

THE NEOCONSERVATIVE PROJECT:
9/11 AND THE IRAQ WAR IN THE AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, terrorism is defined as “the unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims”¹. The term itself is a very strong one, generating shudders and fear. “War against terrorism/terror” is another term used to define the struggle against the proliferation of terrorism. Although the second term should be more likely reassuring and directed towards finding a solution against the threat, “war against terrorism” is in fact a term that provokes even more anguish and uncertainty. And the reason for that lies in the ambiguity of the words. How can you design and plan a war against something which does not fit any existing pattern? Some more knowledgeable on the matter prefer the formulation of “war against a terrorist network”. However, I would argue again using the same ideas: this network is constantly changing, enriching and is always on the move. Again, this fight seems to be lost from the very beginning. But the strange thing is that great powers engage today in this fight. Don’t they know that the rhetoric they use is not that stable and a fight against such a ghost enemy is bound to lose support sometime, sooner or later?

Ever since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the United States, together with other powerful and willing states have embarked on such a fight, to make the world safer, better and terrorist free. As if the terrorists would be a plague or an infectious disease that could be eradicated eventually. What is more, the US has upgraded its position to that of an imperial power in an effort to give the fight more chances of success. In this view, empires are the only ones who can fight properly in these conditions. Again, allow me to doubt it. Empires died after World War II, and reviving the imperial tradition today seems to be rather a desperate effort when confronted with the lack of something more powerful and grand to be able to use for fighting such irregular enemies. Nevertheless, the US does it, trying to pose as a true and strong empire, capable to fight and forever defeat terrorism.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the imperial urge of the United States in light of two important events that have triggered it: 9/11 and the Iraq on-going intervention, also by filtering it through the neoconservative approach. This approach deals with the existence of a great strategy, namely the National Security Strategy, launched by President Bush in 2002, which unofficially became the highly debated Bush Doctrine, a strategy in which the imperial character and the crusading fight against terrorism go hand in hand and are supposed to lead to the creation of a new, better, safer world for the future. That is why this

¹ *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 1489.

paper will be structured as follows: a first part dealing with theoretical aspects regarding neo-conservatism as a trend, followed by several analyses of the 9/11 and Iraq war phenomena impact over American foreign policy. Apart from this, I will also focus on the way these events fit into the neoconservative rhetoric and how they fit in this supposed grand strategy that the US have and that is constantly rearranged so as to correspond to present involvement.

Neo-conservatism is a political philosophy that emerged in the United States, around the 1920's. It supports using American economic and military power to bring liberalism, democracy and human rights to other countries. Neoconservatism is comfortable with a minimally bureaucratic welfare-state, supporting free markets and interference for social purposes. According to E. J. Dionne,² neoconservatives are driven by the awareness that liberalism had failed and there is now a vacuum that needs to be filled. Although President Bush called himself a realist³ at core, there is a neoconservative influence in American foreign policy, clearly reflected in the Bush doctrine. And this has become especially visible after the 9/11 events, when conservatism became public awareness, coming from Bush's idea that the US should seek to promote liberal democracy around the world – this was a key case for invading Iraq. Neo-conservatism became even more visible in the Bush Doctrine of preemptive war, when the major idea was that the US will attack preemptively, to deter and defend against the threat before it is unleashed, even if there is uncertainty about the time and place of the enemy's attack, thus attempting to play the role of a global policeman.

In 2009, Jonathan Clarke, senior fellow at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs defined neo-conservatism as follows: a tendency to see the world in binary good/evil terms, manifesting low tolerance for diplomacy and more likely readiness to use military force, emphasizing the US unilateral action and showing disdain for multilateral organizations, and finally focusing mostly on the Middle East.⁴

Most neoconservatives are members of the Republican Party. They disagree with nativism, protectionism and non-interventionism in foreign policy, which are deeply rooted in American foreign policy. Instead, they support defense capability and challenging regimes hostile to the values and interests of the US. They believe that national security is best

² E. J. Dionne Jr., 'Conservative' World Order?, Washington Post, Friday, September 17, 2004; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A27547-2004Sep16.html> (17.05.2009).

³ Although authors like Michael Mazarr do not refrain from calling him an idealist, owing to his "axis of evil" speech, and his belief that good will prevail over evil in the great framework set by the missionary role that America has. Michael Mazarr, "George W. Bush, Idealist", *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (May 2003), p. 503-522.

⁴ Jonathan Clarke, *Threats to One Humanity*, New York, December 1, 2006, <http://www.cceia.org/index.html> (17.05.2009).

attained by promoting freedom and democracy abroad, as in the democratic theory which they embrace, through the support of pro-democracy movements, foreign aid and in some situations, as is the case in Iraq, through military intervention. Following the Bush doctrine, they speak of cumulative and synergetic Effects-Based Operations to combat asymmetric warfare in the war on terror and its axis of evil supporters. Critics hold that such demonizing controversy is fueling a culture of fear.

John McGowan,⁵ professor of Humanities at the University of North Carolina states that the neoconservatives are attempting to build an American empire, seen as a successor to the British one, its aim being to perpetuate or create a new form of Pax, this time, a Pax Americana.⁶ Nevertheless, imperialism is largely seen as unacceptable by the American public; that is why neoconservatives do not give voice to their ideas and goals in a frank manner in public discourse. There are few of them, such as Niall Ferguson or Robert Kagan who propose imperialism as the alternative to liberal internationalism. Still, the United States continue to pursue the imperial reality that already dominates the foreign policy, but should be discouraged to do so, because of its anti-imperial tradition and because imperialism is highly disliked and disapproved of in public discourse and by the American public.

Strobe Talbott⁷ considers that what the US assumed as a policy is a historical urge to make the world safe for democracy, but this time, not with 14 points of rule, but with a big stick. Until Bush, all other presidents believed in a foreign policy that combined American leadership with a strong cooperation among nations. Bush believes that American power could be that principle putting order into a disorderly world. This is the America that the *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* of 2002,⁸ later known as the Bush Doctrine⁹ establishes. The Bush doctrine calls for the institution of such an empire, ready to pursue its imperial duties. There are four elements in this doctrine that show an acute neoconservative turn in the way foreign policy is developed:

⁵ John McGowan, *American Liberalism: An Interpretation of our Time*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina University Press, 2007, *apud* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoconservatism> (20.05.2009).

⁶ If Pax Romana was a state of relative peace maintained throughout the Roman Empire, and Pax Britannica was a similar thing, extrapolated to the British Empire, in this case, Pax Americana would be not only about maintaining peace, but also about reshaping every member of the long coveted American empire after the democratic model of the United States. *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, p. 1051.

⁷ Strobe Talbott, "Will 9/11 War on Terror Revitalize American Civic Democracy", *Political Science and Politics*, vol. 35, No. 3 (September 2002), p. 537-540.

⁸ *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, Washington, The White House, <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/USnss2002.pdf> (18.05.2009).

⁹ Noam Chomsky, *Understanding the Bush Doctrine*, Information Clearing House, October 2, 2004, <http://www.chomsky.info/articles/20041002.htm> (18.05.2009).

1. A strong belief in the importance of a state's domestic regime in determining its foreign policy and the related judgment that this is an opportune time to transform international politics;
2. The perception of great threats that can be defeated by new and vigorous policies, notably preventive/preemptive war;
3. A willingness to act unilaterally when necessarily;
4. An overriding sense that peace and stability require the United States to assert its primacy in world politics. This could be continued in practice saying that one intervention for establishment of democratic regimes could be emulated to the remaining troubled territories of the Middle East.

The Bush Doctrine brings along the concepts of preemptive/preventive war. The difference between the two is scarcely visible, although Francis Fukuyama attempts to make a vivid description of them and draw a line of separation.¹⁰ What the doctrine is saying is that the United States should be ready to wage wars and to act against emerging threats even before these are fully formed. The preemptive/preventive war doctrine is based on strength and on the associated desire to ensure American dominance.

This war doctrine stems from psychology – actors are prone to accept great risks when they believe they will suffer losses, unless they act boldly. Thus, they have strong reasons to act now, to prevent a deterioration that could allow others to harm them in the future. Under this doctrine, the US is not a status-quo power. This combination of power, fear and perceived opportunity leads it to seek to reshape world politics – the result: United States are in fact a hegemonic power. Only the US have the power to do something about problems such as Iraq, and by its attitude give the others incentives to join the noble cause. However, Europe fears that in a world dominated by the US, their interests and values will be served only under American tolerance.

Since the balance of power has become a rather far-fetched notion, unipolarity seems to be the only alternative right now. And there can only be one dominant power... the US. The result – the debate about the US Empire.¹¹ The imperial flavor is a flavor that the US should carefully avoid, and that is the challenge the United States of America are now facing: how to stay a non-imperial power, when everything calls for them to act as strongly and forcibly as only empires act.

The United States Empire is totally different from the British one, because the latter was formed of colonies, whereas the former is based on satellite states, but nowadays

¹⁰ Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power and the Neoconservative Legacy*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007.

¹¹ Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, "Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations", *Millennium – Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 31, No.1 (2002), p. 109-127.

extending itself towards invading countries with the purpose of imposing democracy. Even in this way of applying the preemptive/preventive war strategy, the US is still basing on those states that it has turned into its allies/satellites.¹² Cooperation with allies is a matter of choice, so is cooperation with the international organizations. However, after the Iraq intervention, the role of state-building and democratic institution establishment has been taken by a very much stepped over beforehand UN. It is a true fact that the US has a great choice of the working relationships it settles. Again, in theory, it would be exaggerated to say that unilateralism is what defines the American policy, but it certainly goes into that direction. And some might say that the generator of this unilateralism and the pursuit of the sacred mission against terrorism have been the 9/11 events. 9/11 was the trigger that determined the US to take up this crusade against terrorism and embark upon the military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq, although the rhetoric used for the Iraq operation was a faulty one.

The quick American victory in Afghanistan contributed to the expansion of the American goals, and at the same time consolidated President's Bush idea of a sacred mission of the American nation. This idea of sacred mission/crusade more likely, reminds one of the colonial empires. Just as Britain, France, Spain and Portugal wanted to extend their civilization (code name for shameless robbery) to the natives, so are the US trying to bring democracy and stability to the Middle East lands, troubled by tyrannical governments always prone to disregard agreements and coerce their neighbors as they do with their own citizens. This is the civilizing mission that the US has taken in the Middle East, a mission upon which the viability of the American empire rests.

True empires know when their end is coming. They know that they will not last forever, and they make sure that their mission is accomplished before the light upon their age is turned off. I am wondering if this is also the case for the newly born American empire.

Britain has an informal empire¹³ that she could assemble and retire to, after losing the colonial empire. The US does not have that, or the possibility to put up one, because of the lack of historical tradition in this aspect.

¹² The difference in the case of the United States is barely unnoticeable. An ally is a person/organization/state that cooperates with others in any kind of aspects. A satellite country refers to the dependence of that country on another one, more powerful and more developed. In the case of the United States, the border between allies and satellites is barely recognizable and the treatment of countries as such depends on the mood and needs of the US.

¹³ An informal empire refers to the British Isles – in fact it is the core of the former British Empire that lasted even after the loss of the colonies and is now the nucleus of the British state. Moreover, this informal empire can be extended to all the other former colonies that still pay service to the Queen and whose foreign policy stays in line with the British one: Falkland Islands, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa. In fact, the Commonwealth of Nations could be called a suitable informal empire for the British. Eric Hobsbawm,

If Britain knew its limits, especially the military and political ones, the US seems to be stretching too wide and too far, without taking into account that like anything else, it has some limits and will eventually reach its ends.

It was rarely the rebellion of their subjects that brought empires to an end. In the 21st century, there is a general crisis of state power and state legitimacy, the age of empires is dead. Or not? The United States stubbornly try to prove this is not true. Nowadays, just giants can become empires, compared with the times when smaller countries ruled the world, because of their way of doing politics.

The policies designed after 9/11 have destroyed the political and ideological framework on which US hegemony rested during the Cold War, and left the country with just a frightening military power.

After analyzing the Bush doctrine, it is high time we went further with the analysis, to the "war on terror" itself, at which this doctrine is directed. Many authors argue that the term "war on terror" is a wrong one.¹⁴ Except as a metaphor, there can be no such "war against terror/terrorism", but only against particular political actors who use this as a tactic. As mentioned before, "terror/terrorism" is a very abstract word, and it would be highly difficult to set up such an effort against a mere idea. With regard to the terrorism phenomenon, Philip Bobbitt embarks on an interesting theory: according to him, crusaders, pirates, conquistadors or even Renaissance fighters are in a way or other terrorists.¹⁵ One's freedom fighter is the other's terrorist. It is all a matter of purposes and motivations, altogether the fault of governments for focusing too much on it. Naturally, it is important to understand why someone wants to detonate bombs in the subway and kill hundreds or fly a plane in the WTC. But overt interest into such practices just fuel them up.

The dangers of the "war on terror" do not come from suicide bombers – but rather from the excessive publicity that governments mistakenly do for them –instead of focusing so much on the violent aspect of terror attacks in the news, not mentioning them at all would mean media decapitation of the terrorists.

Why did the US start this war on terror? Because of the 9/11 attacks. This is the most common response and for this analysis, this is enough. Unfortunately, they made a wrong association between war on terror and the Saddam Hussein regime. It was later proved that Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden had actually nothing to do one with

Globalisation, Democracy and Terrorism, London, Abacus, 2008 and Niall Ferguson, *Empire*, London, Penguin Books, 2004 support this view.

¹⁴ Both Bobbitt and Hobsbawm argue that the term of "war on terror" is a wrong one because of its ambiguity and also support the view that constant publicity and public exposure of the issue to the public engenders a rise in terrorist attacks, which are practically fed with this publicity.

¹⁵ Philip Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent. The Wars of the 21st Century*, London, Penguin Books, 2009, p. 27-44.

the other. Invading Iraq could fit in the great frame of “war on terror” because of the threat of weapons of mass destruction. This again is wrong. First, it was proved that Saddam had no WMD and secondly, invading Iraq under the mantra of fighting terrorism and bringing democracy to the Muslim lands simply is unbelievable. After years of incessant UN resolutions, demanding for something to be done (as in military interference, or any kind of interference) in the case of Saddam since he prevented the UN inspections to the places supposed to shelter WMD, the sudden Iraqi Freedom operation on the solemn idea of bringing democracy and fighting terrorism seems misplaced. Obviously, acquiring WMD and threatening to use them demands some sort of intervention. But now that the US has dealt with Iraq, who is next? Iran maybe?

It is up to states to protect themselves. They have a “duty to prevent”¹⁶ and a “responsibility to protect”, but at the same time, states are the ones acquiring weapons of mass destruction, for the very same reasons – to protect and prevent. What the US is trying to do throughout this crusade is to create a regional climate of peace and security, so that these states no longer feel the need to protect themselves with WMD. But this is where we get back to the beginning of this paper. This is the privilege of empires. Empires are the ones legitimate enough to provide such a protection, and history has shown that not even they have been good enough at doing it. Therefore, if the US voluntarily assumes this duty to protect and prevent, the question is if it has sufficient resources and more important, under what legitimacy are the US to conduct such a battle?

Some authors argue that the “duty to prevent” goes beyond the “responsibility to protect”. This doctrine admits there are times when this preventive/preemptive action – not necessarily a military action – must take place before events get out of control: before famines and epidemics spread, before nuclear weapons are deployed and before terrorist training camps indoctrinate, train and disperse fighters. The two of them - “duty to prevent” and “responsibility to protect” are markers of sovereignty, however, the way they are applied differs. The first one, “duty to prevent” can be applied only where there is a possibility to produce effective results.

To destroy a state-nation, one attacks its leaders, whereas to destroy a nation-state, one attacks the well-being of the national people. We are thus going from nation-state terrorism to market state terrorism. And the US is a leading actor in this scheme; due to this evolution, the imperial dream and its real outcome are even more debatable. Nation states have been, from their very birth, instruments to serve the welfare of the people/nation. The

¹⁶ The concept was developed by Lee Feinstein and Anne Marie Slaughter who proposed changing international law to recognize this “duty to prevent”, that is to create a legal obligation for outside intervention when a state commits crimes against humanity, develops weapons of mass destruction or shelters terrorists. Anne Marie Slaughter, *A duty to Prevent* (see <http://www.lbouza.net/feins.htm> (20.05.2009)).

market state exists to maximize the opportunities of its citizens. Market state terrorism will be similar – just as global and decentralized as the market state, with the intended purpose of maximizing opportunities to act. Relationships between terrorist groups and states will continue to exist, but market state terrorists will be clandestine allies rather than agents. Apart from this, market state terrorism is using various mechanisms, which were once the privilege of the nation state. This will lead to severe threats and the need to upgrade for the security services which will have to deal with even more asymmetric dangers.

Market state terrorism is the new form of terrorism that emerged after 9/11. Terrorist attacks existed before 9/11. The difference is that nowadays, terrorists want more attention focused on them. They want many people watching, not dead. That is why filmed executions are released on the Arab channels, that is why they chose to detonate bombs in the subway and to crash planes in the WTC – because it is visible, and the impact on regular normal life will be long lasting and, naturally, the media and the authorities will have to make a fuss about it. And the authorities fell into the trap, feeding the terrorists with ample reviews of the attacks, techniques and assumptions. The result: market terrorism is lethal. Market state terrorism is better financed, despite the crackdowns that states employ in order to prevent the financing of these movements. A global power like the US – an emerging market state, with extending territorial borders and interests and a strong view of its democratic mission, offers many opportunities for terrorist attacks, especially from suicide bombers. Actually, this new form of terrorism is directed principally to the leading market states – the US and EU. And this is mainly connected to globalization. A global security system led by an American hegemony and an economic system ruled by the EU and the US, bring around fear that the rest of the world will forcibly go under their power and would lose their cultures and traditions. Islamists choose to fight this global war against the US and EU in order to restore the true and forever lasting Islamic nation¹⁷ which has been prejudiced and stereotyped by the West.

The US based her hegemony on economic wealth and its central role in the world economy. But economic wealth can be tricky. Both its existence and its absence can trigger terrorist performances. Of course, this is debatable. Economic contractions are correlated with increases in terrorist violence, they could determine adhesion to terrorists' cause, or could in the same way generate a strengthening of the state system. Consequently, governments have to take severe measures – government crackdowns - to counter terrorist attacks.¹⁸ These crackdowns can consist of the following: closing borders, imposing

¹⁷ Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent*, p. 57.

¹⁸ Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, "The Quality of Terror", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (July 2005), p. 515-530 – draws a refined mathematical analysis of the probabilities of terrorist movements and support for them being triggered by economic issues. His investigation is quite technical and reveals the fact

curfews, bombing areas thought to house terrorists, infiltrating terrorist organizations and disrupting terrorist financing networks. These government measures can either lead to mobilization in favor of the terrorists or discourage participation in terrorism. It all depends on the degree of publicity that terrorist acts get.

There is a lack in the international warrant system. But this lack has been shaped voluntarily by the US, when they chose to interfere in Iraq without a UN resolution. Since the Bush Doctrine/National Security Strategy affirms the intention to involve everywhere where necessary and bring peace there in order to ensure peace at home, who needs the UN? The situation got even more difficult after the American military intervention, when the UN had to be involved to help perform state-building. This situation is possible due to a wanted-to-be imperial America. But the situation is getting out of hand. Iraq is a military success. But the democracy intended to be built there has no sense. The country was easy to conquer, but is now refusing to surrender. Post-conflict Iraq is a failure because small groups are fighting any attempt to establish democracy there. If at first the US did not fight terrorism there, as the Bush administration said they would, they are now fighting extremism. Somehow, from an absent terrorism the road led to extremism. And indeed, extremism it is, out of the fear that after finishing with Iraq and establishing there some sort of democracy, the US would head towards the rest of the Middle East, in this attempt to bring along democracy out of the goodness of an empire's heart. Because that is what empires are supposed to do.

Taking everything into consideration, my goal in this paper was to apply the neoconservative framework to the imperial desires of the US. The tactics used to legitimize the imperial interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq were the preemptive/preventive actions according to the Grand American Strategy. After the end of the Cold War, after more than a decade of liberal democracy, the US have their own strategy that they seem to be extending to all the troubled places in the world, with the purpose of establishing an everlasting prohibition on both states and non-state actors against engaging and supporting terrorist activities.

In the beginning, the strategy seems quite confusing, because it melted down the fight against terrorism, the promotion of democracy and the hunting down of Saddam Hussein in the same pot. Later on, when seeing that fighting terrorism in Iraq is not quite accurate a rhetoric, they diverted it to the fight against extremism. Another ambiguous word, but rather true to the Iraqi setting.

As seen previously, neo-conservatism demands strong actions, from strong actors. And what could be stronger than an empire? That is the reason why the US started to see

that governments and individuals must pay great attention to the way they are tackling economic affairs – any mishap might lead to a turning upside down of the situation.

itself as an empire ready to spread its protective wings over those who ask to be protected and even those who do not, as is the case with Iraq. It is my firm belief that the Bush administration saw Afghanistan and Iraq as a test for a future empire condition. But even if success had been achieved here, what could follow next? Perhaps interventions or attempts to establish working relations with rogue states or linchpin states which fail to fulfill their anti-terror obligations.

Being a self-proclaimed empire, and not clearly recognized by its allies/satellites, the US intentions are to establish a global regime against terrorism which is to fit into this big demanding strategy¹⁹ that President Bush built. But the main question arising is who is going to do this? However idyllic a crusade is fighting terrorism, a mission dignified enough for the Knights Templar, in its essence is a very abstract one. And since instead of going for an underground fight, rather than a media fight that just develops a sea of opportunities for the terrorists, the Bush administration seems to have embarked on a very neoconservative fight against unseen, but very present monsters. And their imperial urge and pretensions are to be seen in the way they are dealing with the UN. A strong empire does not need approvals or support from anyone. But in the post-conflict Iraq, the UN is now helping with performing stabilization and nation-building. Therefore, the main question is whether the US are still an imperial power now?

At first sight, the incoming Obama administration seems to be the opposite of this neoconservative approach. It remains to be seen if Iraq will be effectively pacified and turned into a democratic country, on the pattern established by the Bush administration, and if this happens, where will the US go further to perform its imperial desires? Or was this just a middle-age cry for restating one's sovereignty and legitimacy, as another means of supporting the envisaged idea of an empire? Such an empire should be based on the cooperation between its subjects, a difficult thing to achieve, mostly because states still think in "relative gains" perspective. And when the leader comes with a manicheist vision – "you are either with us, or against us", the outcome is not very predictable. Such a black and white vision might determine states to rearrange themselves so as to fit the US strategy, might make them neutral or indifferent, or might give the incentives to offer help and support to terrorists. That is why an empire is not always a solution, especially since it means a visible continuation of the end of Cold War unipolarity.

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¹⁹ Michael Boyle, "The War on Terror in the American Grand Strategy", *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 2 (2008), p. 191-209.

PROIECTUL NEOCONSERVATOR: 11 SEPTEMBRIE
ȘI RĂZBOIUL DIN IRAK ÎN MAREA STRATEGIE AMERICANĂ
Rezumat

După atacurile de la 11 septembrie 2001, Statele Unite s-au imbarcat împreună cu alte state într-o Coaliție a Bunăvoinței pentru a lupta împotriva terorismului, pentru a elimina atentatele teroriste, precum și pe cei care le orchestrează; în același timp, pentru a aduce democrația în Irak. Mijloacele și căile utilizate pentru acest important țel sunt cel puțin interesante, iar de-a lungul timpului au suferit atâtea modificări încât se impune o analiză atentă a lor. Desigur, modificările au avut loc sub umbrela protecție a Statelor Unite, transformate recent într-un adevărat „imperiu al Binelui”, care încearcă să elimine un întreg „imperiu al Răului”.

Scopul acestei lucrări este de a investiga manifestările imperiale ale Statelor Unite în lumina celor două evenimente care le-au cauzat: atentatele teroriste din 2001 și intervenția din Irak, trecându-le însă și prin filtrul abordării neoconservatoare. Această abordare mizează pe existența unei mari strategii, și anume *Strategia Națională de Securitate*, lansată în 2002, cunoscută și sub numele de Doctrina Bush. Este vorba despre o strategie de securitate în care caracterul imperial și aspectul de cruciadă împotriva terorismului se împletesc și ar trebui să ducă la crearea unui nou model de desfășurare a vieții la nivel mondial.

Lucrarea este structurată în două părți: o primă parte constă în aspecte teoretice privind neoconservatorismul ca teorie a relațiilor internaționale, urmată de o a doua parte, în care sunt supuse analizei cele două evenimente menționate mai sus pentru a vedea în ce măsură tratamentul post-eveniment se supune rigorilor neoconservatorismului, dar și felul în care strategia de securitate americană a fost readaptată evenimentelor și țintelor stabilite de președintele George Bush, bineînțeles, în lumina aceleiași teorii. De asemenea, textul încearcă să explice și felul în care retorica neoconservatoare a fost folosită de administrația Bush pentru a da o serie de motivații viabile acțiunilor sale de politică externă.

Cuvinte cheie: neoconservatorism, Irak, Doctrina Bush, terorism, imperiu.