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Symmetric-Asymmetric Dyadic Relations and Foreign Policy Decision Makings: A Poliheuristic Analysis

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Abstract

The goal of this article is to distinguish small states’ foreign policy decisions from those of major states’ by differently applying non-compensatory criteria of poliheuristic theory to each. Is the calculus of small states’ foreign policy decisions different from that of major states? How do different types of alliances (i.e., symmetry versus asymmetry) affect the foreign policy of both small and major states? Most previous research explains a state’s foreign policy with domestic constraints as a non-compensatory rule, ignoring the role of an alliance. For example, poliheuristic theory may fail to explain the variations among U.S. allies’ foreign policy behaviors regarding recent wars against terrorism – the Afghanistan and Iraqi Wars – because of its over-focusing on domestic politics as a representation of the noncompensatory rule. Alternatively, the modified approach using an alliance factor can allow poliheuristic theory to help determine why some U.S. allies participated in the war on terrorism while others did not. This article finds in comparative case studies that democratic states under symmetric alliances with the U.S. are not prone to support and participate in U.S. wars on terrorism (given the domestic opposition), while democratic states under asymmetric alliances with the U.S. are likely to select an alternative option, even in the condition of strong domestic opposition, due to an alliance influence. Therefore, I conclude that the revised poliheuristic theory can shed light on variations in foreign policy decisions between small and major states.
The goal of this study is to distinguish between small states and major states’ foreign policy decisions by applying different non-compensatory rules of poliheuristic theory to each. In other words, is the calculus of small states’ foreign policy decisions different from that of major states? How do different types of alliances – symmetric versus asymmetric alliances – have an influence on their foreign policy decisions? All of these questions represent puzzles yet to be solved. Recent foreign policy scholarship has generated an idea known as the poliheuristic perspective which connects cognitive heuristics with rational choice, presented first by Mintz (1993). However, despite a considerable amount of theoretical and empirical development, most previous research explains states’ foreign policies with domestic constraints as representations of the non-compensatory rule, overlooking the non-compensatory role of international factors like alliances. Accordingly, poliheuristic theory fails to explain the variations between the reasons why some US allies became actively involved in the ‘war on terrorism’ while others did not. This article seeks to resolve this discrepancy by focusing on both the domestic constraints and the influences of alliance types that result in different foreign policy behaviors.

Poliheuristic scholars offer a two-stage process when political leaders make foreign policy decisions. In the first step, decision makers use cognitive shortcuts based upon the noncompensatory rule (Mintz 1993, 1997, 2004, 2005). In other words, political leaders eliminate the most negative alternative in the most critical dimensions in their government on the earlier stage. Second, as derived from rational choice theories, political leaders select only one alternative among remaining options after the calculation of cost-benefits (Mintz 2004: 3-4). Up to now, many previous scholars have studied, in terms of poliheuristic theory, the U.S. decision to use force or not (Mintz 1993; DeRouen 2003; Brule and Mintz 2005), foreign leaders’ decision processes in the Middle East (Mintz 2000; Mintz and Mishal 2003; Clare 2003), and autocratic regimes’ foreign policy decisions (Sathasivam 2003; Kinne 2005;
James and Zhang 2005). Most of these studies focus on domestic constraints as functions of the non-compensatory principle, even though foreign policy is not always decided under domestic constraints; that is, there is an anomaly (Stern 2004).

Thus, this article seeks to demarcate the foreign policy decision calculus of small states with those of great powers, by exploring in detail how small states commit to foreign policies as compared to major powers, specifically by taking into consideration their domestic politics and alliance influences as non-compensatory principles. My explanation of the U.S.’s allies diverse international commitments during the two wars against terrorism – the Afghanistan and Iraqi Wars - finds that democratic leaders in asymmetric alliances with the U.S. are significantly prone to participate in those wars in spite of domestic opposition, while those in symmetric alliance with the U.S. are likely to refuse to join the U.S. led war on terrorism, given the existence of negative domestic constraints. These results are noteworthy in their contribution to the development of poliheuristic theory.

This article has four parts. The first presents the current reviews of poliheuristic theory and small states’ foreign policies. The second discusses the theoretical arguments comprising the revised poliheuristic theory relating to noncompensatory rules, such as domestic politics and the alliance factor. The third presents comparative case studies on U.S. led wars against terrorism – the Afghanistan and Iraqi Wars. The fourth offers conclusions and further discussion.

Poliheuristic Explanation to Foreign Policy Decision Making

Poliheuristic theory accomplishes both the theoretical development and the policy implications of foreign policy literature by incorporating the cognitive with the rational choice perspectives, and by being practically applied to the real foreign policy process,
although few theories have covered them both. In foreign policy decision making, the poliheuristic theory presents a two-step decision process (Mintz 1993, 2004). The first phase is a simple cognitive shortcut based on the noncompensatory principle. In other words, negative alternatives are automatically eliminated in the most crucial dimensions considered by decision leaders. Second, as derived from rational choice theories, political leaders select only one alternative among the remaining options after the calculation of cost-benefits.

The poliheuristic theory consists of alternatives and dimensions of the foreign policy decision making process. On the one hand, the former indicates various options available for selection by decision makers, for instance: ‘do nothing’, ‘use force’, ‘make sanctions’, ‘negotiation’, etc. The latter, on the other hand, signifies the issue criteria that political leaders should take into consideration: ‘political’, ‘military,’ ‘international’ and ‘economic’ dimensions, etc.

This theory is also characterized by “noncomensatory, nonholistic, nonadditive, and satisfying,” compared to other foreign policy theories. A noncompensatory (or nonadditive) rule means that “a low score on one dimension can(not) be compensated for a high score on another dimension” while nonholistic assumptions address that “decision making derives from evaluation and comparison of all alternatives across different dimensions but rather from the use of heuristic decision rules that do not require detailed and complicated comparisons of relevant alternatives, and adopt or rejects undesirable alternatives on the basis of one or a few criteria” (Mintz and Geva 1997, 85; Stern 2004, 108-9). Satisfying characteristics implies that foreign policy decision makers tend to pick up ‘suboptimal’ options rather than optimal ones” (Mintz 1993, 2004, 2005; DeRouen 2003).

The previous studies represent not only the foreign policy decision making processes of democratic or autocratic regimes, but also those of powerful or less powerful states: for example, the former would include the United States (Mintz 1993; Redd 2000; DeRouen
2003; Taylor-Robinson and Redd 2003; Brule 2005; Brule and Mintz 2005), China (James and Zhang 2005), and countries in the Middle East; while the latter would encompass China, the Soviet Union (Kinne 2005), Hussein Iraq (Mintz 2000; Kinne 2005), Pakistan (Sathasivam 2003; Kinne 2005), and Syria (Astorino-Courtois and Trusty 2000). The distinctive feature of the previous literature is that most pay attention to domestic politics as noncompensatory criteria. That is, a state’s political leaders tend to take into account the domestic political conditions for the first time when making policies governing foreign behaviors regarding events such as the use of force, war initiation, or the dispatching of troops overseas. Specifically, political leaders are considerably sensitive to the essential elements of political survival: public opinion, domestic opposition, the position of special interest groups, and items affecting re-election (Mintz 1993, 600; 2004, 9). For example, Mintz (1993) explains the U.S.’s decision to attack Iraq by analyzing the political dimensions – Presidential popularity, the state of the economy, partisan politics, and the concerns of the military industrial complex – that are noncompensatory factors in the foreign policy decision making process. In his analysis of President Eisenhower’s decision not to send ground troops, DeRouen (2003) illustrates that the President could not help refusing the French request for military assistance because of the negative public opinion that would result otherwise, and Congress’s vocal opposition. Brule (2005) addresses that Carter’s decision to initiate the hostage rescue mission resulted from his re-election burden, because the option of ‘do nothing’ with regards to the American hostage crisis outraged the public and aggravated the President’s popularity. In large-N studies on the U.S.’s use of force, Brule and Mintz (2005) argue that the President tends to decide to use force if he is endowed with a “blank check” and “marching orders” from the public.

On the other side, poliheuristic theorists are interested not only in the foreign policies of non-democratic or autocratic regimes, but also in non-major powers. Some scholars argue
that autocratic political leaders are liable to be influenced by ‘small winning coalitions’ (Bueno de Mesquita 1999, 2003). According to Kinne (2005), autocratic leaders are likely to be concerned with domestic constraints like single party, leaders’ personality, or military groups. He uses as an example Pakistan’s decision not to send troops into Iraq, Gorbachev’s shifting foreign policy, and Hussein’s decisions involving Iraq. Sathaivan (2003) presents the process behind Pakistan’s decision to test nuclear bombs as a response to India’s testing. She contends that Pakistani decision makers had no other choice but to initiate nuclear tests because the opposition groups disagreed with a ‘do nothing’ alternative, and 80 percent of Pakistanis supported nuclear testing.

However, despite the tremendous development in poliheuristic research as a foreign policy analysis, it remains to figure out how minor powers differ from major powers in foreign behaviors. In other words, it fails to make generalizations by over-focusing on domestic politics as a factor of the noncompensatory rule. That is, few studies pay attention to the theoretical and empirical demarcation between small states’ and great powers’ foreign commitments, given their respective relationships with the dominant state. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap.

Non-compensatory Rule and the Decision to Support Allies

The most important assumption in poliheuristic theory is the noncompensatory principle. Most poliheuristic theorists commonly assume that domestic constraints are sine qua non for political leaders when making foreign policy decisions. However, this study presents dual criteria for the noncomensatory rule: domestic politics and alliance influences. This modification enables poliheuristic theory to policy is constrained by both domestic politics and alliance effects might increase the explanatory powers of the poliheuristic perspective. That is, different types of alliance formation – symmetric versus asymmetric –
lead to different foreign behaviors among allies, even though states’ leaders are influenced by the current domestic political environment.

**Domestic Constraints**

Domestic politics or constraints lead decision makers not only to pursue international commitments, but also to back down from certain foreign behaviors and to violate promises during certain types of international events. Some IR scholars argue that democratic leaders tend to abide by international agreements or to pursue the use of force because of domestic audience costs (Fearon 1994; Gaubatz 1996; Leeds 1999). Others contend that domestic audience constraints also make political leaders violate alliances or back down from certain events (Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004). However, domestic constraints do not have just one directional influence on foreign policy decision making in poliheuristic theory. In other words, domestic constraints play a critical role not only in encouraging political leaders to pursue specific foreign behaviors, but also in imposing restrictions on their international commitments.

It is said that democratic political leaders are more likely to be constrained by domestic audience cost than autocratic leaders (Fearon 1994; Smith 1998; Partell and Palmer 1999). Domestic audience constraints consist of re-election concerns or democratic cycling—the occurrence of regular elections (Smith 1997; Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004), the presence of domestic political opposition, public opinion (Trumbore 1998; Brule and Mintz 2005), and domestic political institutions (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999). On the one hand, domestic constraints encourage decision makers to keep up their international agreements and to accomplish certain foreign goals. For example, Leeds (1999) reports that democratic leaders are more likely to execute international commitments because of their institutional constraints, i.e., their high accountability and low policy making flexibility. Gartzke and
Gleditsch (2004), on the other hand, maintain in their empirical analysis that democratic
countries are less reliable allies because they are constrained by policy instability from
“democratic cycling” and “the influence of interest group” (781-82).

**Alliance Influences**

Alliances can be classified into two groups by the power status differential between
the signatories - that is, ‘symmetric versus asymmetric alliances’ (Morrow 1991; Gibler and
Rider 2004). Symmetric alliances are considered to be alliances between great powers that
give all parties involved either security or autonomy, while asymmetric alliances refer to the
alliances between weak and major states that lead to trade-offs between security and
autonomy. That is, great powers mainly provide weak states with security but gain a
considerable portion of their autonomy.

Compared to the major powers, small states’ leaders retain less autonomy in relation
to the dominant state or great powers. Specifically, if small states make asymmetric alliances
with great powers, their foreign behaviors have limited but consistent patterns. Alliance
influences on the noncompensatory rule are an important development in poliheuristic theory
as it relates to this paper. It is considerably difficult for weak states to defend their security
with their own capabilities in the current volatile international system. Thus, these small
states should receive permanent neutral status like the Swiss, or align themselves with the
great powers. as previously mentioned, the most common kind of alliance between weak
states and major powers is called an ‘asymmetric alliance.’ Unlike symmetric alliances
among the great powers, asymmetric alliances assume a trade-off between the great powers’
provision of security and the weaker states’ sharing of their autonomy (Morrow 1991).
Therefore, small states tend to consent to great powers’ requests for specific policies.
Even if weak states’ leaders are liable to conform to major powers’ foreign policies, they do not always line up with great powers on all issues, due in part to the relative increase in autonomy after the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union. Even weak states tend to give support to great powers only with regards to extremely salient issues of the greater powers. For instance, while the containment of the Soviet Union was most salient during the Cold War, the ‘war on terrorism’ only became crucial after the 9/11 crisis. Thus, the salient issues of great powers are naturally reflected onto the smaller states’ foreign policies. If this is the case, why do small states make alliances with great powers despite the inherent constraints? I will present some proper alliance theories – security provision, extended deterrence, security externality, and alliance reliability - as possible answers to this question.

According to traditional alliance theories, alliances with other nations provide members with security. Alliance formation is indeed the critical factor augmenting national capabilities (Morgenthau 1985). Major powers should provide weak states with security as a reward for the loss of partial autonomy from the latter (Morrow 1991). Alliances have a positive effect on the economic and military relationships of both partners. According to Gowa and Mansfield (1993), and Gowa (1994), the free trade between political-military allies becomes brisk because the close trade gives rise to security externality. While defense pacts are associated with higher trade among alliance members, trade members of non-defense pacts are empirically indistinguishable from trade between non-allies (Long 2003; Long and Leeds 2005). These benefits of alliance formation are very useful for small states.

Asymmetric alliances, on the other hand, play a limiting role to small states’ security. Small states retain little national power to defend themselves against enemies’ potential threats. An alliance relationship with great powers furnishes weak states with extended deterrence. According to Huth’s review article (1999: 35), “when defenders have the military capabilities to repulse a large-scale attack from the very outset, the prospects of
immediate deterrence success increase significantly, as potential attackers recognize that it will be difficult and costly to achieve specific military missions and territorial goals.” Leeds (2004) argues that alliance formation with mutual defense is more likely to achieve successful deterrence. That is, mutual defense pacts are prone to reduce the probability of potential attack from enemies. Therefore, alliance formation with great powers gives small states deterrence effects.

Although asymmetric alliances are helpful in assuring weak states’ security and in deterring potential threats from their enemies, some suggest that it is uncertain whether or not the alliance commitment is substantially fulfilled. Sabrosky (1981), for example, suggests that an empirical test of alliance commitment from 1816 to 1965 shows that all alliance members do not necessarily honor their contracts. If alliance commitments might not be reliable, weak states’ leaders cannot expect their partners’ assistance in certain events and, additionally, tend to refuse to accede to great powers’ international policies. Some studies, however, contend that the alliance commitment is usually reliable under specific conditions. According to these studies, alliances between great powers and weak states are both more durable and more reliable than symmetric alliances (Morrow 1991; Leeds et al. 2000). Leeds et al. (2000) argue that approximately 75% of alliance commitments are fulfilled, considering the detailed contents of alliance treaties, as based upon Alliance Treaty Obligation and Provisions (ATOP) data. The remaining 25% of alliances fail to be reliable because of changes in the power status of members, or in their policy making processes (Leeds 2003). These results also imply that asymmetric alliances between major and minor powers are more likely to be trustworthy, as was stated in Morrow’s previous argument.

<<Table 1>> Types of Noncompensatory Rules
In summary, small states’ leaders tend to be affected by domestic and alliance constraints, while great powers with relatively autonomous positions are liable to be critically influenced primarily by domestic politics. Table 1 shows in detail the matrix of noncompensatory rules in terms of alliance relationships and regime types. Democracies with symmetric alliances tend to be influenced mainly by domestic constraints as a non-compensatory factor due to their possession of sufficient power and relative autonomy. Democracies with asymmetric alliances are prone to be affected by both domestic politics and alliance constraints as non-compensatory principles because of their weak power and relatively less autonomy.

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, U.S. President Bush stressed the ‘war on terror’ as the U.S.’s national security strategy (“The National Security Strategy of the United States of America”, September 17, 2002; Crawford 2004). The recent wars against terrorism in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) provide excellent cases to test this argument. Even if the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan in 2001 gained strong support amongst the populace of most of U.S. allies, many European countries (including France and Germany) recognized as ‘permanent allies’ refused to participate in the Iraqi War, and even criticized U.S. foreign behavior (Gordon and Shapiro 2004). President George W. Bush asked approximately fifty three nations to participate in the military operation against Iraq, but fewer countries sent troops than expected (Washington Post January 26, 2003). This made Defense Secretary Rumsfeld mention “Old Europe” and “New Europe” (Bugajski and Teleki 2005, 95). Many new European countries – especially central eastern European countries – and Asian allies including South Korea and Japan joined both wars. In order to explain this situation, I have
selected six countries in two wars as examples. This sample not only maximizes the amount of variation in my key argument, but is also small enough to allow for the use of a “process tracing” methodology uniquely suited to verify the causal mechanisms that I posit are actually at work.

**Democratic States in Symmetric Alliances with the US: France and Germany**

Both the Berlin and Paris cases show the foreign policy decisions of democratic states in symmetric alliances with the U.S., the dominant power. They both tended to be influenced by domestic politics as a noncompensatory rule when making their decisions. They displayed important similarities in the ways they coped with the U.S.’s request to join a war on terror. That is, they showed nearly identical positions both to the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq, by supporting and joining U.S. led military operations in the former but refusing to send troops in the latter.

France, immediately after 9/11, has played a major role in joining in the ‘war on terrorism’ by offering verbal support, as well as by sending her soldiers to Afghanistan, with strong support from the French public – 64% of the French approved of the war in Afghanistan.\(^1\) However, the French response to the U.S. led military campaign in Iraq was quite different from her response to the former foreign war. Jacques Chirac not only refused to join in the war commitment in Iraq, but also played a leading role in initiating several permanent U.N. members’ veto of the Iraq war resolution in the U.N.’s Security Council. He stood supported by a strong anti-war public opinion. 61% of the French raised their hands in agreement that France “should not support” the U.S. war.\(^2\) Before the U.S. led military

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\(^1\) This is a multinational survey conducted in association with the International Herald Tribune and Council on Foreign Relations, on April 2-10, 2002, by the Pew Research Center. The survey title is “Americans and Europeans Differ Widely on Foreign Policy Issues: Bush’s Ratings Improve But He’s Still Seen as Unilateralist”. (http://people-press.org/reports/print.php3?ReportID=153)

\(^2\) This poll is conducted by Gallup for the “Gallup International Iraq Poll 2003” (www.gallup-international.com).
campaigns in Iraq, the French President confirmed in a meeting with the British Prime Minister that there were indisputable differences (anti- versus pro-military operations) in Iraqi policy between Paris and London (Malici 2005, 90).

Germany stands decisively opposite to U.S. policy with regards to Iraq, while strongly supporting the U.S. war on terrorism in Afghanistan. Germany’s different foreign behaviors in these different wars offer unsolved puzzles for researchers. In fact, Germany was historically one of the most reliable U.S. allies in the NATO treaty during the Cold War. Specifically, Germany has played a strongly supportive role in U.S. led international order campaigns, even after the demise of the Berlin Wall. For example, Schröder has joined in various U.S. led military campaigns by dispatching German soldiers to the Gulf War in 1991, to Kosovo in 1999, and to Afghanistan in 2001 (Larres 2003, 24, 33; Pond 2003, 200). The German public approved of the war in Afghanistan by more than sixty percent in one survey.\(^3\) Therefore, the option of sending troops for the German political leader did not impair the country in its domestic political dimension. In this case, if Berlin had not decided to send troops to Iraq or “Rally-Round-the Flag” for the war on terrorism, she would have fallen to harsh condemnations by domestic audiences that strongly agree with the fighting of terrorism.\(^4\)

On the other hand, the Berlin situation for the Iraq War was tremendously different. Unlike the previous series of her supporting U.S. foreign commitments, Germany refused to consent to the war against Iraq and even refused to join in any military coalitions. Germany’s decision not to send her soldiers to Bagdad bowled over Washington, which had expected the support of traditional European allies. The reasons for this refusal are the strong opposition of the German public and Schröder’s concerns about re-election. Germany strongly opposed

\(^3\) Ibid.1

\(^4\) In the survey “Worldviews 2002” on European public opinion and foreign policy, the German public supported the options of attacks by ground troops against terrorist camps and air strikes against terrorist camps at about 60%. (http://www.worldviews.org/detailreports/europeanreport/index.htm), p. 21.
U.S. led military expeditions in Iraq with Germans’ backing Schröder’s popular anti-war policy (Katzenstein 2003, 733). German public attitude supporting the U.S. using force in Iraq is barely more than ten percent⁵ and 61% of Germans uphold Schröder’s Iraq policy not to send their soldiers.⁶ Moreover, Schröder had to choose to refuse the U.S.’s request for German assistance because he was under pressure of re-election (and thus political survival) at that time (Pond 2003, 200; Larres 2003, 27).

**Democratic States in Asymmetric Alliances with the US: South Korea and Poland**

Seoul and Warsaw’s decisions demonstrate the cases of democratic states in asymmetric alliances with the U.S. They are prone to be affected by both domestic and alliance constraints when making foreign policy decisions. Thus, this kind of state is more likely to select sub-optimal choices among all their alternatives because two factors play a noncompensatory role in their decision making.

With regards to South Korea’s position at the time of the Iraqi War, President Roh gave strong support to Bush’s war initiative. However, it was difficult for Mr. Roh to send ground troops to Iraq because there was a significant debate surrounding any such dispatch. President Roh’s choice was either to not send troops in consideration of domestic opposition, to send combat troops given the asymmetric alliance relationship with the U.S., and lastly to send non-combat troops as a third alternative, all of which were learned from the history of troop dispatch overseas. The President in Seoul was troubled with the decision of whether or not to send troops to Iraq, and repeatedly reversed his words. In the end, Seoul decided to dispatch non-combat troops as an alternative option despite negative public opinion. The South Korean government should have taken into account both the domestic public opinion and the alliance relationship with the U.S. At that time of the Iraqi War, most Koreans fell

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 22.
into the anti-war group and criticized the U.S. led war missions. A mass poll conducted in Seoul showed that the population was increasing anti-Americanism to the point where 63% of South Koreans had unfavorable feelings toward the U.S (Kim 2002-03, 109). On the other hand, South Korea owed the U.S. due to military aid offered during the Korean War in 1950, and has been under the sphere of U.S. influence for more than 50 years (with an alliance relationship).

Specifically, Seoul still could not help but depend upon the U.S.’s aid in retaining their national security against North Korea, even though the President used the promise of less dependence upon the U.S. as a major campaign issue to gain political power (South China Morning Post, April 5, 2003). Moreover, the increasingly alienated relationship between the two countries might make Seoul seriously consider the U.S.’s request for military assistance from South Korea. Therefore, President Roh decided to send non-combat troops to Iraq, not the ‘do nothing’ option that could harm U.S.-South Korean relations nor the ‘dispatch combat troops’ option because of strong domestic opposition. The South Korean government might also have thought that sending troops would help ameliorate the recently alienated relationship between the two countries (Donga Ilbo, April 4, 2003).

Like South Korea, Poland sent her soldiers to the war in Afghanistan by accepting the U.S.’s request for support in its war against terrorism. President Alexander Kwasniewski, on November 22, 2001, said that “there comes a moment when Poland has to join the military operation as an ally that knows the importance of international solidarity” (Polish News Bulletin, November 23, 2001). In addition, 69 percent of Poles gave support to the U.S. led military actions against terrorism in Afghanistan, according to a certain survey (PAP New Wire, November 13, 2001). Therefore, Poland’s government decided to align itself with the U.S.’s anti-terrorist war under strong popular support. Contrary to domestic conditions in the first war on terror, however, Warsaw, with other New European countries, resolutely carried
out sending her troops to Bagdad despite public opposition. 62 percent of Poles thought that their government should not support U.S. military operations in Iraq, according to *PAP News Wire* in February 10, 2003. Poland “expressed solidarity with the United States and underscored the shared values” (Gordon and Shapiro 2004, 129). This ‘unlimited solidarity’ with the U.S. was realized by deploying up to 200 troops to the Gulf region in a non-combat role (*Seattle Times* March 19, 2003; *Japan Economic Newswire* March 25, 2003).

In summary, the analysis of South Korea and Poland’s foreign policy actions in Kabul and Bagdad reveals that two less-powerful nations decided to send their troops in a non-combat role because of the asymmetric alliance effect, despite strong domestic opposition. This result shows that poliheuristic theory can explain small states’ international commitments to be different from great powers with a relative level of accuracy.

**Conclusions and Discussions**

This research is an extension and modification of recent studies on the theoretical and empirical investigations of poliheuristic arguments. The original poliheusitic perspective was developed by Mintz (1993). Since then, many scholars have produced major works to develop the poliheuristic theoretical and empirical framework. However, most past research relies on domestic constraints as the non-compensatory rule when explaining a state’s foreign policy decisions, as Stern (2004) mentioned. Thus, poliheuristic theory fails to shed light on foreign policy decisions when addressing anomalies.

In this study, I present alternative explanations for traditional poliheurisite theory. I extend and elaborate upon poliheuristic explanatory power by adding the alliance factor to the previous argument. In other words, I assume that small states’ political leaders tend to be affected by both domestic and asymmetric alliance constraints, while great powers are only concerned with domestic constraints due to symmetric alliance formations. Thus, I have
found that democratic leaders under asymmetric alliances are more likely to choose an alternative, while great powers under symmetric alliances tend to exclude such options where domestic constraints present highly negative consequences.

In this study, I successfully explain how small states perform their foreign policies differently from great powers. I present the evidence for my argument by using comparative case studies. First, Germany and France fall into the democratic-symmetric mode and show international commitments influenced by domestic politics. For example, both nations refused to support and join U.S. led military expeditions in Iraq because of strong opposition voiced in domestic politics. Second, South Korea and Poland under the democratic-asymmetric mode demonstrated that they were affected by both domestic and alliance constraints, and thus could not help but decide to send troops in a non-combat role.

This study possesses some limitations. There are several anomalies that my argument here cannot cover. Anomalies play a restrictive role in molding the generable arguments. Therefore, further study of the statistical analysis using the more significant cases is necessary. Such research will be addressed in future projects.
**Table 1** Types of Noncompensatory Rules

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Symmetry</th>
<th>Asymmetry</th>
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<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Domestic Opposition</td>
<td>Domestic Opposition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do Not Support</td>
<td>Look for ‘Third Option’ such as sending non-combat military support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>France, Germany, Russia</td>
<td>Poland, South Korea, Spain</td>
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