

When looking at the results in the category of resolutions dealing with multilateralism, one can see a very high degree of voting cohesion between the United States and the United Kingdom: In around 93.8 percent of the cases, the US and the UK recorded the exact same vote, meaning that either both voted ‘yes’, ‘no’ or abstentions were recorded from both of them. When one adds the small number of cases when they did not entirely disagree, which means that one voted ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and the other state abstained, the resulting percentage of 98.5 indicates a very high level of cohesion or almost-cohesion.

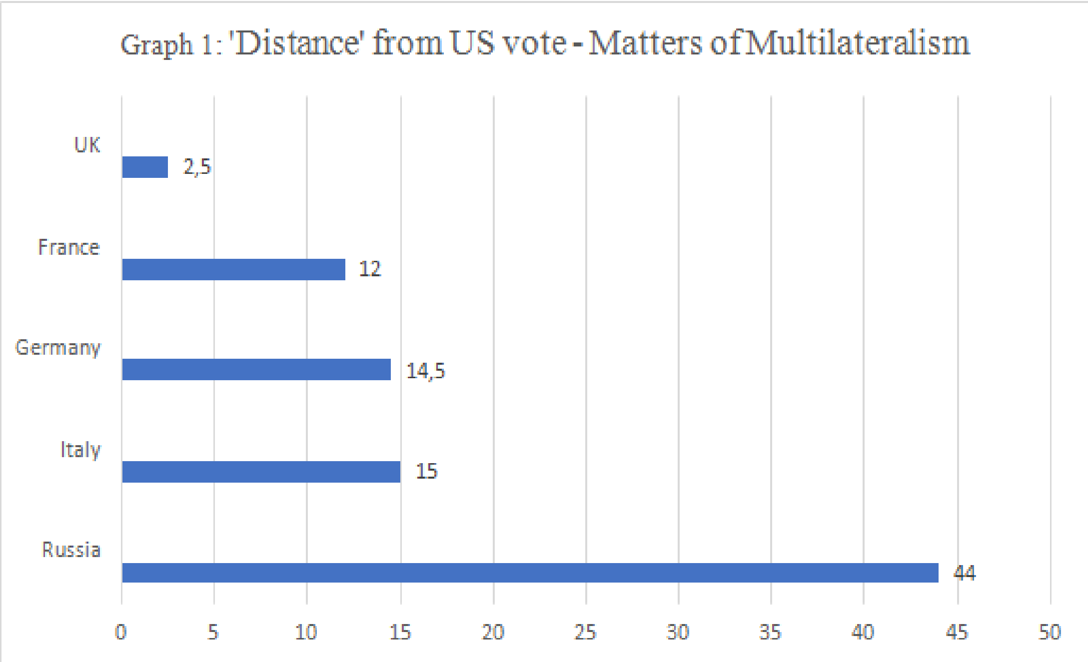
When one compares the votes of the other European countries selected for analysis to the levels of US-UK cohesion in matters of multilateralism, the results concerning the combined levels of cohesion and ‘almost-cohesion’ are on the same or at least a similar level, while the percentages of voting cohesion alone are considerably lower, despite still being well above 50 percent in each case: France scores the same 98.5 percent for combined cohesion and ‘almost cohesion’ with the US as the UK. However, the percentage of the two states registering the exact same votes in resolutions concerning issues of multilateralism is approximately 64.6 percent, which is almost a 30 percent gap to the level of voting alignment between the US and the UK in these matters. Germany and the US have a cohesion level of 61.5 percent (including almost cohesion, the percentage increases to 93.8) and Italy and the US voted the same in 56.9 percent of the resolutions surveyed and have a combined cohesion and ‘almost cohesion’ level of 96.9 percent.

What is interesting to note here is that the level of cohesion between the US and the UK is higher in resolutions of this type than the cohesion between the UK’s voting behaviour and that of its fellow European states, Germany, France and Italy. The UK and France have a cohesion of 70.8 percent, however, when adding ‘almost cohesion’, the level reaches a total of 100 percent. This means that while the UK and France did not score the same high number of exact same votes as the UK and the US, they did (in the sample of resolutions considered here) never disagree completely and vote ‘no’ while the other voted ‘yes’ or vice versa. The cohesion levels between the UK and Germany and the UK and Italy can be found slightly below the margin of UK-France voting cohesion: The UK and Germany submitted the same vote in approximately 67.7 percent of the resolutions and did not entirely disagree in around 95.4 percent. The UK’s level of combined cohesion and ‘almost cohesion’ with Italy is higher than the one with Germany, reaching about 98.5 percent, while the percentage of actual cohesion is slightly lower, at around 63.1 percent. This means that the UK’s cohesion levels with its (as of 2018) still fellow EU member states are generally higher than those between the US and the European states, with the exceptions of the US-France cohesion level being 1.5 points higher than that of UK-Italy cohesion.

Among each other, the European states of France, Germany and Italy score higher levels of cohesion than any of them does with the United Kingdom. France and Germany, as well as Germany and Italy recorded the same vote in approximately 87.7 percent of the cases, and France and Italy in around 86.2 percent. Their levels of combined cohesion and ‘almost cohesion’ are ca. 95.4 percent (France and Germany) and 98.5 percent (France and Italy, as well as Germany and Italy). The combined cohesion level of 100 percent between the UK and France remains, however, unrivalled.

Summing up these numbers, the highest level of coherence found was that of the United States and the United Kingdom. Those of the US and the other European states and of the UK and the three Europeans fell considerably below this level. The pairs which came closest to this percentage were the three continental European states among each other. Solely judging from the data presented here, one could therefore definitely conclude that there is an indication of some sort of ‘special relationship’ between the UK and the US, which shows itself in the voting record regarding matters of multilateralism.

The calculation of ‘distances’ from the US vote speaks in a very similar language (graph 1). For the sake of better comparison, the votes of a non-European state, Russia, were included for this aspect of the analysis in order to be able to put the results obtained into better context. As can be seen in the following diagram – and as was to be expected after the presentation of the data above – the UK’s voting behaviour shows the ‘shortest’ distance from that of the United States, scoring a value of 2.3. It is followed by France, Germany and Italy (with almost identical values) and, expectedly, the Russian voting behaviour shows the greatest ‘distance’ from that of the United States.



Data source: UNBIS 2018 & United Nations 2018 n= 65

3.2. Issues of arms control, (nuclear) disarmament etc.

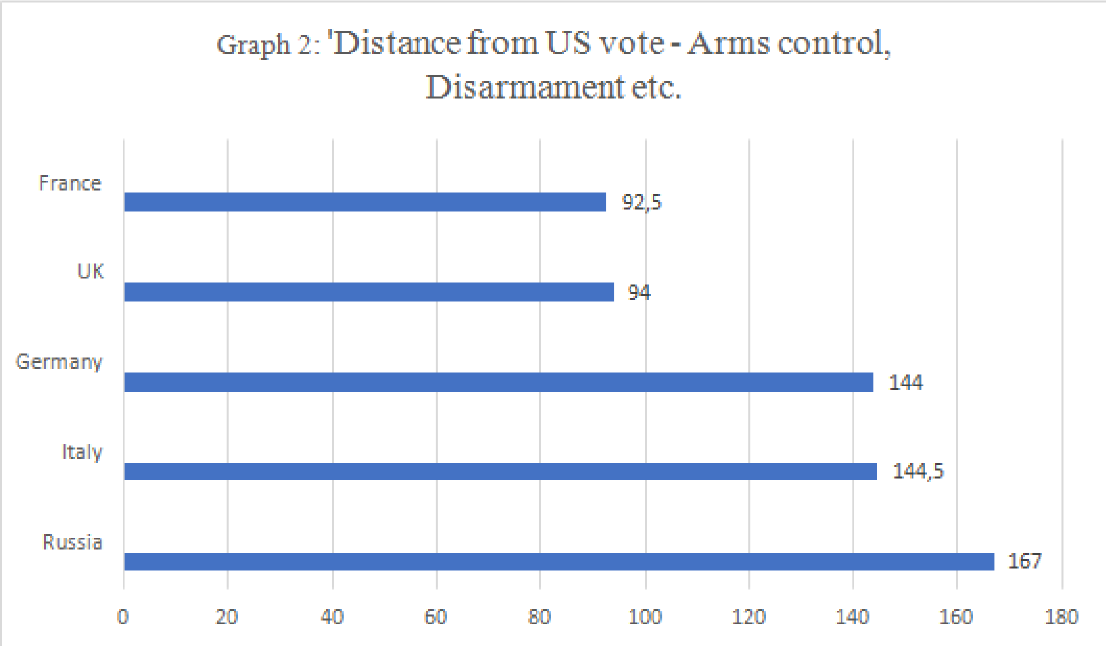
When surveying the data in the second category (resolutions dealing with some form of arms control), the resulting cohesion levels do look slightly different from the ones presented above in the multilateralism category. The most obvious difference here is that the state with which the United States has the highest cohesion as well as 'almost cohesion' is not the United Kingdom, but France. The US and France reach a cohesion level of approximately 66.8 percent in terms of both of them voting either 'yes' or 'no' or abstaining at the same time as the other one. Combined with the times their voting behaviour did not 'contradict' each other, since one of them abstained, this percentage climbs to about 86.3 percent. While the UK's level of voting cohesion with the US ranks below that of the US and France, the difference is minimal: US-UK cohesion in the resolutions put into this category is at approximately 66.5 percent and the combined level of cohesion and 'almost cohesion' is at around 85.8 percent. Those of Germany and Italy with the United States are around 15 points lower than those of the UK and France, with both the US-Germany as well as the US-Italy cohesion level reaching ca. 51.8 percent (with the inclusion of ‘almost cohesion’ approximately 74.7 (Germany) and 74.2 percent (France)).

Another difference to the first category discussed in the pages preceding these is that the United Kingdom has higher cohesion levels with each of the three European states than it has with the United States. Those between the UK and Germany as well as between the UK and Italy both reach ca. 80.4 percent (cohesion) and ca. 91.8 percent when instances of ‘almost cohesion’ are factored in. The voting behaviour of the United Kingdom and France was even identical in 93.6 percent of the resolutions, which were taken into consideration here. When adding ‘almost coherence’, this percentage climbs up to 100, which means that, identically to the results in the first category, the UK and France’s voting behaviour did never ‘contradict’ in the chosen sample of resolutions passed by the UNGA.

The highest level of cohesion as such (without factoring in ‘almost cohesion’) can be found between Germany and Italy: They reach a level of ca. 95.9 percent of cohesion in this category, which jumps up to 99.5 percent – and therefore only minimally remains below the UK-France ‘best mark’ of 100 – when one additionally considers cases when one of them gave a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ vote while the other abstained. The levels of France-Germany and France-Italy cohesion are, furthermore, considerably higher than those which can be calculated between the US and these two states: They reach around 79.4 (France-Germany) and 78.4 percent (France-Italy), with the ‘extended’ cohesion level at 91 percent in both cases. This also means that in the matter of arms control, the UK has scored higher levels of cohesion with the European states of Germany and Italy than France has, while France is the state whose voting behaviour was most similar to that of the United States, when considering the voting record of the resolutions put into this sample.

In contrast to the voting records on matters concerning multilateralism, these results, consequently, do not immediately suggest a ‘special voting relationship’ between the UK and the US but show that the levels of the UK’s as well as France’s cohesion with the US can be considered to be quite similar. The relationships mostly deserving the attribute ‘special’ in this category are, therefore, the one between the UK and France, as well as the one between Germany and Italy.

When looking at the calculated ‘distance’ from the United States’ voting behaviour, it is not surprising – keeping in mind the numbers presented above – that in this category France’s voting behaviour is ‘closest’ to that of the US, with the UK following closely behind. Similar to the 'distances' in the first category, Germany and Italy have about the same 'distance' to the US vote, with Russia[1], which was again included for the sake of comparison, trailing behind.



Data source: UNBIS 2018 & United Nations 2018 n= 388

4. Embedding the discussion into the broader one of multilateralism

When studying the numbers which were just presented in the previous two sub-sections, one can conclude that particularly the combined levels of cohesion and 'almost cohesion' between each of the European states analysed (including the UK) is always beyond 90 percent in both of the categories considered for analysis. The cohesion levels as such vary between 51.8 percent (US and Germany, and US and Italy in matters of arms control) and 95.9 percent (Germany and Italy in arms control. In both categories, the UK and France have the highest cohesion levels with the United States. In the multilateralism category the US and the UK even showed the same voting behaviour in 93.8 percent of the cases. As already stated above,

[1] While it is not closely related to the research question in this thesis, it is nevertheless interesting to consider that US-Russian voting cohesion in areas of arms control, disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation etc. has been significantly higher in the period of the 69th (2014-2015) to the current 72nd session (2017-2018) , approx. 50.5 percent, than it was in between the 53rd and the 68th session, approx. 31.9 percent. In 2015, the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty fell apart without producing a consensus outcome document (Wan 2015).

the cohesion levels between the US and the other European states lies considerably below, along the margins of 60 and 50 percent.

Whether the numbers obtained in the multilateralism category indicate anything with regard to the multilateralism of (and in) the United Nations is difficult to maintain, since the number of cases in this group was rather low and the results could therefore probably not be seen as representative. This thesis will therefore only cautiously attempt a deduction: In the cases which were put into this first category, the US and the UK apparently show a similar approach towards multilateralism and the its strengthening by the United Nations in several thematic areas. Since a 'yes' vote generally indicates a more 'progressive' stance on a matter in the UNGA, according to Young and Rees (2005: 201), it might be worth looking at the 'no' votes in the multilateralism category: In the (albeit not very numerous) resolutions considered here, the US has voted 'no' in about 75 percent, the UK in around 70 percent of the times. In comparison, France, Germany, and Italy have done so in ca. 43, 40 and 35 percent of the resolutions (respectively). This leaves the slight indication that a generally more sceptical stance towards multilateralism is reflected in the UK's and the US's voting behaviour in the resolutions on multilateralism considered here.

According to Gálvez (2011: 2), the classic multilateralism, which he describes as "universal, inclusive and democratic, based on rules and institutions" has had a difficult time at the UN level in this century and continuously faces "the risk of becoming sidelined (sic) by other multilateral mechanisms for collective action". Gálvez (2001: 2) argues that the UNSC has found "itself being circumvented in situations for which actions are needed to counter crises that affect international peace and security". Furthermore, in matters of arms control, disarmament and nuclear weapons non-proliferation, the United Nations' "entire multilateral disarmament machinery" can be stalled easily, resulting in agreements and mechanisms 'springing up' "that represent limited groups of countries and use a variety of participation systems" rather than comprehensive solutions to be found at the UN level (Gálvez 2001: 2-3).

As discussed in the theory chapter, Heydon and Woolcock (2009: 9) argue that in matters of international trade diplomacy, the number of PTAs between countries has considerably increased in the 21st century. One possible explanation they present is that multilateralism and multilateral negotiations have become increasingly complex. While the authors' argumentation rests on the economic sphere, a part of their explanation could possibly be transferred here: They state that by concluding preferential trade agreements between a small number of selected participants, states seem to be able to take a shortcut on the way to the goal of comprehensively improving market access, by undercutting classical multilateral principles (Heydon & Woolcock 2009: 3). This complexity could not only be seen in regards to multilateral trade arrangements, but also with regard to to the international system and its complex composition and sometimes difficult processes of decision-making. So, while the United Nations remain the focal point of global multilateralism (particularly in the political and not purely economic sphere) and an important arena where international politics are played out, Thakur (2012: 2) maintains that "without continual structural and procedural reforms, the legitimacy and performance deficits will accumulate and there will be an intensifying crisis of confidence in the world's system of organized (sic) multilateralism centred on the United Nations". Otherwise, the 'rise of bilateralism' as postulated by Heydon and Woolcock (2009) for the economic sphere might feature even more prominently in the arena of international politics as it already does. Thakur (2012: 2) argues that multilateral organisations fail to meet certain "standards of representivity (sic), consent, juridical accountability, rule of law, broad participation, and transparency – and therefore political legitimacy". This, however, raises the question, of what exactly such reforms should look like, and more importantly, how they should be achieved and implemented, with states such as the US and the UK registering a high number of 'no' votes at the UNGA level when it comes to the extension and forward development of multilateralism in matters falling into the realm of international security.

VI. The sphere of economics- a looming Brexit and 'special' relations

According to the United States' Department of State (2018), the country "has no closer ally than the United Kingdom" with their bilateral cooperation reflecting "the common language, ideals, and democratic practices of the two nations". With the UK still being a member of the EU until March 2019 and the transition period determining the future UK-EU relationship being negotiated, it is – as of spring 2018 – still unclear what exactly post-Brexit Europe as well as a post-Brexit US-UK relationship will look like.

Since President Trump took office in January 2017, there have been noticeable changes in terms of the United States' approach to several foreign as well as domestic policy issues. The aspect of trade agreements was not untouched by this shift of approaches, which now outspokenly puts 'America First', thereby highlighting "the intention of focusing foreign policy on what is perceived to be in America's national and international interests" (Tobin 2018: 1). While this might logically go hand in hand with "a less interventionist approach to global affairs", as Tobin (2018: 1) points out, some actions taken by the new administration did not entirely fit into this pattern, leaving the overall approach to be slightly incoherent at this point.

The current administration might pursue a more protectionist course in economic matters, with the president having raged against foreign trade deals such as the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) and the proposed TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) while still on the campaign trail (when he labelled them 'disastrous'), as well as in his inauguration address, when he, among other things, promised to buy and hire American (Tobin 2018: 3). It is, however, worth noting that even before Trump, the US was the country "that imposes more protectionist measures than any other" (Shen 2015).

Most recently, the US set import tariffs of 10 percent on aluminium and 25 percent on steel, which was followed by heavy criticism by the European Union as well as other states, with the EU proposing a set of counter measures. Between the US and China, there is, as of March and April 2018, still the looming danger of a trade war, in which, according to experts, there will almost certainly be no winner at all (Reuters 2018; Xiaoming 2018). Since discussing this aspect in more detail would diverge from the topic of this thesis, the following sections of this chapter do not focus on current developments in this respect, as the situation seems quite volatile and parameters might change, whereas a prolonging of a tit-for-tat situation would possibly affect the global markets as a whole as well as weaken the multilateral trading system (Morrison 2018: 64).

Once the UK has left the EU, the question of Free Trade Agreement negotiations between the US and the UK might become relevant, should both parties wish so. This chapter therefore examines the two countries' economic relationship. Firstly, it surveys the different types of bilateral trade treaties between which the US and the EU distinguish, before moving on to the matter of a possible post-Brexit US-UK FTA. Following this, the general economic and trade parameters of the two countries are discussed before channelling back to the questions of whether one could categorise the US-UK economic relationship as a 'special' one and what this might mean in terms of the theoretical framework of this paper – bilateralism.

1. US bilateral trade treaties

The US has (as of April 2018) entered into FTAs with 20 countries, of which many are of a bilateral nature, which means that they are agreements between two governments. Some, like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement, were concluded among more than just two states and are thus multilateral agreements. In addition to FTAs, there are also Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFAs), which "provide frameworks for governments to discuss and resolve trade and investment issues at an early stage" and are meant "to identify and work on capacity-building where appropriate (Office of the United States Trade Representative 2018).

The aim here is to basically set up a framework or rather a stage which enables the parties to establish a longer-term dialogue on the issues of trade and investment, with yearly TIFA Council meetings at senior government level. The exact type and range of these agreements varies: They can, for instance, also take the form of TICA (Trade and Investment Cooperation, as in the case of Iceland) or TICF (Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum, as in the case of Switzerland). This variation can also be seen in the range of different countries as well as country clusters, with which such agreements were negotiated, namely from Angola to Vietnam, from TIFAs with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to a US-Central Asian TIFA (including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) (Office of the United States Trade Representative 2018). A third type of agreement is the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT). The purpose of these BITs is, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative (2018), to “help protect private investment, develop market-oriented policies in partner countries and promote U.S. exports”.

2. EU trade agreements

Similar to the three types of US trade agreements, the EU also has three main types: The first one is the agreement to a Customs Union. Its two most important features are the elimination of customs duties in bilateral trade as well as the establishment of “a joint customs tariff for foreign importers” (European Commission 2018). Ranking below the first category are “Association Agreements, Stabilisation Agreements, (Deep and Comprehensive) Free Trade Agreements and Economic Partnership Agreements”, which belong to a second category, whose the objective it is to either remove or reduce customs tariffs for bilateral trade between the parties (European Commission 2018). In contrast to the first two types, the third one (Partnership and Cooperation Agreements) does not touch upon the matter of tariffs and more superficially aims at providing “a general framework for bilateral relations” with customs tariffs being left “as they are” (European Commission 2018).

Since 2013, the EU has also been in negotiations with the US for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), which enjoyed much media attention. The negotiations were, however, “paused until further notice” in 2016 (European Commission 2018). With the Lisbon Treaty entering into force in 2009, the negotiation competence for investment agreements was moved up from member state level to EU level. Previously concluded BITs, which have been in force between a member state and a third party, can remain so unless the EU has negotiated and concluded an agreement with said third country. Since attaining this competence, “[t]he EU has therefore begun to negotiate its own investment agreements (either as investment chapters in broader FTAs, i.e. Canada, Singapore, Japan and the US, or as stand-alone investment agreements, i.e. China)” (Lange 2018). TTIP would also have fallen into this category and was therefore negotiated by the Commission and not by the individual member states.

The reason this agreement drew so much criticism from civil society as well as some EU member states was its Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism. Such an ISDS clause was a common feature of US trade agreements and BITS as well as BITs concluded by EU member states. However, “investors facing possible administrative, regulatory or judicial measures leading to discrimination or adverse treatment have increasingly turned to an independent arbitration tribunal based on the ISDS clauses in the respective bilateral investment treaties" in recent years, causing concern with critics that "investment protection rules could be abused by foreign investors with a view to preventing (or at least limiting) countries' 'right to regulate', i.e. to make legitimate policy choices, especially in the fields of environment, public health and social protection" (Lange 2018).

3. 'Deeply' integrated – A survey of economic data

In general, the economic relationship between the US and the EU as a whole is more based on investment than it is on trade (Chase 2011: 1). The factor of trade is, however, often regarded as a benchmark for politicians, governments as well as media representatives to assess the level of international commerce (Quinlan 2003: ix). This difference is probably best described by Hamilton and Quinlan's (2005: i) definition of 'deep' integration, which means that the US and European economies are bound by extensive ties, which shape the transatlantic economy. Foreign affiliate sales and investment flows are such 'deep' forms of integration, standing in opposition to trade, which is labelled a 'shallow' form of integration by Hamilton and Quinlan. They argue that "Europeans and Americans have become so intertwined that we are literally in each other's business" (Hamilton & Quinlan 2005: i). However, 'deep' forms of integration can also cause frictions and disputes when there are two different economic systems 'rubbing up' against each other (Hamilton & Quinlan 2005: i).

In addition, Hamilton and Quinlan (2005: iii) state that the beginning of the 21st century saw "one of the most intense periods of transatlantic integration ever", albeit being "a time of transatlantic political tension and sluggish economic growth". Furthermore, they (2005: iii) consider trade flows as "a misleading benchmark of transatlantic economic interaction", since, as mentioned, transatlantic economic relations are driven by foreign investment and "contrary to common wisdom, most US and European investments flow to each other, rather than to lower-wage developing nations". As of 2005, the authors concluded that when adding investment and trade together, "US economic engagement remains overwhelmingly focused on Europe", the reason for this being that "[t]he transatlantic economy is where the markets are, where the jobs are and where the profits are" (Hamilton & Quinlan 2005: iii).

3.1. Foreign direct investments

Considering this substantial factor of foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the transatlantic economy, the UK and the US "share the world's largest bilateral foreign direct investment partnerships" (U.S. Department of State 2018). According to a Congressional Research Services publication by Morrison (2018: 23), data for 2015 shows that sales by foreign affiliates of US firms in the UK added up to $697 billion, making it the largest market for US affiliated firms outside the US. In this statistic, the UK is followed by Canada ($625 billion) and China ($481 billion), with Germany ranking fourth ($379 billion), and France tenth with $208 billion (behind Ireland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Mexico and Japan). In 2002, for instance, the foreign affiliate service sales of US firms in the UK were bigger than those in all of Asia put together ($98.5 billion and $97 billion, respectively) (Hamilton & Quinlan 2005: 42).

3.2. US service and merchandise exports

When it comes to service, the UK is the country, "whose various service sectors are most aligned with those of the US", resulting in the UK accounting for "the largest share of US affiliate sales not only in Europe but also the world" in 2002 (Hamilton & Quinlan 2005: 42). The same still seems to apply a few years later, as the UK was the United States' major service trading partner in 2016, in terms of imports ($66.5 billion) as well as exports ($54.2 billion), distancing Canada ($54.2 billion/ $29.6 billion), Japan ($44.7 billion/ $30.6 billion), China ($53.5 billion/ $16.1 billion) and Germany ($31.1 billion/ $33.4 billion) (Morrison 2018: 10).

When looking at US merchandise exports, i.e. tangible exports or exports of goods (not services), the UK ranks fifth in this statistic in 2017, with the US having exported goods worth $56 billion to the UK. This is only surpassed by Canada ($282 billion), Mexico ($243 billion), China ($130 billion) and Japan ($68 billion), thus making the UK the number one export market for US merchandise in Europe, with Germany ($53 billion) ranking 6th globally and second in Europe and the Netherlands ($42 billion) 8th and third, respectively (Morrison 2018: 4-5).

What is also important to add is that in comparison to 2002, US merchandise exports to the UK increased by 69.4 percent by 2017, from $33 billion to $56 billion, while they increased significantly more in Germany, namely by 100.9 percent from $27 billion to $53 billion, and in the Netherlands, by 130.3 percent from $18 billion to $42 billion. These rates were, however, surpassed by China, which boasted a percent change of 491.2 percent (from $22 billion in 2002 to $130 billion in 2017), Brazil ($12 billion to $37 billion and 198.8 percent change), Hong Kong ($13 billion to $40 billion, 217.4 percent change), Mexico ($98 billion to $243 billion, 149.1 percent change) and Canada, whose market for UK merchandise exports increased from the already high $161 billion by 7.7 percent to $282 billion (Morrison 2018: 5).

Four of the aforementioned leading export markets for US merchandise, namely China, Mexico, Japan and Germany also lead the ranking of the United States' largest merchandise trade imbalances in 2017, with China leading by a considerable margin, with a trade imbalance of minus $375 billion, ahead of Mexico, Japan and Germany (with whom the US had trade deficits of $71 billion, $69 billion and $64 billion, respectively) and Vietnam (minus $38 billion) (Morrison 2018: 11).

3.3. US-UK bilateral trade flows

As can already be deduced from the information given in the previous sections of this chapter, the UK is an important economic partner for the United States. The bilateral trade flows between the two countries are significant, with the United States being the United Kingdom's second biggest export destination, ranking after the EU as a whole (Hamilton& Quinlan 2017: 4). According to data provided by Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 4), the US imported "$111.5 billion worth of British goods and services" in 2015 and "exported "123.5 billion in goods and services to the UK", which means that the US exported $12 billion more to the UK than it imported in British goods and services. In 2016, the surplus yielded by the US grew by $3 billion to $15billion, with the US exporting $121 billion worth of American goods and services to the UK and importing $107 billion of goods and services from the UK (Akthar 2017: 2).

Due to the intertwined nature of the US and European economies, the factor of trade is not as important in transatlantic economic matters as investment. While trade statistics are regarded as "the standard benchmark by which governments, politicians and the media usually measure international commerce" (Quinlan 2003: ix), such a concentration on trade alone can be slightly misleading, since, according to Quinlan (2003: ix& 3), American companies prefer to have their foreign affiliates sell goods and services in other countries rather than export them themselves from American shores, which consequently – and as already pointed out previously – makes foreign investment "the backbone of the transatlantic economy, not trade" (Quinlan 2003: ix). The year 2015 saw a record of $593 billion of US foreign direct investment in the UK, while UK FDI in the US was at $483.8 billion. Furthermore, 22 percent of overall global United States assets outside the USA were accounted for by the UK. Moreover, UK affiliates settled in the US improved the trade balance of the United States "by exporting $73 billion worth of goods" out of America in the year 2014. These UK affiliates "employed roughly 1.1 million Americans" and US affiliates in the United Kingdom "employed almost 1.4 million workers in the UK" (Hamilton& Quinlan 2017: 5). The UK, furthermore, ranked second – behind the Netherlands – in terms of American corporate stakes in 2015. At $593 billion in 2015, the United States' capital stock in the United Kingdom was more than twice as much as US investment in the countries of South America added together (Hamilton& Quinlan 2017 4-5).

Supported by their data, Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 7) state that "the United Kingdom is a key pillar of America's global economic infrastructure and a key hub for the global competitiveness of U.S. firms". The UK has, since 2000, "accounted for nearly 9% of the cumulative global income of U.S. affiliates, a proxy for global earnings" (Hamilton& Quinlan 2017: 7). The exports of US affiliates from the UK are, moreover, higher than the total sum of exports of most nations, as Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 7) point out.

In terms of overall trade with the EU-28, the UK is the US' "second-largest trading partner within the EU after Germany", accounting for approximately one fifth of the United States' total trade with the European Union, as Akhtar (2017: 2) states in a Congressional Research Service report. On a global scale, the UK is the US' fifth largest destination for exports and ranks seventh when it comes to US imports. The top goods the United States exports to Britain "include civilian aircraft and parts, nonmonetary gold bullion, art, and light fuels", whereas the top imports from the UK to the US "include drug compounds, certain motor fuels (not including gasoline), whiskies, art, and passenger motor vehicles" (Akhtar 2017: 3).

4. Towards a post-Brexit US-UK Free Trade Agreement?

As shown in the previous sub-sections, the economic relationship between the US and the UK is an important one for both parties. Due to this importance as well as the UK's looming exit of the European Union, the possibility of a future US-UK Free Trade Agreement has been hinted at from both sides, with President Trump openly expressing his support for Brexit and his willingness to "quickly" (Akhtar 2017: 1) negotiate a FTA with the UK. When such negotiations happen, they can certainly be seen as a clear shift in US trade policy in comparison to the stance of the previous administration, since the Obama Administration emphasised their commitment to the negotiations of the TTIP FTA and preferred to "focus on multiparty regional negotiations" (Akhtar 2017: 1).

The first three steps the UK has to take when it leaves the EU – in terms of global trading relations – is to, firstly, "replace the EU's common external tariff with its own customs tariff, and [it] will also need to submit new tariff commitments for both goods and services at the World Trade Organization (WTO)" (Hamilton 2017: 2). Secondly, new trade arrangements will have to be agreed on between the UK and the European Union (if that has not happened previously) and thirdly, the UK will aim at negotiating new trade agreements with a number of states, including the US and other non-EU members (Hamilton 2017: 2).

If a US-UK FTA is to come at any point, however, it will certainly take some time until it has come into effect. There are various reasons for this: The first one is that the government in Westminster is not yet legally allowed to enter negotiations of a trade deal with another country while still being a member of the European Union (Lange 2018; Hamilton& Quinlan 2017: 1). After the UK has left the EU, which will most certainly happen in March 2019, it will be important for future partners, such as Washington, to first "understand the UK's new WTO commitments and the nature of UK-EU transitional arrangements following Brexit, as well as London's end goals with regard to a deal with the UK's largest trade partner, the EU", before embarking on bilateral negotiations, according to Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 1). However, certain 'shadow' negotiations, as Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 1) argue, in which the two parties start talks on a 'trade negotiation agreement', which "identifies potential stumbling blocks and scopes what could be done before the UK leaves the EU" and which could then consequently form the basic framework for a later agreement, once the parties are legally and officially allowed to negotiate it, can take place. Discussions regarding this matter did already start as early as January 2017, when the UK's Prime Minister Theresa May first met with President Trump in official capacity (Akhtar 2017: 1).

When writing about US-UK-EU economic relations, Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 2) use the expression 'transatlantic triangle'. What they mean by this is that UK-EU, US-UK and US-EU relations are deeply intertwined, making an untangling of some of these connections very complicated. One example for this is the sector of financial services: When the United Kingdom exits the EU, institutions which provide financial services and are based in the UK are going to lose their ‘passport’, meaning that they can no longer provide these services in the Single Market. This will then not only entail disruptions in the financial services industry of the UK, as Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 2) state, but may also impact US banks as well as other companies providing financial services, which have “established a presence in the UK to take advantage of passporting via the City of London to access the Single Market”. If no particular EU-UK arrangements are made to allow this kind of passporting post-Brexit, it is possible that a number of US firms will relocate to a different EU member state to secure a different entrance to the Single Market (Hamilton & Quinlan 2017: 2).

According to Hamilton (2017: 4), it will be important for the US in the future to strengthen and modernise its ties not only with the United Kingdom but with the EU as well, and, most importantly, not get “trapped into a false choice between the two”. The UK is a vital trading partner for the US, but even when subtracting current UK data from the EU, the EU “remains America’s largest trading partner, greatest source of foreign investment, and largest source of onshored jobs” (Hamilton 2017: 4). Another point to consider is that while the US nowadays has a considerable financial as well as commercial presence in Great Britain, one significant factor for this presence is the UK’s membership in the EU, which is “the largest, wealthiest and most important foreign market in the world” for American companies (Hamilton 2017: 4).

Hamilton (2017: 4-5) has, furthermore, identified three major issues in a future US-UK trade deal: While it will, according to him, not “be very troublesome” to agree on reductions in tariffs (since most of them are already at quite a low level), reducing barriers to services can, firstly, be considered as “the ‘sleeping giant’ of the transatlantic economy”, since job gains in this sector are very likely to occur (Hamilton 2017: 4). Secondly, it will be important to recognise “that various regulatory procedures in one country essentially conform or are equivalent to those in the other country” and, thirdly, the global frontier could be pushed by “pioneering standards in new economic areas” Hamilton 2017: 5). As of spring 2018, all considerations for possible negotiations are, however, still of a highly theoretical nature, since, as mentioned, Brexit has not happened yet and the exact nature of (trade) relationships between the UK and third parties can only be determined after it has become clearer what Brexit really means for the UK and the EU in terms of their future relationship.

5. A special economic relationship?

According to Hamilton and Quinlan (2017: 4), who, arguably, provide the most comprehensive studies and data in this respect, the economic relationship between the UK and the US does deserve the attribute ‘special’. The UK is one of the major export markets for US goods and services and at the same time also a big import market. When only factoring in trade, the UK trails behind Germany in this respect, being only the second biggest trading partner among the EU-28, according to Akhtar (2017: 2). In terms of foreign direct investment, however, the addition of “[e]stimated sales of American affiliates in the UK and British affiliates in the U.S totalled more than $1.3 trillion” in 2015 (Hamilton& Quinlan 2017: 4). Thus, the UK and the US can be said to “share the world’s largest bilateral foreign direct investment partnerships”, as the United States Department of State (2018) phrases it.

Being the largest market for US affiliated firms outside the US, the UK leaves behind states like Canada and Mexico (geographically closest to the US) as well as Germany and France, influential EU members geographically located not far from the UK. Also, the UK has (in 2016) remained the United States’ major service trading partner, in terms of both exports and imports (Morrison 2018 10& 23). Therefore, one can possibly say that the UK-US economic relationship is a ‘special’ one, particularly when considering the fields of FDIs and the export and import of services.

As outlined previously, it is not yet clear how future UK-EU as well as UK-US (economic) relations will manifest themselves. As of April 2018, the UK is not allowed to negotiate future trade deals with third parties such as the US, but has, however, expressed the intention to do so in the future, which was received positively with the Trump Administration, while President Obama had previously expressed his preference to first negotiate the TTIP FTA with the European Union (Akkhtar 2017: 1).

6. Channelling back to the theory – bilateralism and trade

This sub-section aims at once again factoring in the theory of bilateralism. Firstly, a concept associated with multilateralism, namely Caporaso’s (1993: 54) notion of indivisibility might help to make the matter of UK-US as well as EU-US economic relations a bit more tangible: Indivisibility could be said to apply when looking at the intertwined economic systems within Europe, but as well when taking in the transatlantic economy encompassing Europe and North

America, and it might almost certainly even apply when glancing at the globe as a whole. Indivisibility means that in multilateralism developments affecting one specific region are not confined to this region but will probably affect other regions as well, since the different regions, different partner states, have become ‘indivisible’ due to their high interconnectivity. As has been stated in this chapter, transatlantic economic relations can be labelled as ‘deeply’ integrated (Hamilton & Quinlan 2005: i). Following the logic of Caporaso’s indivisibility, an upcoming Brexit resulting in a changing EU-UK relationship in several policy areas is likely to affect more parties than just the EU and the UK. This is also the reason why economic experts such as Hamilton (2017: 4) advocate that the US should set an improvement of US-UK as well as US-EU economic relations as its goal in order to have the best possible outcome and not lose an economic gamble after only focusing on one side and neglecting the other, which would be consequential in this intertwined, and possibly even ‘indivisible’ transatlantic economy.

The developments of the UK’s moving towards Brexit and President Trump voicing not only his support for this decision but also uttering scepticism towards multilateral agreements and organisations and hinting at his preference of concluding bilateral agreements with single states over multilateral agreements (or bilateral agreements with multilateral structures, such as the EU), can be located rather towards bilateralism on the multilateralism – bilateralism spectrum. As elaborated in the theory chapter, classical bilateralism is “inherently and fundamentally discriminatory” (Ruggie 1993: 9).

Since, however, bilateralism does not always take the exact same shape, bilateralism and multilateralism can be seen as a sort of ‘colleagues’ and ‘rivals’ in the international system, particularly when it comes to the matter of economics: Due to WTO rules, the principle of the most favoured nation has to be adhered to by the member states. This can be seen as a multilateralist feature, with non-discrimination being the goal. But, WTO members are, as already stated in the theory chapter, allowed preferential trade agreements, which grant, for instance, tariff concessions to a certain party, but not to everyone. This might be seen as a bilateralist feature within a multilateral framework (Saggi & Yildiz 2010: 26). What this paragraph is meant to say is that while, in theory, the distinction between multilateralism and bilateralism seems quite clear-cut, it does not have to be so in reality. With reference to the economic relations between the US and the UK, the point that the future relationship can only be determined adequately once the UK has either left the EU or once the details of the UK’s coexistence with the EU have been established can only be reiterated in this context: Whether the UK will experience a trade relationship with the EU based on WTO rules, which would put the UK at a disadvantage in comparison with some of the EU's other trading partners or whether it will be able to conclude a symmetric agreement with the EU and following this possibly another one with the US, is more a question of *which* form of bilateralism or multilateralism is at play here than the one whether multi- or bilateralism is the organising form in place.

Having just mentioned the aspect of symmetry, with asymmetry being a feature of classical bilateralism, the US-UK economic relations can be categorised as fairly symmetrical. While the US exports more goods and services to the UK than it imports, with the surplus in 2016 being $15 billion (Akthar 2017: 2), this might count as an asymmetry in terms of endowment levels. However, other parameters than export and import rates ought to be considered as well, as has been repeatedly argued in this chapter. The two economies are 'deeply' integrated and can be said to constitute the largest bilateral FDI partnership (U.S. Department of State 2018), benefiting corporations on both sides of the Atlantic. Moreover, since the UK can be seen as the US' major trading partner when it comes to imports as well as exports of services (Morrison 2018), an instance of symmetry can also be encountered in this respect.

VII. Defence Relations

While the previous chapter has dealt with the economic relations between the United Kingdom and the United States, this one is going to focus on military matters. At first glance, these two chapters may appear as if they belonged to the different spheres this MA thesis has put them in. In reality, the borders might be slightly fuzzier and sometimes trade deals might be a door opener for military presence in a specific region of this world: Guerriero (2014: 2) researched “the effect of trade treaties in US military involvement in foreign states” and found that in some cases, US military presence has increased in a certain state after the conclusion of a bilateral trade treaty (Guerriero 2014: 11).

According to Guerriero (2014: 2), a trade treaty may generally “bring opportunities, improve access to information, introduce technology, introduce products and introduce a multitude of services”. As critics point out, however, such treaties can also be very beneficial to the more dominant country at the negotiating table, which means that some of the opportunities such deals are supposed to bring along might come at the expense of the poorer, or economically less developed party (Guerriero 2014: 2). The US - as was elaborated in the previous chapter – makes use of a whole network of trade partners around the globe. As will be attempted to show in this chapter, the country is not only a big player in the economic sphere, but also – and perhaps particularly so – in the military sphere. With a plethora of military bases all around the world and an unrivalled defence budget, it is, according to Guerriero (2014: 2) not entirely clear how strong the correlation is between the conclusion of trade treaties and at the same time “securing diplomatic or political advantages for the participating states, such as military or financial aid”.

However, Guerriero (2014: 2) argues that US’ relations with other states are “rooted in the premise that the United States expects to gain advantages and benefits from these relations”. Such benefits could be of economic, political as well as diplomatic nature. What is relevant to consider here – and serves as a form of ‘bridge’ from the previous chapter to this one – is that there might be a connection between the involvement of the US military in certain states and the existence of bilateral trade deals with said states. When one defines ‘US military involvement’ primarily as the United States establishing new military bases and deploying troops into the states with the new bases, as Guerriero (2014: 6) does, some states with which the US had previously concluded trade treaties have shown “an increase in US military involvement, post-treaty”, while others have not. No change regarding military relations was seen in “Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jordan, Morocco, Nicaragua, Oman, Singapore, and South Korea", whereas the military presence of the US increased in "Australia, Bahrain, Chile, Israel, and Peru" (Guerriero 2014: 10-11). According to Guerriero (2014: 11), the main difference between the two groups of states is that the first eleven rank higher in terms of export and import rates (to and from the US) than the remaining five. While this distinction might be a bit simplistic, his argument that the 'proximity' between two states gained after having agreed on a trade deal may foster a closer bilateral defence cooperation and facilitate an "exchange of military arms, bases, and training" (Guerriero 2014: 13) is worth considering. In the case of the US-UK special relationship, it is, as elaborated previously, difficult to assess how a possible post-Brexit FTA might impact the defence relationship between the two states, since due to the UK's EU membership it cannot yet negotiate bilateral trade agreements with third parties. Therefore, formal negotiations over a bilateral trade treaty will still have to wait, but what already exists is a rather close cooperation in military as well as intelligence matters.

1. General Parameters

According to data provided by the World Bank (2018), the US has spent 3.3 percent of its GDP on its military in 2016, while the UK spent 1.8 percent. In 2017, according to NATO data, the US spent 3.58 percent, while the UK spent 2.14 percent (NATO 2017). Just for comparison, France, accordingly, spent 2.3 percent (1.79 in 2017), Germany 1.2 (approximately the same in 2017), the People's Republic of China 1.9 and Russia 5.4 n 2016. The average percentage in the European Union was 1.5, while it was 2.2 for the whole world, 6.2 for the Arab World and 3.1 for North America (World Bank 2018). In terms of absolute numbers, the US spent $596 billion in 2015 and $611 billion in 2016 on its military, making it rank first among several nations (Smith 2014; Statista 2018). The budgets for the fiscal years of 2017 and 2018 are $606 and $639 billion (U.S. Department of Defense 2018). The United Kingdom, on the other hand, spent $56 billion in 2015, which resulted in the fourth rank in terms of worldwide defence budget. When looking at the size of their active armed forces, the UK ranked 33rd in 2015 (with 157,700 personnel), while the US ranked second (behind the People's Republic of China, with 1,492,200 personnel) (Curran & Williams 2016).

Clearly, one can observe some asymmetry here when comparing the US and the UK's expenditures on their military forces: The United States spends, according to the data surveyed, about ten times as much on defence matters as the UK. This chapter now looks at

US and UK participation in UN peacekeeping as well as their engagements with NATO and their record of international military interventions since 2000. Briefly, also the issue of the invasion of Iraq is discussed, albeit solely with the theoretical frameworks of multi- and bilateralism in mind and without any detailed analysis of the events following 2003.

2. The UK and the US's involvement in UN Peacekeeping

Having just described the United States and the United Kingdom's defence budgets, personnel resources and their respective rankings in the world, this section is dedicated to a topic in which the realities laid out above seem to have reversed: the matter of peacekeeping.

The coordinating instance for international peacekeeping is the United Nations. Generally, international peacekeeping can be described as "coordinated international action taken to support an established peace process" (Enholm 2011: 5). The UN has so far been involved in seventy-one PKOs since 1948, fifty-three of them taking place after 1990. The geographical concentration of these operations has changed over time, in synchronisation with the trouble spots of the world (Sandler 2017: 1876). Other organisations, such as the African Union (AU) or NATO, can sometimes be the ones conducting a PKO under a UN mandate and after the UN Security Council has granted its approval (Enholm 2011: 5-6). This means that since the end of the Cold War, there have also been large- as well as small-scale peacekeeping operations which were not conducted by the UN but led by other organisations or even individual countries, the aforementioned AU and NATO being two of them, along with the Economic Community of West Aftican States (ECOWAS). For instance, the Kosovo Force (KFOR), the Stablization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan or the Multinational Force-Iraq, as well as the US-led Operation Northern Watch in Iraq, the ECOWAS mission in Liberia, and also an AU mission in Sudan are all non-UN PKOs (Sandler 2017: 1876).

Since the 1970s, UN Peacekeeping has been mainly concerned with PKOs in countries which have experienced intrastate civil wars involving a rebel group and a government. Sometimes, this type of intrastate war also includes additional third parties, which may even be foreign. From 15 in 1975 to 32 in 1988 to an average of 28 annually since the 1990s, the number of intrastate wars has risen steadily. The operations themselves can be categorised into, firstly, monitoring and observer missions, secondly, traditional peacekeeping, thirdly, peacebuilding, and fourthly, peace enforcement. In terms of financing, financial contributions for UN missions "are mostly assessed against UN members since 1974; whereas troop contributions are voluntary and supported, in large part, by the financial assessments" (Sandler 2017: 1877).

Countries contributing troops receive monthly compensations "for each soldier, police, or military observer" (Sandler 2017: 1877). Depending on the country, this payment may compensate for the troops' cost, even overcompensate it, or it might not meet the actual troops' cost. For states like the US and many other NATO members, the UN payment does not even nearly meet the level at which one could speak about the country being financially compensated for their contribution of peacekeeping troops. According to Shimzu and Sandler (2002: 654), this is one of the reasons why countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Egypt tend to send many peacekeepers, since "the flat payment per soldier from the United Nations exceeds what these governments pay their soldiers, so that supplying peacekeeping troops can be a source of foreign exchange earnings", and why the USA, for instance, mostly seems to limit its contributions to peacekeeping to financial as well as educational transfers.

As of February 2018, the UK contributes over 700 military personnel and police officers to UN peacekeeping operations. The most personnel have been sent to the UN missions UNMISS in South Sudan (with 395 people belonging to the contingent troops and 9 staff officers), UNFICYP in Cyprus (with 261 belonging to the personnel type of contingent troops and 15 staff officers) and UNSOS (United Nations Support Office in Somalia; 41 personnel in the contingent troops). Furthermore, also five, two and one peacekeepers have been sent to by the UK to the UN missions MONUSCO (D.R. of the Kongo), MINUSMA (Mali) and UNVMC (United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia), respectively (United Nations Peacekeeping 2018b).

Among the top ten countries funding the budget for UN PKOs, the United Kingdom ranks sixth, with a share of 5.80 percent. In comparison, Germany is the country providing the fourth largest share (6.39 percent) to the UN Peacekeeping budget. France is in fifth place for 2017-2018, giving 6.31 percent of the overall PKO budget, making it also the third largest contributor among the P5 of the UNSC (ranking behind the US and China) (Best Delegate 2018). With France currently providing 840 French personnel, soldiers as well as police officers (France Diplomatie 2018), the UK and France can be said to be in roughly the same category in terms of their personnel as well as monetary contribution. While it outranks the other two major European powers in terms of funding for peacekeeping, Germany had, in 2016, 432 personnel deployed on UN Peacekeeping missions, hence fewer people than the UK and France (Ansorg & Haass 2017).

The United States does currently not play as big a role within the UN Peacekeeping programme in terms of personnel deployments as one might expect by solely looking at the country's military budget. In 2014, for instance, 121 UN Peacekeepers were sent by the US, resulting in the USA being ranked 63rd that year, while being the 9th largest contributor of the NATO members. According to Smith (2014), the number of American soldiers in (peacekeeping) operations led by the UN has been consistently low after the end of the Cold War, the only exceptions being the years 1992 and 1996, when the UN missions UNSOSM II (Somalia), UNMIH (Haiti), UNPROFOR and UNPREDEP (former Yugoslavia) received "significant numbers of personnel" from the United States. The peak was reached in October 1993, when 4114 US personnel were on deployment in UN missions. However, since eighteen American soldiers died in Somalia, in addition to "numerous difficulties of the broader UN-led operations" which were encountered there as well as in Haiti and in the Balkans, a strategic shift concerning contributions to UN missions happened in Washington: Even though the aforementioned eighteen American casualties were killed on a mission which was under the command of US officials, this incident did, according to Smith (2014) serve as a trigger for American policy makers to increasingly take the view "that the US military should work outside of the structures of UN command, focus on traditional combat operations, and leave the peacekeeping duties to other countries". This new strategy was propagated by the Clinton Administration and the following years saw a drastic decline in US military and police personnel contributions to UN missions, with American contributions to singular UN missions remaining in the range of single to double digits (Smith 2014).

Since the beginning of the 21st century the US has been a strong advocate for a strengthening of UN Peacekeeping efforts and as a P5 member of the UNSC "consistently voted for an expanded peacekeeping agenda that pushed up annual US costs over $2 billion (approximately 28% of the UN peacekeeping budget)" (Smith 2014). The number of American peacekeepers did, however, not increase significantly. The focus was more on supporting troops and police sent from other countries and providing training programmes for, for instance, countries in Africa which could, potentially, become UN troop- and police-contributors. Set up in 2004, the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) has invested $85 million to $115 million in the training and equipment of peacekeepers from other countries than the US. According to Smith (2014) this has made the USA "the largest bilateral capacity-builder of any UN member state".

While President Obama hinted in his first address to the UNGA that the US might be considering a contribution of civilian police, civilian personnel as well as military staff officers to UN missions in the future, there was no serious consideration of deploying American troop contingents, however, throughout the presidencies of George W. Bush and Barack Obama (Smith 2014). The new US administration under President Trump has recently even announced in the person of the US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, that the US would, in the future, not be inclined to pay more than 25 percent of the cost of UN Peacekeeping. According to Goldberg (2018), the US is currently assessed 28.4 percent of the total cost of UN Peacekeeping, meaning that nearly 30 percent of the peacekeeping budget is contributed by the United States. This is the rate to which President Obama had committed and which is negotiated every three years between the member states of the United Nations. It remains to be seen, according to Goldberg (2018), whether the US ends up ceding more of its influence at the UN to their rivals than it actually ends up saving money. For this year, Congress has appropriated "$1.6 billion for UN Peacekeeping, which is about 25 of the total peacekeeping budget of $7.3 billion. That means the United States will go into arrears because the United States is billed at 28.4% this year, but only paying 25%" (Goldberg 2018).

3. NATO – peacekeeping and 'collective defence' between multi- and bilateralism

According to Shimizu and Sandler (2003: 124), NATO has played a crucial role in peacekeeping on account of two main reasons: Firstly, from 1994 to 2000, NATO members provided more than 70 percent of the UN's peacekeeping spending, and secondly, NATO took on a number of peacekeeping operations which were not financed by the UN. Examples for this are NATO's Implementation Force in Bosnia (December 1995) or the Stabilization Force in Bosnia (December 1996). The cost of PKOs led by NATO are not part of the UN Peacekeeping budget. Sandler and Shimizu (2014: 44) argue that NATO has "reinvented itself as a protector of European interests with peacekeeping missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and elsewhere" after the end of the Cold War, since the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that Russia could not be said to present the same level of threat as it did before the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Peacekeeping was included into NATO's new strategy with the Oslo Declaration of June 1992. In doing so, "NATO officially recognized (sic) that it possessed vital interests beyond its allies' territory. These interests spread initially as far as the Persian Gulf owing to the importance of oil" (Sandler & Shimizu 2014: 45). Since in the immediate post-Cold War era (1991-2000) the USSR and the Warsaw Pact were no threats and rivals anymore, NATO's aim was to establish itself as an organisation safeguarding European interests with a crisis management competence (Sandler & Shimizu 2014: 45).

Following the argumentation of Sandler and Shimizu (2014: 48), the expansion of NATO brought along a number of changes to the inner workings and roles of the organisation as such as well as to its member states. The authors claim that effects of the expansion will be seen in, for instance, a division of members along the lines of the ones able to assist with combat missions and those which cannot. This is due to an increased diversity among the member states in terms of money, which means that the richer members will be the ones engaging in combat missions (with other less monetarily equipped members in supporting roles at best), leading to a more unbalanced form of burden sharing among the members. This unbalance will, according to the authors (2014: 48) manifest itself in the matter of defence burdens and benefits derived from being a part of NATO. Consequently, the division between 'hard' combat missions and 'soft' peacekeeping missions could become more pronounced. They argue that "[e]ven among allies that can assist in "soft" (cheap) peacekeeping missions, these allies may not view such missions as yielding much benefit for them" and that new members of the alliance "are more concerned about security at home than underwriting security in distant venues" (Sandler & Shimizu 2014: 48). Owing to this, the result might be "more exploitation of the rich by the poor and a poorer match between defense (sic) burdens and derived benefits" (Sandler & Shimizu 2014: 48).

This narrative of 'exploitation of the rich by the poor' was also reproduced by US President Trump in 2017, when he criticised the United States' NATO allies for not spending at least two percent of their GDP on defence, as is the NATO guideline (Valásek 2017). According to data provided by NATO (2017), only six of the NATO members, namely the US (3.58 percent), Greece, Estonia, the UK, Romania and Poland reached this margin in 2017. The European countries, however, only edged it, with Greece (2.32 percent) spending the highest percentage. With Trump even questioning the United States' commitment to defend NATO allies, since in his view, the other members are not contributing enough (Atlantic Council 2017), the inherent nature of NATO is being questioned. As established in the theory chapter, NATO can be described as a 'collective defence system' and according to Ruggie (1993: 10) a 'truncated' version of a collective security system, which represents one ideal type of a multilateral organisation. While NATO can be seen as a "peculiar mix" (Weber 1993: 233) with regard to its place on the multilateralism-bilateralism scale, the way the members' security assurance is inherent in NATO's understanding is unequivocally a multilateral trait, which is being questioned by the Trump Administration at the moment.

4. Excursion: The EU, CSDP, PESCO and the UK

After having elaborated on UN and NATO Peacekeeping, another actor who should be mentioned in this context is the European Union. Within the framework of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) the EU has so far undertaken a number of "overseas operations, using civilian and military instruments in several countries in three continents (Europe, Africa and Asia)" (EEAS 2016). The tasks range from "humanitarian and rescue tasks; conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks; tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making; joint disarmament operations; military advice and assistance tasks; post-conflict stabilisation tasks" (EEAS 2018a: 1). The first of these EU missions were started in 2003, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As of March 2018, "the EU has launched and run 34 operations and missions on three continents. Of these 22 were civilian and 11 were military, and one – in Darfur – mixed" (EEAS 2018a: 1). Currently, there are 16 ongoing missions, six of them are military and ten are civilian (EEAS 2018a: 1).

In November 2017 a further step in European military cooperation was taken: The PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) Agreement was signed by 25 of the (as of 2018) 28 member states, with Denmark, Malta and the United Kingdom opting out. According to the EU's European External Action Service (EEAS 2018b: 1), the difference between this agreement "and other forms of cooperation is the binding nature of the commitments undertaken by participating Member States". The body in charge of "the overall policy direction and decision-making, including regards as the assessment mechanism to determine if Member States are fulfilling their commitments", is the Council, while the effectiveness of PESCO "will be measured by the projects it will develop" (EEAS 2018b: 2). Furthermore, the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the EEAS "provide a Secretariat function for PESCO, with a single point of contact for the participating Member States" (EEAS 2018b: 2). Having only been introduced at the end of 2017, it has not yet become exactly clear in which way or whether this form of cooperation will change European military cooperation.

What is clear, however, is that the United Kingdom, after having voted to leave the EU and after (not surprisingly) opting out of PESCO, will not be at the centre of this closer form of cooperation. While it has participated in EU defence and security activities and has indicated the wish to participate in CSDP missions as a third party post-Brexit, the UK has not been the biggest contributor in this field, ranking fifth among the states contributing to CSDP operations, despite its military power. Furthermore, the United Kingdom "has vetoed closer integration and cooperation in EU defence: it has resisted increases to the European Defence Agency Budget for the last six years, and, in 2011, it vetoed the creation of a single military headquarters in Brussels" (Institute for Government 2018). According to the Institute for Government (2018), the UK's military power does make the country an important contributor, however, due to the political realities, "removing the UK from the CSDP could allow greater integration and ambition in EU defence policy".

5. UK military presence in the world

According to Johnson (2014: 2), the UK adopted "a robust interventionist posture" for the course of over twenty years after the end of the Cold War. It is striking that few other states adopted such roles, the probably only other two being the US and France. Johnson (2014: 2) argues that since 1991, "the UK has been willing to threaten and use force in pursuit of a broad conception of the national interest". In comparison to France, which can also be described as a militarily active power, which has regularly intervened in African conflicts, the UK has since 1991 launched the larger operations and done so "in close concert with the US" (Johnson 2014: 2). Johnson (2014: 2) argues that even though the UK had to bury its imperial ambitions after the Second World War, the military aim still was to 'punch above its own weight', meaning that retaining full-spectrum military capabilities, i.e. "the ability to fight at all levels of intensity, against a range of foes, with top-tier technology and training" was coupled with "extensive diplomatic influence and developmental aid and expertise" in order to reach that endeavour (Johnson 2014: 2).

As can be seen from the data presented below (table 1 and table 2), the UK's armed forces are present in many corners of this globe. In addition to the army and RAF bases listed below, the Royal Navy also conducts operations around the globe, from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, to the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea (Royal Navy 2018). What is important to add here is that in addition to the RAF stations overseas, which are displayed above, and those on UK soil, the

United Kingdom has ten RAF stations in England which are also operated by the United States Air Force. Noteworthily, one of them, the RAF station at Menwith Hill in Yorkshire, serves as a joint US-UK intelligence and communications support site (Royal Airforce 2018).

The most recent conflicts the UK armed forces have been involved in are the one in Sierra Leone in 2000, where 1,000 British troops were sent to help evacuate foreign nationals. Consequently they also provided logistical support to the United Nations and aided in training government forces; the war in Afghanistan (2001-2014); Iraq (2003- 2011); Libya (2011), where 37 aircraft and four ships were committed to overthrow Gaddafi's regime at the peak of the operation; and finally the airstrikes against ISIS/Daesh in Iraq (2014 onwards) and Syria (2015 onwards) (Duffin 2014; The Royal British Legion 2018). In 2016, for instance, the number of active personnel in the UK armed forces was 151,000 people, with 13,850 UK Regulars on deployment (Ministry of Defence 2016: 3).

Table 1 Current British Army deployments

Location	Purpose	Actor(s)
Afghanistan	rebuilding and stabilising after NATO/ISAF-led military invasion against Taliban (2001)	NATO
Baltics	NATO presence	NATO
Belize	overseas training area	British forces and international partners
Brunei	overseas training area	British forces
Canada	overseas training area	British forces
Cyprus	permanent military bases (UK); peacekeeping (UN)	British Army and UN Force (including British peacekeepers, different commands)
Germany	British Army bases (in the process of rebasing to the UK by 2020)	British forces
Gibraltar	Army presence; strategic importance	British forces
Iraq	Army presence; + training and supporting Iraqi and Kurdish forces	British forces and Coalition against Daesh (75 partners, including US, NATO and EU (non-militay partner)
Kenya	permanent training support Unit near Nairobi	British cooperation with African Union and UN + local park rangers (to combat illegal wildlife trade)
South Atlantic Islands (Falklands)	dependent UK territory; presence there to deter military aggression	British forces

(As of March 2018, data source: British Army 2018)

Table 2 Royal Airforce (RAF) overseas stations

Location	**Purpose**
Ascension Islands (South Atlantic)	strategically positioned approximately 4,000 miles from both the UK and the Falkland Islands; regular flights between America and Africa
Belgium (Tongeren)	NATO international support unit
Cyprus (Akrotiri in the Western Sovereign Base Area under UK jurisdiction; and Troodos signals station outside Sovereign Base Area)	Cyprus Operations Support Unit; Permanent Joint Operating Base, used for missions in Middle East
Falkland Islands (2 radar stations and 1 airfield)	to ensure security of the Falklands, the South Sandwich Islands and South Georgia
Gibraltar	supporting base for major NATO exercises in the Mediterranean and Iberian peninsular areas
Qatar (Al Udeid)	headquarters for UK's military intervention against ISIS in Iraq
United Arab Emirates (Al Minhad Air Base)	air transport and refuelling hub

(Data source: the Royal Airforce 2018)

6. US military presence in the world

According to data compiled by Grossmann (2018) and Torreon (2017: 21-37), the US has engaged in a wide range of different military interventions on foreign soil since 2000. This sub-section only considers interventions which were started in 2000 (or where significant developments happened from 2000 onwards) and leaves out such which were started in the previous century but continued in the early 2000s, such as Bosnia, the former Yugoslavia or East Timor. Iraq is also timed with 2003, even though the years before saw the enforcement of a 'no-fly' zone over Iraq by the United States and coalition forces.

The following representations are a combined result of Grossmann's data (2018) and Torreon's report for the Congressional Research Service (2017: 21-37). To make the representation of the data easier, the interventions were grouped and clustered. Training activities were not taken into account here. Furthermore, the list does not include every single military operation undertaken by American troops on foreign soil, since the aim was more to put them into categories rather than provide a summary of American military action in the 21st century here. For a (probably) complete list, please see Torreon (2017: 21-37).

When analysing the data provided, one type of military operation which happened several times throughout the first seventeen years of this century is the type of a ‘minor’ operation, including the deployment of a group of military personnel to either protect a US embassy in a certain country and/or help protect US and third country citizens and their property or assist in their evacuation. This sort of operation could be seen in, for instance: Yemen (2000), Cote d’Ivoire (2002), Liberia (2003), Lebanon (2006), Egypt (2011) and South Sudan (2014). In some cases, such as Liberia and Haiti, the US later assisted in UN missions (Liberia) or helped prepare them (Haiti). Another common type of US military operations abroad is the humanitarian assistance mission. Examples for this type are operations in the Philippines (2012 and 2013) after typhoons or in Liberia and Senegal after the Ebola outbreak (Grossmann 2018; Torreon 2017: 21-37).

Almost throughout the course of this still young century, ‘anti-terror related activities’ are a frequent label to be found when looking at US military engagement abroad. In Torreon’s (2017: 21-37) comprehensive report, Bosnia, the Horn of Africa, Georgia, Yemen and Somalia are frequent ‘guests’ in this category. Furthermore, United States military forces were/are engaged in Afghanistan (from 2001; troops, bombing, missiles; NATO/ISAF), Iraq (from 2003; troops, navy, bombing, missiles), Pakistan (from 2005; missiles, bombing, covert operations), Libya (2011; bombing, missiles, troops, command operation; NATO) and Syria (from 2014; bombing, missiles, troops, command operation) (Grossman 2018).

The previous sub-section displayed the UK’s overseas deployments and due to endeavoured symmetry, this section should now provide the same information for the United States. However, since the US had 2,133,068 military personnel (including reserves and the National Guard) and 1,315,609 actively deployed personnel in 2017, of which 15 percent, ergo 199,485 (or 193,433 according to Bialik 2017) personnel were/are on overseas deployments in 177 different countries (Desjardins 2017), listing each of the nearly 800 bases (Vine 2015) would not benefit the purpose of this paper.

To put matters into an even wider perspective, it is interesting to consider that the budget increase of $54 billion for the fiscal year 2018, which was requested by the Trump Administration, would have equalled the entire UK defence budget (Desjardins 2017). As mentioned previously, however, the US defence budget for 2018 ended up being $639 billion (U.S. Department of Defense 2018). Also worth noting is that, according to Bialik (2017), the number of US military troops stationed overseas on active-duty in 2016 (below 200,000) was lower than it had been in 60 years. Bialik (2017) states that this number and the aforementioned percentage of 15 concerning the overseas 'deployment rate' of US personnel in 2016 was "the smallest number and share of active-duty members overseas since at least 1957, the earliest year with comparable data".

The countries with the largest presence of active-duty US military personnel in 2016 were: Japan with 38,818, Germany with 34,000, South Korea with 24,189, Italy with 12,088 and Afghanistan with 9,023. Of these five, the only one in open conflict is Afghanistan. The US military presence in the UK stands at 8,365, resulting in the sixth rank, according to Bialik (2017).

7. "I will be with you, whatever" – Iraq and the 'special defence relationship'

When writing about UK-US military relations in the 21st century with the attempt to reach a conclusion in terms of a categorisation along the lines of multilateralism and bilateralism and in order to determine whether a 'special military relationship' could be said to exist, it is also important to acknowledge the elephant in the room: the invasion of Iraq, and more generally the UK-US alliance in the 'War on Terror'. Then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair famously wrote to President George W. Bush "eight months before the Iraq invasion to offer his unqualified backing for war well before UN weapons inspectors had completed their work", as was revealed by the Chilcot report (Booth 2016). His words were, "I will be with you, whatever" (Booth 2016). According to Svendsen (2012: 234) defence relations between the UK and the US were, arguably, "at their most intense" in the period of 2000 to 2005. This time span thus encompasses a brief instance before, and the years following 9/11, as well as the UK's "commitment to the US National Missile Defense (NMD) system; the rigorous enforcement of Iraq's "no-fly zone", particularly from the outset of the George W. Bush Administration in early 2001; and meeting the requirements of post-9/11 operations in Afghanistan (from the autumn of 2001) and then Iraq (from early 2002)" (Svendsen 2012: 234). This thesis is only concerned with the 'overall' special relationship between the UK and the US and is not interested in, for instance, an analysis of the events leading to the invasion of Iraq. For that reason this sub-chapter employs a very general focus and concentrates on structural aspects, with the theoretic considerations of multilateralism and bilateralism in mind.

UK-US defence relations could be said to constitute a part – if not a core part – of the 'special relationship', according to Svendsen (2012: 235). While the military relationship cannot be described as an altogether smooth and frictionless one, Svendsen (2012: 235) categorises it along the lines of *functionalism* (the relationship serves specific functional purposes), *evangelicalism* (highlighting a deeper connection in terms of values and emotional and personal ties) as well as *terminalism* (which means that at some instances the 'specialness' of the relationship is questioned and its end is a matter of discussion).

At the beginning of the 2000s, however, the future of UK-US (military) relations was not entirely certain. The UK had the choice whether it should commit to the American's NMD and Ballistic Missile Defense system and/or whether it should turn onto a "European defense (sic) path towards a Common European Defense (sic) policy" (Svendsen 2012: 235). Simultaneously walking both parts and taking 'the best of both worlds' would, arguably, have been the ideal solution. It was, however, also an option which was very difficult to put into practice, since it was a delicate balancing act. Publicly, Bush referred to the UK's "apparent "open mindedness" – or continuing non-commitment – concerning the US's NMD, which was a stance that contrasted with some other countries" (Svendsen 2012: 235). This scheme was highly controversial and was even viewed sceptically by senior UK military officials. The doubts and concerns were then overridden by Prime Minister Tony Blair and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, who supported the US NMD system. So, when it came to the topic of the NMD or the issue of Iraq, Svendsen (2012: 236) concludes that "values, rather than more tangible constructs, mattered more" in UK decision making. And in adhering to these said values, "practical and realistic alternatives, such as more closely involving interests" were overridden (Svendsen 2012: 236).

According to Ralph (2011: 304), there are two lines of argumentation as to the reason and motives behind the UK's support of the US-led Iraq invasion of 2003 in the pre-Chilcot literature: The first one is that the involvement of the UK could be seen as the consequence of the British policy on Iraq. The UK is consequently "said to have reached its own conclusion that containment had been discredited and military invasion was the lesser evil" (Ralph 2011: 304). Regime change was thus seen as the only solution possible, which is why the use of military force was decided before the Americans had reached a decision and the invasion was then supported. The second line of argumentation does not categorise the decision to invade as a logical consequence of Britain's political approach to the Middle East but more as a logical consequence of the UK's relationship with and policy on the US and the interest of preserving the special relationship. As with many things, the truth potentially lies somewhere in the middle (Ralph 2011: 304).

Due to early political promises by Blair to Bush, on which British defence and security practitioners then had to deliver, the UK's credibility was certainly vulnerable as it was highly exposed (Svendsen 2012: 236). As Clarke (2016: 481) - with consideration of the conclusions of the Chilcot Report - argues, the British Army was put in a difficult situation in the period of pre-invasion, since Blair had settled on the option of a diplomatic coup, which should have solved the problems in Iraq, but which also meant that the military was prevented from making detailed preparations. According to Clarke (2016: 481), the UK Ministry of Defence also had to live in some degree of uncertainty over what exactly was being planned overseas at the Pentagon. UK planning therefore mostly involved 'no visible preparations', before the UK forces were incorporated into the planning process of the US military at the end of October 2002, with many tasks having to be "assembled at the eleventh hour once the move to war with Saddam Hussein had become inevitable and explicit" (Clarke 2016: 481).

In the overall UK-US relations, the military component had taken centre stage by 2004 (if not earlier) on account of both countries being involved in joint military engagements in Afghanistan as well as in Iraq. Their nuclear relations also received more attention and scrutiny as the renewed UK-US nuclear weapons cooperation treaty, the Mutual Defense Agreement (MDA) was ratified in 2004. The legality of this treaty was repeatedly questioned, "in terms of international law and *vis-à-vis* UK and US Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligations" (Svendsen 2012: 236). In 2005, it was then revealed that the UK-US cooperation in this field could have been described as extensive, judging by the high number of visits paid by UK as well as US nuclear scientists to the laboratories of the other party. In the same year, however, Svendsen (2012: 236) senses instances of terminalism, since that year commercial competition at times seemed to overshadow the aspects of cooperation. For instance, the UK worried that US protectionism might be a re-emerging feature in the defence sector and did thus complain to the United States (Svendsen 2012: 237).

Concerning the issue of Iraq, Svendsen (2012: 238) argues that the UK had to make more extensive concessions than the US, in terms of its stance on foreign policy as well as its approach to international as well as Middle Eastern affairs. While the US did make some concessions on Iraq, at the level of the United Nations, for example, those of the UK were, arguably, disproportionate to those of the US. Furthermore, due to the UK's attempt of trying to combine the best of both worlds in foreign politics, Europe-UK relations were in stagnation, as were the UK's "wider global strategy aspirations" (Svendsen 2012: 238).

Following the conclusions drawn from the Chilcot report, there were grave errors and misjudgements made in the period after the invasion of Iraq, namely the dissolution of the security agencies, the emerging security (and also power) vacuum and the consequences of de-Baathification (Sky 2016: 487). Sky (2016: 487) argues that the Chilcot report thoroughly highlights the failures in UK decision-making as well as its post-invasion efforts and that "numerous areas in which the UK could have done things better" can certainly be found. Whether this would have changed the overall outcome is highly debatable. The reason for this is the "limited influence of the UK on both the US and the new Iraqi elites" (Sky 2016: 487), which would make the relationship of the UK and the US in this instance a very asymmetrical one.

A similar picture could be painted when looking at the organisation of the British military presence in Iraq and the apparent lack of British influence with the US authorities in Baghdad: While the British plan was to deploy a single full division, resulting with the creation of a divisional HQ in Iraq with a "single combat brigade plus a Royal Marine Commando Group", the plan was changed and two light infantry brigades were added to the division quite suddenly. According to Clarke (2016: 482) this meant that the forces were not sufficiently prepared, neither for combat – and more ostensibly – nor for controlling the (rather large) territories they had taken on. This three-brigade divisional force was met with approval in the United States, but, as mentioned, the British influence in Iraq remained marginal, also since "the sustainable one-brigade force of 10,000 troops which was then required to bring Southern Iraq through a successful democratic transition was too small, and too distant from events in Baghdad, to make the necessary impact" (Clarke 2016: 482). Furthermore, the foci of the two states' strategies seemed to diverge increasingly: While the US deployed 30,000 more troops, the British concentrated on trying to keep Basra under control and started to focus on withdrawal. They only played marginal roles in, for instance, the Iraqi-led and Us supported 'Charge of the Knights' offensive in 2008, which, as Clarke opines, must have been palpable humiliation to the British (Clarke 2016: 482-483).

Circling back to the theory framework of multi- and bilateralism, Ralph (2011: 319) grants Blair "a Pyrrhic victory", as he managed to persuade the US to initially "take the UN route". The argument that the supposed possession of weapons of mass destruction by the Iraqis posed a serious threat to international security and peace did then, however, "not stand up to the additional scrutiny that multilateralism provides" (Ralph 2011: 319). Similar to Blair, France’s president at that time, Jacques Chirac, also believed that Iraq did have weapons of mass destruction but France, for instance, “refused to go to war without proof that they existed” (Ralph 2011: 319).

8. Military relations in terms of multilateralism and bilateralism

That states go to war and that conflict is something that is common in our world and among states is, according to Morgan (1993: 337), “because the international system creates powerful incentives for aggression”. The cause for this can be found in the anarchic nature of the international system, as Morgan (1993: 337) argues, when discussing multilateralism and security. One explanation is that states can therefore be seen as “aggrandizers in an environment of scarcity, so much that they are quite willing to resort to force” (Morgan 1993: 337). This would mean that anarchy was *facilitative*, suggesting that anarchy is not the cause of conflict between states but facilitates conflicts, since “anarchy leaves states on their own, makes each open to attack and therefore insecure” (Morgan 1993: 337). The other possible explanation Morgan (1993: 338) gives is that anarchy is itself a force inciting mistrust: Here Morgan (1993: 338) cites the security dilemma as one variant, where unilateral steps are taken in order to protect oneself, which then, as a consequence, produces collective insecurity.

Morgan’s (1993) explanation of conflict can be categorised as a neo-realist one in terms of theories of IR. Whether it is sufficient to serve as a general explanation of why conflicts between states, as well as (more frequently nowadays) within states exist, is debatable. The reason his argumentation was included here is, however, that he certainly has a point when he states that the international system is anarchic, since there is no real form of world government. This aspect is important to consider here with a glance back at the previous sub-section: Iraq was invaded by the United States and others (most notably the UK) without approval by the international community, i.e. the UN. In terms of a discussion of the different -lateralisms, this could probably be described as a unilateral approach conducted by a coalition of actors.

When looking at the military relations between the UK and the US in general, it is very noticeable, as elaborated in this chapter, that there is a high degree of asymmetry in terms of the size of forces, budget and also influence. This asymmetry has quite recently also become an issue for NATO, as discussed before. Both countries’ armed forces do operate within multilateral structures, for instance provided by the UN Peacekeeping programme or by

NATO. When analysing peacekeeping contributions, however, it is immediately noticeable that the US is mostly only monetarily engaged in PKOs and supplies fewer personnel than the UK, Germany and France. As remarked previously, when President Trump questions the character inherent to NATO, namely that it is a ‘collective defence system’, a form of multilateralism is questioned by the US.

VIII. The matter of intelligence cooperation

This chapter is related to the chapter before, since intelligence sharing and military matters could be said to be two highly connected spheres, which seem to intertwine even more with today's continued technological advances. Staying in the realm of military affairs, it is certain that intelligence has become one crucial factor when engaged in an armed conflict. Since the end of the Second World War, according to Aldrich (1998: 331), military forces have evolved into entities with ever-increasing mobility, which have the capacity of nearly unlimited firepower. Strategic intelligence has thus, particularly since the Cold War, become a strong influence on "the short-term responses of policy makers at moments of crisis and also the shape of long-term defence programmes" (Aldrich 1998: 332). The organisations and intelligence services have, furthermore, come to enjoy "direct access to policy-makers at the highest level" and have been involved in the major strategic decisions of the time (Aldrich 1998: 332).

According to Aldrich (1998: 332) the reliance of policy-makers in the United Kingdom on their intelligence services had become so strong that forecasts and estimates created by the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) were often taken as law by policy planners, even though they were merely vague estimates. Anecdotes like this aim at highlighting the omnipresence of intelligence as well as intelligence cooperation in the political affairs of today. At the same time, however, the activities of intelligence services as well as the matter of their international cooperation are issues for which it is difficult to find "accurate public comment […] (or the alleged lack of it)" (Lander 2004: 481), which is also why academic studies in this field very often take the form of case studies, while comprehensive quantitative data is unavailable for analysis due to the secretive and delicate nature of the subject matter (Aydinli & Tuzuner 2011: 673-674).[2]

[2] One dataset, which is available is the United States International Intelligence Behavior (USIIB) dataset created by Musa Tuzuner. Even this one is, however, slightly outdated, since it only covers the years 2000-2009. The dataset is comprised of event data; US intelligence cooperation activities, which featured in selected media publications such as the New York Times were encoded. Since it is highly probable that only very select instances of intelligence sharing activities between two states or between agencies of different states were publicised to media outlets, it is probably safe to say that even this dataset cannot be 'complete'. The author of this thesis chose not to use this dataset for analysis due to the two reasons given here and as, furthermore, an extensive analysis of this media data would divert from the main aim and topic of the thesis, which is the application of the theory of bilateralism to the special relationship.

1. **Cooperation in a sensitive field**

While the matter of strategic intelligence might well be one of the branches or businesses of a state in which a nation's strategic culture is most noticeably enshrined, intelligence cooperation across national borders does exist (Clough 2004: 601). It could, however, be considered "something of an oxymoron" (Lander 2004: 481), since the collection of intelligence as well as the agencies involved in this line of work could be described as "at heart manifestations of individual state power and national self-interest". According to Aldrich (1998: 336) most of the intelligence cooperation in the 20th century thus "took place in a narrow functional context, resulting in a number of largely separate, but parallel, Anglo-American-Commonwealth communities of human intelligence collectors, signals intelligence collectors, analysts, domestic security officials and covert action specialists". This separation was then continuously widened by advancing scientific and technical intelligence. Furthermore, bureaucratic competition within the countries, particularly the USA, further contributed towards this parallelism of the different systems, since the intelligence services showed a "rigid compartmentalization (sic) for reasons of security" and revealed an inherent "desire to exclude additional parties, whether European or New Commonwealth, from sensitive core activities" (Aldrich 1998: 336). Cooperation was therefore far from being 'organised' in a more or less coherent 'Western intelligence community' but presented itself more as "a loose federation of diverse groups" (Aldrich 1998: 336).

In addition, national intelligence systems were sometimes also characterised by diversity and decentralisation, particularly so in the United States, according to Aldrich (1998: 336). This meant that there was an intensive rivalry between the different services, which, in combination with ample resources, resulted in producing "significant duplication, as seen in the struggles required to create the National Security Agency in the 1950s and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in the 1960s", as Aldrich (1998: 336) argues. At that time, even the director of the CIA was unable to shift the intelligence culture of the US towards a more coherent system, causing British officials 'headaches' due to the ceaseless changes in US intelligence's organisational patterns and thereby also complicating US-UK relations (Aldrich 1998: 336).

Despite stronger control measures in Britain, this aforementioned diversity was also observable across the pond with a fragmented structure, which -similarly to the US – saw a "myriad of separate, specialist intelligence organizations (sic)" remaining in place (Aldrich 1998: 337). According to Aldrich (1998: 337), British-American intelligence cooperation could thus be said to have proven a certain degree of resilience despite the structural incoherencies. More or less institutionalised cooperation between the two countries already started in 1946 with the treaty labelled as the UKUSA Agreement, also known as the Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) Treaty, which was central for developing the parameters of their future cooperation (Lander 2004: 481).

While certain structural aspects still remain a problem in the 21st century when it comes to intelligence cooperation, transatlantic intelligence as well as security cooperation seem to have rather deepened in the last few decades and particularly so after 9/11. However, 'awkward challenges', as Aldrich (2004: 732) argues, continue to persist, as both NATO and EU have expanded. Nowadays, such cooperation is a field which is very suitable to be discussed in terms of multilateralism and bilateralism, since, on the one hand, our world is increasingly transforming into network and new channels of cooperation are created, while on the other hand, certain high-grade intelligence material is only very reluctantly shared by intelligence agencies "on anything but a selective and bilateral basis" (Aldrich 2004: 732).

Yet, one major aspect which has changed since the end of the Cold War is that the fall of the Soviet Union also brought along the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, consequently eliminating what had been a strategic threat to the Western world. With this 'adversary' gone, thus, more competitiveness and more divisions surfaced between the former Western allies and their intelligence agencies. The once clear friend-foe (NATO - Warsaw Pact) scheme did not seem to be up-to-date anymore, which allowed states to align themselves on a more issue-specific basis, making them adversaries with one state on one particular issue, while serving as an ally to the same state on another one. As is discussed in the course of this chapter, handling this new 'freedom to choose' has proved to be quite a complex endeavour for states like the UK (Lander 2004: 482).

2. Structures of US-UK intelligence cooperation – a very special relationship?

As already mentioned, the UKUSA Agreement has been central to Anglo-American intelligence cooperation, even though its significance was largely disregarded outside these two intelligence communities, according to Lander (2004: 481). The agreement, initially labelled 'Top Secret British-U.S. Communication Intelligence Agreement' was signed on the 5th of March 1946 and aimed at continuing a form of intelligence cooperation between the two countries which had started during WWII (National Archives 2010). The intelligence liaison relationship between the two states generally seems to be “remarkably close and enduring” with a high political importance (Svendsen 2009: 3). Furthermore, the US-UK intelligence sharing relationship is considered to be crucial when looking at our world as a whole, by many scholars, since it might be said to form a sort of centrepiece to the global web of intelligence sharing activities (Svendsen 2009: 3).

According to Svendsen (2009: 3), who has studied US-UK intelligence relations extensively, this relationship could, arguably, be classified as “one of the ‘best’ examples of an effective international intelligence liaison relationship”. In 2009, Svendsen pointed out that for some experts it might have even been a manifestation of the optimal relationship that was then able to be achieved in international relations. Even this US-UK intelligence relationship is, however, not boundless and has its limitations. Moreover, it is not an entirely symmetric form of cooperation, with unequal distribution of resources (Svendsen 2009: 3). While their cooperation might be described as ‘exemplary’ and the terms ‘friends and allies’ may be used, their liaison is, arguably, more rooted in rational gains from this cooperation than purely sentimental feelings of kinship to each other. Svendsen (2011: 342) points out that “the British never give up or give in to critics concerning their gains or the ‘good’ reaped from UK-US relations; while, for the Americans, their benefit from UK-US relations is best described as being better with than without”.

But, here is general agreement that the intelligence relations between the two countries “are well grounded and boast a substantial history that extends over 70 years”, as Svendsen (2011: 343) puts it. Keeping this relationship close was very important in the aftermath of the Second World War, particularly for the UK. This close association with the US has allowed these small to medium Western European islands to ‘punch above weight’ on the international stage in terms of military, diplomatic and economic influence, to preserve some of Britain’s former influence and glory as a world power (*Pax Britannica*), and to secure a continued privileged – and potentially influential – connection with the United States. Another motive is and was to retain the function of a ‘transatlantic bridge’ between Europe and America (Svendsen 2011: 343).

2.1. Sharing of SIGINT and harmonisation

The UKUSA Agreement, which was, as mentioned, enacted in 1946, has aimed at enabling an efficient sharing of signal intelligence between the United Kingdom and the United States

(Tuzuner 2009: 27). In the years and decades following this agreement, several other steps were taken to intensify cooperation. To the public, this intelligence partnership became a household discussion topic in the wake of the revelations of the Snowden leaks from 2013 onwards. At the centre of these leaks were the American National Security Agency (NSA), which, for instance, tapped German chancellor Angela Merkel's phone and the British Government Communications Headquarters (GSHQ), which handed over mobile phone metadata to the U.S. government (Dittmer 2015: 604).

The starting point for UKUSA cooperation on signals intelligence could be set with the 5th of September 1940 because that is when the British government made the suggestion to the Americans to continue the collaboration that took place in the First World War. They proposed "an exchange of full information on German, Italian, and Japanese code and cryptographic information" and "a contiuous exchange of ratio intercepts" (Dittmer 2015: 609). The U.S. waited until after Pearl Harbor and their entry into the Second World War before agreeing to the latter. The collaboration was, like almost three decades before, fuelled by the war but due to growing concern over the behaviour of the Soviets already in the final phases of the war, their liaison did not dissolve the way it did after WWI (Dittmer 2015: 609).

For the cooperation to be effective, the U.S. and UK intelligence communities had to become somewhat harmonised: This included a standardisation "of security procedures, terminology, and other everyday materialities of the state: the physical forms of intercepted raw traffic, the translation of intercepts, the brand of equipment (IBM), the style of analytic reports, the method of encryption" etc. (Dittmer 2015: 610). According to Dittmer (2015: 611), UKUSA sought "to produce a smooth space of flows between intelligence centers (sic)". This means that within the space they had created, 'foreign communications' were those which originated from groups, factions or nations that were not part of the agreement. Thus, a new 'domestic' arena spanning the USA and the UK was created. This new domestic space can also be said to be continuously reproduced on account of close across-the-Atlantic cooperation of, for instance, NSA and GCHQ, whose managerial boards hold conferences together once or twice a year. The practice of secondment - meaning that one party can send personnel belonging to the other party to work with their own personnel on specific tasks (if the other party gives its consent) – also survived WWII and was institutionalised in UKUSA (Dittmer 2015: 611).

However, not only the intensity of the connection within this UKUSA space grew but also the intensity of surveillance connecting UKUSA to the outside world. The main difference between connections within UKUSA and those on its outside was that "communications within UKUSA contributed toward a smooth space of flows, whereas topological connections with the outside were hierarchical" (Dittmer 2015: 612). Furthermore, with technological advances, the business of intelligence services changed: Satellites came in the 1960s, meaning that UKUSA could rely on just three satellite intercept bases for a while. As the web of worldwide communications became continuously denser, more satellites and listening stations were needed. In the early 21st century "the NSA had ten or eleven operating in satellite download footprints" (Dittmer 2015: 612). Mobile phones require a different type of listening stations, which is why UKUSA embassies in foreign states are said to have transformed into "highly sophisticated eavesdroppers reliant on their immediate proximity to the foreign policy apparatuses of their hosts" (Dittmer 2015: 612).

2.2. New Challenges and Five Eyes

Today, the "cutting edge of surveillance", as Dittmer (2015: 612) calls it, are fibre optic cables. The challenge here is that if someone manages to intercept light signals, the signal is then degraded and it is therefore easier to reconstruct whether any tampering has happened, in comparison to signals from radio, microwave or satellites. UKUSA has, however, invested in programmes with which even fibre optic cables can be tapped while avoiding capture: Without going into too much technical detail here, two of such programmes are STORMBREW and PRISM (Dittmer 2015: 2015), the latter one shot to fame in the wake of the Snowden revelations.

The sharing of intelligence in the sphere of human intelligence (HUMINT) between the UK and the USA seems to have been done a bit more reluctantly and not as openly, in comparison to SIGINT. Accordingly, the relationship between the CAI and MI-6 does not necessarily mirror the close relationship between NSA and GCHQ, who even have interlinked computer systems (Dittmer 2015: 612). Nowadays, the UKUSA intelligence cooperation is not solely a bilateral form of cooperation anymore either, but has evolved into a multilateral one, The Five Eyes (FVEY), which it is often labelled. In addition to the United Kingdom and the United States it also comprises the states of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which were previously only considered as 'collaborating' countries of UKUSA due to their membership in the Commonwealth of Nations (Farrell 2013). Other nations, such as Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Germany and Italy have, over time, also become involved as 'third party nations', meaning that they are only part of the 'outer circle' of the Five Eyes (McGruddy 2013).

What also has to be mentioned here - with an additional backwards glance at the chapter on military relations preceding this one – is that joint military deployments and operations can have a positive effect on intelligence sharing activities: According to Lander (2004: 486), "UK/US military deployments have strengthened the intelligence relationship", since in military operations - and the US and the UK have engaged in a number of those in the 21st century alone (as shown in the previous chapter) - there is a need for intelligence and intelligence sharing on what the situation is like before as well as during and after conflicts. Lander (2004: 486) therefore argues that what makes the special relationship 'special' is that while the attribute of 'special' can commonly be ascribed to the actions and utterances of the respective leaders in the political arena, the narratives created in the political arena drive behaviour in other spheres so that other 'special relationships' grow roots there. And this is what, according to Lander (2004: 486), also happens in military matters and intelligence cooperation.

3. US-UK intelligence cooperation in terms of multilateralism and bilateralism

Svendsen (2011: 343) draws on Danchev (1998) and Baylis (1997) to describe the dominant tropes in UK-US relations: These are *supportive 'evangelism'*, which highlights "the role of emotional, personal ties, sentiment and values" and which could, for instance, be attributed to Sir Winston Churchill and the characteristics of his writing; and *functionalism*, in which specific purposes for the cooperation are at the centre of the narrative, as was the case during WWII, the Cold War and, arguably, also during the time span in the early 21st century labelled as 'War on Terror' (approximately 2001-2009). Another such theoretical categorisation of UK-US relations might be *terminalism*, which means that an end to the previously close relationship is being hinted at at some point. The period of the early to mid-1990s is given as an example for this feature by Svendsen. Overall, the relations between the two states can be described to show "a 'complex co-existence plurality' of good, bad and ugly elements" (Svendsen 2011: 343) and could be said to constitute a 'qualified friendship' (Svendsen 2011: 343-344). These interpretations of the special relationship in general, which have been laid out here briefly, can also serve as classifications of its special sub-chapter of intelligence cooperation, which might be said to form the centrepiece or at least a very important part of the whole relationship, which is why this theoretical mini-excursion was attempted here at this point.

The 2000-2005 period – which would, following the theoretical categorisations of the previous paragraph, fall into a phase of functionalism - can be considered as important years for the special relationship: The War in Iraq almost guaranteed daily headlines in the news, while in its shadow the UK-US relationship remained strong, particularly in the field of intelligence cooperation, which is by some (e.g. Svendsen 2011: 343) labelled as "the most special dimension of the UK-US relationship, and the dimension that forms one of the key underpinning pillars of overall UK-US relations". Circling back to the general topic of this thesis, namely the special relationship in the 21st century, one could ask whether this intelligence 'special relationship' is indeed a very 'special' aspect of the already – at least in name – special relationship between the UK and the US. Thus, one could argue that the field of intelligence cooperation does constitute a special case due to, firstly, a formalised partnership and cooperation between the two states in that respect, as outlined before; and secondly, due to the primarily bilateral and confidential nature of the field of intelligence cooperation, which distinguishes the subject of this chapter from the other ones, since public information and data are rather limited.

In terms of bilateralism and multilateralism the UKUSA Agreement is not easy to assess. It started out as a bilateral form of intelligence sharing and subsequently became a multilateral one. Whether Canada, Australia and New Zealand and the other states have remained more in the roles of auxiliaries than equal partners to the two name-giving nations, is difficult to determine. Perhaps excluding the sphere of signals intelligence, in which this chapter has highlighted the seemingly close relationship between the UK and the U.S. in this matter, intelligence cooperation in general remains, according to the literature in this field (e.g. Aldrich 2004; Lander 2004; Lefebvre 2003; Tuzuner 2009), a mostly bilateral affair. This is because it can be considered as a delicate matter, which states often prefer to do bilaterally due a possibly high sensitivity of the information given. Lefebvre (2003: 529) argues that agreements of intelligence liaison tend to be most productive when they are bilateral ones; when dealing with global terrorism, however, multilateral coalitions might have an advantage over bilateral arrangements.

The paradox that intelligence is only valuable when shared very discretely and only with the parties that need it still seems to be the mantra of many in the intelligence community. The risks of intel being compromised are said to become higher the more parties become involved

(McGruddy 2013: 21). How volatile the whole matter is, was quite recently noticeable when the United Kingdom – for a very short period of time – ceased to share information with the U.S. following the bombings in Manchester in May 2017, after which U.S. media published a series of leaked details of the investigation, which had been shared with the U.S. Administration (Liptak & Zeleny 2017).

McGruddy (2013: 215), on the other hand, argues that multilateral intelligence cooperation could be a suitable means to tackle global problems, since new light could be shed on existing problems by including diverse perspectives. McGruddy (2013: 215-216) also opines that such a scheme of multilateral intelligence cooperation should have international oversight in order to help combat the accountability deficit of intelligence. Even though the UKUSA intelligence cooperation network may now be called multilateral, it definitely lacks such oversight. The author, however, also concedes that there are many constraints such as "[d]iffences in perceptions of a threat and the foreign policy objectives of the respective states" or, very importantly, when looking at the matter through the theoretical lenses of bilateralism, "[a]symmetrical power relations between states", which make it rather unlikely that such an oversight will be created in the near future and which might be seen as the reason why intelligence sharing – despite some multilateral elements and developments – *en large* remains a bilateral business (McGruddy 2013: 215-216) .

So, while the UKUSA Agreement, nowadays frequently labelled FVEY, is now in name a multilateral agreement, since it comprises more than two members, it has still an inherent bilateral characteristic feature, namely the aspect of discrimination. As was elaborated on in chapter III, Morgan (1993: 333) argues that organisations with a multilateral surface and configuration, but with member states which do not actively and actually promote multilateralism, can exist, resulting in this organisation to be multilateral in name only. That there is a difference in membership status between those five and the 'third parties' in FVEY means that it cannot be said to be an entirely multilateral form of cooperation.

IX. State visits and official visits

This chapter firstly aims at describing the nature, functions and effects of state and official visits and then employs a mostly quantitative focus on the trips on which representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States of America have journeyed to the respective partner. The term 'state visit' usually denotes a trip undertaken by the head of state of one country to another one. For the purpose of this thesis, however, the term will be applied slightly more loosely, in order to be able to additionally include visits which would rather be classified as 'official' ones rather than state visits.

Traditional state visits usually compromise a quite respectable group of 70 to 140 people who seek to represent their interests during these trips. In some countries, these entourages mostly consist of security officers and bodyguards, while other heads of state invite groups of business people, scientists, artists and journalists into their delegations, thereby creating a heterogeneous mixture of different people. Rauchensteiner (2011: 9) labels this an 'autopoiesis' of a society which usually does not represent itself the way it is presented here anymore. Goldstein (2008: 178) even classifies the state visit as "a rare survival of medieval diplomacy in the modern diplomatic system – a survival that has flourished with modern technology", which still and nevertheless remains "as complex as ever" due to the different "signals of the intent of each state visit and its possible repercussions".

State visits are described in international law as a form of representation of one's country. Visiting other states and receiving visits from various foreign heads of state are usually counted as duties a president or other head of state has to fulfil. These visits are bilateral in nature and could be described as one of the very few remnants of diplomatic practices before the Renaissance. Speeches given at such visits and deals negotiated by politicians and their entourage alike can then have an impact on the future development of the relationship between the two countries (Goldstein 2008: 153; Hartmann & Kempf 2012: 94).

1. Important distinctions, practices and protocol

Generally, one could say that a state visit is the highest form of manifestation of mutual appreciation between two states. They do (usually) take place in the capital city and involve various ceremonial aspects, and although they are commonly used, the terms 'official state visit' or 'unofficial state visit' do not exist. There is only one kind of state visit and it does not need a classification, according to Rauchensteiner (2011: 11). Since state visits do, however, technically only exist on the level of the heads of state, different terms are used for visits by high-ranking politicians, who are not the heads of state of their respective countries. While visits of foreign ministers to their colleagues in other parts of the world may sometimes be referred to as ‘state visits’, they are – strictly speaking – not. So, when the Prime Minister of the UK visits the President of the United States, then this is not a state visit, since the PM is not the United Kingdom’s head of state. Such a visit would then rather fall into the category of an ‘official visit’ - which is the second-highest form of visit after the state visit – or it might be classified as an ‘official working visit’, a ‘working visit’ or just a ‘visit’ or a ‘private visit’. All these forms of meetings do incorporate elements and modules of state visits. Usually, for working visits as well as private visits, the visitor takes the initiative and the arrangements are made by the country’s embassy (or high commission). State visits, on the other hand, take place at the invitation of the head of state, which in Britain would be the monarch, in the US the president. For official government visits the responsibility for making the arrangements commonly rests with a country’s foreign ministry (Goldstein 2008: 153; Rauchensteiner 2011: 11-12; UK Parliament 2002).

While these could all be categorised as bilateral meetings between representatives of two states or governments, further down the ‘pecking order’, as Rauchensteiner (2011: 12) describes it, there are also multilateral meetings, in which multiple heads of state or government meet in various settings. Below these congregations at, for instance, the United Nations, the European Union, or summits such as the G7 or G20, there are no more official terms for one high-ranking politician making a visit to another country. Royalty or presidents visiting certain events in other states, which are not part of the programme of state or other forms of visits, are generally and simply labelled as ‘stay’ (Rauchensteiner 2011: 12).

What is known as ‘protocol’ should not serve as a corset into which visitors have to be squeezed but should rather be seen as sort of framework for an orderly and mannered conduct with friends. The formalised procedures of the visits thus acquire the function of social rituals, which are not interpersonal but intergovernmental or interstate. Similar to our everyday lives being determined by coded behaviour patterns, the rules of conduct of a state visit primarily aim at describing the encounters between the stately office-holders. Due to these rules having a very similar shape worldwide, they make it easier for the functionaries at the centre to concentrate on the issues they want to discuss and on the contents of their meetings (Rauchensteiner 2011: 14-15).

However, despite the strives to standardise the protocol applied at such encounters, there is still a myriad of different forms of protocol in place, which does and will continue to lead to somewhat amusing situations. In Britain, protocol could be described as rigorous (Goldstein 2008: 155), with fixed days for the various events of a typical state visit. It usually starts on a Tuesday, when the guest is taken to Buckingham Palace, which is also the location of the state banquet which typically takes place on that day. The ceremonial welcome, which starts the visit, usually takes place on Horse Guards Parade. The day afterwards sees another banquet, this time held by the City of London at the Guildhall, while on Thursday the guest is expected to make visits to certain sites and provide a 'return banquet' to their hosts, usually at the residence of the ambassador or also at a hotel. Typically, the last day of a state visit is Friday, for which a formal farewell-bidding is scheduled for mid-morning (Goldstein 2008: 156; Nitsch 2005: 2-3; Rauchensteiner 2011: 14-15 & 17; The Royal Family 2018).

In comparison to the United Kingdom, the United States' practice of conducting state visits was only developed some time ago, since up to 1947 the expression 'state visit' did not exist for American policy makers. This meant that there were no means allocated for such visits in the budget and that the US "was not part of the state visit circuit" (Goldstein 2008: 160). Previously, when a foreign head of state wished to make such a visit to the US, they were asked to cover the entire costs themselves. The first official state visit was then that of the Korean president Syngman Rhee in 1954 (Goldstein 2008: 156).

In contrast to Britain, the US could be said to have remained somewhat more flexible on protocol. There is, however, still – quite similar to the UK – a usual course of events which is typically reproduced at such visits. Commonly a formal arrival ceremony welcomes the guest at the South Lawn of the White House, followed by an arrival reception, followed by a private meeting between the president and the guest, which is generally set to last fifteen minutes, followed by a more expanded meeting, which takes place in the Cabinet Room. A state visit customarily also includes a luncheon with the Secretary of State and while there is a state banquet, the president, according to Goldstein (2008: 156) nowadays only seldomly accepts the invitation to a 'return banquet'. As to the duration, "[t]he guest can stay up to three nights at the official guest residence, Blair House" (Goldstein 2008: 156).

Due to the president serving as head of state as well as head of government in the United States, compared to other states, state visits could be considered as a slightly more complicated affair for the diplomacy of the US: The president's time is, for the most part, "at a premium" as Goldstein (2008: 160) phrases it, which means that official or working meetings are ordinarily preferred to ceremonial, time-consuming state visits, which are thus used quite scarcely and usually only when “the effect of such a visit is required”. The country has, however, become a sought-after destination for a state visit, due to its rise as a great power in the twentieth century (Goldstein 2008: 160).

2. Costs and limitations

On account of this apparent ‘popularity’ of the US as a destination for foreign leaders, the administrations generally try to limit the number of such visits. Therefore, the aspects of costs and limits are important points, which have to be raised when discussing state and official visits, since in many countries the number of visits they will (or can) receive is limited due to their cost. The UK, for example, normally plans two state visits in a year. In years with other special festivities, such as the Queen’s Golden Jubilee in 2002, it is also possible that no invitations for such visits are issued. Equally, Switzerland also only allows two state visits per year, while the Tenno in Japan receives three per anno. Even though there seems to be no specific rule of limiting state visits in the US, the numbers do not seem to diverge much from these margins the other countries mentioned here have set. While there was no state visit in 2017, for instance, 2016 saw two plus one state dinner, in 2015 there were also two state visits, while 2014 only saw official working visits and working visits. During his eight years in the White House, President Obama, for example, hosted 14 state visits (Allman 2016; Office of the Historian 2018; Rauchensteiner 2011: 13; UK Parliament 2002).

The three big blocks around which a state visit is ‘constructed’ are usually military honours, a bilateral working discussion and a state banquet. In the UK, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is responsible for covering most of the cost, such as accommodation, transport, food and incidentals. The number of the members of the official delegation of the country invited is, furthermore, limited to the ‘principal’, i.e. the main guest, plus a maximum of 10 ministers or senior officials of their government/state during the official programme. The international air fares for the transport of the visiting delegation are not covered by the British but lie in the responsibility of the guests. According to information provided by the British government, the cost of visits may, logically, also vary depending on the “rank of the principal, the length of visit, numbers in the delegation and individual programme requirements” (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2015/2017; Rauchensteiner 2011: 21).

While the UK only provides specific data concerning the cost of state and official government visits from 2014 onwards, the data published shows that state visits in the last few years can be found in the range of multiple ten- to multiple hundred-thousand pounds, while official government visits can be found in the thousands and ten-thousands. The state visit of the Chinese President to the UK in 2015, for instance, cost £324,791.58, while an official visit of the foreign minister of the same country earlier that year only cost £15,998.10, despite both trips being of equal length. It is, however, not unimaginable that some state visits of high-profile guests may actually considerably exceed the costs stated on the website of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The reason for this might be that while the numbers provided by the government do include aspects such as accommodation, transport, entertainment and programme printing, (possibly high) costs of security and police protection, for instance, are not listed there. The US, furthermore, does not provide any public data on the costs of their state and official visits (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2015/2017; Rauchensteiner 2011: 21).

3. Purposes and possible effects of state and official visits

According to Derix (2009: 9), Nitsch (2005: 1) and Goldstein (2008: 154), the number of official visits has steadily increased since the Second World War and also extended geographically so as to encompass almost every corner of this world. And, as Derix (2009: 11) argues, state visits could almost be said to have had nation-building effects or effects of national integration – particularly in the period in history, when the world was separated into two different blocks (East and West) and in which new states were formed - since such visits did not only have an impact on a state's representation to the outside world but also on its citizens within its territory, where it could represent itself as 'their' state, their country. Additionally, such visits provide the opportunity for political leaders to establish and present themselves as political leaders to their audience. Thus, a state visit could also be compared to a theatre stage, on which the relationship between state and society is negotiated (Derix 2009: 10-11).

Generally, one could say that a first state visit by a newly elected head of state to a certain other state may be a sign of showing one's willingness to maintain stable relations and might also be seen as a kind of indicator as to where the head of state will lay their foreign policy focus. State visits and other forms of political representation have, however, received considerable scientific and scholarly attention only in recent history. For a long time, such visits as well as other forms of ‘visible’ politics were more the subject of anecdotes in historiographic texts. Particularly with respect to democracies, scholars felt – until the late 1980s and 1990s - that it was necessary to demarcate democracies against an aestheticisation of the political life in fascist systems (Derix 2009: 12; Goldstein 2008: 154).

Nowadays, it has become apparent that even in state visits conducted by one head of state of a democracy to another, various elements of political staging can be found. Those planning such visits actively strive to create images from which they want their audience to infer the image of the state representing itself ‘on stage’. Even though such visits are usually planned meticulously, the coming-together of different political actors and the dynamic of their actions can never be accurately predicted. This is why in this case one can distinguish here between the process of ‘staging’ and the ‘performance’, which might not go exactly according to the script. In addition, as already mentioned, state visits involve a rather large number of actors, which is why it is nearly impossible to have total control over the actual course of events of a state visit (Derix 2009: 18-20).

The number of actors in a state visit may, according to Derix (2009: 21), be even larger than one might assume, since also the audience, namely the addressees of the acts of political staging, could be considered to have a sort of ‘double role’ similar to the one of the state guest: The guest is addressee in the ‘greeting’ and ‘farewell’ ceremonies and together with the host they are actors staging the play before the audience. With their attendance at certain stages of the visit, the spectators, on the other hand, help represent the host country, which means that they are in a way also part of the staging process (Derix 2009: 21).

While staging and performing are important processes in a state visit, the general purpose could almost always be labelled as developing and/or enhancing bilateral relations. The specific focus may vary and could thus be laid on “political issues, human rights, environmental protection, cultural contacts, or other themes” (Nitsch 2005: 1). Most often, however, the topic of economic relations finds itself at the centre of discussions. Nitsch (2005: 2) analysed the economic effects of state and official visits and found that they do, on average, have a positive effect on exports, which means that the energy that goes into ‘staging’ one’s ‘performance’ on a state or official visit can generate real economic outputs.

Symbolically, it is evident that state visits can be regarded as something important, since they constitute the highest level of diplomatic contact between two states and can serve as an indicator for the development of the respective bilateral relations in the future. They can also be regarded as quite special and as something out of the ordinary, owing to the fact that they do not take place very frequently, as was outlined before. And even though states are represented in other countries by their embassies, the face-to-face discussions between two leaders can be seen as a means to achieve productive outcomes for both states and can outweigh the everyday contact and cooperation between a state and the embassies of others within that state (Nitsch 2005: 2).

As already mentioned, the number state and official visits has increased over time. In European leaders tend to travel more than their colleagues of other areas of the world, owing to the, in general, smaller country size on this continent "and their higher degree of international cooperation and integration" (Nitsch 2005: 5). Nitsch calculated the economic effects of state and official visits by factoring in a number of different variables: He argues that trade values tendentially "fall with distance and increase with the economic size (as measured by the countries' GDP) of the pair. Also, a common language, colonial links, and a common currency encourage trade, while landlockedness reduces trade" (Nitsch 2005: 7). Furthermore, the German economist states that there is a correlation to be found between state and official visits by, for instance, German chancellors, French or US presidents and the resulting increase in exports to a specific country. Here, however, one has to be aware of the problem of simultaneous causality: "State visits may promote exports, but the choice of destinations for state visits may also be affected by a destination's importance as an export market" (Nitsch 2005: 15).

In his calculations and analyses, Nitsch (2005: 22) finds that state and official visits are positively correlated with exports and their effectiveness therefore extends beyond the symbolic and into the realm of economics. The results of his calculations show an increase in exports by approximately eight to ten percent following such a high-profile visit. The effect on the growth of bilateral exports can therefore be categorised as strong, albeit short-lived (Nitsch 2005: 22).

4. Visiting friends? – Categorising US-UK official visits

There are different types of state and official visits. As already mentioned, one can distinguish on the formal level between such visits and locate them on a diplomatic hierarchy. When considering the meta-level, however, one can also classify such visits according to the intention behind them as well as the effects they produce. Of the typology introduced by Goldstein (2008: 161- 177), the following types are of relevance in this chapter: Firstly, the *alliance-building visit* aims at warming up the relations between two states and the attention attracted by the visit can then be used “to carry public opinion in the direction that governments have already begun to move” (Goldstein 2008: 166). Secondly, a state visit can be categorised as a *trade sweetener*, since such visits are more and more a tool with which states “try to facilitate important foreign trade deals” (Goldstein 2008: 169). Receiving an invitation for a state visit by a more powerful state can thus be quite flattering for a leader of a less powerful state, which might then have the effect of facilitating contracts, particularly if an important export market is targeted. Furthermore, less powerful leaders may also find themselves in an advantageous position domestically, due to the added legitimacy they have received on the trip by a “public acceptance of them on equal terms by the leaders of more powerful states”, which could be a reason why they “solicit such invitations in return for agreeing to trade deals” (Goldsten 2008: 169).

Thirdly, a visit could potentially turn into a *counter-productive state visit*. While the aim here might be to strengthen ties, this could also backfire. Goldstein (2008: 164) puts President George W. Bush’s 2003 state visit to the UK into this category. That visit was meant to symbolise the strength and further strengthening of the alliance between the two countries following the invasion of Iraq in March of 2003. While it might have been the intention to use this visit as a form of celebration of their success, it turned into a “magnet not only for opponents of the Bush administration’s policies in Iraq, but also British Prime Minister Blair’s own opponents” (Goldstein 2008: 164). Bush, who as the first US president since Wilson in 1918 got to stay at Buckingham Palace, was the cause of “one of the largest security operations in London since the Second World War, estimated at between US$ 10-20 million, to be borne by the British tax payer, with much of London disrupted tor three days by traffic closures” (Goldstein 2008: 164). On account of the not anticipated negative echo the visit brought with it, the initial objective of showing off the strength of the ‘special relationship’ was not met (Goldstein 2008: 164).

Fourthly, particularly with a glance at bilateralism, the *cover visit* should be mentioned. In contrast to a summit meeting between a number of heads of state or government, at which there are usually a specific agenda and certain expectations concerning the output, such a bilateral visit generally does not entail any expectations of agreements or announcements of diplomatic breakthroughs. This could be seen as an advantage compared with the summit, since the level of pressure could therefore also be said to be significantly lower. According to the author, “surprise announcements or breakthroughs that are the hallmark of summitry” are usually not desired at state visits anyway. Different from summits, political discussions can often be seen as a ‘bonus’ on state visits, since they are embedded in a script encompassing various “showier events” (Goldstein 2008: 178), which can have the effect that due to the diversion of attention and the subtraction of the pressure of expectations, discussions can thrive and beneficial outcomes for both sides may be achieved. (Goldstein 2008: 176 & 178).

In addition to the types mentioned here, Goldstein’s typology also includes the *theocratic visit* and the *catalytic state visit*, in which a foreign leader attempts “to incite factions within the host state”. These are, however, hardly relevant when discussing the relations between the United Kingdom and the United States (Goldstein 2008: 161& 176-177).

5. The statistics of UK-US official visits since 2000 in terms of bilateralism and multilateralism

State and official visits between the UK and the US could most likely be categorised as alliance-building visits, trade-sweeteners, and possibly as cover visits- depending on the political climate – and, if they do not go according to plan, they could also be seen as counter-productive, as outlined before. As was already mentioned in this chapter, US presidents generally tend to embark on fewer state and official visits than their European counterparts. This is not only due to the size of their countries and the distance to their neighbours and partners but also because of the deeply institutionalised forms of (mostly multilateral) cooperation and collaboration of European states. It is therefore not very surprising that since the beginning of the 21st century, UK prime ministers have visited the US more often than vice versa. US presidents have ‘only’ visited the United Kingdom 10 times since 200 (in the same time span visiting France 11 and Germany 20 times), while British prime ministers have set foot on American soil – on official business - 34 times (U.S. Embassy and Consulates in the United Kingdom 2018; Office of the Historian 2018).

For this chapter, data of official trips undertaken by UK prime ministers, US presidents, UK foreign secretaries and US secretaries of state for foreign affairs to either the US or the UK have been gathered and are presented in the tables below. The data concerning the US presidents as well as secretaries of state was very easily accessible and straightforward. The UK data, particularly the travels of the foreign secretaries before 2014, was not easy to be found. The following tables show the frequencies of UK and US trips by US presidents and UK prime ministers. They are divided into bilateral visits (i.e. state visits, official visits, official working visits etc.) and stays in the country in order to attend multilateral gatherings, such as G7 or G20 summits as well as the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York or other conferences and multilateral talks.

Table 3 Visits of the US president to the UK since 2000

Bilateral	8
Multilateral	2
Total	10

(Data source: U.S. Embassy and Consulates in the United Kingdom 2018)

Table 4 Visits of the UK prime minister to the US since 2000

Bilateral	25
Multilateral	9
Total	34

(Data source: Office of the Historian 2018)

The first table shows that US presidents paid 10 (official) visits to the UK. Eight of them were of bilateral nature, while two were undertaken in order to visit summits taking place in the UK. When taking into account that US Presidents have set foot on French and German soils 11 and 25 times, respectively, in the same time span, then one might be inclined to argue that at least in this respect, the 'special relationship' does not manifest itself that obviously. The number of visits by UK prime ministers to the US is, in comparison, much higher. British Prime Ministers have paid 25 bilateral visits to the US, meeting US presidents or other high-ranking officials, and 9 visits to attend multilateral gatherings, such as the United Nations General Assembly in New York (Office of the Historian).

For the US secretaries of state, another category was added, since they repeatedly met representatives of other states than the UK for bilateral talks in London. Meetings with these representatives and leaders of other countries as well as an address to a London university by Madeleine Albright in 2000 were counted into this ‘other’ category. Generally, when the information provided stated that a conference was attended plus talks with the, for instance, British foreign secretary, this item was put into the multilateral category, since the primary reason for the stay was, arguably, a multilateral one.

Similarly, the visit of PM Tony Blair to the UN General Assembly in September 2005, for which the Office of the Historian (2018) explicitly states that bilateral talks with President Bush took place in the wake of the UNGA, was counted as a multilateral visit, since the prime destination of the trip was the UN in New York and the PM certainly also met with a number of representatives of other states as well. When, however, as was the case with the UK foreign secretary in November 2015, a visit to the UN Security Council was followed by a journey to Washington for an official visit, this was put into the bilateral category. As the focus of this chapter lies on state and official visits, all trips made were counted as one item and were not split when a trip had bilateral as well as multilateral components, since the number of visits to the UK or US was of interest here and not the individual activities and discussions held. In this chapter, the author of this thesis has thus decided to apply the rule that bilateralism trumps multilateralism- solely concerning the coding of the data.

Table 5 Visits of the US secretary of state to the UK since 2000

Bilateral	25
Multilateral	21
Other activities	8
Total	54

(Data source: Office of the Historian 2018)

As of March 2018, US secretaries of state have paid 54 visits to the UK so far in this century. Here, the numbers of bilateral visits and visits for the purpose of attending multilateral summits or other events or meetings seem fairly balanced with 25 to 21. The interesting category here is the category of 'other activities', which was already mentioned above: In these cases, the UK was 'used' as a meeting spot between a US secretary of state and political representatives of other countries than the UK. What is also interesting to consider is that while the UK was visited 54 times by a US secretary of state, France received 59 visits – thus making it a fairly balanced race – and Germany 37 (Office of the Historian 2018).

Table 6 Visits of the UK foreign secretary to the US since 2000

Bilateral	43
Multilateral	34
Total	77

(Data sources: Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2010; Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2013/2017)

As with the visits by the leaders of government of both states, also the statistic of US visits undertaken by UK foreign secretaries shows a higher number of visits than the one of their American counterparts. As of December 2017, British foreign secretaries have visited the US 77 times, which means an average of 4.3 visits per year since 2000. When only counting the bilateral visits, even this number points towards an average of ca. 2.4 visits by UK foreign secretaries to the US per year, indicating the importance of the relationship between the two countries. The data reviewed here thus seems to confirm Nitsch's (2005: 5) statement that European leaders tend to travel a bit more than their American colleagues, at least in the case of the United Kingdom, since there is, with the prime ministers/ presidents as well as with the foreign secretaries/ secretaries of state a clear asymmetry in the numbers of visits.

X. Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has aimed at revisiting the – at times considered to be outdated – theory of bilateralism and combined this endeavour with an analysis of the US-UK 'special relationship'. The attempt there was to apply notions and concepts of the theory to this relationship. The five spheres analysed showed different results as to the intensity of the 'special relationship' as well as the applicability of bilateralism.

As outlined in the first part of the thesis, the concept of the 'special relationship' and its validity in reality, regarding matters of international politics as well as in economic and military affairs, has been rather contested. The reason for this is that such a relationship can never be entirely tangible, since it is a construct which is not rooted in an institutionalised form of cooperation per se, although both states are part of broader schemes of international cooperation, such as NATO.

In the literature surveyed for this thesis, the realms of defence relations as well as intelligence cooperation have repeatedly been presented as fields in which the 'special relationship' seems to exist to the greatest extent. The invasion of Iraq is an empirical example in the military sphere, in which one could recognise, firstly, the 'special relationship' at play, and secondly, an instance, if not instances of bilateral (or possibly even unilateral) actions taken without multilateral approval, as was discussed. What is important to note here (and what might almost certainly also apply to the sphere of intelligence cooperation, even though possibly not to the same extent) is the relative asymmetry in terms of financial as well as human resources (i.e. troops) between the two states. Related to this, another discussion to follow in the future is the matter of NATO contributions and the question of whether the alliance remains a 'collective defence system', into which core principles of multilateralism have been enshrined, or whether a form of American bilateralism within NATO will develop over the years.

In the field of intelligence cooperation, in which official information and reliable data is more than scarce, the question in the next few years will be – as far as that can be determined from the 'outside' – whether this traditionally bilateral sphere is indeed involving into a somewhat more multilateral one, as McGruddy (2013: 215-216) argues. But she concedes, however, that for a real form of multilateral intelligence cooperation a structure for international oversight would have to be created, which has not happened so far (McGruddy 2013: 215-216).

Another sphere in which the data presented has indicated that the ‘special relationship’ could be seen as slightly more than just a narrative construct, is the realm of economics: The United Kingdom and the United States enjoy intensive trade relations and, according to Chase (2011: 1), Hamilton and Quinlan (2005 & 2017), and others, the most important factor in US-European economic relations is the one of foreign investments. The transatlantic economy as such can be described as ‘deeply’ integrated, with the UK and the US sharing UK “the world’s largest bilateral foreign direct investment partnerships” (U.S. Department of State 2018). After Brexit has happened, presumably in the spring of 2019, one interesting development to observe will be whether the two states conclude a bilateral post-Brexit US-UK FTA, for which official negotiations can only start once the UK has exited the EU. Furthermore, the effects of President Trump’s increasingly protectionist stance on international trade, on the multilateral trading system, and on the global markets will be relevant in the near future if this economic course the US has taken is continued.

An area in which it is difficult to conclude upon the existence of the ‘special relationship’ by solely reviewing visiting records is the primarily bilateral matter of state and official visits. Since, as established, American leaders tend to travel a bit less than their European counterparts, the statistics are fairly imbalanced, with UK prime ministers as well as UK foreign secretaries having touched ground on American shores more often than their US colleagues. Whether such a ‘special relationship’ manifests itself in visitation politics is, however, not very straightforward, since this thesis has only managed to study the tip of the iceberg, namely the visits on presidential/ prime ministerial and foreign secretarial level. Whether a form of “privileged access for British politicians and diplomats in Washington” exists, which is said to constitute one of the pillars of the ‘special relationship’, as Wallace and Phillips (2009: 263) argue, can probably only be determined by Washington and Westminster insiders, or possibly by doorkeepers at Washington’s official buildings.

At the level of international politics, for which the United Nations - and in more extensive detail the United Nations General Assembly – have been selected as the arena of analysis, the voting records do indeed show a very close alignment of UK and US votes, particularly in those resolutions surveyed which touched on multilateral matters. However, in questions of arms control, disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation etc., the cohesion levels of the US and France as well as those of the US and the UK are on approximately the same level, with France having a minimally higher percentage of cohesion with the US in this respect. As stated in said chapter, the matter of multilateralism in the UN is a very relevant issue in the

21st century. According to Thakur (2012: 2), all actors continue to “depend upon multilateralism and the underwriting of regularity and public goods in the international system”. However, since multilateralism as such seems to have become a very complex construct, actors have - in the economic as well as political spheres - contributed to a ‘rise of bilateralism’, as it is phrased by Heydon & Woolcock (2009). This has been done by taking ‘shortcuts’ and thus undercutting multilateralism in order to reach faster and better outcomes (for them). According to Thakur (2012: 2), international organisations would have to reconstitute “the values of multilateralism embedded in them […] in line with 21st century principles of governance and legitimacy”. According to him, this might “involve moving beyond the original roots of multilateralism, reassessing the values on which multilateralism is based and promoted, and recognizing that contemporary and prospective challenges call for more agility, nimbleness, flexibility, adaptability and anticipatory rather than always reactive solution” (Thakur 2012: 2).

While these five spheres, which were analysed in this thesis with the help of bilateralism, have shown slightly different levels of intensity of the ‘special relationship’, this supposedly ‘sentimental’ construct, which is said to be based on ‘shared values’, has, in some way, shown itself in each of them. A conclusion of this thesis would therefore be that while Sir Winston Churchill might, in reality, not have disclosed everything to FDR, as the anecdote by Reynolds (1986: 1) recounts, the ‘special relationship’ can be said to exist, even in the 21st century. However, believing that this relationship is exclusive and that other ‘special relationships’ – between different states around the world as well as ones comprising one of the two states under analysis – do not exist, would also be a mistake. France, in terms of its voting behaviour in the UN, as well as the entire European Union, on account of its interwoven economic ties with the US, might, for instance, also claim to have a ‘special relationship’ with the United States. In the years to come, the nature and structure of these relationships will be interesting to observe on both the multilateral as well as the bilateral level.

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XII. Index of graphs and tables

XIII. Abstract/ Kurzbeschreibung

Bilateralism and Multilateralism constitute different organising forms of the international system. As a theoretical concept, however, bilateralism is quite understudied in International Relations. This thesis approaches the so-called US-UK ‘special relationship’, with the background of bilateralism in order to answer the research question whether this special bond can be found as a political reality in the 21st century. Five ‘spheres’, in which the relationship is tested, have been selected and a combination of different methods has been applied in the analysis. The spheres are: international politics, economics, defence relations, intelligence cooperation, and state and official visits. In the area of international politics a quantitative analysis of the states’ voting behaviour in the United Nations General Assembly has been conducted, which has shown very high levels of cohesion between the US and the UK in resolutions concerning multilateralism as such as well as in matters regarding arms control. For determining economic and defence relations, different data have been surveyed, which point towards the existence of special relations. The matter of intelligence cooperation lacks concrete quantifiable data; a literature analysis conducted indicates an intense cooperation and institutionalisation of that cooperation, particularly in the field of signals intelligence. The statistics of state and official visits do not give a clear indication for the existence of a ‘special relationship’ in this matter. They are fairly imbalanced, with UK prime ministers as and UK foreign secretaries having travelled to the US more frequently than their US counterparts. The five spheres analysed show different results regarding the intensity of the ‘special relationship’ as well as the applicability of bilateralism. With the results obtained the thesis can, nevertheless, cautiously confirm the existence of a ‘special relationship’ between the US and the UK.

Bilateralismus und Multilateralismus sind unterschiedliche Ordnungsformen des internationalen Systems. Als theoretisches Konzept in der Disziplin der Internationalen Beziehungen wird Bilateralismus eher vernachlässigt. Diese Masterarbeit nähert sich dem „Special Relationship“ zwischen den USA und Großbritannien mit diesem theoretischen Hintergrund, um herauszufinden, ob diese spezielle Beziehung auch noch im 21. Jahrhundert als politische Realität angenommen werden kann. Die Analyse wurde mit einer Kombination unterschiedlicher Methoden und in fünf „Sphären“ durchgeführt: Diese sind jene der internationalen Politik, der wirtschaftlichen Verbindungen, des militärischen Verhältnisses, der Zusammenarbeit im Bereich der „Intelligence“ (Geheimdienste) und der Staats- sowie offiziellen Besuche. Auf der Ebene der internationalen Politik wurde das Abstimmungsverhalten dieser Staaten in der Generalversammlung der Vereinten Nationen mittels einer quantitativen Analyse untersucht. Die Ergebnisse zeigen sehr hohe Übereinstimmungen im Abstimmungsverhalten in den untersuchten Bereichen, in Resolutionen mit explizit multilateralem Thema und solchen, die sich mit Rüstungskontrolle beschäftigen. Auch in den Bereichen der wirtschaftlichen und militärischen Verbindungen weisen die Ergebnisse der Analysen verschiedener Daten in Richtung der Existenz eines „speziellen“ Verhältnisses. Für den Bereich der Geheimdienstkooperation gibt es keine konkreten, quantifizierbaren Daten, weswegen hier eine Literaturanalyse durchgeführt wurde. Speziell im Bereich der „Signalintelligenz“ hat es eine Institutionalisierung der engen Kooperation gegeben. Die Statistiken bezüglich der Staats- und offiziellen Besuche sind klar asymmetrisch: Britische PremierministerInnen und AußenministerInnen überquerten den Atlantik öfter als ihre amerikanischen AmtskollegInnen. Die fünf analysierten Sphären weisen unterschiedliche Resultate in Bezug auf die Intensität des „Special Relationship“ sowie der Anwendbarkeit des Konzepts des Bilateralismus auf. Mit diesen Ergebnissen kann die Masterarbeit jedoch eine vorsichtige Bestätigung der Existenz des „Special Relationship“ im 21. Jahrhundert wagen.