

Sigmund Grønlie Bolme

## An Exceptional Tradition?

A case study of exceptionalism in the American foreign policy response to China's rise, 1994–2012

Master thesis in Political Science

Trondheim, February 2014

# **An Exceptional Tradition?**

A case study of exceptionalism in the American foreign policy response to  
China's rise, 1992-2012

Sigmund Grønlie Bolme

Master thesis in Political Science  
Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology  
Department of Sociology and Political Science  
Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)  
February 2014

## **Preface**

To me, the process of writing my master thesis has been comparable to that of sailing a ship, days of frantic activity and progress have been relieved by moments of stagnation and frustration, but in the end, I arrived safely in port. Throughout the processes of writing I have been fortunate enough to have received the aid and support from many people all of which have influenced this project in a positive way.

I would like to thank my friends, colleagues and fellow students at the Department of Sociology and Political Science at NTNU and in particular my very good friend Sondre Jordbakke who has been a great source of help, inspiration and frank discussions throughout my years at NTNU.

Professors Torbjørn Knutsen and Jo Jacobsen at NTNU also deserves my thanks for their inspirational teachings on the topics of international relations and foreign policy as well as their comments and guidance when this thesis was in its infancy. I would also like to thank professor Tore T. Petersen at the Department of Historical Studies for his lectures on great power politics in the spring of 2011, which inspired me to pursue my interests in foreign policy further.

As ever, I am eternally grateful to my family who has supported me throughout this process, and who always inspire me to push forward in the face of adversity when I would otherwise lay down and quit.

I would also like to give a special thanks to my supervisor at NTNU, Per Marius Frost-Nielsen. Without his criticism, suggestions and great patience, this thesis would most likely never have been completed.

Finally, I must mention that even though many people have contributed to the result, the responsibility for any errors or mistakes the thesis might contain are entirely my own.

Sigmund Grønlie Bolme

Trondheim, 13. February 2014

# *Table of Contents*

Part 1. Introduction .....	1
An old debate .....	1
American Exceptionalism .....	2
Opposing arguments .....	6
The problem with exceptionalism .....	7
The emergence of a challenger .....	8
The Case and method .....	9
Part 2. Theoretical framework for examining exceptionalism .....	11
The purpose of theories .....	11
The Foundations of Realism .....	12
Classical Realism .....	12
Waltz and Structural Realism .....	13
The Offensive Realism of John Mearsheimer.....	16
The goals and strategies of great powers in Offensive Realist theory .....	18
What to expect with a realist US foreign policy? .....	19
Liberalism as a theory of international relations and foreign policy .....	22
Classical Liberalism .....	22
The preference based liberalism of Andrew Moravcsik.....	23
An exceptional and liberal foreign policy .....	30
The tests for liberal exceptionalism .....	30
Part 3. Mapping the Empirical Basis for the Chosen Theories .....	32
Historical Prologue .....	32
Thawing the Ice .....	32
The Tiananmen Square.....	33
Testing for a Realist U.S. Foreign Policy .....	34
1992-1996: The first Clinton Administration.....	34
1996-2000: The second Clinton administration .....	36
2001-2004: The first George W. Bush administration.....	39
2005-2008: The second W. Bush administration .....	42
2009- 2013: The first Obama period .....	47
Mapping the evidence for a Liberal American foreign policy .....	58
1992-1996: The first Clinton period .....	58
1996-2000: The second Clinton period .....	60
2001-2004, The first Bush period .....	64

2005-2008: The second Bush period.....	67
2009-2013 the first Obama period.....	70
Part 4. Analysis of the Empirical data.....	76
Realist foreign policy expectations.....	76
Liberal Foreign Policy Expectations.....	83
Final analysis.....	91
Part 5. Concluding thoughts.....	95
A rather ordinary foreign policy tradition.....	95
Implications of the findings.....	96
The way foreward.....	97
Sources.....	99
Appendix.....	111

## Tables and Figures

Figure 1. Troop deployments to the Asia-Pacific region during the two Clinton administrations.....	39
Figure 2. American troop deployments to the Asia-Pacific region during the two Bush periods.....	46
Figure 3. Troop deployments to the Asia-Pacific region during the first Obama administration.....	55
Figure 4. American troop deployments to the East Asia and western Pacific 1994-2012.....	111
Table 1. Presence of empirical indicators supporting realist theory.....	77
Table 2. Presence of empirical indicators supporting realist alliance theory.....	80
Table 3. Presence of empirical indicators supporting a liberal trade theory.....	84
Table 4. Presence of Empirical indicators supporting the presence of liberal diplomacy theory.....	87
Table 5. Status of hypothesis following part 1 of the analysis.....	90
Table 6. Number of U.S. Troops deployed to the East Asia and Western Pacific.....	111
Table 7. U.S. imports, exports and trade balance with China. In Millions of U.S. Dollars.....	112
Table 8. Chinese military spending 1992-2012.....	112
Table 9. Presence of empirical indicators supporting the different hypothesis.....	113

## ***Part 1. Introduction***

Otto von Bismarck is famously quoted as having claimed that, “God preserves a special providence for drunks, fools and the United states of America” (quoted in Meade, 2001:35). The quote was supposedly delivered after the German master of realpolitik failed to grasp how the United States’ foreign policy could be so successful. Bismarck is certainly not the only one to wonder at American foreign policy, and some have even claimed that the United States before 1941 hardly had any foreign policy to speak of (Mead, 2001:3). Whereas this myth can be easily refuted by looking at actual American behavior in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Restad, 2012), there is a considerable number of scholars, politicians and Americans in general that considers the foreign policy of the United States to be largely unique compared to the more realist foreign policy tradition of European and other countries. The realist tradition in International Relations (IR) and foreign policy studies are, even by its opponents, often considered the most prominent of the International Relations theory paradigms (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999). Yet when it comes to the foreign policy of the United States several argue that the expectations of realism do not apply (Kennan, 1984; Mead, 2001).

*The question I ask is whether this is in fact true? Does the American foreign policy tradition break with the expectations of realism? Is the United States of America a special case in the long and often bloody history of the world powers? Or is the idea of the unique American foreign policy, based on liberal ideas, just another myth in the greater mythos of American exceptionalism that surrounds the only current global superpower?*

In this study I shall examine whether there is a serious case for arguing that the American foreign policy tradition is as unique as it is often claimed to be. I shall give special attention to the claim that it is based mostly, if not completely, upon the morals, ideals and personal interests of the American people as opposed to the actual strategic interests of the state. In order to do that and test for the influence of realism in the American foreign policy tradition, I will look at the case provided by the recent rise of China. If we can expect realism to influence U.S. foreign policy at all, it should be when the United States faces a potential challenger and a possible future regional hegemon (Mearsheimer, 2006).

### **An old debate**

I would argue that the debate surrounding the question about the uniqueness of American foreign policy goes to the very heart of the realism vs. liberalism debate in international relations theory (IR) in political science. A unique American foreign policy poses a very real

threat to the generalizability of realism. This is especially the case if it is shown that American public opinion and American foreign actions often flies in the face of what is generally thought of as sound realist foreign policy. If the United States, the only current superpower on the planet, does not adhere to the principles of realism, which mostly focuses on the actions of great powers, can we expect realism to apply to other cases? Even if the geographic position of the United States is largely unique compared to other great powers, it would still imply that realism is unsuitable for use unless the situation that one seeks to explain is first found to contain the elements and structure that is necessary for realism to apply. Needless to say such a situation is less than appealing when formulating a scientific theory.

As the primary alternative to realism however, liberalism is seemingly greatly strengthened if American foreign policy should prove to move in a different direction than realist theory expects it to do. Whereas Realism focuses on the external environment of states and the power structure of the international system (Mearsheimer, 2001; Rose, 1998), liberal theory argues that it is a country's population and in particular it's influential elites that decides the route the nation is to take on the international stage (Moravcsik, 1997). If one were to use liberal theory in order to make predictions about a country's foreign policy one would expect to find a policy that served the interests and followed the morals of the country's leading elites.

### **American Exceptionalism**

Even staunch realists and proponents of realpolitik like Henry Kissinger often claim that American actions on the international stage are governed by an uncommon set of considerations that often include more than a little idealism (Kissinger, 1994). According to Kissinger, Americans have never been comfortable discussing foreign policy as a way of promoting national self-interest. Instead, Americans have claimed that they are "struggling in the name of principle, not interest" (Ibid: 810). As a result the political leaders of the US seems to be more prone to bursts of idealism than their continental colleagues, and according to Kissinger there are few American leaders that one can consider to be followers of a realist foreign policy.

This same argument is taken up by George Kennan who, almost in despair it seems, claims that American foreign policy more often than not has been influenced by moral principles and the changing preferences of the American electorate. This at the cost of a foreign policy guided instead by realism and the experts that have the knowledge necessary to conduct foreign policy in a consistent and safe manner. The public mood decides the actions that government officials and politicians would take, for the simple reason that these same officials depends on the public vote in order to keep their jobs. Kennan believed that the American

democracy made the US especially prone to conduct its business abroad in this manner, and that it constituted a serious weakness whenever the country was faced with a serious challenger on the international stage. He also feared that this foreign policy tradition could lead the United States into moral wars and foreign adventures that a prudent state would do better to avoid (Kennan, [1984] 2012). This last argument was taken up by many prominent realists in the time before the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Advertisement in the New York Times, 11.26: 2002).

This alleged American propensity to focus on principles rather than national interests is said to have come from the idea that the United States is an exceptional nation compared to the older nations of Europe (de Tocqueville, [1835] 1972:324). This view has since taken root in the mythos of the US and its democracy, and led to the idea that as a democratic country it was and still is the American duty to spread its democratic and liberal values to the rest of the world (See: Mead, 2001: 132-134, or for a more recent example: Krauthammer, 1990-91).

The idea that the US is meant to lead the world to a better future seems also to be deeply entrenched in America's political elites. This most prominently shown by the necessity for American politicians to mention American exceptionalism and America's role in the world, in most of the speeches they make on foreign policy. As shown by the 2012 presidential race, to accuse an American politician of not believing in this exceptionalism can be a very serious accusation, especially during a heated presidential campaign (Dwyer, 2012). Bill Clinton's former secretary of state Madeleine K. Albright at an interview on NBC, also famously used the idea of American exceptionalism to explain U.S. policy decisions. When asked why the United States should take the responsibility of "cleaning up the world's mess" she answered; "if we have to use force, it is because we are America; we are the indispensable nation. We stand tall and we see further than other countries into the future," (Albright, on NBCTV, 1998).

Although Americans like to focus on their special role and unique way of conducting foreign policy the idea that a nation has a duty to spread its civilization to other people is nothing new. As Stephen Walt points out, almost every great power in history has emphasized its uniqueness and the special role it plays, from ancient Athens to the British Empire (Walt, 2011). Still, despite the fact that Walt obviously denies the idea that the US has a certain destiny to play, he nevertheless seems to believe that the foreign policy of America often is decided by idealism rather than realism, and that idealists and liberals instead of realists are in overall charge of policy (Walt, 2012). Like realists before him, he asks the question "What would have happened if realists were in charge of American foreign policy?" Walt's answer is that a lot would be different, and in many cases, to the better. Notably, Walt is not the only scholar to



think so, and some claim that a realist foreign policy would lead to a more peaceful United States (Rosato & Schuessler, 2011).

As shown here, it seems to be a large consensus among scholars and politicians that American foreign policy is somehow different and more based on ideals and morals than the foreign policy of other similar countries. It is claimed that the expectations of realism and realpolitik don't apply to the actions that the United States takes on the international stage. Even those that oppose the view that America has a special role to play in the world seem to think (sometimes with a small hint of despair) that American foreign policy is formed on the basis of the moral expectations of the general public and liberal ideology rather considerations about power politics and American national security.

The idea that the United States represents something new and unique in the history of the world powers originally stems from the founding of the nation as well as from de Tocqueville's work *Democracy in America* ([1835] 1972). American presidents from Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush have spoken about the duty of the United States to safeguard the world and spread the democratic ideals that exists in America. This idea seems to be ingrained in the way many Americans as well as foreigners view American foreign policy, and perhaps for a reason. Few other nations have spoken as fervently about liberty and human rights on the international stage as the United States has done. Sometimes even to the disbelief and confusion of other nations who follow more realist principles when forming their foreign policies. As Kennan (1984) writes, the American involvement in East-Asian power politics at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was both confusing and to a certain degree highly embarrassing to the European powers already hard at work carving out empires in China.

Kissinger writes that, "America's journey through world politics has been a triumph of faith over experience. Since the time America entered the arena of world politics in 1917, it has been so preponderant in strength and so convinced in the rightness of its ideals that this century's major agreements have been embodiments of American values" (1994:18). According to Kissinger, it is the power and the favorable position of America in the world that has allowed American leaders to conduct this idealistic and somewhat naïve foreign policy.

These writers and several like, them all seem to agree on the fact that American diplomacy is in fact exceptional. However, few seem to have formed a clear theory of why this is. Kennan writes that it is the American democracy and ideals that explains American behavior. This argument is supported by Walter Lippmann who argues that the democratically elected politicians often are compelled by the wishes of the people into doing either too little or too much

(Lippmann, 1955:20). This despite the fact that politicians and professionals, according to Lippmann, often knew at the time what would have constituted the wiser action.

Accepting the democracy argument, Kissinger claims that American power allowed its foreign policy and principles to triumph where other weaker democracies were unable to prevail. However there existed democracies more powerful than the United States for more than half of that country's history (both Britain and France comes to mind), and few of these have gone to the same length in order to promote their values in the way the United States have done.

Attempting to dig out the core and reasoning behind more than 200 years of an active foreign policy is a daunting task, but one which has been attempted by Walter Russel Mead in his book *Special Providence*. Mead is one of the proponents of unique kind of American foreign policy, and he argues strongly and consistently for his point, namely that the United states has developed a way of behaving on the international stage that differs greatly from what he call continental realism (Mead, 2001).

Mead especially confronts the idea that there was hardly any American foreign policy to speak of before World War 2. Instead, he claims that American leaders consistently protected the interests and principles of the United States during the whole period, and that they were remarkably successful in doing so, despite the fact that their policies often deviated from the expectations that follows from realist theory. If American foreign policy has been so inconsistent and as chaotic as many of its critics claim, says Mead, it would be inconceivable that the United States should have been as successful in promoting its interests and values.

The assumptions of continental realism does not apply to the U.S. says Mead, mainly because of the strong geographic position occupied by the United States (Mead, 2001). Behind the Atlantic "mote", the US developed a distinct view of looking at the world, and especially a distinct way of conducting its foreign policy. In fact Mead claims that four such distinct views developed and that their premises and ideals echoes down through the generations of American statesmen and still influences leaders and the greater American public today.

Mead names these four schools of thought after former American politicians who each stand as the main proponent of one of these schools. Hamiltonians, Wilsonians and Jeffersonians. Mead claims that all of these three schools are found among Americans and especially amongst the American political elite who formulates American foreign policy. However, Mead identifies a fourth school which he claims is a largely populist school that is often reflected in the views of the common people. This school of thought is named Jacksonianism by Mead, after American president Andrew Jackson. The followers of Jacksonianism believe that the primary role of the government's foreign policy is to safeguard

the physical security and wellbeing of the American people. According to Mead it is this idea that pitches the American public into a righteous frenzy during war, and that leads to large periods of isolationist tendencies in American foreign policy during times of peace.

It is argued in *Special Providence* that it is the isolationist tendencies of Jacksonianism that lead foreign powers into underestimating American resolution and willingness to risk war. Mead claims that both the Japanese before the Pearl Harbor attack as well as Al-Qaeda's attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup> demonstrates this. Faced with attacks on its home soil, the American public opinion changes from one of peaceful isolationism to one dedicated to the prosecution of war by all means until total victory is achieved. As Mead puts it, "The whole Hive swarms out to sting the intruder to death. As an imperial power... the United States can be irresolute and divided; in self-defense it is focused and ruthless" (Mead, 2001:336). Mead claims that it is these two inherently opposite sides of American public sentiment that have baffled foreign observers, and that the Jacksonian element of the American public is both a source of strength and worry for American politicians. It often makes the United States look sluggish on the world stage and can at times prevent American leaders from acting decisively, but when turned upon a foreign attacker, Jacksonian sentiment and the public outrage that follows will often prove to be devastating. Mead claims that the combination of the four thoughts of school have allowed the United States to conduct an effective foreign policy that differs from continental realism. He also claims that powerful groups within the US still adhere to these schools when forming foreign policy.

## **Opposing arguments**

The extent to which this idea of exceptionalism has taken root might in itself be used as an argument in favor of it; however, the same sentiments are to be found in other nations and great powers as well. When E. H. Carr wrote the *Twenty Years' Crisis* in 1939 he was of the opinion that the British public and British politicians had become too idealistic and had forgotten the values of a more realistic foreign policy. This could, according to Carr, lead to a weakening of British power and security in the long run (Carr, 1939). The fears that many American realists harbor about their country's foreign policy today, echoes those of Carr's in the late 1930s.

Besides the fact that other great powers have been in similar situations to the United States before there is also the argument that John Mearsheimer (2001) presents. Unlike many of his fellow realists he claims that American foreign policy for the most part has followed the expectations of Realism. Of particular note is the fact that the United States is the only state in the modern world to achieve regional hegemony. This achievement is, according to

Mearsheimer, the real basis for American exceptionalism, and not the idea that American foreign policy is based on ideals rather than realism (Mearsheimer, 2001).

Mearsheimer argues that through clever application of force against its neighbors and the native population in North America, the United States managed to achieve a position of supremacy on its continent. Combining this with a policy of not antagonizing Great Britain, in order to avoid a showdown with the only great power that could challenge it, America achieved security and dominance in its own back-yard. After regional hegemony was achieved America preferred to act as an off-shore balancer rather than an imperial power

The reason why the United States, or Britain for that matter, never attempted to create an empire in either Europe or Asia, and instead acted as an off-shore balancer, is because large bodies of water makes it close to impossible to conquer distant land masses. Since both continents, and especially Europe, contains other great powers that would oppose such an adventure and any amphibious landings that would have to be attempted, it would be close to impossible for the US or Britain to effectively conquer and control these regions (Ibid).

There are also others who argue that American foreign policy have been more realistic than it would seem. Some claim that American foreign policy since World War II has been formed by both realism and liberalism (Howard, 2001), and that the net result was a consistent foreign policy that focused on balancing against the Soviet Union both for ideological and strategic reasons.

According to Joseph Nye, there has long existed a foreign policy tradition that incorporates both realism and liberalism in the United States, and several American presidents have borrowed ideas from the different schools of thought that exist in the debate. Nevertheless he thinks that the two schools of thought needs to be further reconciled if America is to have a successful foreign policy in the coming years, and he introduces the term liberal realism as a new form of power strategy Nye would like American decision makers to follow (Nye, 2011).

### **The problem with exceptionalism**

As shown, a number of people considers American foreign policy to be at least partially based on realism and power-politics consideration. Nevertheless even Mearsheimer admits to the fact that realism is hard to sell in America and that American leaders often tend to focus on ideals and values when holding speeches on foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2001:23).

All this considered it is a source of curiosity that there seems to be conducted so little research on the question of whether the United States really is unique in the way they act on the global stage. Instead it looks as though this view is simply accepted among most of the scholars

in the foreign policy field (see for example, Moravcsik, 2005), although with some prominent exceptions (Mearsheimer, 2001; Dueck, 2005). Despite this acceptance, there are several examples of American foreign action where it would seem realism trumped idealism. One of the more prominent ones would be the about turn of American propaganda after World War II. In the face of Soviet expansion and possible aggression, American leaders quickly discarded the wartime image of “Uncle Stalin” and the friendly and courageous Russian soldier “Ivan”. Instead, the soviets were cast for the role as the new enemy of democracy (Mead, 2001).

Another example would be the opening of trade and diplomatic talks with China during the 1970s, a move which was planned in large parts by Henry Kissinger and executed by President Richard Nixon. The goal was to play on the antagonism that had developed between China and the Soviet Union and thereby create a more favorable diplomatic climate for the United States to maneuver in (Kissinger, 1994). The plan worked, and from 1979, until the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, the Chinese were generally friendlier to the United States located on the far side of the Pacific Ocean, then they were to the Soviet Union with which China shared a long and, in places, hotly contested border (Zhao, 2004). As one can see, American leaders have been capable of committing to realist policies, even if they were forced to sell these ideas as based on ideals and a fight for democracy to the American electorate.

### **The emergence of a challenger**

In the aftermath of the Cold War many of these interests seems to be located in Asia and in particular in East-Asia. This has prompted a “pivot” towards Asia in the foreign policy of the Obama administration (Defense Strategic Guidance, 2012). Traditional areas like Europe are now of less concern, and the American focus seems to be directed at Asia and especially China.

The rise of Chinese power and confidence during the two first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century looks as though it might have reawakened American leader’s focus on power politics and geo-strategic considerations. Despite some claims to the contrary many American leaders and observers now seems to look upon the rise of China as a considerable challenge for the United States, maybe even the greatest challenge the U.S. will face in the foreseeable future (Friedberg, 2011; Kissinger, 1994; Kristof, 1993; Clinton, 2011; Ikenberry, 2008). Some observers even seem to be of the opinion that a conflict between China and the United States are bound to happen (Bernstein & Munro, 1997). While others are already wondering how a potential war between the two powers would be fought, and how the United States can best prepare for such a fight (Kaplan, 2005). It is certainly true that the Chinese have committed to a great increase in their military expenditure since the end of the cold war (Sipri, 2012), And equally true that

the Pentagon continues to watch this Chinese force improvement and military buildup with some worry (Annual Report to Congress, 2011).

Whether one believes in the probability of such a conflict is often decided by which side of the realism vs. liberalism debate one finds oneself. As mentioned above, Friedberg (2005) argues that there is considerable number of American experts that expects the Sino-U.S. relationship to be a peaceful one. Trade and cooperation will, according to these observers, lead to both an environment where neither China nor the United States can afford a war, due to the loss of trade this would entail, as well as the development of a democratic China that will adhere to the liberal theory of democratic peace. The argument goes that if leaders on both sides can keep their cool, the rise of China will cause few if any problems for the United States (Li, 2005).

However, if we follow the predictions of offensive realism as laid down by Mearsheimer, the picture changes quite dramatically. Realists share few of the hopes that the liberal thinkers base themselves upon. The argument goes that as China's strength increases, the United States are most likely to attempt to balance against it in order to make sure that no other power but the United States are able to attain regional hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001). No amount of trade and international cooperation will change the fact that "each State pursues its own interests, however defined in ways it judges best" (Waltz, 1959:238). After all, the fact that the British and German economies were interconnected and largely dependent upon each other before 1914 (Reynolds, 2000:78) did not stop them from waging war against each other. Both states at that time believed that the only way of preserving the national security was to go to war. As such, the interests of survival trumped the interests of trade.

## **The Case and method**

The case of China's rise, and the American response to this rise, seems to be the perfect opportunity to test whether American foreign policy does indeed follow its own peculiar ways rather than being dictated by traditional concerns about national interests. If Mearsheimer is correct, and the United States does indeed follow realist principles when faced with a serious challenge, then we can expect to see a United States that is currently strengthening its presence in East-Asia. The American goal here will be to stop China from attaining a position of Hegemony in the region. Primarily, we can expect to see that the American military presence in East-Asia will increase substantially. Further, realism would also expect an increase in American support to local allies in the region as well as an attempt to strengthen these alliances. We could also expect American leaders to worry about the closing gap between American and

Chinese economic power and see policy decisions that attempt to rectify the export/import advantage that China currently seems to enjoy.

As an alternative to the explanatory power of offensive realism, I will be looking at the liberal theory of preference as laid out by Moravcsik (1997). Moravcsik states that the preferences of the elites influence a country's foreign policy. If Friedberg (2005) is right and the majority of American leaders and policy makers favor a liberal policy towards the rise of China, then Moravcsik's theory claim that we would see a foreign policy based on these ideals. Namely attempts at increasing trade and cooperation as well as attempts at strengthening the opposition in China that favors democratic reform.

This master thesis will be based on a case study of the American foreign policy reactions to the rise of China spanning two decades from the end of the cold war in 1992 and until 2012. The study will be carried out as what Jonathon Moses and Torbjørn Knutsen calls a "Mis-fitting" Case Study, that is, a case study "that seek to show how a case does *not* fit a general or universal claim" (Moses and Knutsen, 2007:134). I will test the validity of using either Moravcsik's preference based Liberal theory or Mearsheimer's Offensive Realism theory as a way of explaining U.S. foreign policy. Through this test I will determine whether there is any real cause for saying that the American Foreign Policy tradition differs from that of other states in the sense that it is more prone to follow the wishes and interests of the electorate and elites rather than the pursuit of power and safety in an anarchic state structure. The Case study is by its nature unable to provide us with a definite answer to whether the entirety of American foreign policy is exceptional, but it can provide some indications. I also hope that this can be a stepping-stone for further studies into this particular area.

I will show that there is a case to be made for both theories, but that their explanatory power seems to switch over time. During the 1990s, liberalism and idealism seems to have had the greatest influence on American foreign policy. However, as Chinese power grow the foreign policy conducted by the Americans towards China begins to exhibit signs of being realist in nature rather than liberal. This corresponds with China's growing power and suggests that there is a considerable realist component present in American foreign policy decisions. As such, I suggest that there is a case to be made for a more nuanced view of U.S. foreign policy and that little support the notion that the United States constitutes a special case. In other words, I have found no clear evidence that points to the existence of an exceptional American foreign policy. Due to the prevalence of this notion of American exceptionalism I would suggest that further study is devoted to examining this claim, as the myth of American exceptionalism have the potential to be a source of miscalculation by both American and foreign politicians.

## ***Part 2. Theoretical framework for examining exceptionalism***

In this section I will outline the competing theories which I will use in order to test the claim of whether there exists a certain American exceptionalism in the way the United States acts on the international stage. I have chosen to focus on the Offensive Realism theory, most prominently laid out by Mearsheimer (2001) as well as the preference based Liberal theory laid out by Moravcsik (1997). I will begin by examining the respective historical traditions and philosophical foundations that these two theories rest upon and go into the respective theories in some detail. This will open up the possibility of formulating a set of hypotheses about how the foreign policy actions of the U.S. can be expected to look like if it follows the expectations laid out by Realism or Liberalism. These hypotheses will allow me to test empirically the claim of exceptionalism later in the paper. I will then proceed to explain why these two theories can be used for testing for a possible American exceptionalism in its reactions to the rise of China.

### **The purpose of theories**

According to Kenneth Waltz theories explain the laws that one assumes exists in the real world. A law in itself cannot explain “why particular association holds” (Waltz, 1979:6). As such, in order for scientists to understand the laws that govern the real world, one would first need theory that explains the particular phenomenon one examines.

Examining the foreign policy tradition of a country like the United States can be a daunting task. With a history spanning centuries and foreign interests spanning most of the globe, there are potentially hundreds of variables that one could argue deserve to be examined in order to create a complete picture of the American foreign Policy tradition. One would also be forced to look at the foreign policy traditions of other countries before we could establish whether the United states is in fact exceptional. Naturally such a thorough examination is beyond both the ambition and feasibility of this analysis. By applying theory to the research question however, one is able to narrow the areas of research down considerably.

By using Realism and Liberalism I will be able to pick my battles with much better precision than I otherwise would. Add to this that it is in large parts the claimed irrelevance of realist theory as an explanation of American foreign policy that I seek to verify or discard, the application of these theories are necessary. In short, the application of theory allows the social scientist to focus on relevant areas of research instead of chasing down every irrelevant fact (Popper, [1959] 2003). As such, the application of theories is necessary in an analysis of this scope, without it I would be left to examine the foreign policy actions of every state on the planet in order to test for any American exceptionalism.



## **The Foundations of Realism**

Perhaps the most prominent of the current theories of international politics and foreign policy today (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999), realism is considered to be one of the oldest theories in international relations studies, and its proponents often claim that the tradition include such classical writers as Thucydides, Machiavelli and Rousseau (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008:97). It is also worth noting that there is not a single consistent theory of realism that exists, but that several different types have developed since Hans Morgenthau formed his theory of Classical Realism (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008:97).

Many of these different types vary greatly; common for all of them however is a set of assumptions about the world, and more importantly the structure of the international system. The idea here is that humanity is divided into states, these states are often widely different from each other, yet they are equal in the tasks they face. The difference lie in the ability each state has to perform these tasks (Waltz, 1979:96). Even more importantly, states exist in an anarchic system with no higher legal force that can rein them in and stop them from threatening or attacking each other. There are other forces in the world, but when it comes to influence and the ability to use power, the state has no equal and even weak states will often retain the ability control or greatly influence strong non-state actors (Ibid:94-95).

Kenneth Waltz claims that this idea of international anarchy is as old as the writings of Thucydides, and that the anarchic system holds the potential for war between states, “with many sovereign states, with no system of law enforceable among them... conflict, sometimes leading to war is bound to occur” (Waltz, [1954], 2001:159). In such a system it follows, says Waltz, that each nation must at all times be ready to use its own power and resources in order to counter the potential actions of other states. According to Waltz the actions each state can take is “imposed by the circumstances in which all states exist” (Ibid:160).

All the different theories of realism adhere to the notion of anarchy among states, but they often differ when they attempt to explain how wars come to pass within this anarchic system. Waltz believe that the structure of the system and a state’s relative power influence what actions a state will take (Waltz, 1979), whereas others focus on how decision makers perceive these powers and how they act according to these perceptions (Rose, 1998). Oldest among the realist traditions which seek to explain this are the Classical Realism of Thucydides and Morgenthau, which I will examine underneath.

### **Classical Realism**

Written in the 5 century BCE, Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* lays the groundwork of classical realist theory in international relations. Writing about the war between the then great powers Sparta and Athens, Thucydides claims that it was the fear that the Spartans had about the growth and intention of the Athenian empire that led the two cities into open war. To quote him: "What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta" (Thucydides, [1954] 1972:49). Sparta's interests lay with its own survival, and when they felt that this survival was threatened by the increasing strength of Athens they went to war against their challenger. The comparison with Sparta and Athens at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war has since been made several times when great powers face each other, perhaps most recently during the cold war and the U.S. Soviet standoff (Nye & Welch, 2011:20).

In the classical realism of Thucydides it is the human drive to power and the fear that states have for one another that leads them into conflict. Human nature leads states into conducting power politics and to seek dominion over others in order to maximize security (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008:95-96). Perhaps the most famous proponent of classical realism, Hans Morgenthau attempted to develop realism as a comprehensive theory of international politics. He argued that international politics was governed by universal laws that had their roots and origin in human nature rather than it being the product of personal choice and impulses of leaders (Morgenthau, [1948] 1993:4). Morgenthau claimed that humans would actively pursue their interests and that interests are defined as power (Ibid: 5-6). As such, the human search for power is the chief reason for international conflict and wars. In the classical realist tradition then, it is the flaws of men and our perpetual desire for power that influence a country's foreign policy. As Morgenthau says, "the drives to live, to propagate, and to dominate are common to all men" (Ibid: 30). Challenging this rather dark notion that human nature drives us to war, Structural Realism places the cause of conflict with the international structure rather than humans, this theory will be my next subject of examination.

## **Waltz and Structural Realism**

The next big development in realist theory came with the structural realism of Kenneth Waltz. In his book *Theory of International Politics* Waltz attempted to create a general theory of Realism that was easily tested. He points out early that few theories of international politics are actually worth testing; they are often too complex and make assumptions that cannot easily be verified (Waltz, 1979:14). He claims that the development of theories that scientists are capable of testing scientifically should be a primary task for social scientists (Ibid: 16).

Following his own advice, Waltz developed a form of realism that focuses on the structure of the system, rather than the actors. With this theory he attempted to explain why it is that the relationship between states hardly changes despite the fact that the individual actors change all the time, new leaders have new priorities for example. The explanation that Waltz arrives at is that the system affects the behavior of the interacting units just as these units themselves affect the structure of the system (Ibid: 40). Further, Waltz argues that in order to explain state actions on the international stage one has to study the structure of the international system, rather than the individual states. The actors (states in this case) do not, in themselves, have the power to change the structure unless the arrangement of the states in the international system is changed (Ibid: 80).

The structure that he envisions is anarchic in nature and this anarchism explains, according to Waltz, why one can see the same types of conflicts played out on the international stage again and again throughout human history. "The relations that prevail internationally seldom shift in type or in quality. They are marked instead by dismaying persistence, a persistence that one must expect as long as none of the competing units are able to convert the anarchic international realm into a hierarchic one" (Ibid:66). What follows then, says Waltz, is a structure where conflict between states is not only a possibility, but a necessary consequence. Echoing Hobbes' famous claim about the nature of man in the *Leviathan*, Waltz says that: "Among states, the state of nature is a state of war" (Ibid: 102).

By this Waltz means that each state has the capacity to act aggressively at any time, rather than claiming that states always wage war against each other. In fact, Waltz claims that rational states will go to great lengths in order to avoid war since the cost of fighting wars can be huge (Ibid:114). Still, it is the goal of every rational state in the system seeks to survive into the future (Ibid: 91) and to retain its independence and freedom of action, no states wishes to be dependent upon any other state. This desire for independence foster insecurity because any international organization capable of protecting the states against each other would be able to coerce them as well (Ibid: 112). In a self-help system of the kind Waltz describes, the states in it will worry about their survival and this worry will often determine their actions within the international system (Ibid: 105). The fear of being destroyed or subjugated by other states will, according to Waltz, drive states into creating a Balance-of-power system (Ibid: 118).

This balance of power theory assumes that states will eventually strive for their own preservation, and possibly "drive for universal domination" (Ibid: 118). States attempt to achieve these goals by strengthening their own military and economic power at home, and creating alliances that can help protect them abroad. According to Waltz his Balance-of-power

theory applies if only two conditions are met: “That the order be anarchic and that it be populated by units wishing to survive” (Ibid: 121). He also claims that his Balance-of-power theory cannot explain foreign policy, but rather illuminates the restraints that the international system sets upon the actions that states can perform, and allows some predictions to be made about how states will act within these restraints (Ibid: 122).

The practical consequences of an anarchic Balance-of-power system, is that, whenever one state or an alliance of states increases their relative power, other states will join balancing coalitions against these states in order to make sure that no one “wins” and gain a position of leadership. These coalitions will then break apart again the moment the threat that led to their creation is eliminated or weakened. Waltz also claims that the maximizing of security, and not power is the primary goal of states. States only seek to maintain their position in the international system, and they do this by conducting balance of power politics (Ibid: 126). As such states not yet aligned to any alliances will flock to the weaker side in any conflict because it is the stronger side that threatens them most (Ibid: 127). This state behavior leads to a relatively stable system where states for the most part act as status quo powers rather than revisionists, and where peace can be maintained through the careful maintenance of this balance. Waltz further claims that multipolar systems (a system with several great powers) are more prone to conflict than a system with only two main great powers (a bipolar system). This is due to the fact that a multipolar system opens the door for greater confusion and a more chaotic image than a bipolar system does (Ibid: 170-172).

Waltz’s idea that states only seek to maintain their position in the system instead of seeking to maximize their power, and therefore act defensively rather than offensively, is considered to be the primary proponent of this branch of realism (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008: 99).

Whereas the theory of Defensive Realism argues that states only seek to maintain their position in the international system, Offensive Realism argues that a state is going to seek greater power no matter its current position (Mearsheimer: 2001; Toft, 2005). Offensive Realism is the theory that I will focus on beneath, and the theory that will be used in my attempt at exploring the possibilities of a unique American Foreign policy. The reasons for this are twofold. First is the fact that whereas Waltz claim that structural realism is unable to explain the details of foreign policy, Mearsheimer argues that realist logic often will guide or influence a state’s foreign policy (Ibid: 17, 26). Secondly the focus on power in Offensive Realist theory is also closer to the classic idea of *realpolitik* and European Realism than the Balance of Power theory in Defensive Realist theory is (for a definition of *Realpolitik* see: Kissinger, 1994:137). This is important since, as I mentioned in the introduction, the claim of American

exceptionalism is based mostly on the idea that American foreign policy is focused on ideals and values rather than power and state interests. As such, Offensive Realism seems to be more opposed to any theory of American exceptionalism than Defensive Realism.

### **The Offensive Realism of John Mearsheimer**

Through the theory of Offensive Realism John Mearsheimer builds upon the framework of structural realism that was laid down by Kenneth Waltz (Toft: 2005). Like Waltz, Mearsheimer subscribes to the idea of an international anarchic system, and that the structure of this system influences the states that are part of it (Mearsheimer, 2001:22). Like Waltz, he argues that it is the fear of other states that makes states seek security through power and military might. Unlike Waltz however, Mearsheimer does not believe that states merely wish to gain enough power to maintain their position and security. By examining the actions of some former and current great powers, Mearsheimer seek to improve upon the theories of Waltz by explaining why strong states often seek to increase their power and improve their position in the international system, beyond what is needed in order to balance other states that might threaten them (Ibid: 21-22).

Great powers, says Mearsheimer, are not always happy with the amount of power that they can bring to bear, and will in general seek to escape the security competition of the international system by accumulating as much power, and latent power, as possible (Ibid: 43). This leads to the classic example of the security dilemma, where one state, in order to safeguard itself increases its military might. A military buildup does however also have the unfortunate side effect of increasing the amount of fear that this state instill in its neighbors, and thereby providing a strong incentive for these states to increase their own military might. This again scares the original great power into seeking to increase its power even further. The result can be a spiraling arms race that has the potential to erupt into open war (Herz, 1950). The implications of the security dilemma for individual states are clear says Mearsheimer “The best defence is a good offence. Since this message is widely understood ceaseless security competition ensures” (Mearsheimer, 2001: 36).

However, this does not imply that states are going to act offensively all the time. The way states act is bound to depend upon their relative power and position in the international system. A great power that is markedly more powerful than its rivals is likely to behave more aggressively, whereas a great power that faces more powerful opponents will most likely attempt to balance against them rather than confront them head on (Ibid: 37). Over time, the ultimate goal of a great power is to achieve the position of hegemon in the system. Unlike Waltz and other defensive realists, Mearsheimer claims that states only become status quo powers

once they have achieved a position of hegemony (Ibid: 34). The argument goes that only a hegemon can achieve total security from the aggression of other states. Once a state has achieved hegemony it is for all intents and purposes the only great power left in the system, since no other state has the military might to threaten it (Ibid: 40). According to this theory, no rational state would forego the chance to become the hegemon of the system, and even if a state has no chance at achieving hegemony it will still attempt to assemble as much power as it possibly can in order to safeguard itself.

If all states follow this logic then they will, according to Mearsheimer, seek to take advantage of each other, and constantly try to increase their power on the expense of rivals. At the same time states also seek to defend themselves, and maintain the power they have already gained, they will therefore attempt to check potential challengers, and stop other great powers from rising (Ibid: 35). In Offensive Realist theory, it is this perpetual hunt for power that leads to security competition and eventually to conflict between great powers. It is also worth mentioning that this security competition makes cooperation between states difficult since they all think in terms of relative gains, and few states will accept a deal if that means their competitor gain more than they do (Ibid: 52; Mearsheimer, 1994-95). Mearsheimer himself has stated that he finds the whole picture depressing, and that no amount of goodwill will help great powers avoid the security competition that arises when one of them increase its relative power and capabilities (Mearsheimer, 2006).

In *The Tragedy of Great Power politics* (2001:30-31) Mearsheimer lists five bedrock assumptions that he feels is necessary for his theory to hold true. These are:

- First the international system needs to be anarchic in nature. Although it is worth noting that he never claims that anarchy necessitates chaos and constant war.
- Secondly Mearsheimer claims that all great powers inherently possess the some offensive military capability that can be brought to bear on an opponent. In other words, states are a danger to each other.
- The third assumption is that states can never be certain about the intentions of another state, and as such a state can never be one hundred percent sure that another state does not harbor any hostile intent towards it.
- Fourth: Security and survival is the most important goal of any state. Without it all other actions are impossible since the state will cease to exist. As such this goal trumps all other goals.
- And finally that all great powers are rational actors and that they think strategically about how to survive in the environment they find themselves in.

Offensive realists claim that if all of these assumptions holds true then we can expect to see foreign policy behavior from states that mostly focuses on their own state interests through the

accumulation of power. Now, one must remember that it is argued that the power of a state can depend upon several factors, from the preeminence of a state's ideological values, through economic and industrial might as well as cyber knowhow and infrastructure, and to its geographic position and resource basis (Nye, 2011).

For an offensive realist however, military, and primarily land-based armed forces, are the most important measure of the power of a great power (Mearsheimer, 2001: 83). In the end, as the Melians discovered in the Peloponnesian war, the power of your legal argument is irrelevant if somebody is holding a gun to your head (Thucydides, [1954] 1972: 400-408). In his examination of military power, Mearsheimer argues that both sea based power (navies) and air based power (air forces) has severe limitations in their application (Ibid: chapter 4). According to him, only land forces are capable of actually controlling landmasses and occupying territory. Mearsheimer also makes the claim here that the ability of large bodies of water in acting as a sort of mote, can severely limit the power projection capabilities of land armies. This is an important point for Mearsheimer since it helps offensive realist theory to explain why sea based powers such as the U.S. and Great Britain never have made a serious attempt at conquering Europe, or occupying territory on other continents when faced with the serious opposition of another great power (Ibid: 114, 254-265). Large oceans are simply so difficult to traverse with large numbers of troops, and amphibious landings are so difficult to pull off that invading territory overseas held by another unengaged and prepared great power is close to impossible (Ibid: 120).

### **The goals and strategies of great powers in Offensive Realist theory**

As stated above, the main goal of any state in an anarchic international system is to survive. The surest way for a state to ensure its survival is, according Mearsheimer, to gain such an amount of power that no other state can challenge you, or in other words; to become a hegemon. The ultimate position of strength, and therefor of security, would be as a world hegemon. However, because of the stopping power of the World's oceans, this position is very difficult to achieve if not completely unattainable. Instead, states will seek to gain regional hegemony in its part of the world (Ibid: 140). States will also attempt to stop other powers from gaining hegemony in another region of the world. This is because only a regional hegemon has the power and resource base that are needed to threaten the position of another hegemon. Even if a direct attack upon another hegemon is unfeasible in itself, the distant hegemon may threaten the local balance of power, and thereby threaten the supremacy of the local hegemon (Ibid: 142).

Besides aiming at being the only hegemon on the planet, states also seek to generate and control as much of the wealth in the world as possible, to have the strongest armed forces in its region, and finally to gain nuclear superiority despite the fact that nuclear superiority is very difficult if not impossible to achieve (Ibid: 147).

When it comes to behavior of great powers Mearsheimer claims that because relative power plays such an important part in the relationship between states, great powers have developed several distinct strategies as a way of gaining and maintaining power as well as hinder other states from obtaining it (Ibid: 138). In order to gain relative power a state can either attempt to use war, blackmail, bait and bleed or bloodletting strategies. Out of these three waging war is risky and can be costly, but is still the main strategy great powers use for gaining power and achieving a position of hegemony (Ibid: 138).

Strategies for preventing a rising great power from upsetting the balance of power include balancing, buck-passing, appeasement and bandwagoning. Although Mearsheimer argues that bandwagoning and appeasement are poor choices in a realist world. This is because they both allow the aggressor to gain more relative power than the defender. Instead the real choice for a state stands between choosing to balance against a threat by itself, or attempt to let another state face the challenger instead through the strategy of buck-passing (Ibid: 140).

Since I am currently examining the foreign policy practices of a regional hegemon, the United States, and because offensive realists expect regional hegemons to act as status quo powers, it would seem a waste of time to examine the strategies that states use in order to gain power. Instead, I will look at primary ways by which states seek to contain and check aggressors. First, Mearhseimer claims that the formidable armed forces that great powers are wont to build, often will prove enough for deterring potential enemies (Ibid: 155), however, from time to time more drastic action will have to be undertaken in order to check aggressive states. If we accept the arguments that Mearsheimer presents about the unfeasibility of appeasement and bandwagoning, the two remaining strategies left are balancing and buck-passing.

### **What to expect with a realist US foreign policy?**

Balancing against a challenger is as we have seen a very old concept, and it is also the action that Waltz, and other defensive realists, expects threatened states to prefer in the face of a challenger. Balancing also has an important role to play in offensive realist theory; however, Mearsheimer concludes that states prefer to “pass the Buck” whenever they are feeling seriously threatened.



“A buck-passer attempts to get another state to bear the burden of deterring or possibly fighting an aggressor, while it remains on the sidelines. The buck-passer fully recognizes the need to prevent the aggressor from increasing its share of world power but looks for some other state that is threatened by the aggressor to perform this onerous task” (Ibid: 157-158).

Mearsheimer argues that the popularity of buck-passing stems from the ability that strategy has of providing cheap security. Wars are costly and risky so having another great power fighting your war for you is a tempting prospect for most states (Ibid: 160).

However, buck-passing is only possible if another great power exists which is capable of fighting and potentially win a war against the aggressor. In the case of China’s rise and the American response to this rise, there are few other powers in the region that would be capable of containing China on their own. Japan comes to mind, but Japanese strategy with regards to a potential Chinese threat seems to be based on cooperation with the U.S. in every aspect rather than any attempt at taking on China by itself (Shinzo, 2012). Other democratic countries that face a potential threat in a rising China are India and Australia these (and especially India) could at first glance look like prime candidates for American buck-passing strategy, but on closer inspection one realize that neither really are. Like Japan, Australia also seems to have realized that a growing China could spell trouble for the future, and like Japan, Australia looks to the U.S. for a security partner (Australian Defense White Paper, 2009). With regards to India, Delhi does have serious security concerns over increasing Chinese strength; however, the Indian government looks like they prefer to work with the United States rather than alone when it comes to facing these security concerns (Friedberg, 2011: 206).

Even more important than the strategies these individual governments seek to implement, are the fact that none of these powers possess the military capability to contain China on their own. When looking at the military expenditure for Australia, India and Japan compared to China we find that the biggest spender of the three, Japan, spend less than half of what China does on its armed forces (119 billion dollars for China vs. 54 billion for Japan in 2010) (Sipri: 2012). In short, even if American decision makers wanted to, there is no great power in East Asia that the United States could reliably pass the buck to. As such, the only realist route left for American strategy with regards to China seems to be to balance against and contain the rising power. Much in the same way as the U.S. was forced to balance against the Soviet Union in Europe during the cold war (Mearsheimer: 2001:392). This is in fact what Mearsheimer expects the United States to attempt as China increases its power and seeks to influence its local region (Mearsheimer, 2006).

When attempting to balance against a rising great power, the balancer takes it upon itself to make sure that the aggressor does not upset the balance of power. This includes trying to contain and deter an aggressor, and fighting a war if the balancing fails and the rising power remains aggressive (Mearsheimer, 2001:156). Mearsheimer lists three actions that a balancer can take in order to contain an adversary, they are as follows:

- “First, they can send clear signals to the aggressor through diplomatic channels...that they are firmly committed to maintaining the balance of power, even if it means going to war.
- Second, threatened state can work to create a defensive alliance to help them contain their dangerous opponent.
- Third, threatened states can balance against an aggressor by mobilizing additional resources of their own. For example, defense spending might be increased or conscription might be implemented... But there are usually significant limits on how many additional resources a threatened state can muster against an aggressor, because great powers normally already devote a large percentage of their resources to defense... Nevertheless, when faced with a particularly aggressive adversary, great powers will eliminate any slack in the system and search for clever ways to boost defense spending” (Ibid: 156-157).

Keeping this in mind, and accepting the argument that the United States do not have the option of following a buck-passing strategy in the face of growing Chinese powers, we should be able to make some assumptions about how the foreign policy of the U.S. would look like if American decision makers were influenced by realist thought. We should expect to see a United States who sends a clear signal that it will not tolerate any Chinese aggression or attempts at gaining hegemony in Asia, and who convey their willingness to confront such a potential act of aggression. We should be able to observe American leaders who attempt to balance against China through the construction of alliances and improving their own standing among nations who are located in the east-Asia and south-east-Asia region. We should also expect to see an American military that plans for and worries about a potential war against China. This will include focusing its efforts in east-Asia, and improving its capabilities in this crucial region of the world.

My two assumptions about what kind of American foreign policy we can expect, provided American policy makers are following a realist foreign policy, are as follows:

- *1: That the U.S. are sending clear diplomatic signals to China that it will not tolerate any Chinese aggression or bullying tactics against America, American allies or other nations in East-Asia. Further; that the United States are focusing a substantial amount of their available military capacity on the East-Asia region in order to contain the growing Chinese military*
- *2: That the American government is hard at work shoring up its existing alliances, creating new ones, attempts to foster better relationships with unaligned nations in the East-Asia and South-east-Asia region, and generally supports nations whose interests clash with those of China.*

Examining whether these two assumptions holds true will be a vital task of this study, and will help us determine whether American foreign policy can be said to be truly detached from realist consideration and therefore exceptional. If these assumptions prove to be false, one we will have to look for better explanations of American foreign policy. With that in mind I will now turn to the Liberal tradition in international relations theory.

## **Liberalism as a theory of international relations and foreign policy**

As noted in the introduction, there seems to be a majority of decision makers and foreign policy experts that argues in favor of a liberal American foreign policy (Friedberg, 2005). Liberalism is also the historical rival to realism and the theory has been widely influential in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Dunne, 2005:110). Besides being the historical alternative, Liberal theory also fits better with the arguments of Walter Russel Meade about American expectionalism, and it is the favored theory among most American presidents and politicians (Mead, 2001; Kissinger, 1994; Mearsheimer, 2011).

While Realist theory stands in direct opposition the argument of this exceptionalism, it is my view that the presence of a liberal foreign policy would lend credence to this theory. I will in this part of the paper show how liberalism and specifically the preference based liberalism as put forward by Moravcsik (1997), can be used to test for exceptionalism and help explain the American foreign policy tradition.

### **Classical Liberalism**

The original ideas of Liberalism developed in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, and grew from the writings of several distinguished authors such as John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant (Dunne, 2005). Liberal ideology focuses in its core on the liberty of individual, as well as the right and the ability to choose that it claims every individual human being possesses (Heywood: 2007: 27). Liberalists like John Locke agree with Thomas Hobbes in his argument that humans originally existed in a state of nature (Locke, [1689] 1988: 269), but unlike Hobbes, Locke argues that this state is not a state of war, and that individual freedoms can be protected without compromising human society or the state. The individual has a given right to decide for itself.

Whereas the theory of Locke mostly focuses on the organization of the state, the theories of Immanuel Kant touches more on the relationship between nations and are as such more applicable in international relations studies. Kant argued that liberal democratic countries would be more inclined to settle their differences with diplomacy rather than on the battlefields, and

he predicted that a group of liberal nations would develop that would cooperate on security rather than compete against each other (Doyle, 1986).

Whereas realists claim that the structure of the international system put strict boundaries upon the actions that leaders and politicians might take on the international stage, liberals tend to take a more optimistic approach to international politics. It may be that the structure play some part in deciding a country's foreign policy, but often, leaders are very aware what their constituents want and will attempt to take this into consideration, after all most leaders want to get reelected. At the same time, the actions following these concerns will influence the international community, and may change the priorities of other states as well as the international structure itself (Putnam, 1988).

Because the people of any given state is likely to influence decision makers liberals often also argue that the rules that govern within states may be transferred to the international stage, and by transferring these rules order may be created and wars may be avoided more easily (Dunne, 2005: 110). The international natural state is not necessarily a state of war says liberals, and by applying laws, rules of conduct, and human morals one can avoid the pitfalls of war that threatens within an anarchic international system.

This then is the reason why I have decided to use liberalism as a further test of American exceptionalism. The rejection of realism as a way of conducting foreign policy will strengthen the idea of American exceptionalism. Similarly, the embracing of liberal ideals and the attempt to enforce American values in the international system will strengthen this theory even further. Indeed, like the liberals, Walter Russel Mead claims that the interests of the democratic populace and the American elites largely shape American foreign policy (Mead, 2001:84-86).

### **The preference based liberalism of Andrew Moravcsik**

In his 1997 article *Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics* Moravcsik attempts to reformulate liberal international relations theory "in a nonideological and nonutopian form appropriate to empirical social science" (Moravcsik, 1997). Like many liberals before him, Moravcsik argues that the foreign policy and behavior of a state is fundamentally dependent upon the structure and internal social context of said state. He claims that, despite years of severe criticism and allegations of utopianism from realist and institutionalists, liberal preference based theory provides the best explanation of state behavior. "For liberals, the configuration of state preferences matters most in world politics—not, as realists argue, the configuration of capabilities and not, as institutionalists (that is, functional regime theorists) maintain, the configuration of information and institutions" (Ibid: 513).

Moravcsik claims that this theory also addresses one of the main weaknesses in realism, namely, what liberals claim is, its inability to explain changes in the in the international structure (Ibid: 535).

Unlike the realists who assume that states are the primary actors in the international system, Moravcsik maintains that the behavior of states fundamentally rests on individuals and private groups that behave rationally, avoids risks and tries to maximize the amount of resources they control and are able to utilize. These groups will use their influence in order to pursue their own interests and what they perceive is the interests of the state. It is also worth noting that what these groups perceive as the interests of the state often will be in their own interests as well (Ibid: 517). The function of the state in this theory is simply to represent the primary interests groups and individuals that exist within that stat on the international stage. Needless to say Moravcsik's assumptions about the international system differs greatly from those of Mearsheimer and other realists. His three main assumptions about international relations politics are as follows:

- **Assumption 1: The Primacy of Societal Actors**  
The fundamental actors in international politics are individuals and private groups, who are on the average rational and risk-averse and who organize exchange and collective action to promote differentiated interests under constraints imposed by material scarcity, conflicting values, and variations in societal influence.
- **Assumption 2: Representation and State Preferences**  
States (or other political institutions) represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics.
- **Assumption 3: Interdependence and the International System**  
The configuration of interdependent state preferences determines state behavior. (Ibid: 516-520).

If we accept the premise of these assumptions, the international conflicts in Moravcsik's theory will arise not from the attempts by states of gaining security through power, but rather from a clashing of interests between the dominant social groupings in two different countries. When one of these groups attempts to use their state as a tool on the international stage in order to realize their preferences and these preferences clashes with those of another dominant group, conflict has a high chance of arising. It is, according to Moravcsik, not the configuration of power among states that decides whether conflict will eventually erupt, but rather the value that the dominant group within a given state put on the issue in question, as well as their willingness to accept risks and bear the burden of a potential war over this issue (Ibid: 521). In the same sense, cooperation between states will ensue when the ruling elites within the states have correlating interests and values. If this situation occurs, one can expect to see states that go to

great lengths in order to cooperate and protect each other. Unlike realists who claim that states act within their capabilities and the means they have of achieving their goals, the liberal theory of Moravcsik claims that the primary concern of states is the ends they wish to achieve with their foreign policy. “*Variation in ends, not means, matters most*” (Ibid: 522).

Since Moravcsik claims that elites and interests groups decide how a country's foreign policy is going to look like, we will need to examine what the interests as well as the morals and ideologies of American elites are with regards to the rise of China. As to the matter of determining which group has the most influence in Washington, Friedberg (2005) claims in his article that this is the “optimist liberals”. This claim corresponds with what Mead (2001) argues in “Special Providence” where it is claimed that the liberal Hamiltonian and Wilsonian schools of thought dominate among American elites (Mead, 2001: 267). Below I will look at the most prominent theories and interests that I am able to discern in the liberal American foreign policy elite and among other groups with influence in the establishment. However, before we arrive at these interests I will first address the influence on foreign policy that common Americans is believed to have.

In his work *American diplomacy* (1984) George Kennan suggests that the moral values and interests of ordinary Americans are part of the reason why decision makers in the United States refrain from following a realist foreign policy. Despite of this I am going to focus my attention on the American elites rather than the common voter. The reasons why I choose not to include the ideals, interests and values of ordinary Americans in this analysis is threefold:

- First: Moravcsik himself focuses mostly on elites and decision maker, because these are the persons that are going to have to most influence on the final decisions and be best placed to change them (Moravcsik, 1997).
- Second: Despite the fact that Mead claim to have identified what he calls Jacksonianism as a very common set of foreign policy priorities among ordinary Americans (Mead, 2001), the breadth of interests among a population of more than 300 million people is bound to be immense. It follows then that the general interests of the populace is very hard to ascertain both for the social scientist and for the politician taking the final decision on policy.
- Third: Several social scientists have suggested that, while politicians and the government are influenced by the wishes of the general populace through, among other institutions, the media (Iyengar, 2011:92-93). The established Media will in cases of most national security questions follow the line as it is laid down by the government and accept the government's arguments in order to “stay in the loop”. This deprives the general population of the information necessary for people to decide whether the current foreign policy being conducted really is in their best interests (Bennett, 1990).

For example, before the invasion of Iraq in 2003 there was widespread opposition among ordinary Americans to this invasion. However in the weeks before the invasion started and once

the attack was underway, the opposition in the established media went almost completely silent, and the result was that support for the war skyrocketed among ordinary Americans (Iyengar, 2011: 105-106). Since the case of China's rise is most definitely a security question, there is a case for assuming that the security elite will make most decisions on this matter and that the opinions of ordinary Americans will have little influence on the final decisions that are made.

All that considered, let us now take a look at the theories that I assume drive the liberal decision makers in the United States. These have already been categorized by Aaron L. Friedberg in his 2005 article "The future of U.S.-China relationship, is conflict inevitable?" and in my analysis I will for the most part use the theories he claims are determining the preferred strategies of optimist liberals in America.

### **The Democratic Peace theory**

Kant's idea about the relationship between liberal republics eventually developed into what is today known as the Democratic-Peace theory. In short, its expectations are that liberal democratic countries very seldom wage war upon each other. This is partly because the electorate of those countries never would permit their politician to go to war against another liberal democracy (Doyle, 1986), but also because liberal republics recognize the "international rights of foreign republics. These international rights of republics derive from the representation of foreign individuals, who are our moral equals" (Ibid: 1162). Democratic peace theory suggests that the best way of achieving perpetual peace is to make sure that all states are liberal democratic republics. In contrast, realist thinkers only accept the implementation of a world government or the rise of a world hegemon as a way of securing world peace (Waltz, 1959). Some authors have claimed that the democratic peace theory is as close to a general law as one can get in international politics since wars between democratic countries are extremely rare if not none existent (Russett, Layne, Spiro and Doyle: 1995). Nevertheless the democratic peace theory has faced severe criticism by several realists over the years who claim that there are instances of democracies who wage war against each other and that these wars therefore refutes the theory (see for example: Layne, 1994).

Despite this criticism the democratic peace theory still has many supporters among theorists and decision makers, and perhaps especially among the American elite (Friedberg: 2005; Lieberthal and Wang: 2012). One could see a clear example of this before the American led invasion of Iraq in 2003, where one of the main arguments of American President George W. Bush in favor of the invasion was that tyranny had to be defeated all over the world in order

to create a safe planet of democratic states. Delivering his second inaugural address in 2005 Bush claimed that:

“The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world... So it’s the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and every culture, with the ultimate goal of ending Tyranny in our world” (Quoted in Nye & Welch, 2011:62).

The will to use force in order to create peaceful democratic states was perhaps especially pronounced during the Bush administration, but the democratic peace theory continued to exercise strong influence on officials during the administrations of President Barack Obama as well. Obama made this perfectly clear in his Nobel Peace Prize lecture in 2009, when he stated that:

“Only when Europe became free did it finally find peace. America has never fought a war against a democracy, and our closest friends are governments that protect the rights of their citizens. No matter how callously defined, neither America's interests – nor the world's – are served by the denial of human aspirations” (Obama, 2009a).

With the democratic peace theory so prominent in American foreign policy thinking, despite a change of administrations, we should expect to see an American policy towards China that promotes democracy within that country and that aims at turning China into a liberal republic of the kind that Kant envisions. As a strategy for achieving this goal, we can expect to see American support for human rights activists within China, a policy of condemnation whenever the Chinese government is perceived to break the human rights, and an attempt at influencing prominent Chinese officials and future Chinese leaders into accepting democracy as a valid and preferable way of government. Further it is the belief of several of these liberalists that the economic development of China will create a strong middle class that eventually are going to demand their democratic rights (Lieberthal, 1995). This focus on China’s economic development brings us over to the second set of interests that seems to be prominent among the American elites. That is, the growing economic interdependence between the U.S. and China as well the immense wealth invested by the two countries in each other’s economies.

### **China-U.S. economic ties**

Like the democratic peace theory, the theory of economic interdependence is popular among liberal thinkers. The basic idea of this theory is that as trade grows between modern countries, the cost of going to war against your trade partners grows as well.



“Trade provides valuable benefits, or “gains from trade,” to any particular state. A dependent state should therefore seek to avoid war, since peaceful trading gives it all the benefits of close ties without any of the costs and risks of war. Trade pays more than war, so dependent states should prefer to trade not invade” (Copland, 1996:8).

Particularly the expectation of growth and a stronger future trade relationship is expected to influence the decisions makers. When the trade between two nations is expected to grow in such a manner, liberals argue that the incentives to find peaceful solutions to any potential disagreements between the two countries are going to increase (Ibid). When American liberals apply this theory to the case of a growing China they will expect that with an increase in trade and economic interdependence, the economic interests of elites on both sides are going to combine to stop any war that could threaten the trade that is making them all rich (Friedberg, 2005:12). This interest in fostering a peaceful relationship between the two countries through trade combines with the pure economic interests that the American business elite have in increasing trade. This is likely going to put considerable pressure on any American administration’s foreign policy.

The trade between China and the U.S. has been steadily growing since the opening of China by President Richard Nixon in the 1970s, and is expected to continue to grow despite some American concerns about Chinese regulations and business practices (U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2012). In fact, China is now the premier trading partner of the United States and their economies are heavily linked to each other. Several American companies operate in China and vice versa. These businesses have already sought to influence American trade policies and it is claimed that they have been highly successful. Even to the point where the American focus on democracy and human rights have been forced to step aside in order to accommodate a more profitable foreign policy towards China (Cohen, 2005). With regards to the peace making aspect of this theory there are already claims that American attempts at integrating China into the international economic system are stabilizing the East-Asia region (Christensen, 2006).

To sum up, if American foreign policy is best explained by liberal theory, we can expect to see a policy that strives to improve the business environment between China and the U.S. We should also expect a policy that seeks to integrate the two economies even further in order to foster a lasting peace between them and avoid potential conflict that may arise as China increases both its economic and military strength.

However worries about Chinese trade practices is already causing concern among the American business elites, politicians and experts (U.S.-China Economic and Security Review

Commission, 2012). If these practices eventually start to impair the ability of American companies to make a profit from deeper economic integration with China, we could see a shift in U.S. policy to one based more on preserving American competitiveness on the world market rather than one focused on facilitating trade between China and the United States.

### **The promise of international institutions**

Unlike realists who are quick to claim that the international institutions of the world have no discernible effect upon peace between countries (Mearsheimer, 1994-95), liberals often place great faith in these same institutions as ways of creating order in the anarchy that exists on the international stage (Keohane: 1998; 1988). The hopes of the proponents of institutionalist theory are that international institutions, such as the UN, can help clear up the often muddled field of international politics by reducing uncertainty about state intentions. It is also claimed that international institutions often improves communications between nations and allow these same nations to cooperate closer together than they usually would have been able to do (Friedberg, 2005:13). All of this allows a nation feel safer in an uncertain world and helps mitigate the effects of anarchy. Proponents of liberal institutionalism also note that the importance of international institutions such as the WTO, the UN and NATO has kept increasing during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and that even realists like Henry Kissinger who used to ignore these institutions now admit their importance (Keohane, 1998:85). If the United States can help improve upon the already existing institutions that operate in East-Asia as well as integrate China into the current international structure, liberals expect that the two countries can manage to maintain a peaceful relationship (Christensen, 2006). In fact, the ongoing integration of China into these international institutions is expected to have already turned the Chinese into a more responsible partner. This can potentially lead to a situation in the future where the Chinese aid the Americans in propping up the international system they both profit from (Shambaugh, 2004-2005:69).

Like the Democratic Peace theory and the growing economic ties between China and the U.S., the potential for peace inherit in an international system structured by institutions is a strong incentive for liberal policymakers. As such, we can expect these liberals to pursue a policy that aims at integrating China into such a system. Following the liberal theory of Moravcsik it is reason to claim that any American foreign Policy based upon a liberal tradition, and which therefore could be claimed to be exceptional for America, can be expected to aim at integrating China into such institutions. More precisely, we can expect the Americans to support such institutions in the East Asia region, as well as promote the inclusion of China into these

same institutions and other more worldwide organizations. I would also expect to see a United States that seeks to conduct its diplomacy within the framework of these institutions rather than on a bilateral basis when negotiating with the Chinese.

### **An exceptional and liberal foreign policy**

With the three main liberal theories accounted for it is time to summarize what I expect to observe if American foreign policy is driven by liberal considerations rather than realist. If we accept that Friedberg (2005) and Mead (2001) are right and the liberals really are the most influential group in Washington, we can expect to see an American policy that focuses on these two aspects:

- *1: American attempts at turning China into a liberal democracy along the lines of western democracies. Further, since many liberals are arguing that international institutions promote peace, I will expect to see an American foreign policy that promotes these institutions and aims at integrating a rising China with them.*
- *2: we can expect to see American attempts at fostering greater economic cooperation and integration between the two powers, even if this trade does not benefit the U.S. in the short term.*

### **The tests for liberal exceptionalism**

As I mentioned in the introduction, the basis for claiming that there exists a unique American way of conducting foreign policy lies foremost in the perceived absence of realist considerations in the American foreign policy tradition, as well as the pressure that the democratic system and the importance of spreading “American values” put on politicians (see Mead, 2001:30-31; Kennan, 1984:49-50). The preference based liberal theory by Andrew Moravcsik serves as way of identifying the most important groups that influence American foreign policy. These groups can for the most part be said to stand for what have traditionally been characterized as American exceptionalism. On the opposite side of the spectrum, you find the Offensive Realism of John Mearsheimer. As noted earlier, Mearsheimer claims that the United States acts like any other great power and that unlike what is generally believed state interests and the race for power is what drives U.S. foreign policy forward. Therefore, the presence of clearly realist foreign policy decisions in the United States’ relationship with China should be hard to explain through the theory of American exceptionalism.

Having considered this, I have chosen to test for the absence or presence of realist considerations in American foreign policy as well as the absence or presence of policy driven by the values and preferences that dominates among the American elite. Below are listed the respective foreign policy actions that I expect to see with the presence of a policy driven by

either realist or liberal/exceptional preferences. I have divided the behavioral patterns I expect to observe into two hypothesis for the Realist theory and two for Liberal theory.

### **Realist founded U.S. foreign policy towards China**

- *1. Hypothesis: A strong and clear American posture with regards to Chinese expansion of its military capabilities and Chinese attempts at influencing its neighbors, as well as a substantial increase in American military deployment to the East-Asia and the South-East Asia regions. American military assets in the Pacific and in East Asia should also be shielded from defense cuts, even to the point where the budget for this area is increased despite other cuts.*
  - *Variable: Military focus and American perception of China as a threat*
    - *Empirical indicators: Statements of policy, Military presence, Development and deployment of weapons aimed at countering China and American military Strategy.*
- *2. Hypthesis: An attempt at containing China through the application of alliances and cooperation with the other states in the region.*
  - *Variable: Alliances and American alliance building in the region.*
    - *Empirical indicators: Statements of intent, high profile joint exercises and defense agreements.*

### **Liberal founded U.S. foreign policy towards China**

- *1. Hypothesis: An American diplomacy focused on human rights and democracy while attempting to bring about these changes within China through cooperation and avoiding unnecessary confrontation between the two nations. A U.S. policy that seeks to integrate China into international institutions in order to create a more stable frame for China to rise within.*
  - *Variable: Bilateral diplomatic cooperation and American support for Chinese integration into international institutions*
    - *Empirical indicators: Statements of policy in documents and following meetings, Positive and friendly rhetoric towards China and American support for Chinese membership in international organizations and fora.*
- *2. Hypothesis American attempts at fostering greater economic cooperation and integration between the two powers in order to ensure a peaceful relationship as well as cater to the wishes of the American business elite.*
  - *Variable: U.S. bilateral trade with China.*
    - *Empirical indicators: Statements of intent, increase in trade between the U.S. despite of an American trade deficit and China, as well as successful pressure on decision makers from the economic elite.*

Having established these parameters, I will now take a closer look at the actual American policy decisions that have been made since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the first Bill Clinton presidency.

### ***Part 3. Mapping the Empirical Basis for the Chosen Theories***

My last section focused on the two theories that I would use as a way to examine the possibility of an exceptional American Foreign policy. I also outlined what I would expect to see if American foreign policy followed the expectations of either Realist theory or Liberal theory respectively. This section will map the empirical evidence found within the case of China's rise, which can support either of the two theories. It will be organized along the lines which were provided in the theory section. To be more precise I will first outline evidence that supports the existence or nonexistence of U.S. foreign policy behavior based on the two expectations that were identified for realist theory. Following that I will gather outline the data that supports or go against either of the expectations that follow from preference based liberal theory.

This data, which shows American foreign policy behavior and statements of intent in the period from the end of the Cold War, will form the basis for my analysis of American policy with regards to China. I will look at each presidential period from Bill Clinton until the first Obama presidency, looking first at the realist hypotheses and then at the liberal. However, before we dive into the depths and detail of American strategy and foreign policy, I want to start with a short overview of the relationship between the U.S. and China since the beginning of the cold war and especially the thawing of that relationship during the 1970s. This is relevant because the opening of China as well as the Tiananmen Square incident sets the stage for the American foreign policy that has been directed towards China for the last two decades.

## **Historical Prologue**

### **Thawing the Ice**

The relationship between China and the United States after World War 2 was heavily characterized by the cold war standoff between the U.S. and Soviet Russia. The two countries went from being allies during the WW2 to competitors and enemies in the years after 1949. The U.S. policy during this period was one of containment and in one instance war against the Chinese. The Korea war was originally a response to the aggression of North Korea towards South Korea, but in reality the Chinese fear of American encroachment (Scobell, 2004) and the American fear of spreading communism (Kissinger, 1994:476-477) led to what was to all intents and purposes a hot war between China and the U.S. It was during this was that the U.S. first committed itself to the defense of Taiwan with President Eisenhower stating that: "The occupation of Formosa by communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to the United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in

that area" (Ibid: 479). This commitment would prove to be significant for the development of later U.S.-Sino relationship.

The relationship between the two powers remained frosty until the beginning of the 1970s and the Presidency of Richard Nixon (Ibid.). Nixon and his staff followed a strict balance of power policy with regards to the Soviet Union and his main goal was to shift that balance in favor of the United States. His preferred way of achieving this goal was by detaching China from the Soviet Union and bringing them to the American side, or at the very least make sure they remained neutral (Cohen, 2005: 8). To quote Nixon:

“We must remember the only time in the history of the world that we have had any extended period of peace is when there has been balance of power. It is when one nation becomes infinitely more powerful in relation to its potential competitor that danger of war arises" (Nixon, quoted in: Kissinger, 1994:705).

For their own part, the Chinese were more than happy to cooperate with the Americans. Indeed many Chinese leader were at the time considering the Soviet Union to be a bigger threat to China than the U.S. constituted (Siu-Kai, 2004:95-96). The most serious source of contention, the question of Taiwan, was put off until later. Mao was even claimed to have stated that: “We can do without them [Taiwan] for the time being, and let it come after a 100 years” (Kissinger, 1994:727). The Chinese were in other words resolved to being patient concerning the Taiwan question for the time being.

The political and economic consequences of Nixon’s newfound cooperation with China were significant. Trade between the two countries expanded rapidly, Chinese leaders opened their country’s economic system to some capitalist practices and the communist leadership seemed more inclined to accept a greater personal freedom for the average citizen. As a consequence several western commentators in the 80s claimed that it was now only a question of time before China developed into a fully-fledged liberal democracy similar to the United States and other western countries (Cohen, 2005:15).

## **The Tiananmen Square**

The Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 came as a wakeup call to both Chinese decision makers and Americans. The killings of close to one thousand demonstrators shattered the image of China as a developing democracy that the west had entertained for several years (Ibid: 14-15). For decision makers in Washington the whole incident seems to have come at a very inopportune moment. With the Soviet Union opening up, but still a threat, President Bush was anxious to retain China as an ally. At the same time he faced increasing criticism from the American public and opposition who wanted to punish the Chinese leaders for their actions.

The result was a sort of compromise where Bush stopped all weapons sales to China, but at the same time maintained diplomatic and trade relations as a way to maintain at the very least the semblance of a relationship between the countries (Ibid.: 15-16). This was done despite severe condemnation of the Chinese actions from the American media, the opposition and the general public. In other words, China was too important to alienate completely even if the cold war in effect was coming to an end (Friedberg, 2011:91). Still the incident marked the beginning of a new form of U.S. policy towards China, one which retained the earlier optimism about democratic change but which included a greater skepticism towards the goals of the Chinese leadership (Ibid.:89-90).

With the historical background out of the way, the rest of the chapter will examine the policy conducted by the U.S. towards China and East and South-East Asia in this period. I will begin with examining the factors that are necessary for testing the Offensive Realist theory.

## **Testing for a Realist U.S. Foreign Policy**

### **1992-1996: The first Clinton Administration**

#### **Military deployments and U.S. diplomatic posture**

When Bill Clinton arrived in the White House in January 1993, foreign policy seemed to be very far from his mind. Economic issues dominated and if international issues came up they were almost all focused on the economic aspect (Cohen, 2005:57). It is worth mentioning however, that during the presidential race between Clinton and George Bush sr. the question of how to respond to the Tiananmen massacre was a hot topic. Clinton himself criticized Bush for not acting more forcefully towards the Chinese leadership, and promised a tougher stance on human rights if he was elected President (ibid.). According to Cohen, this stance was nevertheless quickly abandoned when Clinton took office, in favor of a policy that focused on economic cooperation with China rather than risking actions that could lead to a strained relationship (Ibid.). The Clinton administration tried for a time to push China into concessions on human rights and political liberties. However when threats to link Chinas Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to its human rights record failed to produce results, the White House started to assert that the United States could best promote change by encouraging trade instead of withholding it (Friedberg, 2011:93).

For Clinton, it seemed economic prosperity and national security was two sides of the same coin and that economy was the priority. In the National Security Strategy Report for 1994 (page: 15), this is stated quite clearly:

“A central goal of our national security strategy is to promote America's prosperity through efforts both at home and abroad. Our economic and security interests are increasingly inseparable. Our prosperity at home depends on engaging actively abroad. The strength of our diplomacy, our ability to maintain an unrivaled military, the attractiveness of our values abroad... all these depend in part on the strength of our economy”.

The report also stresses the unique situation that the U.S. found itself in in 1994. With no real peer competitor to speak of and democracy on the rise in most parts of the world, the image that is painted in this report is an optimistic one. The Clinton administration focused on smaller more asymmetric threats as the main problem and threat that America faced, and as a consequence the armed forces were expected to be more flexible than before. The administration still expected the United States armed forces to be able to fight and win two almost simultaneous wars against medium strength states in different parts of the world (National Security Strategy Report, 1994:6 (NSS)), but the emphasis had shifted away from the cold war strategy of massive wars against another great power. Nevertheless, the Clinton administration stated in its Strategy that it wished to maintain at least 100 000 American troops deployed to the Asia-Pacific region (Ibid: 23). The 100 000 mark was to be retained throughout the Clinton years.

As with regards to China, the country is mentioned as a future partner rather than competitor and a strategy of integrating China into the regional order is emphasized as a means of making sure that China's neighbors are reassured. To quote the report again:

“We are also working to facilitate China's development of a more open, market economy that accepts international trade practices. Given its growing economic potential and already sizable military force, it is essential that China not become a security threat to the region. To that end, we are strongly promoting China's participation in regional security mechanisms to reassure its neighbors and assuage its own security concerns.” (NSS, 1994 :24).

If we look at the actual number of American troops we see that despite of Clinton's emphasize on the importance of Asia, the number of troops deployed to the Asia-Pacific region and the two important U.S. Pacific bases on Hawaii and Guam by 1994, had dropped by 21 289 men. Down from 168 038 in September 1990 to 146 749 in September 1994<sup>1</sup>.

By 1995 the number had been reduced even further and the number of U.S. army personnel deployed was now at 132 987, down 13762 from 1994. Adding this up we can see that more than 35 000 U.S. troops were redeployed from the Asia-Pacific region during the first half of the 90s. 35 000 troops constitute more than a 20 percent decrease of American military presence

---

<sup>1</sup> All data that I make use of on the U.S. troop levels in the Pacific and East-Asian region are collected from: DoD PERSONNEL & PROCUREMENT STATISTICS; <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/miltop.htm>. Individual direct links for each year is found in the literature list. For an overview of U.S. troops deployments to East Asia during the different presidential periods see the Appendix.



in the region since the end of the cold war. This was done despite that growing importance of the region and the expanding economic and military potential of China. It is however clear from the National Security Strategy Reports (1994, 1995) that the White House did not consider China to be an important military threat at the time, despite warnings from writers like Henry Kissinger (1994) and Samuel Huntington (1993). As such, it is not surprising that the presence of American forces in the region declined through the early 90s.

### **Alliance and containment policy in the period**

As for alliance policies and partners, most of the U.S.'s long time partners in the region such as Japan and Australia were mentioned in the NSS for 1994 only in passing. The exception would be South-Korea but this has probably more to do with a relatively aggressive North-Korea than with a rising China. Overall the Clinton administration seems to have been more concerned with the legal framework of trade practices than with strengthening the alliances in the region. This is perhaps not surprising when one considers the rather weak international position of China at the time. Some American analysts even argued that Japan was actually a stronger competitor to America than China was (Cohen, 2005: 42).

## **1996-2000: The second Clinton administration**

### **Military deployments and a strong stance**

The period from 1996 - 2000 incorporates the first incident since the end of the cold war where China and the United States directly opposed each other and the U.S. actively tried to deter the PRC from pursuing a specific course of action. The action in question was Chinas attempt at using threats and force in order to influence the 1996 presidential election on Taiwan (Ross, 2000; Thies & Bratton, 2004; Scobell, 2000). These threats came as a result of increasing Chinese fears about the intentions of the Taiwanese Leadership, and what the Chinese claimed were obvious American and Taiwanese provocations (He & Feng, 2009), such as the decision to allow Taiwanese president Lee Teng-Hui to visit the United States in 1995 (Bush, 2005:83).

The Chinese missiles tests and following amphibious operations and troop movements in 95 and the spring of 96, led to the deployment of the American aircraft carriers Independence and Nimitz to the Taiwan Strait as an assurance to Taiwan and a way of deterring the Chinese from further aggressive action. The Americans wanted to send a strong signal to China that military aggressions against Taiwan would not be tolerated and the U.S. was prepared to fight if China went so far as to invade Taiwan (Ross, 2000). The Pentagon gave this statement to the press when it became common knowledge that the two ships and their escorts had been deployed to the Taiwanese Straits:

“The signal that these ships are sending is one of precaution and reassurance: precaution because we want to make sure that there is no miscalculation on the part of Beijing as to our very firm interest in that region of the world; reassuring because we want our friends in the area to know that we have a large stake in the stability and the peace in that region...But I also want to point out, Charlie, that there has been absolutely no indication that the Chinese have any intention of doing anything other than settling their differences by peaceful means”. (Doubleday, 12 mars 1996).

In short, the Taiwan crisis in 1996 seems to have forced the Americans into thinking about China as a possible threat, at least for a short while. Some argue that the Taiwan Straits constitutes the most volatile area that the U.S. is currently engaged in, and that the Taiwan crisis in 95-96 brought this to the forefront of planners and staffers’ minds (Tucker, 2005). Following the arguments of Offensive Realism, we should expect to see an increase in American military deployment to East Asia and the Pacific after the 1995-96 confrontation with China. After all American resolve had been challenged and their willingness to defend an ally tested.

Looking at the numbers we can see that from September 1995 to September 1996 the number of American troops in the region rises from 132 987 to 136 888. While this is an increase of almost 4000 men, the increase should be explainable by looking at the extraordinary measures the U.S. took in order to guard against Chinese aggression against Taiwan, the Crew of a single Nimitz class carrier alone constitutes more than 5000 troops for example (Americas Navy Fact File, 2012). At any rate, the increase in troops did not turn out to be permanent and a year later, in 1997, troop levels had fallen below those of 1995 down to 130 631 deployed personnel.

The NSS reports for the years following the Taiwan Crises does not differ a lot from those of the earlier Clinton administration either. One does get the feeling that there exists a certain amount of urgency with regards to integrating China into the world order as a responsible power. However very little actually portrays China as a potential threat:

“An overarching U.S. interest is China's emergence as a stable, open, secure and peaceful state. The prospects for peace and prosperity in Asia depend heavily on China's role as a responsible member of the international community. China's integration into the international system of rules and norms will influence its own political and economic development, as well as its relations with the rest of the world”. (NSS Report, 1997).

Nevertheless, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) for 1997 stresses the importance of maintaining American military supremacy and mentions as a threat potential great powers that are currently engaged in modernizing their forces (QDR, 1997). At the time this review was written China was the only potential challenger that was busy modernizing its forces to any great extent. The QDR also states that even if the state department saw no reason to expect China to become a “peer competitor” before 2015, the country did have the potential to become

so at a later date. With this in mind, one can assume that China's growth had started to weigh on the minds of the planners in Pentagon and the State Department.

Looking at the numbers for the years 1997-2000 one finds that the overall number of troops deployed to East Asia, Hawaii and Guam increases quite a bit. From 130 631 in September 1997 to 138 643 in September 2000 (see figure 1.). This troop increase coincide with a greater urgency among the top leaders in Washington to come up with a strategy for containing China if that country were to gain the strength to challenge U.S. interests (Friedberg, 2011:98). So despite attempts by President Clinton at emphasizing cooperation and partnership with the Chinese in the years following the Taiwan crisis (see for example: NSS, 1998), we also see an increase in American troops deployed to the East Asia region. Further one can see increasing American worry at the prospect of a strong and confident China among the top leaders in the State Department, the Pentagon and the intelligence agencies (Friedberg, 2011:98-99).

The year 2000 also saw the first annual report to Congress on the military power of the People's Republic of China (Annual Report to congress, 2000). These reports were meant to keep a seemingly increasingly worried Congress up to date on the military developments of the People's Liberation Army (Friedberg, 2011:97). Overall, one can witness an increasing American worry over Chinas growth at the turn of the millennium, this worry developed despite reports that concluded that China was still lagging far behind U.S. military might and would need decades to catch up with the Americans, and even more if China aimed at surpassing the United States (se for example: Ross, 2002).

The increase in American focus on China is not surprising when one considers the Taiwan crisis in 95-96, but it also coincides with growing Chinese military might and spending. If one looks at the figures on military spending one will learn that from 1995 to 2000 the Chinese military budget increased by more than 50 percent, from \$23b in 1995 to \$37b only five years later (SIPRI, 2012). Even if American leaders were not going to admit it, they would almost certainly look upon such an increase in Chinese military spending with some worry. Even if the Americans believed that it would take 15 years before China could become a peer competitor in 1997 (QDR, 1997), the rise of peer competitor in 15 years' time is still a source for worry.

### **Alliance building and partners from 96-00**

This period saw an increase in American troop deployments to the region, but it also led to a strengthening of military ties between Taiwan and the United States. The crisis in 95-96 drove

the American and Taiwanese military closer together and signified a newfound cooperation between Taiwan and the U.S. In fact the American military and the Taiwanese armed forces were at the time of the crisis largely ignorant of each other's operational procedures and the crises forced a quick change in American strategy (Chase, 2005:166). Contrary to separating Taiwan and the United States, China's actions in 1995 seem to have brought them closer together and strengthened their alliance considerably.

As to the U.S.-Japanese alliance, the "1997 revised Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation" saw a strengthening of ties between the two countries. The 1997 guidelines seem to have been an attempt by the U.S. to counter the threats from both China and North Korea at the same time (Ajemian, 1998). They allowed the U.S. to count on Japanese help in the event of a war against China over Taiwan as well as in a potential conflict against North Korea. As such, this is a clear example of the Strengthening of U.S. alliances in the region after a period of confrontation with China, although it is perhaps worth mentioning that the NSS released in December 2000 stressed that the Guidelines were not meant to be directed against any one country.

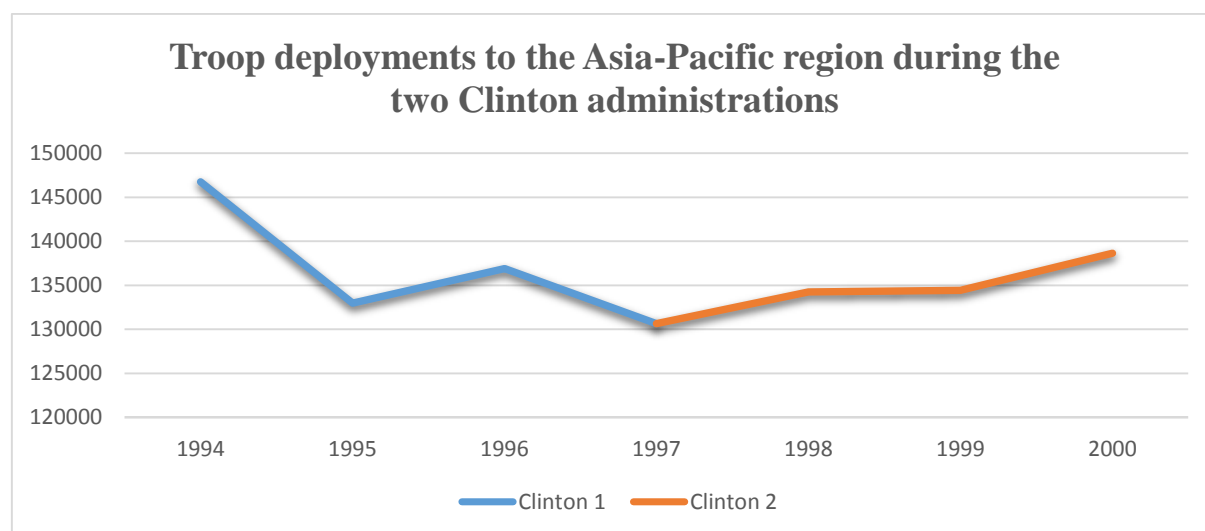


Figure 1. Source: DoD Personnel and Procurement Statistics.

## 2001-2004: The first George W. Bush administration

### Military deployments and U.S. diplomatic stance

The first foreign crisis that George W. Bush experienced came when a Chinese fighter plane and an American reconnaissance plane collided off the coast of China in April 2001. The Chinese pilot died in the collision and the American plane was forced to land at a Chinese airport (Cohen, 2010:267). The incident provoked Chinese anger and calls for an American apology. In the end, Bush expressed regret for the loss of the Chinese pilot and the fact that the

American plane had landed without obtaining permission from China. The Chinese accepted this statement and American and Chinese relations normalized for the time being. The incident seems to have been an awakening for Bush who had earlier promised to be tougher on China than his predecessor were (Ibid: 266). In the face of an assertive China Bush had been forced to compromise.

The Clinton administration's newfound worry over the increasing Chinese strength seems to have continued into the early days of the George W. Bush administration. In the QDR for 2001 it is stated that there is a chance that a military competitor may arise in Asia, this combined with the lack of American bases in East Asia, as well as the distances involved in that region makes it, according to the review, more difficult for American forces to ensure access to this vital region. "This places a premium on securing additional access and infrastructure agreements and on developing systems capable of sustained operations at great distances with minimal theater-based support" (QDR, 2001:4).

The QDR for 2001 also saw the first instance of a broad American strategy for realigning the U.S. armed forces to new threats around the world. Included in this realignment were plans to increase the U.S. Navy presence in the Western Pacific through the deployment of carrier battle groups as well as other assets, the U.S. Air Force was asked to ensure the logistic capabilities necessary for carrying out operations in the Western Pacific. Further, the feasibility of conducting training exercises for the U.S. Marine Corps in the Western Pacific was to be explored.

Despite these stated goals the American troop levels in the Western Pacific, on Guam and Hawaii dropped by more than 9000 troops from 138 643 in September 2000 to 129 314 September 2001. Nevertheless, by 2002 the numbers had increased again and were now at 134 142. In fact, the troop levels to the region were to flux quite a bit for the entirety of the first W. Bush administration. In September 2003, at 137 358 troops, they were almost back to the September 2000 levels. However, American troop strength dropped markedly in 2004 down to 128 128 and even more severely in 2005. As George W. Bush began his second term in office in 2005, the number of troops deployed to the region had fallen to 114 501, clearly the U.S. did not consider China to be a primary concern at the time.

Overall, the foreign policy direction of the first W. Bush administration was influenced heavily by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade center and Pentagon in 2001 and the "War on Terror", and as a result the Middle East, quickly took center stage (Cohen, 2005). The National Security Report for 2002 spoke, not surprisingly, at length about the importance of combating terrorism and extremists.

As with regards to China, some worry was expressed in the NSS report over continuing Chinese military modernization, and the Administration warned the Chinese about following this path. However, the importance of cooperation against extremists and stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction seems to have taken precedence over any threat that China's growth might constitute. In fact, the relationship between the two powers seems to have improved markedly in the months following the attacks on the World Trade Center. The Chinese were quick to offer their sympathy with the American people and aid in the War on Terror, at the same time the Americans agreed to consider the Chinese suppression of Muslims in the Xinjiang province as part of that same war (Cohen, 2010:269).

With this in mind, it is interesting to see that during both the invasion of Afghanistan in 2002 and during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the number of troops deployed to the Pacific and East Asia was maintained at a considerable level. While there were some reductions, these were for the most part temporary and not until 2005 do we see a considerable reduction in the number of troops deployed to the Pacific and East Asia region.

### **Alliances, change and consistency**

As for American alliance policy in the first W. Bush Administration, it followed the path of the later Clinton administration in attempting to reassure its old allies such as Japan, Australia and South Korea. Security cooperation between the United States and these nations was claimed to be the bedrock which the region's stability rested upon (NSS, 2002:26). The report did however mention some changes that the administration would like to see. More specifically the report argues that the alliance between the U.S. and South Korea should be prepared for a larger role as a way of maintaining regional stability, rather than simply being used to ensure the good behavior of North Korea.

Putting the traditional allies aside, the new direction American foreign policy seems to have taken with regards to India as a potential great power is of particular interests. Earlier reports from the Clinton days had focused upon the importance of maintaining peace between India and Pakistan and especially upon American worry over the considerable nuclear arsenals of the two countries. By 2002 however this stance seems to have shifted:

The United States has undertaken a transformation in its bilateral relationship with India based on a conviction that U.S. interests require a strong relationship with India... Differences remain, including over the development of India's nuclear and missile programs, and the pace of India's economic reforms. But while in the past these concerns may have dominated our thinking about India, today we start with a view of India as a growing world power with which we have common strategic interests. (NSS, 2002).

While the report does not mention China as a reason for this newfound interest in India, one need only look at a map to see why a Pacific based power worried about Chinese growth would find an alliance with India to be of great importance (Friedberg, 2011: 108). India seems to have worries of its own when it comes to the increasing power of China and have taken some measure in order to balance out what they perceive to be a Chinese military advantage along their shared border (BBC, 2010a). As such, a closer relationship with the United States that force the Chinese into managing two fronts simultaneously makes good strategic sense for India as well.

The election of George W. Bush to office also had consequences for the U.S. Taiwanese relationship. While greater defense cooperation started to take shape in the later Clinton years, the pace was picked up in the early months of the new W. Bush administration. Bush even stated in an interview that the United States would “do whatever it takes to help Taiwan defend itself” (Quoted in: Chase, 2005: 168).

According to Michael S. Chase, the U.S. was trying to striking a balance between selling and upgrading weapons for the Taiwanese and reassuring China. The Taiwanese for their part seems to value American weapons more as a symbol of American commitment to Taiwanese security than as a means for them to defend themselves. As such, before 1996 they were less concerned with the knowhow to use these weapons than the process of acquiring them (Chase, 2005: 172). That aside it is clear that in the early days of the 21<sup>st</sup> century American and Taiwanese security cooperation kept advancing at a fast pace. The only logical explanation for this is the increasing threat that a powerful China represents to Taiwan, there are no other obvious factors that could have influenced Washington into taking this road.

## **2005-2008: The second W. Bush administration**

### **Military deployments, diplomatic posture and U.S. focus**

As George W. Bush began his second term as President, the war in Iraq was turning into a quagmire and the war in Afghanistan was quickly getting out of hand. The administration struggled with mounting terrorist attacks against American forces abroad and a growing opposition to the war at home (Cohen, 2005: 160-163). Indeed, in the NSS report for 2006 the new security strategy is stated to be a war strategy and the “War on Terror” takes precedence over other problems and conflicts.

Yet by 2005, the improvements in relations between the United States and China that followed the terrorist attacks on 9/11 seems to have abated somewhat. On a trip to China, the then U.S. foreign secretary Condoleezza Rice criticized the Chinese on their human rights record, and she would not offer any promises on Taiwan (Cohen, 2011: 273). The relationship

seems to have been further strained by the increasing discrepancy in the U.S.-China trade balance and Chinese unwillingness to take steps to safeguard intellectual property rights.

In the reports to congress on Chinese military Power for 2005 and 2006 the Department of Defense expressed worry over the increasing military might of China, as well as over Chinese intentions with regards to Taiwan. The Chinese military seems to have focused a lot of attention on developing capabilities that could help them win a potential conflict with Taiwan and at the same time keep other powers from interfering. In particular, the implementation of modern missile systems and the ability to deny area access to other powers looks to be of paramount importance to the PLA. It was speculated that advances in Chinese missile technology could threaten even American carriers operating in the East Asia Theater of operations (Chase, Erickson & Yeaw, 2009). Further, improvements in the Chinese submarine force have led to at least one instance where a Chinese submarine was able to come within firing range of an American aircraft carrier (The Washington Times, 2006). The report to congress for 2006 focuses heavily on this military buildup and asks the questions: “Why this growing investment? Why these continuing large and expanding arms purchases? Why these continuing robust deployments?” (Annual Report to Congress, 2006: I).

The QDR from 2006 is equally skeptical to Chinese military modernization and argued that improved Chinese military capabilities as well as the huge distances involved in any conflict with the Chinese could place U.S. forces at a disadvantage. The answer to these problems says the QDR, is to focus on cooperation with allies and to strive to maintain U.S. air superiority, improve cyber defense and secure the ability to strike fast and overwhelming against any aggressor through both naval and air power (QDR, 2006: 30-31). Despite these goals and the worries expressed over China’s military buildup, the focus of the QDR was still on how to combat terrorists and insurgents. As a consequence, improving the operational capabilities of American special forces, rather than other capabilities that could allow the U.S. to easier win a great power conflict, took precedence (Ibid.).

I mentioned earlier that from 1995 to 2000 China’s defense budget increased by more than 50 percent and that this could help explain the buildup of American forces in the pacific during those years. In the period from 2000 to 2005 the estimated figures for Chinese defense spending kept increasing and almost doubled, from 32.1 billion US\$ in 2000 to 62.1 billion in 2005. It is clear from both the 2006 report to congress and the Quadrennial Defense Review for that same year that this development worried the American defense department. The lack of transparency in China’s military buildup was considered to be another serious issue by top U.S. officials and military commanders in 2006, and one which it were feared could lead to



misunderstandings and potential conflicts (Bloomberg, 2006). Nevertheless, by 2005 the American troop deployments to the Asia-Pacific region, at 114 501, were smaller than they had ever been since the end of the Cold War.

This development continued in the following years with the number of deployed personnel in the East Asia/Pacific region falling steadily. By 2006 the number was 112 331, by 2007 110 387 and by the election year 2008 the number of U.S. troops in the region had declined to 109 724. Put in perspective, the number of American forces deployed in this region declined with 28 919 troops during the Presidency of George W. Bush. At the same time Chinese defense spending kept increasing at a prodigious rate, up from 37.1 billion US\$ in 2000 to 106.7 billion in 2008 (Sipri: 2012). This increase in spending continued to worry decision makers in Washington and the Pentagon as well as independent analysts (see for example: Kaplan, 2005).

Besides the danger of increasing Chinese military power, U.S. decision makers were also increasingly worried over Chinese espionage and intelligence gathering. The report to congress for 2008 stated for example that the FBI and other law enforcements agencies considered China to be a leading espionage threat to the United States. The report also expressed worry over growing Chinese nationalism and the potential for unrest and foreign conflict this entail (For an insight on the effect of nationalism on Chinese military buildup see: Ross, 2009). It is also worth to mention that American planners seems to suspect that the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) was seeking the ability to deny access to enemy forces in as far away waters as Guam, or what the Chinese call "the second island chain" (Annual Report to Congress, 2008:23). If the Chinese were to develop these capabilities, they could potentially deny the U.S. Navy the ability to operate carrier air-groups in parts of the Western Pacific Ocean.

Despite of these worries we see that the number of American military personnel deployed in the region kept decreasing (see figure 2.) At the same time, as stated in the QDR for 2006, there seems to have been a shift of strategy within the American military. The focus of American military doctrine in 2008 had moved even further in the direction of smaller but more mobile and formidable forces. Some have also argued that despite of Chinese naval modernizations, the United States did not need to start a new arms race in order to stay ahead of the PLA. It would simply be enough to continue with the current plans for modernization and deployment (Ross, 2009).

Nevertheless, the ability to maintain military superiority in every scenario remained an important goal for the U.S. armed forces, and this led to a considerable realignment of U.S. forces in the Western-Pacific (Halloran, 2007). The idea was that in the years following 2007

the Americans would have fewer boots on the ground overall as the army withdrew some combat units from South Korea and Japan, in favor of the U.S. base at Guam. At the same time, Washington planned to improve air and naval capabilities in the region, with long time plans stretching to 2017. As a consequence, the U.S. Air Force and Navy started to deploy more and improved units to the Western Pacific during the second Bush administration. The number of aircraft carriers deployed in the Pacific and on the eastern-coast of the United States increased from five to six. The Navy also planned to improve on missile defenses in the region as a response to the increased proliferation of missiles, and especially Chinese anti-ship missiles being deployed to East Asia (Ibid.).

The Air Force for their part had started to deploy more modern fighter jets such as the F-22 to Japan and Guam as well as B-2 bombers to Guam. Both the F-22 and the B-2 are stealth aircraft and represented a marked improvement over the aircraft already present in the Asia-Pacific region (Washington Post, 2008). As a consequence of the increased threat from missiles in East Asia the Air Force, like the U.S. Navy, took steps to improve upon the overall missile defense of the region, this was done in part to reassure allies like Japan and Taiwan (Halloran, 2007). The general investments in missile defense was a notable characteristic of the Bush presidency since it required that the U.S. withdrew from the 1972 Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty. The White House claimed that this shield was meant to defend the U.S. and her allies from “rogue states” like Iran and North Korea (NSS, 2006). Nevertheless, both China and Russia were quick to condemn the plans and claim that the defense would constitute a danger to the balance of power in certain regions of the world as such a shield could potentially be used to endanger the Russian and Chinese nuclear deterrent (BBC, 2008).

While American officials are quick to dismiss the idea that they are trying to contain China’s rise, it is still clear that the Pentagon considered China to be potentially dangerous adversary in 2008 (Halloran, 2008), and this seems to have prompted the changes that one could see in American military strategy in the western Pacific during the last Bush administration. The final National Defense Strategy paper of the Bush administration devotes quite some space to the potential threat from China and states that:

“China is one ascendant state with the potential for competing with the United States. For the foreseeable future, we will need to hedge against China’s growing military modernization and the impact of its strategic choices upon international security...The objective of this effort is to mitigate near term challenges while preserving and enhancing U.S. national advantages over time.” (NDS, 2008: 3).

Besides the general challenge that a rising great power presents the NDS states that China in particular are developing capabilities specifically to mitigate the American advantage in

communications technology and the command and control aspect of modern warfare (Ibid:22), a trend that clearly worried planners in Washington. As the second period of President George W. Bush came to an end, one could observe a greater emphasis on the security problems that China poses to the U.S. than was present in 2001 as Bush took office.

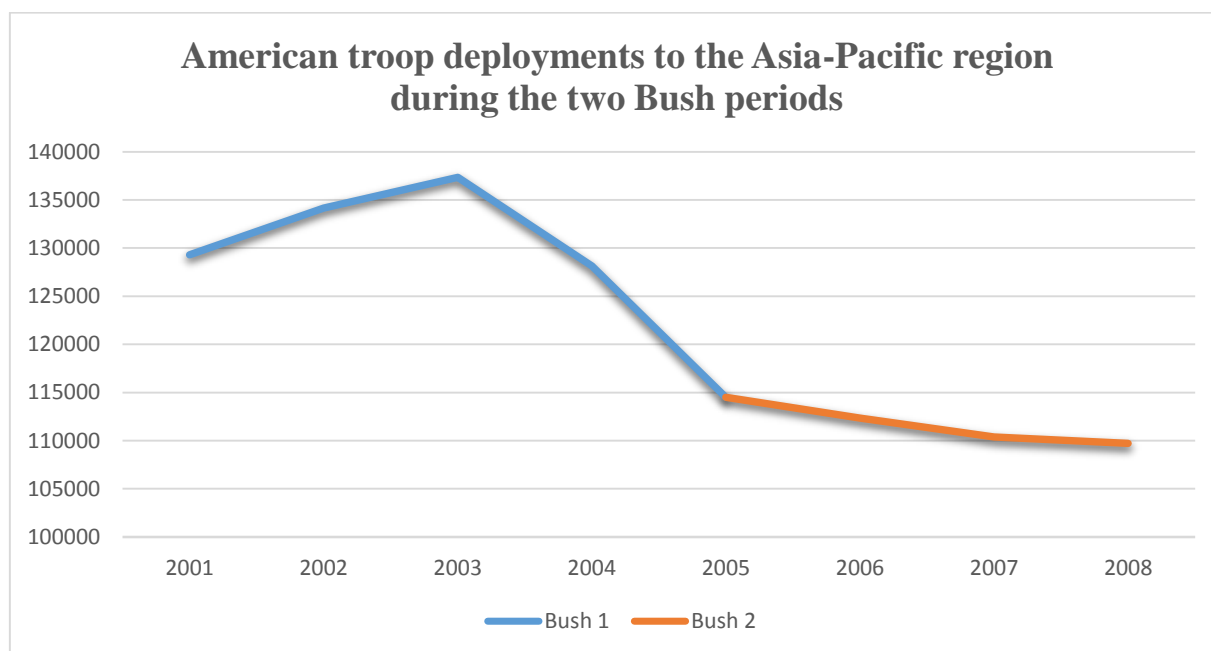


Figure 2. Source: DoD Personnel and Procurement Statistics.

### **Alliance policy in East Asia 05-08.**

The alliance policy that began with the first Bush administration was continued in the second term as well, and the support to traditional allies such as South Korea, Japan and Australia was maintained. As noted earlier the implementation of an American missile defense system in East Asia was something that both Taiwan and Japan clearly wanted to see. The Japanese seems to have been worried by the North Korean nuclear weapons program and the Taiwanese were as always worried about Chinese military buildup (Halloran, 2007).

The relationship with India was also further improved upon as the United States became willing to help that country advance their civilian nuclear energy program and started to view India as a friendly rising power rather than a country locked in conflict with Pakistan (Blackwill, 2005). In fact, the policy of engaging with India was given even more attention during the second Bush presidency and it proceeded even more rapidly than it had in the first period. Former American Ambassador to India Robert D. Blackwill claims that reason behind this increase in pace lay with the many foreign problems that the first administration faced, as well as certain inertia among the foreign policy bureaucracy which had to be convinced into seeing India as a major partner rather than as a nuclear proliferation problem (Ibid.). By 2005 however,

these hurdles seems to have been overcome and the bilateral cooperation between the two countries proceeded at an even faster pace (Friedberg, 2011).

Looking at South Korea, the number of U.S. troops in that country had been dropping for some time since 2004. However, in 2008 president Bush stated that the U.S. would once again increase their presence in South Korea to 28,500 troops and that this was the troop level that the United States would seek to maintain in the future (Korea Times, 2008).

The White House was also hard at work trying to ferment greater multilateral cooperation between their allies in East Asia in the period. In 2007 the United States, India, Japan and Australia began the first naval exercises of the Quadrilateral Initiative, a strategic partnership that seems to have been formed as a counter to growing Chinese power (BBC, 2007). Both Australia and Japan have expressed worry over China's increasing power and according to Blackwill, the Indians have long been looking at China as a strategic competitor (Blackwill, 2005). This worry seems to have found an outlet in more frequent military exercises and closer strategic relationships between the U.S., India, Australia and Japan. In short then, as Chinese power kept increasing during the final term of George W. Bush, America strengthened its ties with natural allies like India and worked hard to implement greater security cooperation between the democratic countries in East Asia and the Western Pacific region.

## **2009- 2013: The first Obama period**

### **Military deployments, diplomatic posture and new weapons programs**

President Barack Obama rode to the White House on a wave of public optimism during the election of 2008. The campaign message of the new President was very simply "Change", but it seemed to be broadly appealing to an American public in the middle of a financial crisis and tired of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. While the 2008 campaign in general focused on the state of the American economy and the importance of creating jobs for the average American, Obama still promised changes on the foreign policy front as well. Concerning China, the president claimed that he would like to see the two countries work together on common interests like the climate issue (Obama, 2008). In general, the tone of the Obama campaign's foreign policy was one of dialogue rather than confrontation and cooperation rather than conflict. In fact the Obama policy was claimed to be more realist in certain aspects than the one followed by Bush (The economist, 2009a). Still, the focus of the campaign was mostly on economic issues rather than foreign policy ones.

Nevertheless, just a few months after Obama took office, the Sino-American relationship once again drew headlines (The Economist, 2009b). The situation in question was

in many ways similar to the one who confronted George W. Bush when he first took office in 2001. An American survey ship operating in international waters was harassed by Chinese patrol boats who claimed the Americans were spying on Chinese submarines. The American ship eventually left the area after some time. During and following the confrontation both Chinese and American officials accused each other of breaking international law with one Chinese admiral likening the American navy to a criminal who was “wandering around just outside gate of a family home” (Ibid.).

Despite an outspoken policy of change then, it would seem that Obama was faced with the same problems his predecessor had in the face of a growing China. China had, as we have seen, also grown stronger since the first Bush administration; as such, a realist foreign policy would be expected to attempt to improve upon American military capabilities in the face of a stronger China and continue the process of strengthening alliances and partnerships in the East Asia region. One final point should be made, in the campaign year of 2008 the seriousness of the global financial crisis became clear, and as a consequence the Chinese started to argue that America was now declining at an even faster rate than they had earlier believed to be possible. Following this argument, many Chinese now claimed that the world was turning more multipolar and they expected that other powers would take a more central role on the world stage (Friedberg, 2011:131). Statements like these do not normally go down well with American leaders (or Americans in general for that matter) and increasing Chinese self-confidence could be expected to lead to increasing American worries over China’s rise.

The early months of the Obama administration followed the recipe of the campaign and saw the US strike up a more cordial tone with several foreign powers, and among them the Chinese. This was quite contrary to the early administrations of Clinton and Bush who both came to office with a promise of a tougher stance on China (Ibid: 122). In contrast, Obama’s then foreign secretary, Hillary Clinton, stated in remarks given at the Asia Society in New York in 2009, that the Obama administration did not look upon China as an adversary but rather as a future and necessary partner. To quote Clinton:

“Now, some believe that China on the rise is, by definition, an adversary. To the contrary, we believe that the United States and China can benefit from and contribute to each other’s successes. It is in our interest to work harder to build on areas of common concern and shared opportunities... And our two countries, I’m happy to say, will resume mid-level military-to-military discussions later this month... Even with our differences, the United States will remain committed to pursuing a positive relationship with China, one that we believe is essential to America’s future peace, progress, and prosperity.” (Clinton, 2009).

The early Obama administration seemed determined to turn the foreign policy of President Bush around, at least in the first months after it took office. Clinton also stated that the new administration would not let disagreements over human rights issue stand in the way of improvements in U.S. and China relations. Some officials even suggested that a G2 group consisting of the U.S. and China should be created, although this scheme was later abandoned due to lack of Chinese enthusiasm for the idea (Friedberg, 2011: 113).

Looking at actual security policy for the period, we see that Obama was occupied with the war in Afghanistan. The Taliban insurgency had gotten progressively worse during the later Bush administration even as the situation in Iraq started to stabilize. As a consequence the war in Afghanistan was the foreign problem that would receive the most attention from the new administration in Washington (Woodward, 2010).

Nevertheless, the Pacific and East Asia regions did get some serious attention from the Obama administration from the very start. Hillary Clinton made her first trip as foreign secretary to Asia and the so called “Pivot to Asia” in 2012 saw a major shift in American foreign policy where the old world and Europe became less significant and Asia was prioritized (Defense Strategic Guidance, 2012). In its first National Security Strategy (2010) the new administration stressed the importance of other regions of the world besides the Middle East, even as the war in Iraq was ebbing out and the war in Afghanistan took center stage. However, in a move that mirrors that of the President Clinton, Obama argued that the foundation of American strength depended on a strong and healthy national economy. Rebuilding American economic prosperity was to be a central goal in Washington’s new security strategy; this is perhaps not surprising considering the severity of the 2008 global financial crisis. Looking at the statements concerning China we find that they are by and large in the same vein as those one could observe coming from the Bush administration. China is emphasized as an important player on the world stage, and it is stated that while the two countries may differ on some issues a “positive” and “constructive relationship” is what the U.S. is aiming for. The White House also states that the new administration will work to see the amount of distrust between the two powers reduced.

This is, as one could expect, all very diplomatic, however when one considers the actual outline of American defense strategy, we see that the Obama administration expected the Pentagon to be “preparing for increasingly sophisticated adversaries, deterring and defeating aggression in anti-access environments” (NSS, 2010). At the time the NSS for 2010 was written, China was the only potential adversary of the United States that was developing major area-denial and anti-access capabilities (Halloran, 2010). Further, the importance of cyber

security was mentioned specifically in the NSS and the QDR for 2010, even as the competition between the U.S. and China in this particular area grew stronger and more tense (for an overview of issues related to increasing cyber security competition see for example: Rothkopf, 2013).

While cooperation and partnership is emphasized in the NSS for 2010, we can still see an administration that are aware of the potential threat that China was said to pose to U.S. interests and who focused part of its security strategy on meeting and countering Chinese military advances and buildup. In 2010 it also became clear that the U.S. would continue to sell defensive weapons to Taiwan, and Hillary Clinton started criticizing Chinese human rights records (Friedberg, 2011: 114).

As for troop numbers present in the Pacific East Asia region, they started to increase during the first year of the Obama administration. In 2009 the amount of U.S. military personnel went up from 109 724 in September 2008 to 114 141 in September 2009<sup>2</sup>. The increase continued somewhat in 2010 with troop numbers hitting 114 221. However, from 2010 and onwards the American presence in the region increased considerably. Looking at the deployment level for 2011 we can see that in the space of only one year the American presence increased by more than 16 000 troops, putting the combined forces present in East Asia, on Guam and Hawaii at 130 709. As of December 2012 this number had increased further, 137 413 American troops were now present in this important region. In 2011 Obama also declared that 2 500 U.S. Marines were to be stationed in Australia in the following years and he further stated that the expected budget cuts within the armed forces would not “come at the expense of the Pacific” (New York Times, 2011). If we add these marines (which are not included in my current figures) to the other U.S. forces in the region we reach a number of 139 913 in 2012, up 25 629 from 2010. Clearly, a considerable buildup of American armed forces in the Western Pacific. A second thing to consider is that this buildup came even as the Pentagon was facing serious budget cuts. In fact, while the Americans increased their presence in East Asia, they reduced some assets in other parts of the world. In Europe the planned missile defense system was put on hold because of budget issues and the Navy reduced their carrier presence in the Persian Gulf from two to a single aircraft carrier (BBC, 2013), (Seattle Times, 2013).

---

<sup>2</sup> Note that from 2009 and onwards the DoD statistics does not include the number of troops deployed to the Republic of Korea. As such, I have been forced to use the number of U.S. troops deployed to South Korea for September 2009 stated in the 2010 Department of Defense Base Structure Report, and then added them to the numbers from the DoD statistics. By 2010 I expect the troop levels to have reached 28 500 personnel, which is what the U.S. has stated that it wishes to maintain in South Korea. There are some indications that the number of U.S. troops are even higher (see the Department of Defense Base Structure Report for 2011 and for 2012, which gives even higher troop numbers for 2010 and 2011 respectively) however, I will keep to the official figure of 28 500 for 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Of further interest is the fact that the number of troops deployed to Guam and Hawaii had grown considerably during Obama's first term in office. From 40 912 in 2008 to 54 888 in 2012. As noted earlier, the Pentagon had begun a process in the second Bush administration which was meant to redeploy American forces from bases in Japan and Korea to these strategically important islands. This process seems to have picked up the pace as Obama took office and especially after the President launched his "Pivot to Asia" strategy in 2012 (Kan, 2012).

The base on Guam was particular important, due to its role as the new backbone of American security policy in the Western Pacific, and as a consequence the Change of strategy can most easily be detected here (Washington Post, 2008). On the American sovereign territory of Guam U.S. forces would be free to develop their capabilities as they saw fit (Kan, 2012). This stood in contrast to bases located in other countries such as Okinawa in Japan. Here opposition to the American presence among the local populace had already created problems for the United States (BBC, 2010b). There would be no such troubles on Guam. In short, Guam had the potential to fulfill the needs of U.S. forces in the region better than other locations closer to the Asian mainland had. In 2008, then defense secretary Robert Gates put it like this when he was asked about the buildup on Guam:

"All in all, it will be one of the largest movements of military assets in decades and continue the historic mission of the United States military presence on Guam: to serve as the nation's first line of defense and to maintain a robust military presence in a critical part of the world," (Quoted in: Miles, 2008).

The buildup on Guam as well as the strengthening of ties with traditional allies such as Japan and Australia was all meant to increase American military capability in the region, and at the same time make U.S. strategic assets more secure in the face of Chinese military buildup and increasing Chinese military capabilities (Kan, 2012). Further, it has been claimed that a strong American stance on Guam was meant to signal to the Chinese that the Americans refuse to let the Chinese push them out of South East Asia, and that they intend to maintain their presence in the region even in the face of growing Chinese missile threat and anti-access/area-denial capabilities (Halloran, 2011). In fact, while North Korea has long been stated to be the main antagonist of the U.S. in the region, the primary focus of the United States was said to have shifted towards China by 2011 (Ibid:47).

2010 seems to have been a turning point for Obama's China policy. As mentioned the number of American troops in the East Asia/Pacific started to increase quite dramatically after 2010 and this year was also the year that the first Quadrennial Strategic Review of the new



administration was presented. This particular review has some interesting parts about American China policy, more precisely the new strategic concept called “AirSea Battle” (QDR, 2010). In short, the concept was to be developed by the Navy and Airforce in concert and allow the two military branches to work closer together and to complement each other’s strengths. AirSea Battle is meant to give the U.S. armed forces the tools “for defeating adversaries across the range of military operations, including adversaries equipped with sophisticated anti-access and area denial capabilities.” (QDR, 2010:32).

While not overtly directed towards China, a report made by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment (CSBA) on the AirSea Battle concept does identify the PRC as the main reason why such a concept is thought to be needed. In their introduction it is stated that:

“The US military today faces an emerging major operational challenge, particularly in the Western Pacific Theater of Operations (WPTO). The Chinese People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) ongoing efforts to field robust anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities are threatening to make US power projection increasingly risky and, in some cases and contexts, prohibitively costly. If this occurs, the United States will find itself effectively locked out of a region that has been declared a vital security interest by every administration in the last sixty years” (van Tol, Gunzinger, Krepinevich & Thomas, 2010:VIII).

The report further states that Chinese power could be used to intimidate U.S. allies and that the American military’s ability to operate freely in the Western Pacific is of vital interest to the U.S. The new concept is meant to help maintain that ability, even as Chinese military power increases and their ability to deny other states access to this region improves.

While the CSBA is independent of the U.S. government and its views do not necessarily reflect that of American politicians, it is still worth noting that the strategic “experts” in Washington had begun to view China as such a threat. (For an overview of the challenges that China is thought to pose to United States see for example: Denmark and Mulvanon, 2010). Reading through the 2010 QDR it seems that the American Department of Defense mirrors these views as well; after all, there would be very little reason to start the development of the AirSea Battle concept unless one shared the view that China’s rise was cause for considerable worry. Considering that the only other threat to American interests in the Asia-Pacific region is North Korea, which does not seem to have the capability to challenge the U.S. and its allies on the Korean peninsula let alone in the Pacific, it follows that China is the likely target for this new strategic concept that is being developed by the DoD.

The concept of Air-Sea battle also fits in with the American redeployment to Guam and the new emphasis on Naval and Air power at the expense of the army in East Asia, which one could witness during the last Bush administration. The 2010 QDR also called for the

strengthening of the resilience of forward deployed personnel and capabilities, and while one big base on Guam might be more vulnerable to attacks than more dispersed forces (Kan, 2012), its relative distance from the Asian mainland would give the Americans better time to prepare for any potential attack. In Sum, Guam seems to have been deemed more than suitable to be the lynchpin for American power in the region (Ibid.).

In order to maintain American military dominance the QDR directed the Department of Defense to improve American capabilities in several ways beside AirSea Battle, these were:

- Expand future long-range strike capabilities;
- Exploit advantages in subsurface operations;
- Increase the resiliency of U.S. forward posture and base infrastructure;
- Assure access to space and the use of space assets;
- Enhance the robustness of key ISR capabilities;
- Defeat enemy sensors and engagement systems; and
- Enhance the presence and responsiveness of U.S. forces abroad. (QDR, 2010:XI).

All of these improvements and especially improved long-range capabilities, access to space and ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) are assets which could prove vital in any confrontation with the Chinese which the Americans may find themselves in. Further, it is made clear in the report that the ability to defend Navy ships, bases and military aircraft against increasingly sophisticated missiles, as well as the ability to penetrate areas where the opponent retains significant anti-access capabilities, is a priority.

While better cooperation between the Navy and the Airforce was explored in the AirSea Battle concept, the pentagon seems also to have felt the need for a conventional strategic missile, which could hit targets that would otherwise be out of reach. This need has led to the development of the Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS) concept, which, while ostensibly not aimed at either China or Russia, nevertheless has sparked serious worries in both countries (Bunn & Menzo, 2011). A conventional missile that could reach hard to get at targets would also be a great strategic asset in a potential great power conflict as it could be used to take out parts of the enemy's nuclear arsenal. Even if the original purpose was to give the Americans the ability to strike at hard to reach terrorist bases this assets could easily be used in other situations (Ibid). As of 2013 Chinese fears over this program seems to have increased further as the CPGS program began to test various missile types and American planning started to include CPGS as a possible response to a potential Chinese attack against strategic assets like American satellites (Richardson, 2013).

It is also worth mentioning that as of 2013 it has become clear that the American focus on cyberspace has grown in recent years. Even as the United States complains about Chinese cyber-attacks against them, they are developing their own considerable capabilities in this

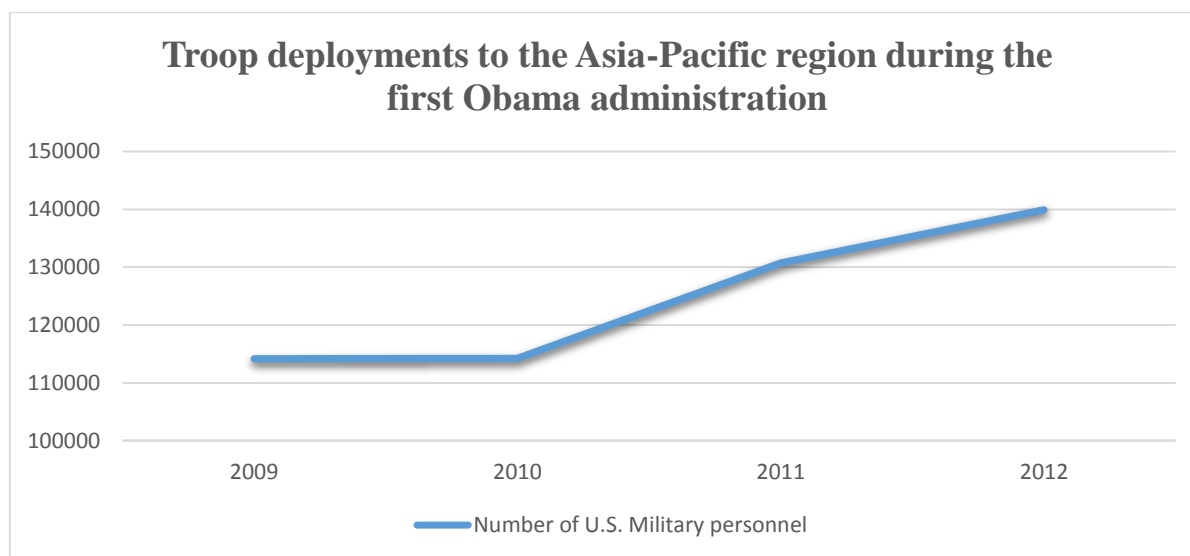
particular area (Aid, 2013). In the words of an intelligence source with extensive knowledge about the National Security Agency: “We hack everyone, everywhere” (the Guardian, 2013). In the face of a number of Chinese computer attacks this American focus on cyber-warfare is to be expected, but it does suggest that the Americans are actively working to counter the Chinese in at least one strategic area.

While it is stated early in the 2010 QDR that this is a wartime defense review and that defeating the Taliban and Al-Qaeda remains the priority of the United States, the overall impression that the document gives is that the priorities had shifted somewhat since the Bush administration. A much stronger focus on the roles of the Navy, Airforce, command and control concepts and cyber security as well as less attention given to the special forces all suggests that the current questions occupying the minds of American leaders are more about how to defeat a powerful conventional enemy than the asymmetric forces of terrorists and political extremists. The development of new strategic concepts, the “Pivot to Asia” and the strength buildup on Guam all seems to suggest that American priorities had shifted in the few years since Obama took office.

This shift corresponded with what seems to be a more assertive stance from China as many Chinese now feels that “the time is right for a more active assertion of Chinese interests and ideas” (Breslin, 2013:616). The Chinese also continued to increase their military spending in the period, up from 106.7 billion US\$ in 2008 to 157.6 billion in 2012 (Sipri, 2012). Although some claim this assertiveness is far from new and that the Chinese have been willing to fight for their core interests for quite some time (Johnston, 2013; Fravel, 2005). Nevertheless there seems to be a strong and somewhat growing distrust between the leaders of the two countries. For the Americans this distrust is claimed to stem at least partly from Chinese military buildup and growing assertiveness on the international stage (Lieberthal & Wang, 2012).

Indeed looking at the U.S. Defense Strategic Guidelines for 2012 one can observe that China is mentioned together with Iran as a state that pursues anti-access capabilities that could be a threat to American interests and ability to influence. The development of American capabilities to counter Chinese anti-access weapons seems to have been a running theme in U.S. security policy during the first Obama administration. Further, grouping China with Iran shows that American decision makers were really waking up to how potentially detrimental to American influence and interests the Chinese military buildup have the potential to be. Reading through the reports to congress starting in 2000 and ending with the report for 2013, one can see that the worry expressed over China’s military capabilities are rising in the U.S. department of defense. This fits with the increasing attention that the U.S. is giving East Asia as a whole

and the development that we have seen of capabilities that could counter increasing Chinese military power. That said lets now take a look at the alliance policy of the United States during the Obama Presidency.



Figur 3. Source: DoD Personnel and Procurement Statistics; DoD Base Structure Report, 2010.

### **Alliance policy in East Asia during the first Obama presidency**

The American Defense Strategic Guidelines for 2012 stress the importance of strong partners in the East and South-East Asia regions even as the Americans withdraw some of their focus from Europe. The guidelines also express the wish for a policy that maintains the current U.S. alliances in Asia and attempts to create new strong partnerships among other nations in the region. For the most part this policy continued on the road laid down during the later Bush administration, although some worry did surface over the future Indo-U.S. relationship early in 2009.

In the early days of the Obama administration there seems to have been some concern among experts that the U.S.-India relationship might suffer. This worry arose as a consequence of President Obama's tough stance on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as the new administrations seemingly friendlier stance towards China (Friedberg, 2011: 205). As of 2010 however, these worries seems to have disappeared as the U.S. and India reiterated their wishes for a closer relationship. During a visit in 2010 Obama also endorsed India in their bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council in a move that was seen as a way of countering the growing influence of China (New York Times, 2010a).

Even as the relationship with India was further strengthened, the U.S. continued to focus on their traditional allies in East Asia. As mentioned above Obama decided in 2011 to begin

the regular deployment of 2500 U.S. marines to Australia in a bid to reassure the Australians about American commitment to their alliance (New York Times, 2011). The Australians had begun to worry about growing Chinese influence and a strong reassuring stance from the Americans seemed to be necessary (Friedberg, 2011). Further North the Americans removed some of their troops from Japanese bases and South Korea in order to redeploy these to Hawaii and Guam. At the same time, the U.S. government reiterated their commitment to the defense of South Korea. First and foremost this was meant as a deterrent against North Korean aggression against the South. Still, the Joint Communiqué that followed a meeting between then U.S. secretary of defense Robert Gates and South Korean defense minister Kim, Tae Young in 2010, also stressed that the defense relationship between the two nations was evolving into a full alliance with a goal of ensuring greater regional security as well as global aspirations (U.S.-ROK. Joint Communiqué, 2010).

With regards to Japan, the strong alliance between it and the U.S. seemed to be weakening at the start of the Obama administration. The election of the Democratic Party of Japan to office in 2009, and their wish for a stronger Sino-Japanese relationship seems to have sparked some worries in Washington (Friedberg, 2011: 210-211). By 2010 however, these fears had been eased somewhat, and as of 2013 the continuing dispute between Japan and China over the Senkoku islands seems to have driven the Japanese further into American arms. This dispute had grown considerably in the years since Obama took office and does not seem to be solvable anytime soon and constitutes a potential security risk comparable to that of Taiwan. However as long as the Chinese maintain their demands for territorial sovereignty over the Islands, the Japanese seems likely to continue to depend on a strong alliance with the U.S.

Increasing Chinese assertiveness has also had an effect on American alliance policy in other parts of the East Asian Theater. At the beginning of the 1990s the traditional American alliances with the Philippines and Thailand were unraveling to some extent and both countries started to develop closer economic and even to some extent military ties to China (Ibid: 206). However as Chinese aspirations in the South China Sea has started to encroach upon territory claimed by the Philippines, the Americans are once again considered to be important partners to the Philippine government (Ibid: 207; BBC, 2011a). The Americans for their part has stated that they want to see a peaceful settlement to the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and have voiced that they would like to contribute to this diplomatic settlement (BBC, 2011a). These statements seems to have gone some way to reassure the smaller countries involved in the dispute and has certainly ruffled some feathers in Beijing as the Chinese strongly object to the idea of any form of American involvement in what they claim is a purely Asian issue.

Further, American joint military exercises with the Philippines and Vietnam has drawn criticism from the Chinese, even as the Americans stated that they would continue countries it considered to be allies, and that these exercises would go on (BBC, 2011b).

As we can observe, the alliance policy of the Americans in East Asia remained relatively fixed during the first and beginning of the second Obama administrations. The Americans remains committed to the region and pursue strong partnerships with several countries as a consequence of this commitment. While little can be directly attributed to the growth in Chinese power and capabilities, it seems clear that both the U.S. and its partner nations watch this growth with some worry. India, Australia and Japan have all voiced their concern over Chinese aspirations to become a Great Power, and Taiwan, the Philippines and other nations around the South China Sea have already experienced the consequences of growing Chinese assertiveness. In this environment it should be relatively easy for the Americans to follow realist expectations and maintain and create strong alliances dedicated to preserving the status quo.

Looking at the actual foreign policy that is being pursued this seems to fit rather well with the realist expectations. The Americans are engaging with countries all around China's borders and disagreements with both India and the Japanese over issues such as American military bases and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons seems to have been put on hold as China's strength has grown.

In short, while very little of U.S. policy is said to stem from a desire to contain China's rise as a global power, American decision makers have been focusing on creating the sort of strong bounds with strategically important nations that offensive realists would expect them to do. Growing and strengthening U.S. relationships with countries that surround China in Asia. In fact, the Chinese seems to be acutely aware of the fact that they might very well soon be surrounded at sea by a collection of American allies and partners. Consequently, they are even now looking at ways to ensure that vital supplies to China such as oil from the Middle East gets through in the case of a conflict (Pherson, 2006).

Despite of some American foreign policy decisions that look to be realist in nature, one must keep in mind that the growing attention the Americans are giving to this region also could reflect the fact that Asia is becoming increasingly important to the American economy.

In the next section I will examine this closer as I move on to testing for the Preference Based Liberal theory of Andrew Moravcsik that focuses upon the interests and wishes of the elites as vital for the foreign policy direction, rather than the structural explanations of Offensive Realist theory.

## **Mapping the evidence for a Liberal American foreign policy**

### **1992-1996: The first Clinton period**

As I wrote in the theory chapter, the variables that I consider to be of importance when testing for a liberal foreign policy are first, the presence of bilateral diplomatic cooperation and American support for Chinese integration into international institutions, and second, the U.S. bilateral trade with China. These will be mapped in the following section and this mapping will form the basis for the later analysis.

#### **Economic growth and cooperation**

As mentioned above, Bill Clinton came into office during the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square incident. The impact this violent crackdown on the student protesters had on the American opinion towards China was considerable. Indeed Clinton stated in his presidential campaign that he would take a tougher stance against the “Butchers of Beijing” than his opponent George Bush had done (Cohen, 2005). Central to this tougher stance was the renouncement of China’s Most Favored Nation status (MFN), a status that gave the Chinese considerable advantages when trading with the United States. This status had been granted China since 1980 but had to be renewed by the U.S. every year due to the nature of China’s political system. In the immediate aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre, the Democratic Party representatives in congress had wanted President Bush to revoke this status; something the President was reluctant to do (Cohen, 2011: 243-244). Clinton had promised to hold the Chinese accountable for their transgressions against human rights, and several democrats now felt that the time was right to do exactly that (Cohen, 2005:81).

However, the new president had also based his campaign on the promise of strengthening the flagging American economy and removing MFN from China could push the two countries into a trade war which would be hurtful to American business as well as the Chinese. Having to choose between the demands from human rights activists to punish China and the worries of the American business elite, Clinton chose to maintain Chinese MFN for the time being. Several major American corporations with interests in China lobbied for quite a while in order to ensure that U.S. foreign policy wouldn’t hurt their businesses (Ibid: 82). Indeed as the Clinton administration settled in, issues concerning the licensing of technology sales to China were moved from the Defense and State departments to Commerce. In the words of Warren I. Cohen, in the new administration “Commercial rather than political and military considerations would be privileged” (ibid: 82). The National Security Strategy report for 1995 supports the decision to remove the MFN status from the question of human rights by stating

that trade between the U.S. and China had grown significantly since that particular policy decision was made<sup>3</sup> (NSS, 1995: 29). Being able to show actual economic gains achieved by pursuing a policy of cooperation must have given the adherents to this policy even greater influence in Washington and would probably have ramifications for the later foreign policy decisions of the Clinton administrations. It is worth noting though that while trade had indeed grown between the U.S. and China, most of that growth had come from American imports of Chinese goods, and the U.S. was now running a deficit in its trading relationship with the Chinese (United States Census Bureau, Foreign Trade, 2013).

### **Working for a democratic change and the integration of China into the world order**

Besides the commercial considerations, there does seem to have existed among Clinton's advisors a wish for more engagement with China on ideological grounds. The argument was the same as I mentioned in my theory section and rests on the notion that the U.S. could change China through cooperation and by integrating the Chinese into the current U.S. dominated world order. If American leaders through dialogue and cooperation could change the way the Chinese perceived their place in the world, and if the Chinese eventually started to implement democracy and liberal economic policies then there would be no need for conflict between the two countries. Liberals argued that this in turn would help stabilize the East Asia region and benefit all concerned as trade would increase and stability would reduce the costs of defense (Lieberthal, 1995). It was even expected that the Chinese eventually could help shore up the dominant world order and help maintain international law all over the globe as well as in Asia and the Pacific, thereby helping to serve American interests as well as their own (Ibid ;Friedberg, 2011:91-92).

Indeed, in 1994 the Clinton administration announced that it would pursue a policy of "comprehensive engagement" with China. More trade, more cooperation and more contacts were the watchwords of the day (Ibid, 2011: 92). Reading the National Security Strategy for 1994, we find that cooperation with the Chinese and integrating them into a stable world order took precedence over purely worries about growing Chinese power. To quote the document:

"We are developing a broader engagement with the People's Republic of China that will encompass both our economic and strategic interests. That policy is best reflected in our decision to delink China's Most Favored Nation status from its record on human rights. We are also working to facilitate China's development of a more open, market economy that accepts international trade practices" (NSS, 1994).

---

<sup>3</sup> On U.S.-China trade: A full overview of American imports and exports as well as the U.S. trade deficit with China throughout the five presidential terms I cover is found in the appendix.



The NSS for 1995 follows that of 94 to a large degree. Promoting democracy and liberal economic principles around the world remains the priority and China is an opportunity rather than a major problem. Overall, the impression one gets from the 95 National Security Strategy document is of an administration committed to a policy of engagement and economic cooperation, confident that this would eventually lead to a democratic and responsible China and certain that this would help to serve American interests in the long run. Before the Taiwan Crisis in 95-96, the only serious point of conflict between China and the Clinton administration was connected to the rampant pirating of American movies, CDs and computer software that was taking place in China. As big business became concerned so too did Clinton and in 1995 he threatened to impose sanctions if the Chinese did not introduce laws that would reduce the amount of pirated movies that was produced (Cohen, 2010: 253). Still most American business were happy with a deeper economic relationship with the Chinese and supported Clinton's policies in this regard (Cohen, 2005).

### **1996-2000: The second Clinton period**

#### **Supporting democratic development and Chinese international participation**

As Bill Clinton began his final term as president, the relationship between China and the U.S. had stabilized. In 1997 Chinese president Jiang Zemin visited the United States in what was the first state visit by a Chinese leader to the U.S. for more than a decade. Clinton himself seems to have had high hopes for this visit, his own later visit to China scheduled for 1998, and for the future relationship between the two countries. During a speech he made in 1997 concerning the upcoming visit by the Chinese president, Clinton reiterated his hopes for the visit and for a China that was "stable, open, and non-aggressive" and that "embraces free markets, political pluralism, and the rule of law" (Clinton, 1997). He further stated that while it was up to the Chinese people to decide the future of China, the Americans could by working with the Chinese and expanding cooperation between the two countries help ensure that vital American interests were maintained as this would help the Chinese start the development of their own democratic institutions and traditions (Ibid.). The President also brought up China's increasing participation in international institutions and claimed that this showed major progress, and he hoped that China would continue to integrate itself into the existing world order. While the growing American trade deficit were of some worry, Clinton seems to have believed that this problem could be overcome as long as the Chinese played fair and opened their borders for more American goods.

As for democratic reform in China, the speech shows that the Clinton administration still believed that the growing Chinese middleclass, increasing exposure to liberal ideas and western media and a more open Chinese economy eventually would lead to the development of democracy. To quote Clinton:

“The more ideas and information spread, the more people will expect to think for themselves, express their own opinions and participate. And the more that happens, the harder it will be for their government to stand in their way” (Ibid).

In short, the speech followed the earlier policy of opening China up to more trade and cooperation while at the same time nudge the country in the direction of democracy as well as greater international integration and cooperation (Ibid.). The President claimed that this sort of policy was the very best way to engage a growing China.

“This pragmatic policy of engagement, of expanding our areas of cooperation with China while confronting our differences openly and respectfully... this is the best way to advance our fundamental interests and our values and to promote a more open and free China” (Ibid.).

Overall, Clinton does not seem to have been deterred by aggressive Chinese behavior in 95-96 and he also took the time to criticize those who argued for a policy of containment against China. Clinton argued that such a policy would be counterproductive and dangerous in the long run as he feared that such a policy could potentially drive American allies away, both within China and in the greater world. As the second Clinton administration took office, it seemed like the liberals for the most part were in control of U.S. foreign policy despite of growing Chinese military might.

The National Security Strategy reports for the second Clinton period follows the policy that was outlined in this speech as well. In the 1998 NSS it is stated that the United States will continue to support the integration of China into the international system and the rules that govern this system. To quote the 1998 NSS:

“Our key security objectives for the future include:... encouraging a constructive PRC role in international affairs through active cooperation in ARF, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) and the Northeast Asia Security Dialogue; and improving law enforcement cooperation with PRC officials through increased liaison and training.”.

Further, following the presidential visits in 1997 and 98 the two countries decided to strengthen ties through regular summits and more high-level meetings, as well as meetings between army officials in order to ensure that the two countries could avoid any military related accidents or misunderstandings. America’s commitment to integrating China became especially apparent in 1999 when Clinton strongly endorsed Chinese membership in the World Trade Organization (New York times, 1999). Chinese membership had been questioned for some time due to the

Chinese human rights record and Chinese trade practices. Clinton however seems to have believed that Chinese membership were both in the economic interest of the United States and that it would speed up the internal reform that he claimed were already transforming China into a more liberal and democratic country (Ibid.). Weighed against these possibilities the White House seems to have considered human rights violations to be of less importance. If trade did in the end encourage the development of democracy in China, these violations could be addressed at a later point.

As for Clinton's visit to China in 1998, it started out somewhat confrontational when Clinton in his first speech to the Chinese people denounced China's human rights record and the oppressiveness of the communist party (Cohen, 2010:260). Nevertheless, Clinton also decided to throw the Chinese leadership a bone when he stated in his later Shanghai address that the United States continued to support the one China principle and that a Taiwanese declaration of independence was unacceptable (Ibid.)

The NSS for 2000 follows that of the 98 report and continues to argue the case that a stable and responsible China is of paramount importance to both the East Asia region and the larger world. Despite some setbacks, such as the accidental U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999, the document stresses improved cooperation and a better relationship between the United States and China. The successful completion of bilateral WTO negotiations between the U.S. and China as well as the presidential visits in 1997 and 98 are all highlighted in the NSS as proof of a better relationship and the Clinton administration's commitment to further cooperation. The report also mentions the effort of the U.S. in convincing the Chinese to join non-proliferation agreements on both nuclear weapons and advanced missile technology. Further, it argues that Chinese and American cooperation was important in order to ensure that North Korea did not develop nuclear weapons, weapons that if deployed could destabilize the East Asia region further (NSS, 2000).

Despite of a certain optimism and strong claims of progress that you can find in the NSS for 2000, as Clinton's second term came to an end the foreign policy experts in Washington seems to have been divided on how to handle China (Cohen, 2010:262). With a republican president supported by some rather hawkish foreign policy and security advisors (Cohen, 2005), the relatively liberal policy that President Clinton and his administration had followed were in danger of being supplanted.

### **Growing economic interdependence**

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century came to an end, the growth in trade between China and the United States just kept increasing. From 1994 to 2000, the value of all trade between the two countries had more than doubled, from 48068.5 million in 94 \$ to 116203.2 million in 2000. An increase of 68134.9 million \$ (United States Census Bureau, Foreign Trade, 2013). The two economies were clearly becoming more dependent upon each other as many liberals hoped they would, and as President Clinton had argued they should. This however does not tell the whole story. As trade between the U.S. and China grew, it became quite apparent that the Americans were importing far more from the Chinese than they were exporting. In 1994 the trade deficit between them were 29,505.1 million \$ in favor of the Chinese, by 2000 however the deficit had grown to 83,833 million \$, almost tripling in size (ibid).

It is worth noting that despite such a huge trade imbalance the interests of the American business elite in continuous trade with China was considerable. At certain moments their interests even seems to have outweighed what was perceived to be serious national security concerns. When an American firm came under fire over its sales to China in 1998, the allegations were that technology sale to China had allowed the Chinese to improve upon their ballistic missile guidance systems (Cohen, 2005:88; Washongton Post, 1998). As a consequence of these allegations, voices in congress wanted to stop a planned satellite technology sale by the company to China. Clinton, who had received generous donations to his campaign from said firm and, some claimed, even the PLA (New York Times, 1998), decided to let the sale proceed. Clinton was accused of having “at best”, put American business interests and jobs before keeping advanced technology and development secrets out of Chinese hands, contrary to what many meant was in the national interest (Cohen, 2005:88). This could not have been done unless Clinton and his team really believed that time were on their side and that China eventually would evolve into an open and democratic society.

Clinton also managed to win a victory for his China policy when Congress voted to grant permanent Most Favored Nation status to China in 2000 (New York Times, 2000). The vote was surprising to some, due to the large amount of Republicans who voted in favor of the motion. That the Republicans supported it seems to have been mostly due to the hope that such an act would help open the Chinese market to Americans and help on the trade deficit (Ibid.). Indeed, the argument that American business would benefit from permanent Chinese MFN status, seems to have been critical for the outcome, despite the fact that President Clinton claimed that the decision had more to do with national security than economy. His argument was still that engagement would help bring China into the world order as a responsible partner, and that MFN status would help in that regard (Ibid).

Despite some worries over Chinese military buildup and the security of Taiwan there seems to be few indications that Washington would change its relatively liberal trade policy with China anytime soon.

Neither did it look as though there would be any halt to the massive increase in trade that the previous years had seen when Clinton left the White House. Despite of a growing trade deficit with the Chinese, the U.S under Bill Clinton kept to its policies of an open market. Further, the interests of the business elite seems to have been kept firmly in mind during the final Clinton administration, and in some cases they trumped what looked to be important national security interests.

## **2001-2004, The first Bush period**

### **Democratic development and gaining China as a partner**

As mentioned earlier, George W. Bush came to power with a rather different China policy than that which Bill Clinton had followed. In the view of many of Bush's advisors China was a dangerous and an undemocratic state that repressed its own people. As a consequence it would be necessary for the United States to be firm in order to ensure that China did not turn into a state that could threaten American presence in East Asia (Cohen, 2010: 266-267). Writing in early 2000, then foreign policy advisor to the President, Condoleezza Rice claimed that despite the importance of including China in the greater global community, the U.S. "should never be afraid to confront Beijing when our interests collide". In addition, it was her belief that the United States needed to stand resolute in the face of potential Chinese aggressions especially concerning Taiwan (Rice, 2000).

However, as I have written earlier, Bush's China policy soon changed considerably. The surveillance-plane incident in early 2001 and the tough Chinese stance on several other issues quickly forced the administration to rethink its policy, moving away from a China policy more bent on containing China to one more focused on cooperation and engagement. When Colin Powell, then U.S. Secretary of State, flew to China in July 2001, it was with a promise of further cooperation and a wish for a stronger U.S.-China relationship (Cohen, 2010: 268).

Nevertheless, this turnaround might have been less radical than it seems at first glance, since it is worth noting that despite the seemingly hard stance that Bush had wanted to towards the Chinese, he did argue in favor of some cooperation in the presidential campaign. Speaking on the attempt to get China to join the WTO as a full member, Bush claimed that he was in complete agreement with Clinton, and that a Chinese participation in the world order was vital to the U.S. In Bush's words, Chinese membership "holds out the hope of more open contact

with the world of freedom” (Bush, in: the New York Times, 2000). As one can see, Bush was not necessarily against cooperating with China.

The attacks on the World Trade Center in September 2001 seems to have strengthened this policy of cooperation. With American forces busy responding to the threat of terrorism, balancing against China seems to have been low on the priority list. Indeed, while the QDR for 2001 does mentions China as a possible peer competitor and calls for better base structures in the Eastern Pacific-Ocean, the report focuses most its attention on terrorism and strategies to prevent terrorist attacks (QDR, 2001). The National Security Strategy report for 2002 shows the change in Bush’s foreign policy quite profoundly. Cooperation with the Chinese is emphasized and the report also argues that democratic development is vital in order to ensure greater Chinese development in the years to come:

“To make that nation truly accountable to its citizen’s needs and aspirations, however, much work remains to be done. Only by allowing the Chinese people to think, assemble, and worship freely can China reach its full potential.” (NSS, 2002)

One can also see influence from the ongoing “War against Terror” in the report’s handling of China. As this war grew in importance for the United States, Countering terrorism seems to have opened up new avenues of cooperation with the Chinese.

“The United States seeks a constructive relationship with a changing China. We already cooperate well where our interests overlap, including the current war on terrorism and in promoting stability on the Korean peninsula. Likewise, we have coordinated on the future of Afghanistan and have initiated a comprehensive dialogue on counterterrorism and similar transitional concerns” (Ibid.).

Indeed the cooperation on counter-terrorism was, according to the new administration, the main reason why the Sino-American relationship would continue to improve. As President Bush put it in his 2002 State of the Union address: “common danger is erasing old rivalries” (Bush, 2002). For the most part this remained true during the first term of the Bush Administration. As China was rapidly growing in strength and economic importance, the Americans were busy fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan and insurgents in Iraq. As long as the Chinese refrained from doing anything rash, President Bush seemed perfectly happy to keep cooperating with the Chinese and hope that time and development eventually would lead to a more democratic China.

Several liberal observers and experts supported this policy and the argument was that democratic change was already taking place despite attempts by the Chinese government to suppress all opposition (Economy, 2004). In her 2004 article, Elizabeth Economy argues that a bigger media picture, access to internet and more economic freedom all influence the Chinese people into demanding more democracy and government transparency. As Chinese leaders

were waking up to these demands it was believed that they would have to accommodate some of them in order to stay in power. Even if the development were going along at a slower pace than many had hoped for, it would, according to Economy, still be prudent to continue on this course and not return to a strategy of confronting China.

However as Bush entered his second term, some of the advice given by liberal advisors and experts were beginning to be supplanted by arguments that China were quickly becoming a peer competitor and therefore a danger (Cohen, 2010). Chinese disrespect for human rights also kept nagging American politicians and the trade deficit between the two countries were finally getting to high to ignore.

### **Economic cooperation during the first Bush period**

Despite an ostensibly hardline China policy, George W. Bush did consider trade between the United States and China to be of great importance. In the campaign, he argued that the trade relationship was vital for American employees and business as well as for the bilateral relationship between China and the U.S. (Bush, 2000). According to Bush, trade would also be what would eventually lead China down the path of democracy.

“Trade with China will promote freedom. Freedom is not easily contained. Once a measure of economic freedom is permitted, a measure of political freedom will follow. China today is not a free society... Economic freedom creates habits of liberty. And habits of liberty create expectations of democracy. There are no guarantees, but there are good examples, from Chile to Taiwan. Trade freely with China, and time is on our side” (Ibid.).

This sentiment echoes the writings of Condoleezza Rice (2000), who also claimed that maintaining trade would help open China up to democratic ideas and most likely would lead to a liberalization of Chinese society. In short, there was little support in the Bush administration for limiting trade with China let alone stopping it altogether.

From 2001 to 2005 the bilateral trade between China and the United States kept increasing at a steady rate. The Americans continued to increase the amount of goods it exported to China through 2001 to 2004 and by 2005 the amount had more than doubled, from 16 185,2 million \$ in 2000 to 41 192,0 million in 2005. As one can see, China was importing far more from the U.S. than earlier. However during the same period the value of American imports from China grew with 143 451,9 million\$ from 100 018,2 million to 243 470,1. As of the end of 2005 the U.S. trade deficit with China had reached a total of 202 278.2 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013) and several voices in congress and among American workers unions were beginning to call for sterner measures including special tariffs against China due to complaints over Chinese currency policy (Washington Post, 2004; New York Times, 2006). Some worry

was also expressed over Chinese firms who tried to buy American companies and in some instances these purchases were actually stopped by U.S. authorities who feared Chinese competition (Cohen, 2010: 274).

Even if some were calling for special tariffs on Chinese goods in order to protect American industry and others worried about the huge trade deficit and what this might do to the balance of power, trade between the U.S. and China kept increasing during the entire first term of President Bush. As the U.S. maintained a careful diplomatic stance and kept pushing for an integrated and responsible China, so too was the liberal Strategy of letting trade work its magic, maintained by President Bush.

## **2005-2008: The second Bush period**

### **Diplomacy and cooperation amidst China's growth**

As we learned in the previous section, when President Bush began his second period in 2005, China and the United States had a stable working relationship that benefitted both parties. In fact, the United States seems to have been prepared to let China take a greater role on the world stage and greater responsibility for international stability. The deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick suggested as much in late 2005 (Zoellick, 2005), and the Chinese for their part seemed more than willing to accept both the international responsibility and the greater national status that followed it (Cohen, 2010:274).

Indeed, in his 2005 remarks, Zoellick argued that the best possible way for the United States to go forward was to continue its policy of engaging with China. As Chinese power grew, the Chinese would have to become a more “responsible stakeholder” and American fear could only help ruin what might become a productive relationship (Zoellick, 2005).

“We now need to encourage China to become a responsible stakeholder in the international system. As a responsible stakeholder, China would be more than just a member – it would work with us to sustain the international system that has enabled its success... You hear the voices that perceive China solely through the lens of fear. But America succeeds when we look to the future as an opportunity, not when we fear what the future might bring... We can cooperate with the emerging China of today, even as we work for the democratic China of tomorrow”. (Ibid.).

The national security strategy for 2006 focuses for the most part on “the War on Terror” and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the analysis about China and East Asia follows the arguments of Zoellick in calling for a responsible China that can participate in maintaining the international system. To take a concrete example, the Americans were expecting the Chinese to help negotiate a deal with North Korea that would terminate that country’s nuclear weapons development program (Ibid.). Such a China would, according to the 2006 NSS,



become an asset to the international community rather than a potential problem and source of conflict. It is further stated in the report that the growing economic liberalization is still expected to lead to a democratic development in China as the growing middleclass begins to demand more influence over the political decisions that are made.

“The United States encourages China to continue down the road of reform and openness, because in this way China’s leaders can meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of the Chinese people for liberty, stability, and prosperity. As economic growth continues, China will face a growing demand from its own people to follow the path of East Asia’s many modern democracies, adding political freedom to economic freedom” (NSS, 2006:41).

2006 was also the year where George W. Bush declared the Sino-U.S. relationship to be “the best ever” (Cohen, 2010:276) and despite some issues such as the ever present Taiwan question, the two countries were becoming increasingly dependent upon each other and cooperated on more issues than at any time earlier. By the end of 2006, the U.S. and Chinese navies had held their first joint exercise and the two countries had organized the first of what was to become a formal biannual strategic dialogue. The Chinese also proved willing to meet some American economic concerns by strengthening its laws on intellectual property rights and allowing foreign firms greater access to the Chinese domestic market (Ibid.).

As the end of President Bush’s second term approached, the U.S.-China relationship remained stable although somewhat precarious. During his trip to China in 2008, Bush publicly rebuked China over its civil liberties and human rights record, while at the same time praising China for their culture and economic progress in the last decades (New York Times, 2008). While Bush did criticize China to some degree, he fell well short of the kind of condemnation that many human rights watch groups expected. His main message remained the same as before; cooperation was of paramount importance and a good relationship was still the goal. The United States might complain about human rights abuse and political oppression in China from time to time, but in the end, the policy of engagement and the hope that this might lead to democratic change within China remained.

As one can see, despite of the fact that China was clearly a non-democratic state, we hear the same arguments from the second Bush administration as we heard from the Clinton administrations. If the United States continued to cooperate with the Chinese then democracy would eventually win through and China would become an important partner rather than a peer-competitor. As such, it seems that the Americans were indeed making a serious effort to engage with China despite of the promise of a tough China-policy that Bush had promised during the presidential campaign of 2000.

One should note however that while this policy was the stated China policy of the White House, the Pentagon (as I have mentioned above) was starting to upgrade their base structures on Guam, Hawaii and on other locations in the western pacific. The Department of Defense also began to redeploy a considerable part of their forces in the East Asia region, in what seemed to be an attempt at countering growing Chinese military strength (Halloran, 2007). The NSS also ends on a note of caution when it states that while U.S. strategy is still to nudge China in the direction of democracy, the Americans also “hedge against other possibilities” (NSS, 2006: 42).

### **Economic developments 2005-2008.**

The years of 2005-2008 saw some of the biggest upheavals in the international economy in recent memory. While 2005 and 2006 remained relatively calm, the consequences from the global economic crisis that developed in late 2007 and especially in 2008, was profound. While the Americans were trying to maintain their stricken financial system, the Chinese economy continued to grow at a steady pace. Some Chinese observers were even wondering whether this crisis signaled a decline of U.S. power that could allow China to take a greater role in the international system and maybe even supplant the Americans in time (Nye, 2010).

Coupled with the growing economic power of China and the financial crisis influencing western countries, was the huge and increasing trade deficit with the Chinese that the United States suffered from. From 2005 to 2008 the deficit grew by 65 761.7 million \$ to reach a new high of 268 039.8 million. While the U.S. did increase the amount of goods it exported to the Chinese, from 41,192.0 million to 69,732.8 million (U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade, 2013), this increase was still far outweighed by the money the Americans spent on imported Chinese goods. As the deficit became more and more obvious, some Americans started to complain about the abilities of American companies to access the Chinese market. In addition, the Chinese were still not producing considerable results in the fight against intellectual property theft; the Chinese were not “playing a fair game” according to one official. (New York Times, 2007a). Indeed after several complaints, the American government decided to take action against China in the WTO in 2007 (New York Times, 2007b). Despite of these worries the value of goods imported from China from 2005 to 2008 increased from 243 470.1 million to 337 772.6 million \$ (United States Census Bureau, Foreign Trade, 2013). Clearly, Sino-U.S. trade was not slowing despite growing American financial woes and worries over Chinese trade practices.

Looking at the statements from American leaders in the period this development is hardly surprising. In his 2005 speech, Robert Zoellick pressured for increasing cooperation with China, and writing to the next American President in 2008, then U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson Jr. argued that engagement with China was “the only path to success” (Paulson, 2008).

“Even if it were possible to block China’s growth, it would not be in the United States’s interests to try... the inextricable interdependence of China’s growth and that of the global economy requires a policy of engagement. In fact the overriding importance of economic growth to China’s leaders presents the best means of influencing China’s emergence as a global power and encouraging its integration into the international system.” (Ibid.: 59).

Paulson further claimed that China viewed the world through a mostly “economic lens” and that a future president should understand this and base his policies on that knowledge. The Secretary of the Treasury also stated that the cooperation that was set up in 2006 through the U.S.-China Strategic Economic Dialogue led to a new level of cooperation and trust between the two countries. Paulson claims that as a consequence of this, China became more active in the WTO and began to participate more in international fora in general (Ibid.).

The dialogue was also credited with improving the environment for trade between the U.S. and China and especially in the financial sector. This allowed American companies greater freedom of movement and more opportunity to invest in China, and it also improved the Chinese’s abilities to operate in the United States (Ibid.: 68). In the end, the Secretary of the Treasury argued that the policies of economic engagement pursued by the administration had been a success and he urged the next President to continue to engage with China (Ibid: 76-77).

## **2009-2013 the first Obama period**

### **Barack Obama and American diplomatic focus**

The campaign of Barack Obama was launched on a platform of “change”. In the foreign policy area this implied changing the course which had seen many foreign countries begin to consider the U.S. to be a threat to world peace, these countries also included several close allies (Cohen: 2010). Obama wanted to engage more with the world and to use American economic power, ideas and diplomacy in order to do this (Obama, 2008). For the China policy however, the change was less profound. The U.S. would “continue to engage China on common interests like climate change, even as we continue to encourage their shift to a more open and market-based society” (Ibid.).

As I have stated earlier, the policy of engagement was pursued rigorously during the first year of Barack Obama’s presidency. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that the

United States would “work harder to build on areas of common concern and shared opportunities” with China (Clinton, 2009). Clinton also stated in a Q&A session that followed her speech that the United States would attempt to broaden the economic dialogue with China and incorporate other issues more connected to diplomacy and defense as well (Ibid.). In the Clinton period one could observe that issues having to do with China were moved from the State Department to the Department of the Treasury. As Obama took office and the global financial crisis worsened, some of these issues seems to have been moved back to the State department. Further, some American officials even suggested that a G2 group consisting of China and the U.S. should be set up in order to facilitate closer cooperation on some issues. Although, as I have mentioned before, this idea was eventually abandoned due in no small part to lack of enthusiasm from the Chinese over the idea (Friedberg, 2011: 113). In fact, one could argue that in 2009 several Americans considered China to be stronger than the Chinese themselves thought they were, and as a consequence the Americans argued that the Chinese should take a greater responsibility and play a larger role internationally than they had been willing to do before (ibid).

The first National Security Strategy report released by the Obama Administration in 2010, largely followed the policy that the President had earlier laid out. It stated that the United States would continue to pursue engagement and cooperation with other countries (NSS, 2010:11). The U.S. would also maintain its commitment to spreading democracy abroad and hold other countries accountable for human rights transgression, although the administration seemed less inclined to use force to further this end than their predecessors had been (Ibid.). While not directly aimed at China, both of these issues would most likely influence any China policy that Obama pursued.

On China, the NSS claims that the U.S. “will continue to pursue a positive, constructive, and comprehensive relationship” (ibid.). It also states that despite of growing Chinese military strength the U.S. will engage with the Chinese on several issues and attempt to encourage the Chinese to contribute in maintaining peace and stability in the international system. To quote from the document:

“...we will encourage China to make choices that contribute to peace, security, and prosperity as its influence rises...We will not agree on every issue, and we will be candid on our human rights concerns and areas where we differ. But disagreements should not prevent cooperation on issues of mutual interest, because a pragmatic and effective relationship between the United States and China is essential to address the major challenges of the 21st century.” (Ibid: 43).

Clearly, engagement and not containment remained the name of the game. Despite some changes in American military posture from 2007 and in the following years, the Americans

seemed determined to maintain the policy of engagement and hopeful that as China grew it would also take on greater responsibility for maintaining international stability and solving world problems such as pollution, terrorism and climate change.

As we get further away from the election however, we see the outline of some change in direction for Obama's China policy. As I have stated earlier, Barack Obama and his team were faced with a minor diplomatic crisis with the Chinese few months after they took office (The Economist, 2009b). As the Chinese accused the Americans of spying and likened them to a "criminal lurking outside the door" (Ibid.), the Americans seemed to struggle with how to engage with an increasingly assertive China while at the same time ensure both the Chinese and their allies that the U.S. were in East Asia to stay. This new turn was especially visible as China tried to assert their territorial claims in the South-China Sea. The Chinese had previously warned the Americans to stay out of the dispute as they considered the maritime region to be exclusively Chinese territory and therefore an internal matter that should be handled exclusively by the East Asian nations involved. However, as the dispute grew increasingly heated, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton offered to help ease tensions between the countries involved. Clinton also said that, "The United States has a national interest in freedom of navigation, open access to Asia's maritime commons and respect for international law in the South China Sea," (New York Times, 2010b) a statement and position that was received with anger by Chinese authorities.

In fact, one senior American official claimed that the U.S. had "tested the limit of how far you can get with China through positive engagement" and that by year two of the first Obama period the State Department was forced to "toughen their position" when dealing with the Chinese (New York Times, 2012a). Another U.S. official stated that, while the United States did not conduct the same cold war policies that it had applied against the Soviet Union, the Chinese nevertheless respected strength and determination when negotiating. As a consequence to this, the administration started to show more strength when dealing with China (ibid.). With a harder line in place, the Chinese seems to have had problems placing the new administration, with some officials complaining over the mounting pressure on China and the Chinese foreign minister allegedly saying that "Big countries can get bullied by little countries" (ibid.). Clearly the Chinese were less than pleased about the American change in policy direction.

When we reach the election year of 2012, one can see that the liberal policies of engagement looks to be increasingly put aside in favor of a harder stance. In its Defense Strategic Guidance report for 2012, the Administration argued for a stronger presence in the

East Asia theater and a more cautious policy towards China while still hoping for a strong cooperative relationship.

“Over the long term, China’s emergence as a regional power will have the potential to affect the U.S. economy and our security in a variety of ways. Our two countries have a strong stake in peace and stability in East Asia and an interest in building a cooperative bilateral relationship. However, the growth of China’s military power must be accompanied by greater clarity of its strategic intentions in order to avoid causing friction in the region... The United States will continue to make the necessary investments to ensure that we maintain regional access and the ability to operate freely in keeping with our treaty obligations and with international law.” (Defense Strategic Guidance, 2012).

This statement comes at the same time that the United States kept increasing their forces in East Asia and the Pacific region. The Chinese actually confronted Hillary Clinton about this force buildup during her trip to China that same year, arguing that the Americans should reconsider their strategy in the region. China was also adamant that the U.S. was not to interfere in the dispute concerning the South-China Sea (New York Times, 2012a). The Americans for their part, asked the Chinese to engage with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), rather than with individual countries, something the Chinese were reluctant to do (Ibid.). It is worth noting that Secretary Clinton still considered the relationship between China and the U.S. to be moving forward and that the annual meetings between top officials were having an effect (ibid.). Nevertheless, the tone between American and Chinese officials seems to have grown more confrontational than had been for quite some time.

### **Intellectual property rights and U.S. trade deficit**

When President Obama entered the White House in January 2009, he had a profound task ahead of him. The American economy was reeling from the 2008 financial crisis, and the national debt, was higher than ever before. It should come as no surprise to anyone then, that rebuilding the American economy were a top priority for the newly elected president. In Obama’s words “The state of our economy calls for action: bold and swift. And we will act not only to create new jobs but to lay a new foundation for growth” (Obama, 2009b).

With a goal of strengthening the American economy, one could be forgiven for expecting Obama to attempt to reduce the trade deficit with China. Indeed Obama did file a case against China in the WTO in 2012, claiming that the Chinese were breaking the rules by subsidizing local industry (New York Times, 2012b). According to Obama, this was putting American jobs in danger, and at the time, he promised to take step in order to stop this practice. The Chinese for their part also filed a complaint that very same year claiming that the Americans were breaking the rules as well (Ibid.). Obama had also previously imposed a tariff

on tires produced in China, as a response to complaints from American unions (Washington Post, 2009).

Trade with the Chinese were still growing, but as time wore on the White House seems to have taken a much harder stance on this issue as well. Especially the allegations that Chinese authorities were committed to policies that favored Chinese firms over foreign ones were said to be of particular concern to the president, who during the Campaign had promised to protect ordinary American workers and their jobs (ibid). Worry was also expressed over the Chinese decision to restrict the export of rare earth minerals (Washington Post, 2012). These minerals are necessary in the production of most advanced technology, including military technology vital to the U.S. armed forces (Humphries, 2012) and the Chinese monopoly on this particular area had been a concern to the Americans for some time.

Fast forwarding to 2013 and we find that a U.S. government report on the abuse of intellectual property (IP) rights lists China as one of the main offenders internationally (Special 301 Report, 2013). The report argues that IP enforcement in China remains “a central Challenge” and that increasing cybertheft originating in China has made the situation even worse. Of concern were the fact that Chinese laws and policies regarding intellectual property rights “unfairly disadvantage U.S. Rights holders in China” (ibid: 4).

Nevertheless the Report maintains that ongoing law amendments in China is a positive step in order to reinsure U.S. authorities and U.S. firms of China’s commitment to upholding intellectual property laws, and allowing U.S. firms to compete fairly on the large Chinese market (Ibid 31). Yet for all the promise that new Chinese laws were said to hold, the Americans still worried over their competitiveness in the face of Chinese IP theft. Of a particular concern were the fact that many Chinese companies seemed to be actively stealing or copying information and technology that belonged to U.S. companies and IP holders both in China and abroad. This had been going on for quite some time but had become progressively worse. The report also mentions that the PLA was suspected of being behind many of these attacks and that firms that developed advanced technology were particularly vulnerable (Ibid.).

“The theft of trade secrets is an escalating concern. Not only are repeated thefts occurring inside China, but also outside of China for the benefit of Chinese entities... Particularly troubling are public reports by independent security firms that actors affiliated with the Chinese military and Chinese Government have systematically infiltrated the computer systems of a significant number of U.S. companies and stolen hundreds of terabytes of data, including IP, from these companies. The United States strongly urges the Chinese Government take serious steps to put an end to these activities and to deter further activity by rigorously investigating and prosecuting thefts of trade secrets by both cyber and conventional means” (Ibid:32).

However, despite of these worries and the measure Obama took against China in the WTO, the trade between the two Countries, as well as the trade deficit, kept increasing during the entire first period of Barack Obama. In 2009 the value of U.S.-China trade lay at 365 870,6 million \$, this was a reduction from 2008 and the deficit had also been reduced, down from 268 039,8 million to 226 877,2 million (United States Census Bureau, Foreign Trade, 2013). By 2010 however the deficit was once again growing and were now at 273 041,6 million \$, well above 2008 levels and a considerable increase since 2009. When we reach 2012, the trade deficit had reached its highest level yet at 315 095.3 million US dollars. The value of American goods being exported to China did increase significantly from 2009, but U.S. imports from China had grown even more. From 296 373,9 million in 2009 to 425 578,9 when we reach the end of 2012 (Ibid.). As one can see, despite growing concern over the deficit and Obama's promise to preserving American jobs, the trade between the U.S. and China keeps increasing.

Over the course of three different administrations and almost five presidential terms, the U.S. trading policy towards China had remained relatively unchanged. The idea remained that China would open its political system if it were allowed to trade and import goods and exchange ideas. However, in the last half of President Obama's first term, the situation seems to have changed somewhat. As the American economy grew weaker, and Chinese trading practices came under increasing scrutiny by the Americans, United States policy also looks as though it might have shifted somewhat in a harder, more confrontational direction. I will follow this line of thought closer in the following analysis.



## ***Part 4. Analysis of the Empirical data***

The question I initially posed was whether there exists an exceptional American foreign policy tradition that breaks with the expectations derived from realist theory and instead fits better with liberal theory. Having finished my empirical mapping, I will now analyze the data that I have systematically collected and determine whether there is a case for claiming that American foreign policy is indeed special in the sense that it deviates from the traditional realist foreign policy by being more focused on ideals and the interests of elites rather than *realpolitik*.

In the theory section, I argued that it should be possible to observe very distinct patterns of behavior in U.S. policy towards China, if either of the two theories fit. China was chosen as a case because of China's status as a rising great power. Offensive realist theory expects some very distinct behavior from existing great powers when faced with a rising power (Mearsheimer, 2001) which is why a rising China is a good case. On the other hand, we should expect a quite different form of policy if the liberal theory of Andrew Moravcsik is a better match. Since this would imply that the liberal experts and policy makers that are dominant in Washington (Friedberg, 2005) would have the greatest influence on U.S. foreign policy. As we can remember, this group is mostly in favor of a softer China policy based on engagement and cooperation and American democratic ideals.

I divided these behavior expectations into four hypotheses, two supporting realist theory and two that would suggest a liberal foreign policy (see the theory section). I will in part one of the analysis chapter examine the empirical data and determine whether any of the hypotheses are strengthened or weakened by what I have found. In part two I will put the different hypothesis against each other in order to determine which theory is the better fit for American foreign policy.

### **Realist foreign policy expectations**

#### **Hypothesis 1: Stance and military deployments**

To reiterate the Hypothesis from the theory section I expect:

- *A strong and clear American posture with regards to Chinese expansion of its military capabilities and Chinese attempts at influencing its neighbors, as well as a substantial increase in American military deployment to the East-Asia and the South-East Asia regions. I also expect American military assets in the Pacific and in East Asia to be shielded from defense cuts, even to the point where the budget for this area is increased despite other cuts.*
  - *Variable: Military focus and American perception of China as a threat.*

Presence of empirical indicators supporting realist theory hypothesis 1.

<i>Empirical Indicators</i>	<i>Clinton 1</i>	<i>Clinton 2</i>	<i>Bush 1</i>	<i>Bush 2</i>	<i>Obama 1</i>
<i>Statements of policy</i>	N	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Military presence</i>	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>Development and deployment of weapons aimed at countering China</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y
<i>American military Strategy</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y

Table 1.

Table 1. above lists the presence of indicators that supports my hypothesis about military deployments that corresponds with Offensive Realism theory. The table lists the different administrations and the four indicators I have chosen to look for, here an N (No) indicates that there are little or no presence of the relevant indicator, whereas a Y (Yes) indicates the presence of policy decisions that supports Realist theory.

Looking at the development of policy throughout the period as a whole we see that there is very little that suggests a U.S. foreign policy based on realist considerations during the first Clinton years. This serves to weaken the hypothesis somewhat right from the start, as realist theory would expect these indicators to be present in U.S. policy if the Americans were beginning to balance against China. However, as I have mentioned before, China was relatively weak during this period and few expected Chinese power to grow with such speed as it has done. At the time, many Americans considered countries like Japan and Germany to be as much of a competitor as China (Cohen, 2005), and it was apparent that the Chinese still had a long way to go if they were ever to become a peer-competitor. We do see some warnings from writers like Kissenger (1994) and Huntington (1993), but these were not acted upon to any great extent. China at the time was a relatively minor power that was still adapting to capitalism and the liberal international system. Chinese defense spending was low compared to what it was to become less than a decade later (Sipri, 2011), and Chinese military technology had still to evolve to a point where it could be a serious threat to American forces (Ross, 2002). We can therefore expect that the sense of threat was less in this period than it would be at a later date and as such a lack of realist based foreign policy decisions are not all that surprising. What I would claim then, is that despite the fact that the policies of the first Clinton administrations seemingly fly in the face of realist expectations, it does not seriously weaken the hypothesis overall.

In Clinton's second period, we see that the policies changes somewhat and some of the realist expectations are realized. This change corresponds with growing Chinese power, and especially with greater Chinese assertiveness. In particular, the Taiwan crisis in 95-96 seems to have given the Americans some worries about Chinese power in the future. American reactions to this particular situation follow the expectations of realism as they responded to a perceived threat with an attempt at balancing. Looking at the empirical indicators we find that: the United States stated that it would remain in East Asia for the foreseeable future and that it would defend its allies there, such as Taiwan. The American military presence in the region also started to grow after it had been continuously reduced since the early 1990s (See appendix). Although U.S. decision makers were starting to take an interest in Chinese military capabilities and how they might affect the United States and its allies. Since American military strategy remained relatively fixed. I do not consider this enough to claim that there existed an American intent to counter China.

The sense of threat from China also seems to have grown during this period. In 2000 the congress asked the Department of Defense for the first of what was to become annual reports on Chinese military power and the QDR for 1997 talked about China as a potential future peer competitor. As the sense of threat from China grew, we also see the presence of the expected indicators. Consequently, I would suggest that the hypothesis was somewhat strengthened following Clintons second term as president. Although far from all of the expected indicators were present in U.S. policy at the time.

Reaching the presidency of George W. Bush, we see that the indicators that suggests a realist policy towards China all goes by the wayside. Instead, the focus shifted towards the war on terror and Bush himself moderated the China policy that he favored during the campaign. At the same time, China keeps increasing its defense budget and the Chinese economy turns the country into an increasingly important player on the world stage. This does throw some doubt upon whether the U.S. does follow a realist foreign policy, and weakens the hypothesis somewhat. I consider a weakening of the hypothesis during this period to be of greater significance than the weakening that we saw during the first Clinton years. This is because of the growing power of China, but also because of the greater sense of threat that developed during the early 2000s. That said, the Bush administration was preoccupied with two wars in this period and China did not yet constitute a real threat to American dominance (Ross, 2002). This period does seem to constitute a weakness in the realist argument. Yet some of this behavior can be explained by looking at the wars that the United States committed itself to during this period, especially if these wars were seen to be a greater threat to American security.

By the end of the second Bush period in 2008 we see that the indicators suggesting a realist foreign policy is resurfacing. The Americans looked increasingly worried by Chinese power and the National Defense strategy for 2008 even went so far as to state that the U.S. would need to “hedge” against China in the coming years (NDS, 2008). This sense of threat also seems to have manifested itself in the actions of the second Bush administration. From 2005-2008 the Americans were increasingly focusing their attention on strategies on how to countering and containing the Chinese military buildup. This is evident in the deployment of more sophisticated weapons to the East Asia region as well as the American redeployment to Guam. Yet for all that, the Americans were still not increasing their military presence in East Asia and the Western Pacific in raw numbers, even if the units stationed in that region were becoming more sophisticated and capable. In Offensive Realism, the presence of military personnel and military force trumps all other considerations (Mearsheimer, 2001), and even if a case can be made that the Americans were increasing their firepower while reducing troop numbers, this would still only partially explain why the U.S. refrained from increasing the amounts of troops. If the Chinese were considered to be a growing threat, then we should expect to see troop numbers rise also. Still, the presence of all the other indicators does strengthen the hypothesis to a considerable extent and while I would not yet claim that the U.S. was balancing against the Chinese, the empirical evidence does suggest that U.S. policy was, at least partially, moving in that direction.

When we reach 2009 and especially 2010-2011, we see that U.S. policy has changed even further and it now looks like the United States is actively seeking ways of balancing against China. This, despite a president who went out of his way to extoll the virtues of cooperation between nations. The American military presence starts growing rapidly from 2010 and onwards, and by the end of 2012 the number of American troops stationed in the region was at greater than it had been at any time since 1994 (see figure 4 in the appendix). In addition, U.S. strategy and military developments starts to focus increasingly on how to counter another great power in short high intensity conflicts, featuring advanced Anti-Access/Area-Denial capabilities. We observe this development even as the American military budget is reduced and the Americans reduce their presence in other areas of the world. As is made perfectly clear in Obamas Defense Strategic Guidance report for (2012), the Americans were “pivoting to Asia”. This pivot coincide with growing Chinese assertiveness and a more volatile political situation in East Asia.

With the presence of all four empirical indicators and such a steep rise in American troops deployed to the region I can only conclude, and quite strongly, that the hypothesis was

strengthened during the first Obama administration. It is somewhat ironic that a president who argued heavily in favor of a foreign policy based on engagement and cooperation in the 2008 campaign, eventually committed to a foreign policy towards China that incorporates all the empirical expectations suggested by Offensive Realist theory.

To sum up then, we see a development from the second Clinton administration and onwards of a U.S. who is increasingly following realist policies in their dealings with the Chinese by improving their military capacity in East Asia, developing strategies and weapons aimed at China and by signaling their intent to remain a power in East Asia. This corresponds with growing Chinese power and, perhaps more importantly, a growing sense of threat in the U.S., most easily discerned by looking at the official documents such as the Annual Report to Congress. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan does seem to distort the image somewhat, but overall it still remains relatively clear that the Americans were following a policy that corresponded more with the expectations of realism in 2012, then they were in 1992. In conclusion, I would suggest that the empirical evidence supports and strengthens my first hypothesis about U.S. foreign policy behavior, the Americans were focusing more and more of their military power in East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean even as Chinese power, and perhaps more importantly American sense of threat from China grew.

## **Hypothesis 2: The presence of a realist alliance policy**

To reiterate the Hypothesis from the theory section I expect:

- ***Hypothesis 2: The presence of a realist alliance policy.*** *An attempt at containing China through the application of alliances and cooperation with the other states in the region.*
  - *Variable: Alliances and American alliance building in the region.*

Presence of empirical indicators supporting realist alliance theory.

<i>Empirical Indicators</i>	<i>Clinton 1</i>	<i>Clinton 2</i>	<i>Bush 1</i>	<i>Bush 2</i>	<i>Obama 1</i>
<i>Statements of intent</i>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>High profile joint exercises</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y
<i>Defense agreements</i>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Table 2.

Mearsheimer claims that threatened states prefer buck-passing to a policy of containment, he also suggests that when buck-passing is impossible states will prefer to balance against an aggressor with the aid of allies. After all, containing a threat is hard and expensive and the

presence of allies that can share the load would in most circumstances make the task easier (Mearsheimer, 2001). As such, we would expect the Americans to be more willing to focus on alliances than to spend money and military resources on an attempt to contain the Chinese on their own. Looking at the periods in question, we nevertheless see that the Americans are not fulfilling any of the expectations during Clinton's first years in office. Important American partners were mentioned only briefly in the 1994 NSS and some experts even argued that Japan was a greater challenge than China was. South Korea was mentioned as an important ally, but that could have more to do with the threat from North Korea than any perceived challenge from the Chinese. As was the case with the hypothesis about American military deployments, the evidence from the first Clinton period only serves to weaken the case for a U.S. alliance policy based on realist considerations. However, I must once again stress that the sense of threat that China conveyed in the U.S. at this time was relatively small. Some commentators such as Kissinger (1994) and Huntington (1996) did predict that China would rise to become a challenge but there was no great sense of urgency among the American elites. As such this can partially explain why we do not see any of the relevant indicators for this period.

This is also the only presidential period where the Americans remain so passive. From Clinton's second period and onwards, we see that the Americans are clearly signaling their intent to protect allies, and particularly Taiwan if we look specifically at the second Clinton period. We also see that the Americans are hard at work shoring up support among allies in the region. First through defense agreements with Japan and Taiwan in the second Clinton period and following that, agreements with India, South Korea and Australia as President Bush took office. Indeed, the policies and actions taken in both Clinton's second term and Bush's first period strengthened the hypothesis concerning a realist alliance policy. We do not yet see large high profile joint exercises, but there is still more support for claiming that the U.S. was conducting a realist alliance policy then there was in the previous period. I would especially highlight the policy decision to engage more closely with India. While Clinton had often criticized India for their nuclear weapons program and seemed to look upon that country purely through the lens of the India-Pakistani conflict, Bush turned to India as an important partner and chose to ignore the Indian nuclear weapons program. The NSS for 2002 is crystal clear in stating that the U.S. was no longer willing to let disagreement over nuclear issues stand between it and what it regarded to be a vital partner with the same strategic interests as the United States. While these strategic interests are not stated explicitly, the geographical positions of India and American bases in East Asia would in the case of a conflict force the Chinese to fight on two

opposite fronts simultaneously. As such, an argument could be made that the Americans were attempting to encircle China.

The development in Bush's second term as President strengthens the hypothesis even further. As with the two preceding periods, we see the presence of statements of intent as well as a strengthening of defense agreements. In addition, we also the presence of high profile joint exercises in the relevant areas. In fact, The Quadrilateral Initiative was a partnership that seemed to have been created as a specific counter to Chinese power, and the Chinese themselves certainly saw it that way (BBC, 2007). What we see is American commitment to the Koreans, as well as closer relationships with the Japanese and Taiwan. The relationship with India was further improved upon and the Americans hosted exercises meant to increase the effectiveness of cooperation between its allies and it self. All of these actions suggests that the Americans were indeed following the expected policy of Offensive Realist theory. The Americans were actively building their alliances in the region even as the Chinese improved upon their own military capabilities. With all three empirical indicators present. I can only conclude that the hypothesis was strengthened considerably during Bush's second term.

Looking at the indicators for the first Obama period, we see that they are all present in this period as well. U.S. allies were increasingly expressing their worries over Chinese growth in this period and the new administration seems to have continued on the policy of strengthening American alliance and partnerships in the region. The U.S. supported India's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council and stood behind Japan when the Japanese-China conflict over the Senkoku Islands flared up. The Obama administration also started to involve itself more in the South China Sea situation by standing behind the Philippines and Vietnam in their conflict with China over this important maritime region. In the final two presidential periods I have been looking into, we also see the presence of high profile joint exercises straight in the middle of the areas of contention. These exercises were carried out despite serious protests by Chinese authorities.

The U.S. clearly stated in this period that they would stand by their allies and these allies were increasingly venting their worries over China's growing military strength. The United States also looked to be fermenting alliances that in a sense encircled China from the sea and that could cut off Chinese trade from the rest of the world if a conflict should arise. As China is dependent upon foreign imports for their energy consumption, this tactic could very well be a winning one if conflict between the two nations ever arose. All of this is in accordance with what one would expect to see if the Americans were following realist principles in their security and foreign policy deliberations.

Similar to what we saw with the empirical indicators of a realist policy concerning military deployment and containment policy, we see that as the Chinese grow stronger, the Americans focused more attention on their partners in the relevant regions. If anything, the Americans were pursuing closer alliances and stronger partnerships more closely than they were pursuing military balance and the ability to contain China through military means. While we only see the presence of all four empirical indicators for a military containment policy in the Obama administration, we can observe that the final Bush administration also followed an alliance policy that incorporates all the indicators expected by Offensive Realist theory. Considering the theory that assumes countries prefer to have partners and allies help them with containment rather than go it alone, this is not particularly surprising. The development of U.S. policy certainly seems to become more realist as Chinese power and influence in East Asia and the Pacific increased.

The lack of a realist policy in the early years of Clinton's presidency is not necessarily detrimental to this hypothesis, as we remember that China at the time was less of a challenger than it eventually would become. We also see the U.S. was quicker to shore up its alliances in East Asia than it was to increase its military presence in the region. This is in accordance with the expectations that follows from Offensive Realist policy, as it assumes a state will prefer to balance with allies rather than to balance all on its own.

To sum up, there are strong empirical evidence for the growing US ambitions through the period to balance China by strengthening alliance commitments in the region. The hypothesis is thus strengthened.

## **Liberal Foreign Policy Expectations**

### **Hypothesis 3: The importance of economic considerations**

To reiterate the Hypothesis from the theory section I expect:

- *An American diplomacy focused on human rights and democracy while attempting to bring about these changes within China through cooperation and avoiding unnecessary confrontation between the two nations. I also expects a policy that seeks to integrate China into international institutions in order to create a more stable frame for China to rise within. In other words, China is not contained in the traditional sense.*
  - *Variable: Bilateral diplomatic cooperation and American support for Chinese integration into international institutions*



Presence of empirical indicators supporting a liberal trade theory.

<i>Empirical Indicators</i>	<i>Clinton 1</i>	<i>Clinton 2</i>	<i>Bush 1</i>	<i>Bush 2</i>	<i>Obama 1</i>
<i>Successful pressure on U.S. decision makers from business</i>	Y	Y	N	N	N
<i>Increase in trade despite a U.S. trade deficit</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Statements of intent</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

Table 3.

As I stated in the theory section, Friedberg (2005) and Mead (2001) both claim that liberals are in the majority among American foreign policy experts and decision makers. As such, I expected to find indicators that suggests a liberal foreign policy if American foreign policy traditions adheres more to the theories of Andrew Moravcsik than realist theory. As we know, the ideas of a peace based upon interdependence and the belief that democratic reform follows the liberalization of the economy are deeply ingrained in liberal theory. Therefore, I would expect liberal American decision makers to focus on trade with the Chinese rather than more confrontational policies.

Looking at the actual policy for the different periods, we see that the two Clinton periods have instance of all three indicators of such a policy. Clinton's focus when he won the presidential election in 1992 was on the economy and despite delivering harsh criticism of China's handling of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations, Clinton quickly realized that China was too important as a trading partner to antagonize further. Instead, the Clinton administration put human rights concerns on hold for the time being, and proceeded to renew China's Most Favored Nation Status despite critics in congress who wanted the MFN to be revoked. This move is very much in line with what we would expect if the U.S. were following a foreign policy based on the ideals of the liberal elite, as liberals expect trade to change China into a democratic state. The trade deficit was also growing throughout both Clinton periods, and yet we see few attempts to try to rectify this. I consider the trade deficit to be especially important, since allowing a large trade deficit directly contradicts one of the assumptions in Offensive Realist theory, which is the idea that a state will try to maintain an economic advantage over its rivals. The Americans were somewhat worried about Chinese pirating of copyrighted material, but despite some heavy rhetoric, this worry never translated into a big change in trading

policies. What we find then, is that all the empirical indicators are present throughout both of Clinton's two periods.

Looking at the Bush periods, we see that the pressure from business seems to have abated somewhat. Some American firms were even starting to become skeptical to the growing China trade and especially to Chinese trading practices. Still, the value of goods traded, and the deficit kept increasing and the American administration stated their intent to keep trade with China flowing on several occasions. In fact, while President George W. Bush differed greatly from his predecessor on many issues, he nevertheless supported trade with the Chinese. If anything, we see that he wanted to increase it rather than reduce it. Like Clinton before him, Bush also seems to have believed that maintaining and strengthening the trade between the U.S. and China were of vital importance and that it eventually would lead the Chinese down the path of democracy (Bush, 2000).

As we can see from table 3, the two Bush periods shows a minor weakening of the hypothesis overall. However, as I stated earlier, the most important empirical indicator for this particular hypothesis was always the increase of trade despite an American deficit. As we can see, this increase continued throughout both Bush periods. Not only did trade increase but the deficit grew considerably as well. This growth suggests that the Americans were not yet abandoning a liberal policy towards China, and that the belief that trade would change China into a liberal democracy was still strong. The statements of Bush also supports this.

The fact that the deficit kept growing even at a time of general crisis in the U.S. economy is significant, but may also have come about if the average American would turn more frequently to cheap Chinese goods, as her personal economy got poorer. This is a possibility that cannot be discarded. Still, the Administration did allowed trade to continue despite a clear deficit that must have been hurting the American economy's ability to restore itself. There is less that supports a liberal policy in this period if we look only at the empirical evidence. but the fact that U.S. businesses no longer applied so much pressure on the administration might very well be because many U.S. firms were becoming more skeptical to the China trade than they had previously been and not because of any change in U.S. policy (New York Times, 2012a).

Reaching the first Obama administration, we see that American decision makers were no longer praising an open trade relationship with the Chinese to the extent they had previously done. In fact, Obama started to implement some reforms that were meant to help American business compete with the Chinese. The new administration filed several complaints against the Chinese and took them to the WTO in 2012 claiming that the Chinese were subsidizing their

own national companies and thereby making it harder for American firms to compete in China. Obama had also previously imposed a tariff on imported Chinese tires in 2009. Allegedly, to protect U.S. firms which found it hard to compete with the Chinese and their business practices.

The Obama administration also seems to have increased their fight against intellectual property rights theft and pirating of American software, films and music. This suggests that the Americans were increasingly worried about their ability to compete in the Chinese market and their ability to maintain the technological edge against Chinese companies. China's growing economic strength and their propensity to favor local Chinese businesses seems to have started to have an impact on the Obama administration and their policies. Officials were no longer pushing for more trade with China at any cost.

This new policy direction leads to a further weakening of the liberal trade policy hypothesis during this period. Nevertheless, the U.S.-China trade and the U.S. trade deficit kept increasing in this period despite statements from the White House that suggested a harder line on China. By the end of 2012, the deficit from U.S.-China trade that the Americans suffered from had reached a staggering 315,095.3 million \$ (United States Census Bureau, 2013). While words are important, actions speak louder, and it is clear from the numbers that the Americans were still allowing the Chinese to walk away with most of the profits generated by the trading relationship of the two countries. This happened despite of a more difficult economic climate and harsher rhetoric from American politicians and leaders.

As we can observe, the indicators for a liberal trading policy weaken over the period. This suggests that the Americans were less eager to maintain the trade with the Chinese as it became obvious that China was benefitting greatly from trade with the U.S. while the Americans were losing money on account of the same trade. It is interesting to observe that as the Americans were moving more in the direction of a realist security policy, they were moving away from a liberal trading policy. As such, the hypothesis of a liberal trading policy is weakened by the empirical evidence. Although this weakening remained relatively minor until we reach 2009 and the first Obama administration.

Nevertheless, the most important indicator in this table, *increase in trade despite a U.S. trade deficit*, was present throughout all five presidential periods. In fact, despite of the American financial crisis and spiraling U.S. national debt, the trade deficit reached its highest point ever in 2012 at 315,095.3 million. To sum up then, I do consider the hypothesis to be weakened, but the presence of increased trade despite the huge deficit does suggest that the Americans were still relying upon trade with China to a great extent.

#### Hypothesis 4: Presence of a policy pursuing a democratic and accountable China

To reiterate the Hypothesis from the theory section I expect:

- *American attempts at fostering greater economic cooperation and integration between the two powers in order to ensure a peaceful relationship as well as cater to the wishes of the American business elite.*
  - *Variable: U.S. bilateral trade with China.*

*Empirical indicator: Statements of intent, increase in trade between the U.S. despite of an American trade deficit and China, as well as successful pressure on decision makers from the economic elite*

Presence of empirical indicators supporting the presence of a policy pursuing a democratic and accountable China

<i>Empirical Indicators</i>	<i>Clinton 1</i>	<i>Clinton 2</i>	<i>Bush 1</i>	<i>Bush 2</i>	<i>Obama 1</i>
<i>U.S. support for Chinese membership and participation in international organizations and fora</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Statements of Policy</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
<i>Positive and friendly rhetoric towards China</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

Table 4.

As we can see from table 4, American behavior has been relatively consistent for four of the five periods I examine. Only during President Obama's first administration do we see any sort of change to the American diplomatic stance, as the American rhetoric towards China became harsher and more critical and the U.S. policy towards China seemed to become more cautious. In the theory section, I explained that if U.S. foreign policy adhered more to the principles of liberalism, I would expect the Americans to conduct their diplomacy towards China in a positive and friendly way so as not antagonize the Chinese. I suggested that the U.S. policy would be one focused on cooperation and engagement with the Chinese rather than conflict and competition. I also expected the U.S. to aim at integrating China into the international organizations and the international system in general.

Bill Clinton's China policy during his first term is in line with what liberal theory expects U.S. policy to be as all three empirical indicators are present. Clinton had promised to be hard on China during the election campaign, but this policy was quickly changed in favor of a policy that focused on integrating the Chinese into the international community. As with trade

issues, we see that the Clinton administration was far more concerned with developing the relationship between China and the United States, rather than worrying about China as a potential competitor and threat to U.S. interests. In general, I consider it safe to claim that by and large President Clinton and his administration was following liberal principles in their policies towards China during his first term as president.

Clinton's second period as president followed the serious confrontations between the U.S. and China over Taiwan in 95-96 and the Chinese military exercises and Clinton's response of sending two aircraft carriers through the Taiwan Strait, strained the relationship between the two countries considerably. One thing that should be noted though is that despite the considerable tension that existed between the United States and China at the time, the relationship did not suffer too badly from the whole situation in the long term. In fact, Chinese and American leaders were quick to reestablish a friendly working relationship after the crisis had abated (Cohen, 2010, 257-258). Neither the Americans nor the Chinese seems to have been willing to pay the cost of a serious cooling in their relationship and as a consequence diplomatic relations were soon back on track. Indeed, President Clinton appears to have speeded up his policy of engagement with the Chinese during his second term. The NSSs for the period all stress the importance of engaging with the Chinese in order to turn China into a responsible stakeholder in the international community. Further, the Clinton administration also argued in favor of Chinese membership in the WTO and Clinton met with the Chinese president on several occasions, including the Chinese visit to the U.S. in 1997, the first visit by a Chinese head of state to the United States for more than a decade. As we can see the policy of engaging with China remained strong, and both the first and the second Clinton periods present strong empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis. I would also claim that the fact that the relationship between China and the U.S. was restored to its previous warmth so soon after the Taiwan Crisis further strengthens the hypothesis. The Americans were clearly not ready to give up on engaging with China, despite the seriousness of the situation in the Taiwan Strait.

If anything, the relationship between the United States and China improved further as George W. Bush became president. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, the U.S. seemed happy to consider the Chinese to be a partner rather than a competitor, and the Chinese for their part seemed pleased to be able to improve their relationship with the U.S. Overall, tensions were low during Bush's first presidential term. Looking at the official documents from the period shows an administration that still claimed that democratic change was needed in China, but who also claimed that cooperation with the Chinese on several issues, not least that of terrorism, was of vital importance (NSS, 2002). In sum, the policies of the new administration

echoed those of President Clinton, and the Americans most definitely stated that cooperation was the order of the day. This development might be surprising when one considers Bush's hard stance towards China during the campaign of 2000, and it serves to strengthen the idea that the U.S. was very much committed to liberal foreign policy based on engagement rather than containment.

As we can see through both reports from the period and statements from American politicians such as Zoellick (2005) and Paulson (2008), the friendly tone between the Chinese and the U.S. was kept during Bush's second presidency. Although it did abate somewhat during the final years, and the Americans seemed less inclined to sweep Chinese human rights abuse under the carpet as we approach the 2008 election. Nevertheless, the policies of the second Bush administration also shows strong empirical support for the liberal hypothesis as all three empirical indicators that I am looking for was present. The rhetoric did change somewhat during Bush's final years, but because the change happened late in the period and because Bush chose to moderate his speeches somewhat when he visited China, I do not consider this change significant enough to warrant an N on the indicator. Overall, I consider the American diplomacy towards China to have remained relatively fixed, and neither worries over trade deficits, Chinese growing military might or Chinese assertiveness seems to have changed this to a very large degree.

Looking at the presidency of Barack Obama from 2009 and onwards, we are able to observe a somewhat cooling of the relationship between China and the U.S. As I stated in the last section, this cooling was also in evidence in the late second Bush period, but with the stated policy of President Obama, one should perhaps have expected the relationship to improve. After all Obama did state that he wanted to build his foreign policy upon cooperation. However, from late 2010 and onwards we see that the rhetoric of the Obama administration becomes increasingly harsh towards China. The U.S. still pursued a policy that aimed at incorporating the Chinese into the international system, for instance they argued that China should negotiate a settlement over the South China Sea within the ASEAN group. The Obama administration also stated quite clearly that they would continue to commit to a policy of engagement, yet this policy now became more nuanced as the new President also made commitment to remain as a power in East-Asia and assured allies of U.S. commitment to their security. I would in fact argue that the U.S. policy changed from 2010 and onwards. As China became more assertive so the American policy became more focused on countering Chinese assertiveness. In fact, the Defense Strategic Guidance for 2012 states as much when it says that China needs to be more

open about its strategic intent if friction is to be avoided, and that the U.S. would make sure that it maintained access to South East Asia.

Looking at the presented evidence, I would argue that while the other presidential periods mostly supports a liberal diplomatic policy, the Obama period shows an important change in the China-U.S. relationship. The new administration seems to have been more willing to show strength when dealing with the Chinese, and less willing to accommodate Chinese demands. As we can observe by now, all of the indicators that I expected are empirically present right up to the first Obama administration, where two of them fall away. There is therefore a case in favor of a liberal American foreign Policy in general, yet one should also note that following the financial crisis in 2008 the balance of power between the U.S. and China shifted somewhat, and it looks like the Americans started to consider the Chinese to be more of a threat. As such, it is very possible that the changes that we see during the first Obama administration is a warning of more to come. Like with the economic considerations, the indicators of a liberal diplomatic policy are weakened as time goes by. This corresponds with a more pronounced sense of threat present in American strategic documents stemming from China's growth. I therefore also considers this hypothesis to be weakened overall.

## Summary

Having concluded the first part of this analysis, I have found that while the two realist hypothesis is relatively weak during the first presidential periods that I examine, the two liberal hypothesis is correspondingly stronger and then slowly grows weaker over time. As one can see from table 5, both realist theories and liberal theories are sometimes strengthened during the same period, this is fine as the theories are not necessarily mutually exclusive and it could very well be possible that both theories retain some explanatory power.

Status of hypotheses following part 1 of the analysis.

Hypothesis	Clinton 1	Clinton 2	Bush 1	Bush 2	Obama 1	Summary for all periods
Hypothesis 1	W	S	W	S	S	Strengthened
Hypothesis 2	W	S	S	S	S	Strengthened
Hypothesis 3	S	S	W	W	W	Weakened
Hypothesis 4	S	S	S	S	W	Weakened

Table 5. W=Weakened, S=Strengthened.

Note that while the liberal hypothesis are not weakened to the point where they become irrelevant, an important part of my argument is that the liberal policy needed to be upheld

throughout the period in order for liberal exceptionalism to remain as a viable explanation. The Realist one however, needed only to grow stronger as China's power increased, since Realist theory expects countries to follow certain patterns in the face of a growing power. This is why I still consider both liberal theories to be weakened by my analysis despite the fact that some empirical indicators for both hypothesis remained even in Obama's first period as president.

That said there remains some support for a liberal policy even during Obama's presidency. As such, I will in the following section, put the hypothesis up against each other and try to reach a conclusion on whether there still is a case for arguing in favor of an exceptional American foreign policy.

## **Final analysis**

My initial argument was that if United States was shown to follow realist rather than liberal policies in its dealings with a rising China, then there would be strong reasons to doubt the idea of an American foreign policy exceptionalism in general. As the preceding sections show, we can observe the presence of indicators that support both liberal theory and realist theory throughout the period that I have examined. Yet for all that, I have also concluded that liberal indicators lose a lot of their strength as time goes by and the perception of China as a threat grows in the United States.

I have found support for both liberal and realist theory in the foreign policy of the United States during these last twenty years, but this support exists somewhat at different places in time. In no period are all the expectations of both a realist and a liberal foreign policy fulfilled. The two behavior patterns that supports a realist foreign policy grows increasingly strong as time goes by and this corresponds with a growing worry over China's power and intentions among decision makers and experts in the United States. Similarly, the two patterns that would support liberal theory remain strong throughout the presidency of Clinton and most of Bush's as well, but they are weakened considerably as we reach the presidency of Barack Obama. The empirical evidence therefore shows that as the perception of China as a threat to American power grew stronger, the Americans became less willing to cooperate with it and instead began to prepare for a potential conflict that could arise between the two countries. This would explain why we see a weakening of the liberal indicators and a strengthening of the realist ones.

On the realist side, the factors indicating a realist alliance policy grows strong before those indicating a realist military stance. This fits with the Offensive Realism theory of Mearsheimer, as he expects a country to avoid taking all the burdens of balancing a growing power upon itself. What we see then, is that as China increases its presence in East Asia and



the Pacific. The Americans are busy shoring up alliances and even building new ones. The improved relationship with India is as such a strong indicator. That the Americans were choosing to forget old disagreements in order to gain friends which shared their strategic interests is significant. The act of establishing alliances is also relatively easy, compared to the act of actively balancing against an opponent. The first require mostly words and commitments, the second requires expensive military deployments, which may not have been available due to American commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan. On the liberal side, we see that the liberal diplomacy hypothesis remains strong longer than the liberal trade hypothesis. Similarly to the alliance hypothesis, diplomacy requires mostly words and it would therefore be easier to maintain a friendly diplomatic stance and rhetoric than it would be to maintain an unbalanced trade relationship. This could explain why the liberal diplomacy hypothesis remains strong despite the strengthening of the Realist indicators. Despite of this we still see that most traces of a liberal diplomacy policy is gone by the end of Obama's first period. Only the focus on integrating China into international organizations remained and that might actually have more to do with the structure of the international system than any actual policy decisions. When the Americans had first integrated the Chinese to a large degree, it would be difficult, if not impossible to push them back out.

As for military presence and policies that suggests the U.S. was actively balancing against the Chinese, these came somewhat later, most notably during the Second Bush administration and Obama's first period. Still, we are able to see some increase in U.S. military deployments in the second Clinton period as well, following the Taiwan crisis in 1996. This suggests that the force reduction seen during Bush's presidency might have been precipitated by the war in Afghanistan and Iraq rather than any specific lack of realist considerations in U.S. foreign policy. Yet there was little that suggested an American strategy for countering China during Clinton's second presidency. These strategies and developments came first during Bush's second term and Obama's first. This also fits with the American perception of threat that China's rise constituted during the Clinton period. China seems to have given the Americans a mild scare in 1996, but for the most part the consensus among American decision makers and experts looks to be that the Chinese did not pose any considerable threat yet. I would therefore argue that the insurances of American commitment to East Asia and the force buildup was a direct response to the Taiwan crisis, rather than an answer to a more general sense of threat stemming from China's growth. In contrast, the new weapon deployments and strategies of the second Bush administration and especially the impressive force buildup that followed in Obama's first period, is vital to the argument of a realist U.S. policy. Consider the

fact that the U.S. defense budget was reduced during President Obama, yet the number of American troops in the Eastern Pacific and East Asia rose. East Asia is a relatively peaceful region compared to the Middle East, yet the Americans still choose to increase their presence here, while they reduced in other parts of the world. This strongly suggests that the Americans were indeed prioritizing to balance against a potential aggressor. As it stands, the only country in East Asia even moderately capable of challenging the Americans is China. Looking only at U.S. troop deployments and security policy from the second Clinton Period gives the impression that Washington was actively pursuing a Realist foreign policy.

The one big counter argument to this would be the strong position that the indicator for U.S.-China trade continues to have, as realists expects countries to focus on relative gains from trade rather than absolute gains (Mearsheimer, 2001). If Mearsheimer is right and a country will attempt to maximize its economic advantage as well as its military, then it would make no sense for the Americans to keep accepting a negative trade balance with the Chinese. If the Chinese are rivals to the U.S., this can only help them achieve their own advantage in any potential struggle. However, if the decision makers in Washington believe that the trade is going to transform China and lead to a more stable and peaceful relationship, then it makes sense for the Americans to maintain the open trade relationship despite a considerable trade deficit. This argument is important and it does strengthen the hypothesis of a liberal trade policy. However, as we have seen, the other indicators of this hypothesis disappears during Bush and Obama's presidencies. In fact, steps were taken by the Obama administration that was clearly meant to reduce the advantages that the Chinese enjoyed. Even to the point where the U.S. was increasing tariffs on Chinese goods and focusing a lot of attention on combating pirating of American software and technology in China. Because of this development, I would argue that the fact that trade increases while the trade deficit remains is less important than it would otherwise be. It could very well be the case that the Americans are caught up in a situation where the average citizen is dependent upon cheap imports from China and where the economies of the two countries are so interconnected that any break or even change in policy is difficult to achieve. Alternatively, changes in policy that are meant to rebalance the trade relationship may already be in development or on the table (see for examples suggestions to congress by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2012), but these may not yet have made a great difference. With the willingness of the Americans to trade with China reduced, and new policies that address this issue implemented, I would expect that the actual trade relationship may change more in favor of the U.S. in the coming years. As one can see, there are strong reasons

to claim that as China's power grows and American sense of threat increases, the policies of the United States turn in the direction predicted by Offensive Realist theory.

This is why I would argue that the Americans are overall fulfilling the expectations of Offensive Realist theory in their relationship with China. While the policy is neither completely Realist nor completely Liberal throughout all of the relevant presidential periods, the evidence points to a considerable weakening of the liberal policy in American foreign policy. Even if liberal ideals were still present in the minds of the politicians and bureaucrats responsible for policy decisions, they were not followed up on. Instead we see a strong strengthening of Realist indicators, even to the point where the United States were significantly increasing their forces in East-Asia and were developing weapons and strategies that seemed to directly counter Chinese military developments.

These actions are not the actions of an exceptional great power that focuses their foreign policy on cooperation, diplomacy and liberal ideals. Instead, they represent a very clear traditional great power policy based on realist considerations and *realpolitik*. The explanatory power of liberal theory is weakened even as the strength of the realist indicators increase. At the end of our time frame we see that U.S. foreign policy is very strongly realist rather than liberal. Therefore, I will argue that realists like Walt (2013) and Kissinger (1994) can breathe easy. Despite all claims to the contrary the Americans have begun to actively balance against China in East-Asia and the Western Pacific, and as tension in the region rises I can see no reason as to why they should change that policy in the foreseeable future.

China represents a considerable challenge to American dominance in the East Asia region, and as I mentioned in the introduction, such a threat represents a good opportunity to test for an exceptionalism based on the perceived lack of realism in American foreign policy. As the United States is clearly fulfilling realist expectations in their relationship with a growing China, I can only conclude that the Americans are not immune to realist considerations when they decide upon their foreign policy. Further, as the empirical evidence shows not only the presence of realist foreign policy decisions, but also the strong prevalence of them, it becomes clear that to speak of a special American foreign policy tradition that is defined by its lack of adherence to realist expectations is problematic at best.

## ***Part 5. Concluding thoughts***

### **A rather ordinary foreign policy tradition**

The scope of this study was considerable, nothing less than to examine whether the idea of exceptionalism in the American foreign policy tradition could be maintained under scrutiny. This idea has been heavily ingrained in the American mythos and in both American leaders and the general population; however, as I have shown in this case study, there are strong reasons to reject this idea. As with any country, a certain way of doing things that differs from other nations may very well exist in the United States. Indeed Waltz (1979) claimed that foreign policy was inherently difficult to analyze because it depended so much upon the unique position of the state in question. However, to claim that the US foreign policy is exceptional is problematic, at least when you look at the period from 1993 to 2012 that I have examined. The United States fulfill the expectations of realist theory when they commit to alliances in East Asia, and they also fulfill realist expectations when they deploy thousands of troops and billions worth of military hardware to a region where another great power and potential challenger is rising in strength.

As I have shown, liberal ideals does seem to influence American foreign policy in periods, but when faced with a challenger, the United States moves away from these ideals and the policies that are derived from them. Instead, it focuses on its own security and on maintaining its position as the strongest great power in the world through balancing and containment strategies. Some may argue that the fact that there exists evidence for both a realist policy and a liberal one means that there are reasons to argue in favor of American exceptionalism. However, as I stated earlier, the premise of an exceptional foreign policy was not the presence of liberal policies in U.S. foreign policy, but rather the absence of realist foreign policy considerations. This study has shown that U.S. policy decisions for the last two decades meet the expectations derived from realist theory to a large degree. As such, it makes little sense to keep insisting upon the existence of an exceptional U.S. foreign policy towards China that is based on the rejection of *realpolitik*.

One could argue that it is problematic to make an assumption about the wider U.S. foreign policy tradition based upon only a single case study that spans the last two decades. After all, the history of U.S. foreign policy spans more than 200 years and the American position in the world differs widely within that time span. This argument is correct in the sense that one cannot use this single study to prove that the foreign policy tradition of the United States has never been exceptional. However, I would argue that the rise of China provides such a crucial

example of the problems surrounding the rise of a new great power (Mearsheimer, 2006) that the findings of this study retains considerable explanatory power for American foreign policy in general.

As I claimed in the introduction and the theory section, China's rise constitute a classic case of a rising great power (Ibid.). The dominant position of the U.S. and the importance of American interests in East Asia, further improves the case as a way of testing for exceptionalism in U.S. foreign policy, especially when one considers the importance of balance of power and maintaining ones hegemony in realist theory (Mearsheimer, 2001). If the Americans did not react according to the expectations of realism in this particular case, then one could reasonably expect that they would not do so at any other time. However, the evidence shows that the Americans have followed a policy in East Asia that corresponds more and more with the expectations of realist theory for most of the last two decades, similarly one sees that the policies expected by liberal theory is increasingly falling by the wayside. Since the United States did not pass the test for an exceptional foreign policy in this theoretically important case, there are reasons to assume that it would also fail when one examines other periods of history.

### **Implications of the findings**

I mentioned in the introduction that the question of American exceptionalism was relevant for the greater realism/liberalism debate. As you will remember, I claimed that realism would suffer if I found that that theory was unable to give any explanation to U.S. behavior in the face of a growing challenger. Similarly, liberal theory would be strengthened if American policy were found to reflect the ideals and opinions that exists among the American foreign policy elite and politicians. Having found evidence that supports both liberal and realist theory in this study, it would be wrong to come down in favor of one theory or the other.

In contrast, it would seem that the two theories both retain some explanatory power, but during different circumstances. When the United States remained in a position of strength during the 1990s, it looks like liberal theory provides a better fit than realist theory. In that period, the liberal optimists and their policies of choice seemed to be firmly in control. Similarly, the explanatory power of realism increases as the American position grows somewhat weaker, and more importantly, as China grows into a real challenger to American power in East Asia and American worry over this growth increases. One could argue that both theories are needed if one is to understand the intricate system that is a country's foreign policy, and that the real difficulty lies in choosing when to apply one or the other.

Looking at the implications for the literature that focuses on American foreign policy alone, the picture changes somewhat. It is my conviction that the authors who write about an exceptional foreign policy tradition devoid of realist considerations should reconsider their position and rethink their theories. Similarly Realists who despair at the seemingly idealist policy of the United States should be able to breathe a sigh of relief. At the very least, they should not fear that the U.S. would refrain from balancing against a rising power when it needs to. Kennan's fears that America might be dragged into unnecessary conflict due to ideology is still somewhat relevant as evidenced by the war in Iraq, but as I have shown, great power challenges to American security interests takes precedence in the end. As such, this propensity for ideological wars does not seem to threaten the United States in a fundamental way.

An interesting research approach for the future and one that could yield good results would be to look for other patterns of realist considerations in the history of American foreign policy, and to see whether these patterns corresponds with a greater sense of foreign threat in the American leadership and among the foreign policy experts in the U.S.. I would expect that they do, and that others will find similar results to mine. One interesting line of approach could for example be the policy pursued during the 1800s, when the United States remained a relatively minor power for much of the century. Another could be to look upon U.S. policy during the 1920s and 30s when isolationism was seemingly at its peak. Without such research, it is possible to argue that this development in favor of a realist foreign policy is a relatively new occurrence and that the United States has remained exceptional for most of its history. However, if others are able to show that there have been realist considerations in American foreign policy decisions throughout its history, then we can assume that the myth of American exceptionalism has little basis in reality.

### **The way forward**

In the end, I would like to stress that an American realist foreign policy in itself is not necessarily problematic and could, as Kennan (1984) claims, have positive repercussions. It could for example hold the United States back in situations where the idealistic response would otherwise be to engage in costly and perhaps unnecessary wars. However, if Americans continue to believe that their country stands above petty power competition and does not stoop to the realist strategies that other countries employ, it may lead to mistakes and miscalculation from both American and foreign leaders in the future. Mistakes that could have far reaching consequences for all involved.

Friedberg (2010) claims that it is the combination of realist “containment” policy and liberal “engagement” policy that led to the China policy that we have seen in the last two decades. A policy that Friedberg calls “congagement”. He argues that the U.S. should continue to follow this sort of policy and incorporate both traditional balance of power considerations as well as liberal policies into its China policy in order to safely manage the rise of China and ensure that the United States remains a power in East Asia.

This does seem to be the most prudent course of action in my mind as well, and there is still evidence of both a liberal and realist China policy in the policy pursued by the Obama administration. Nevertheless, I fear that the belief in a “special” American way of doing things might very well stop future politicians from taking the right decisions in crucial moments. In a worst-case scenario, a weak president might decide to fulfill the expectations of the American people rather than commit to the best policy option. There is also the danger that American politicians might conceivably adapt a policy that lack realist considerations simply because they are convinced that U.S. foreign policy has never employed the lessons of realism. In any event, such decisions could have serious ramifications for both the United States and the world.

Human beings have an extraordinary ability to learn from both past failures and successes, and the ability to use history as a guide should be one of the most important tools for leaders everywhere. However, if history ends up becoming distorted due to the proliferation of myths and fairytales, then this tool risks being left unused at best, at worst it could lead to serious mistakes and miscalculations. It is therefore imperative that those that practice the art of diplomacy or decides upon their country's policies have the necessary knowledge and awareness about past events, so that they can copy successful policy where appropriate and even more importantly, avoid policies that resulted in failures.

Despite very different conclusions about the amount of realism that exists in U.S. foreign policy, both Mead (2001) and Mearsheimer (2001) agrees that it has been mostly successful throughout its history. After all, the American foreign policy tradition helped turn 13 fledgling colonies on the edge of the world into the greatest power on the planet. Americans should note that this achievement is not in any way lessened by the fact that U.S. foreign policy also makes use of the realist tradition. It would therefore be very unfortunate if future American leaders were unable to capitalize on, and learn from the successes of their predecessors due the prevailing myth of American Exceptionalism.

## Sources

- Aid, Matthew M. (2013), "Inside the NSA's Ultra-Secret China Hacking Group", *Foreign Policy*, found at [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/06/10/inside\\_the\\_nsa\\_s\\_ultra\\_secret\\_china\\_hacking\\_group?wp\\_login\\_redirect=0](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/06/10/inside_the_nsa_s_ultra_secret_china_hacking_group?wp_login_redirect=0), on the 11.06.13.
- Ajemian, Chris (1998), "The 1997 U.S-Japan Defense Guidelines under the Japanese Constitution and their implications for U.S. foreign policy", *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 8.
- Albright, Madeleine K. (1998), interviewed on NBCTV, Found at: <http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1998/980219a.html> on the 03.02.13.
- America's Navy Fact File (2012), "Aircraft Carriers – CVN" Found at: [http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact\\_display.asp?cid=4200&tid=200&ct=4](http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=4200&tid=200&ct=4) on the 14.05.13.
- Annual Report to Congress (2000), "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China", Office of the Secretary of State, Found at <http://www.defense.gov/news/jun2000/china06222000.htm>, on the 18.04.13.
- Annual Report to Congress (2002), "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2004), "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2005), "The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2005", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2006), "The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2006", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2007), "The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2007", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2008), "The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2009), "The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2010), "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2011), "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2011", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2012), "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2012", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Annual Report to Congress (2013), "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2013", Office of the Secretary of State.
- Australian Defense White Paper (2009), "Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030", found at: [http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper2009/docs/defence\\_white\\_paper\\_2009.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper2009/docs/defence_white_paper_2009.pdf).



- BBC (2007), "New strategic partnership against China", found at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/6968412.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6968412.stm), on the 18.05.13.
- BBC (2008), "Presidents Condemns U.S. Shield Plan", found at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7416734.stm>, on the 18.05.13.
- BBC (2010a), "India to deploy 36,000 extra troops on Chinese border", found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11818840>, on the 15.05.13.
- BBC (2010b), "Anger simmers over Okinawa base burden", found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11390281>, on the 25.06.13.
- BBC (2011a), "U.S. stands by Philippines amid South China Sea tension", found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13899465>, on the 05.04.13.
- BBC (2011b), "U.S.-China spat over South-China Sea military exercises", found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-14097503>, on the 06.04.13.
- BBC (2013), "U.S. scraps final phase of European missile shield", found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-21812161>, on the 17.03.13.
- Bennet, W. Lance (1990) "Toward a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States", *Journal of Communication*, 40(2), spring.
- Bernstein, Richard & Munro, Ross H. (1997), *The Coming Conflict With China*. New York: Alfred A Knopf.
- Blackwill, Robert D. (2005), "The India Imperative", *National Interest* no. 80 (Summer 2005) pp. 9-17.
- Bloomberg, (2006), "Fallon, U.S. Commander, Pushes China to Modernize Its Military", found at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a8Wqk11um0ok> , on the 15.04.13.
- Breslin, Shaun (2013), "China and the global order: signaling threat or friendship?" *International Affairs*, 89:3, pp. 615-634.
- Bunn, M. Elaine & Vincent A. Manzo (2011), "Conventional Prompt Global Strike: Strategic Asset or Dangerous Liability?", *Strategic Forum*, February, No. 263, pp. 1-23.
- Bush, George W. (2000), "Join Together in Making China a Normal Trading Partner", Quoted in New York Times, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/05/18/world/in-bush-s-words-join-together-in-making-china-a-normal-trading-partner.html>, on the 05.08.13.
- Bush, George W. (2002), "State of the Union Address" Quoted in the *Washington Post*, found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/sou012902.htm> on the 23.08.13.
- Bush, Richard (2005), "Lee Tung-Hui and "Seperatism", in Tucker, Nancy Bernkopf (Ed), *Dangerous Strait: The US-Taiwan-China Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Carr, E. H. ([1939] 1946), *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939, An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, London: The Macmillian Press LTD.
- Chase, Michael S. (2005) "U.S.-Taiwan Security Cooperation: Enhancing an Unofficial Relationship", in: Tucker, Nancy Bernkopf (ed.), *Dangerous Strait The US-Taiwan-China Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Chase, Michael S., Andrew S. Erickson & Christopher Yeaw (2009), "Chinese Theater and Strategic Missile Force Modernization and its Implications for the United States", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 32:1, 67-114.
- Chinese Govt. White Paper (2011), "China's Peaceful Development", Found at: [http://www.china.org.cn/government/whitepaper/node\\_7126562.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/government/whitepaper/node_7126562.htm), on the 12.11.12.
- Christensen, Thomas J. (2006), "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and U.S. Policy toward East Asia", *International Security*, Volume 31, Number 1, Summer 2006, pp. 81-126.
- Clinton, Bill (1997), "Remarks by the President in address on China and the national interest", The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, found at <http://clinton4.nara.gov/WH/New/html/19971024-3863.html>, on the 15.07.13.
- Clinton, Hillary (2009), "U.S.-Asia Relations, Indispensable to Our Future", remarks at the Asia Society, New York, New York, found at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/02/117333.htm>, on the 18.04.13.
- Clinton, Hillary (2011), "America's Pacific Century", *Foreign Policy*, November, Found at: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas\\_pacific\\_century?wp\\_login\\_redirect=0](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century?wp_login_redirect=0), on the 12.02.2013.
- Cohen, Warren I. (2005), *America's Failing Empire, US Foreign Relations since the Cold War*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Cohen, Warren I. (2010), *America's Response to China*, Fifth Edition, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Copeland, Dale C. (1996), "Economic Interdependence and War: A Theory of Trade Expectations", *International Security*, Volume 20, Number 4, Spring, pp. 5-41.
- Defense Strategic Guidance (2012), "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense", Office of the Secretary of Defense.
- Denmark, Abraham M (ed.) and Dr. James Mulvenon (ed.) (2010), *Contested Commons: The Future of American Power in a Multipolar World*, Center for a New American Security.
- Department of defense Base Structure Report (2010), "Fiscal Year 2010 Baseline, A Summary of DoD's Real Property Inventory", Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment).
- Department of defense Base Structure Report (2011), "Fiscal Year 2011 Baseline, A Summary of DoD's Real Property Inventory", Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment).
- Department of defense Base Structure Report (2012), "Fiscal Year 2012 Baseline, A Summary of DoD's Real Property Inventory", Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment).
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1990), "ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)", Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/Hst0990.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1994), "ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)",

- Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/Hst0994.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1995), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/Hst0995.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1996), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/Hst0996.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1997), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/Hst0997.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1998), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0998.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (1999), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0999.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2000), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/M05/hst0900.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2001), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/M05/hst0901.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2002), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/M05/hst0902.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2003), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/M05/hst0309.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2004), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/M05/hst0409.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2005), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0905.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2006), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0609.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.

- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2007), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0709.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2008), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0809.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2009), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0909.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2010), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst1009.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2011), “ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL STRENGTHS BY REGIONAL AREA AND BY COUNTRY (309a)”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst1109.pdf>, on the 05.06.13.
- DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics (2012), “Total Military Personnel and Dependent End Strength”, Found at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/miltop.htm>, Total DoD-December 31, 2012 (DMDC data), on the 05.06.13.
- Doubleday, Mike (1996), DoD News Briefing : Tuesday, March 12, 1996, 1:30 p.m, Found at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=443>. On the 13.03.13.
- Doyle, Michael W. (1986). 'Liberalism and World Politics', *American Political Science Review* 80(4): 1151-1169.
- Dueck, Colin (2005), “Realism, Culture and Grand Strategy: Explaining America's Peculiar Path to World Power”, *Security Studies* 14, no. 2 (April–June 2005): 195–231.
- Dunne, Tim (2005). “Liberalism”, in John Baylis & Steve Smith (ed.): *The Globalization of World Politics* (3rd ed.). Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dunne, Tim & Brian C. Schmidt (2005). “Realism”, in: John Baylis & Steve Smith (ed.), *The Globalization of World Politics* (3rd ed.). Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dwyer, Devin (2012) “Obama Rebuffs Romney on American Exceptionalism” Found at <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/04/obama-rebuffs-romney-on-american-exceptionalism/>, on the 13.02.13.
- Economist, The (2009a), “Barack Obama’s foreign policy. All very engaging”, found at <http://www.economist.com/node/13278173>, on the 18.03.13.
- Economist, The (2009b), “China and America spar at sea. Naked aggression. With an impeccable sense of timing”, found at <http://www.economist.com/node/13279348>, on the 19.03.13.

- Economy, Elizabeth (2004), "Don't Break the Engagement", *Foreign Affairs*, May/June, pp: 96-109.
- Fravel, M. Taylor (2005), "Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China's Compromises in Territorial Disputes", *International Security*, Vol. 30, No.2, PP 46-83.
- Friedberg, Aaron L. (2005), "The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?" *International Security*, Volume 30, Number 2, fall 2005, pp. 7-45.
- Friedberg, Aaron L. (2011), *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia*, New York: W.W. Norton.
- Guardian, The (2013), "U.S. draws up list of foreign cyber-targets", Article, Saturday 08.06.13. pp. 1, 4-7.
- Halloran, Richard (2007), "A New Line in the Pacific", *AIR FORCE Magazine*, December, pp. 34-39.
- Halloran, Richard (2008), "PACAF Between War and Peace", *AIR FORCE Magazine*, August, pp. 30-33.
- Halloran, Richard (2010), "China Turns Up the Heat", *AIR FORCE Magazine*, April, pp. 34-37.
- Halloran, Richard (2011), "Pacific Push", *AIR FORCE Magazine*, January, pp. 46-50.
- He, Kai & Feng, Huiyun (2009), "Leadership, regime security, and China's policy toward Taiwan: Prospect Theory and Taiwan crisis", *The Pacific Review*, 22:4, pp. 501-521.
- Herz, John H. (1950), "IDEALIST INTERNATIONALISM AND THE SECURITY DILEMMA", *World Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Jan., 1950), pp. 157-180.
- Heywood, Andrew (2007) *Political Ideologies, an Introduction*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Palgrave Macmillian.
- Howard, Michael (2001) "Grand Strategy in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century", *Defense Studies*, Volume 1, Issue 1:1-10.
- Humphries, Marc (2012), "Rare Earth Elements: The Global Supply Chain", *CRS Report for Congress*, Congressional Research Service.
- Huntington, Samuel P. (1993), "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs*, Summer, pp. 22-49.
- Huntington, Samuel P. (1996), *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, London: Free Press.
- Ikenberry, G. John (2008), "The Rise of China and the Future of the West, Can the Liberal System Survive?", *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2008.
- Iyengar, Shanto (2011), *Media Politics, a Citizen's Guide*, W.W. Norton & Company: New York.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain (2013), "How New and Assertive is China's New Assertiveness?", *International Security*, Volume 37, Number 4, Spring, pp. 7-48.
- Kan, Shirley A. (2012), "Guam: U.S. Defense Deployments", *CRS Report for Congress*, Congressional Research Service.
- Kaplan, Robert. (2005), "How would we fight China?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, 295(5), 49-64.
- Kennan, George F. [1984] (2012), *American Diplomacy, Sixtieth-Anniversary Expanded Edition*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

- Keohane, Robert O. (1988), "International Institutions: Two Approaches", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.32, No 4 (Dec.), pp. 379-396.
- Keohane, Robert O. (1998), "International Institutions: Can interdependence work?", *Foreign Policy*, Issue: 110, Spring, pp. 82-96.
- Kissinger, Henry (1994). *Diplomacy*, New York.
- Korea Times (2008), "U.S. To Keep 28,500 Troops in Korea", Found at: [http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/07/205\\_22820.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/07/205_22820.html), on the 24.08.13.
- Krauthammer, Charles (1990-91) "The Unipolar Movement", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1, America and the World 1990/91 (1990/1991), pp. 23-33.
- Kristof, Nicholas D. (1993), "The Rise of China", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 5 Nov. – Dec., pp. 59-74.
- Layne, Christopher (1994), "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Autumn), pp. 5-49.
- Legro, Jeffrey W. & Andrew Moravcsik (1999) "Is anybody still a Realist?", *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall,) pp. 5-55.
- Li, Rex (2004), "Security Challenge of an Ascendant China: Great Power Emergence and International Stability", in: Zhao, Suisheng (Ed), *Chinese Foreign Policy Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Lieberthal, Kenneth (1995), "A New China Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec.), pp. 35-49.
- Lieberthal, Kenneth and Wang Jisi (2012), "Addressing U.S.-China Strategic Distrust", *John L. Thornton China Center Monograph Series*, Number 4, March.
- Lippmann, Walter (1955), *Essays in the Public Philosophy*, Boston: Little Brown and Company.
- Locke, John ([1689] 1988). *Two Treatises of Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mead, Walter Russel (2001) *Special Providence, American Foreign Policy and how it changed the world*. New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis group.
- Mearsheimer, John J. (1994-95), "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter), pp. 5-49.
- Mearsheimer, John J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton.
- Mearsheimer, John J. (2006). "China's Unpeaceful Rise", *Current History*, Volume: 105 Issue: 690 Pages: 160-162.
- Miles, Donna (2008), "Gates views massive growth underway in Guam", *American Forces Press Service*, found at <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=50042>, on the 02.03.13.
- Moravcsik, Andrew, (1997). "Taking Preference Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics", *International Organization*, 51, 4m Autumn 1997, pp. 513-53.
- Moravcsik, Andrew, (2005). "The Paradox of U.S. Human Rights policy" in: Ignatieff, Michael (ed.), *American Exceptionalism and Human Rights*, Princeton University Press, pp. 147-197.



- Morgenthau, Hans J. [1948] (1993). *Politics Among Nations – The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Moses, Jonathon W. and Torbjørn L. Knutsen (2007). *Ways of Knowing – Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- National Defense Strategy (NSD) (2008), “2008 National Defense Strategy”, United States of America Department of Defense.
- National Defense Strategy (NSD) (2011), “The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2011, Redefining America’s Military Leadership”, United States of America Department of Defense.
- National Security Strategy (NSS), (1994), “A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy (NSS), (1995), “A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy (NSS), (1997), “A National Security Strategy for a New Century”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy (NSS), (1998), “A National Security Strategy for a New Century”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy, (NSS), (2000), “A National Security Strategy for a Global Age”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy (NSS), (2002), “The National Security Strategy for The United States of America”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy (NSS), (2006), “The National Security Strategy for The United States of America”, The White House.
- National Security Strategy, (NSS), (2010), “National Security Strategy”, The White House.
- New York Times (1998), “Clinton Says Chinese Money Did Not Influence U.S. Policy”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/18/us/clinton-says-chinese-money-did-not-influence-us-policy.html>, on the 20.06.13.
- New York Times (1999), “Clinton Gives Strong Push to Admitting China to WTO”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/08/news/08iht-clint.2.t 1.html>, on the 20.06.13.
- New York Times (2000), “The China Trade Vote: A Clinton Triumph; House in 237-197 Vote, Approves Normal Trade Rights For China”, Found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/05/25/world/china-trade-vote-clinton-triumph-house-237-197-vote-approves-normal-trade-rights.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>, on the 21.06.13.
- New York Times (2002), “WAR WITH IRAQ IS NOT IN AMERICA'S NATIONAL INTEREST”, Advertisement on the 11.26.2002.
- New York Times (2004), “U.S. Trade Deficit Hits Record High in 2005”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/10/business/worldbusiness/10iht-usecon.html? r=1&>, on the 28.08.13.
- New York Times (2007a), “Enormous number of trade barriers in China, U.S. official says”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/29/business/worldbusiness/29iht-lavin.1.5070188.html>, on the 03.09.13.

- New York Times (2007b), “U.S. Toughens Its Position on China Trade”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/10/business/worldbusiness/10trade.html>, on the 03.09.13.
- New York Times (2008), “Bush Praises China but Continues Rebuke During Embassy Dedication in Beijing”, found at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/08/sports/olympics/08prexy.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/08/sports/olympics/08prexy.html?_r=0), on the 02.08.13.
- New York Times (2010a), “Countering China, Obama Backs India for U.N. Council”, found at [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/09/world/asia/09prexy.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/09/world/asia/09prexy.html?_r=0), on the 14.06.13.
- New York Times (2010b), “Offering to Aid Talks, U.S. Challenges China Disputed Islands”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/24/world/asia/24diplo.html>, on the 06.09.13.
- New York Times (2011), “A U.S. Marine Base for Australia Irritates China”, found at [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/17/world/asia/obama-and-gillard-expand-us-australia-military-ties.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/17/world/asia/obama-and-gillard-expand-us-australia-military-ties.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&), on the 20.05.2013.
- New York Times (2012a), “Obama’s Journey to Tougher Tack on a Rising China”, found at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/us/politics/obamas-evolution-to-a-tougher-line-on-china.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/us/politics/obamas-evolution-to-a-tougher-line-on-china.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0), on the 07.09.13.
- New York Times (2012b), “In Car Country, Obama Trumpets China Trade Case”, found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/18/us/politics/in-car-country-obama-trumpets-china-trade-case.html?ref=politics>, on the 08.09.13.
- Nye, Joseph S. Jr. (2010), “American and Chinese Power after the Financial Crisis”, *The Washington Quarterly*, 33:4, pp. 143-153.
- Nye, Joseph S. Jr. and David A. Welch (2011). *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation*, 8th edition, New York: Pearson.
- Nye, Joseph S. Jr. (2011), *The Future of Power*, New York: Public Affairs.
- Obama, Barack (2008), “Full text: Obama's foreign policy speech”, in *The Guardian*, Found at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/jul/16/uselections2008.barackobama>, on the 17.05.13
- Obama, Barack (2009a), “Nobel Lecture”, Found at: [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2009/obama-lecture\\_en.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2009/obama-lecture_en.html), on the 14.05.13.
- Obama Barack (2009b), “Inaugural address”, transcribed in the New York Times, found at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/20/us/politics/20text-obama.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/20/us/politics/20text-obama.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0), on the 13.08.13.
- Paulson, Henry M. Jr. (2008), “A Strategic Economic Engagement: Strengthening U.S.-Chinese Ties”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 5 (September/October), pp. 59-77.
- Pherson, Christopher J. (2006), “A String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China’s Rising Power Across the Asian Littoral”, Strategic Studies Institute, found at <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub721.pdf>, on the 06.06.13.
- Popper, Karl ([1959] 2003), “The Problem of Induction”, in: Gerard Delanty & Piet Strydom (red.): *Philosophies of Social Science – The Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

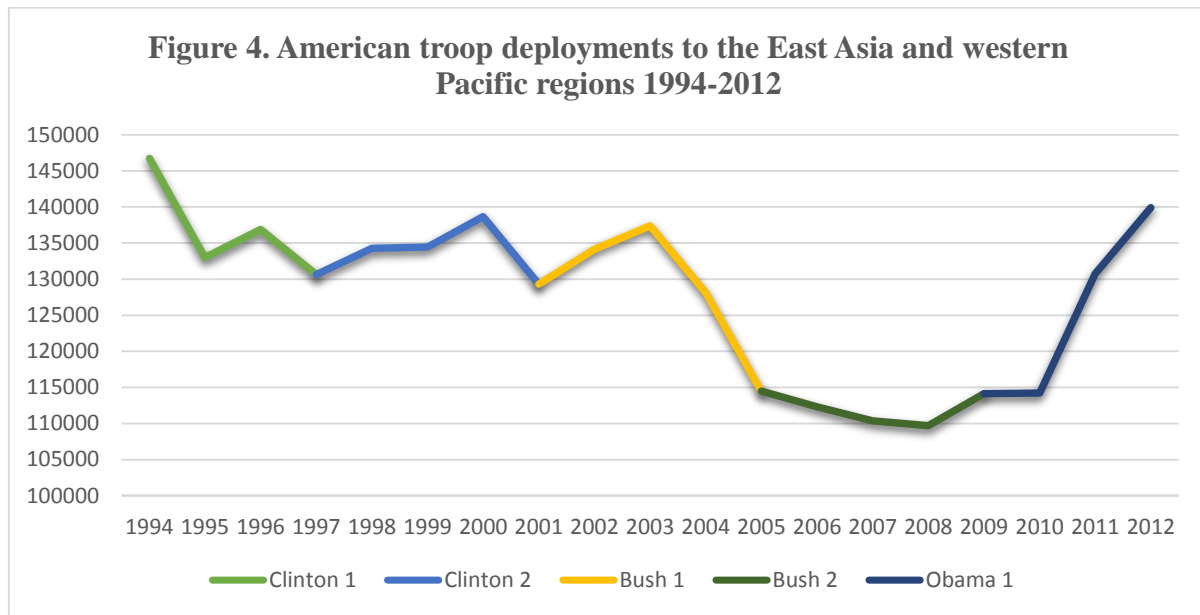


- Putnam, Robert D. (1988), "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games", *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer), pp. 427-460.
- Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) (1997), "Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review", United States of America Department of Defense.
- Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) (2001) "Quadrennial Defense Review Report", United States of America Department of Defense.
- Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) (2006) "Quadrennial Defense Review Report", United States of America Department of Defense.
- Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) (2010) "Quadrennial Defense Review Report", United States of America Department of Defense.
- Restad, Hilde Eliassen (2012) "Old Paradigms in History Die Hard in Political Science: U.S. Foreign Policy and American Exceptionalism", *American Political Thought*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (spring 2012), pp. 53-76.
- Reynolds, David (2000), *Britannia Overruled: British Policy and World Power in the Twentieth Century*, Second Edition, Pearson Education Limited.
- Richardson, Michael (2013), "New U.S. weapons have China worried", commentary in *Japan Times*, found at [http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2013/05/30/commentary/new-u-s-weapons-have-china-worried/#.UhoIuj\\_XsTF](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2013/05/30/commentary/new-u-s-weapons-have-china-worried/#.UhoIuj_XsTF), on the 24.06.13.
- Rice, Condoleezza (2000), "Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest", *Foreign Affairs*, January/February.
- Rosato, Sebastian & John Schuessler (2011), "A Realist Foreign Policy for the United States", *Perspectives on Politics*, December 2011 Vol. 9/ No 4, pp. 803-819.
- Rose, Gideon (1998), "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy", *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Oct., 1998), pp. 144-172.
- Ross, Robert S. (2000), "The 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Confrontation: Coercion, Credibility and the Use of Force", *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 87-123.
- Ross, Robert S. (2002), "Navigating the Taiwan Strait: Deterrence, Escalation Dominance, and U.S.-China Relations", *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 48-85.
- Ross, Robert S. (2009), "China's Naval Nationalism Sources, Prospects and U.S. Response", *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 46-81.
- Rothkopf, David (2013), "The Cool War", *Foreign Policy*, found at [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/02/20/the\\_cool\\_war\\_china\\_cyberwar?page=0,1](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/02/20/the_cool_war_china_cyberwar?page=0,1), on the 13.03.2013.
- Russett, Bruce, Christopher Layne, David E. Spiro and Michael W. Doyle (1995), "The Democratic Peace", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Spring), pp. 164-184.
- Scobell, Andrew (2000), "Show of Force: Chinese Soldiers, Statesmen, and the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 2 (Summer), pp. 227-246.
- Scobell, Andrew (2004), "Soldiers, Statesmen, Strategic Culture and China's 1950 Intervention in Korea", in: Zhao, Suisheng (Ed), *Chinese Foreign Policy Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Seattle Times (2013), "U.S. to cut carrier fleet in Persian Gulf to 1", found at [http://seattletimes.com/html/politics/2020298246\\_apusdefensebudget.html](http://seattletimes.com/html/politics/2020298246_apusdefensebudget.html), on the 20.03.13.

- Shambaugh, David (2004-2005), "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order", *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp: 64-99.
- Shinzo, Abe (2012), *Asia's Democratic Security Diamond*, hentet fra: <http://www.project-syndicate.org/print/a-strategic-alliance-for-japan-and-india-by-shinzo-abe>.
- SIPRI Military Expenditure Database 2012, <http://milexdata.sipri.org>.
- Siu-Kai, Lau (2004), "Pragmatic Calculations of National Interest: China's Hong Kong Policy 1949-1997". I Zhao, Suisheng (Ed), *Chinese Foreign Policy Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Special 301 Report (2013) "Special 301 report 2013", Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive office of the President of The United States.
- Thies, Wallace J. & Bratton, Patrick C. (2004), "When Governments Collide in the Taiwan Strait", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 27:4. pp. 556-584.
- Thucydides [1954] (1972): *History of the Peoponnesian War*, Penguin Books Limited.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de ([1835] 1972), *Democracy in America: And Two Essays on America*, London: Penguin Books.
- Toft, Peter (2005) "John J. Mearsheimer: an offensive realist between geopolitics and power", *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 8. pp. 381-408.
- Tol, Jan van, with Mark Gunzinger, Andrew Krepinevich and Jim Thomas (2010), "AirSea Battle, A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept", Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.
- Tucker, Nancy Bernkopf (2005), *Dangerous Strait The US-Taiwan-China Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- United States Census Bureau (2013), "Foreign Trade, Trade in Goods with China", found at <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5700.html>, on the 20.07.13.
- U.S.-ROK. Joint Communique (2010), "Joint Communique, The 42nd U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting", found at <http://www.defense.gov/news/d20101008usrok.pdf>, on the 15.03.13.
- U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (2012), "Report to Congress", Found at: [http://origin.www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/annual\\_reports/2012-Report-to-Congress.pdf](http://origin.www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/annual_reports/2012-Report-to-Congress.pdf), on the 24.04.13.
- Washington Post (1998), "Panel Faults Space Aid to China", found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/campfin/stories/satellite123198.htm>, on the 19.08.13.
- Washington Post (2004), "2004 Trade Deficit Hits All-Time High", found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A13474-2005Feb10.html>, on the 27.08.13.
- Washington Post (2008), "Guam Braces for Peaceful Military Incursion", found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/01/24/AR2008012403509.html?sid=ST2008012602071>, on the 17.05.13.
- Washington Post (2009), "U.S. to Impose Tariffs on Tires From China", found at: [http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2009-09-12/business/36770811\\_1\\_chinese-tires-tire-tariff-tire-companies](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2009-09-12/business/36770811_1_chinese-tires-tire-tariff-tire-companies), on the 08.09.13.

- Washington Post, (2012), “U.S. challenges China’s curbs on mineral exports; China vows to push back”, found at: [http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-03-12/world/35446990\\_1\\_rare-earths-rare-earths-chinese-companies](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-03-12/world/35446990_1_rare-earths-rare-earths-chinese-companies), on the 22.09.13.
- Washington Times, The (2006), “China sub stalked U.S. fleet”, Found at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2006/nov/13/20061113-121539-3317r/?page=all>, on the 13.05.13.
- Walt, Stephen (2011) “The Myth of American Exceptionalism” *Foreign Policy*, Found at: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/the\\_myth\\_of\\_american\\_exceptionalism?page=0,0](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/the_myth_of_american_exceptionalism?page=0,0), on the 14.02.13.
- Walt, Stephen (2012) “What if realists were in charge of U.S. foreign policy?” *Foreign Policy*, Found at: [http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/04/30/what\\_if\\_realists\\_ran\\_us\\_foreign\\_policy\\_a\\_top\\_ten\\_list?wp\\_login\\_redirect=0](http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/04/30/what_if_realists_ran_us_foreign_policy_a_top_ten_list?wp_login_redirect=0), on the 14.02.13.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. (1959). *Man the state and war; a theoretical analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Waltz, Kenneth (1979), *Theory of International Politics*, McGraw-Hill.
- Woodward, Bob (2010), *Obama’s Wars*, Simon and Schuster.
- Zhao, Suisheng (2004), *Chinese Foreign Policy Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Zoellick, Robert B. (2005), “Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?”, Remarks to National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, New York City, September 21, found at: <http://2001-2009.state.gov/s/d/former/zoellick/rem/53682.htm>, on the 30.08.13.

## Appendix



Source: DoD Personnel and Procurement Statistics; DoD Base Structure Report (2010).

**Table 6. Number of U.S. Troops deployed to the East Asia and Western Pacific**

Year	East-Asia and Pacific	Hawaii	Guam	Total
1990	119 118	41 887	7 033	168 038
1994	98 269	42 161	6 319	146 749
1995	89 306	38 172	5 509	132 987
1996	95 191	36 392	5 305	136 888
1997	91 295	34 826	4 510	130 631
1998	95 680	34 643	3 935	134 258
1999	98 106	32 708	3 621	134 435
2000	101 447	33 930	3 266	138 643
2001	91 670	34 322	3 322	129 314
2002	96 385	34 608	3 149	134 142
2003	99 862	34 203	3 293	137 358
2004	89 846	35 061	3 221	128 128
2005	78 854	32 629	3 018	114 501
2006	74 530	34 934	2 867	112 331
2007	72 719	34 838	2 836	110 393
2008	68 812	37 847	3 065	109 724
2009	74 281	36 890	2 970	114 141
2010	72 453	38 755	3 013	114 221
2011	84 171	42 371	4 167	130 709
2012	82 525	49 242	5 646	137 413
2012+U.S. Marines on Australia	85 025	49 242	5 646	139 913

All years count the numbers for September, except 2012 where December is used. Source: DoD Personnel and Procurement Statistics; DoD Base Structure Report (2010).

Table 7. U.S. imports, exports and trade balance with China. In Millions of U.S. Dollars

Year	Exports	Imports	Balance
1994	9,281.7	38,786.8	-29,505.1
1995	11,753.7	45,543.2	-33,789.5
1996	11,992.6	51,512.8	-39,520.2
1997	12,862.2	62,557.7	-49,695.5
1998	14,241.2	71,168.6	-56,927.4
1999	13,111.1	81,788.2	-68,677.1
2000	16,185.2	100,018.2	-83,833.0
2001	19,182.3	102,278.4	-83,096.1
2002	22,127.7	125,192.6	-103,064.9
2003	28,367.9	152,436.1	-124,068.2
2004	34,427.8	196,682.0	-162,254.3
2005	41,192.0	243,470.1	-202,278.1
2006	53,673.0	287,774.4	-234,101.3
2007	62,936.9	321,442.9	-258,506.0
2008	69,732.8	337,772.6	-268,039.8
2009	69,496.7	296,373.9	-226,877.2
2010	91,911.1	364,952.6	-273,041.6
2011	103,986.5	399,378.9	-295,392.4
2012	110,483.6	425,578.9	-315,095.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2013).

Table 8. Chinese military spending 1992-2012.

Year	Spending in millions of U.S. dollars
1992	25,315
1996	25,424
2000	37,040
2004	63,560
2008	106,774
2012	157,603

Source: SIPRI, 2012.

Table 9. Presence of empirical indicators supporting the different hypotheses.

<i>Empirical Indicators</i>	<i>Clinton 1</i>	<i>Clinton 2</i>	<i>Bush 1</i>	<i>Bush 2</i>	<i>Obama 1</i>
<b>Hypothesis 1</b>					
<i>Statements of policy</i>	N	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Military presence</i>	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>Development and deployment of weapons aimed at countering China</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y
<i>American military Strategy</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y
<b>Hypothesis 2</b>					
<i>Statements of intent</i>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>High profile joint exercises</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y
<i>Defense agreements</i>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Hypothesis 3</b>					
<i>Successful pressure on U.S. decision makers from business</i>	Y	Y	N	N	N
<i>Increase in trade despite a U.S. trade deficit</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Statements of intent</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
<b>Hypothesis 4.</b>					
<i>U.S. support for Chinese membership and participation in international organizations and fora</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Statements of Policy</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
<i>Positive and friendly rhetoric towards China</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

Table 9. (Y=Yes, N=No).