

**THE US LIBERAL HEGEMONY AND BALANCE OF POWER:  
WEDGING STRATEGIES**

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*To my wife, Kübra*

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## Abstract

The post-Cold War world order is presented as distinct from other historical incidences of attempts to attain hegemony. Tellingly, the term benevolent hegemony is used to define the exceptional nature of the US-led international system. The provision of public goods to others and the pioneering of liberal norms feature as the definitive aspects of US benignity. These attributes were claimed to have led other states to appreciate the US's role of leadership as conducive to the improvement of every one's interests. Yet, the multiple forms of resentment displayed by other great powers suggest the US's self-portrayal as benign, benevolent and well-intentioned towards others does not necessarily yield the expected results of approbation and admiration from its partners. Indeed, it appears relative power capabilities continue to remain a more reliable measure than good intentions. As a result, we see states engage in balancing behaviors to check the unrestrained supremacy of the US. From the multiple alternative balancing mechanisms available, this thesis explores wedging strategies as a significant means of degrading the dominance of the US by targeting its alignments in a unipolar international structure. In order to substantiate this claim, the Georgian War of 2008 and the Ukraine Crisis are analyzed as part of the Russia's strategy to prevent Ukraine and Georgia from joining NATO alliance and the Western camp. Additionally, China's declaration of Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in 2013 is examined as an extension of China's policy of weakening the US-Japan cooperation in order to reduce the US dominance in the region.

**Keywords:** Grand Strategy, liberal hegemony, primacy, balance of power, wedging, neorealism

# ABD LİBERAL HEGEMONYASI VE GÜÇ DENGESİ: KAMA TAKMA STRATEJİLERİ

Muhammed Lutfi Türkcan

## Özet

Soğuk Savaş sonrası ortaya çıkan yeni dünya düzeni, tarihteki diğer hegemonya girişimlerinden farklı olarak sunulmaktadır. Bu sunuşa göre, ABD liderliğindeki uluslararası sistem “yardımsever hegemonya” (benevolent hegemony) terimi ile tanımlanmaktadır. Ortak faydanın gözetilmesi ve liberal normların öncülüğünün yapılması, yeni sistemin en önemli özellikleri olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Bu özelliklerin diğer devletlere kendi çıkarlarını gerçekleştirme imkânı tanıyacağı varsayımıyla, ABD’nin liderlik rolünün diğer devletler tarafından kabul edileceği iddia edilmektedir. Halbuki, diğer büyük devletlerin sergiledikleri direnç ve mukavemet, ABD’nin kendini yardımsever ve başkalarına karşı iyi niyetli olarak tanımlamasının beklenen sonuçları vermediğini göstermektedir. Nitekim, bu durum, devletlerin göreceli güç yeteneklerini (relative power capabilities) iyi niyetlerden daha güvenilir bir referans noktası olarak kabul ettiklerini göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, devletlerin ABD’nin sınırlandırılmamış üstünlüğünü kontrol etmek için dengeleyici davranışlar sergilediklerini görüyoruz. Bu tez, farklı dengeleme stratejilerinden biri olan kama takma (wedging) stratejisini, ABD liderliğindeki tek kutuplu sistemde uygulanabilir alternatif dengeleme mekanizmalarından biri olarak analiz ediyor. Kama takma stratejisi, ABD’nin müttefiklerini hedef alarak güç dengesini aleyhte değiştirmeyi hedefler. Bu iddiayı doğrulamak için, bu çalışmada, 2008 Gürcistan Savaşı ve 2014 Ukrayna Krizi incelenerek, Rusya’nın Ukrayna ve Gürcistan’ın NATO ittifakına ve Batı kampına katılmasını önlemek amacıyla bu iki müdahaleyi dengeleme stratejisi olarak gerçekleştirdiği iddia edilmektedir. Buna ek olarak, Çin’in 2013 yılında tek taraflı olarak ilan ettiği Hava Savunması Tanımlama Bölgesi (ADIZ) kararı, Çin’in bölgedeki ABD hakimiyetini azaltmak için ABD-Japonya güvenlik ittifakını zayıflatma politikasının bir uzantısı olarak incelenmektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Büyük strateji, liberal hegemonya, güç dengesi, kama takma, neo-realizm

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ADIZ: Air Defense Identification Zone

BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

DCFTA: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

EEU: Eurasian Economic Union

ENP: European Neighborhood Policy

ESDP: European Security and Defense Policy

EU: European Union

IMF: International Monetary Fund

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NSC-68: National Security Council Report 68

NSS: National Security Strategy

PRC: People's Republic of China

SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organization

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

US: The United States of America

WTO: World Trade Organization

WWI: First World War

WWII: Second World War



## Chapter I: Introduction

Ever since the international structure shifted from bipolarity to unipolarity, the behaviors of great powers within this new structure have drawn the interest of scholars of international relations. Multiple plausible explanations have been provided in the existing literature with regard to the possible behaviors of these great powers.<sup>1</sup> These explanations pertain to the significant questions that have emerged in the subsequent conversations regarding a unipolar world order. What would be the grand strategy of the US, in the absence of a rival similar to the Soviets? Would the US pursue a hegemonic grand strategy or would it refrain from furthering global commitments? Additionally, how would other great powers react to the new circumstances where the US dominates the world order? Would they accept the US superiority and join the bandwagon? Alternatively, would they attempt challenge the US hegemony instead?

Among other alternative explanations, structural realism has received an increasing amount of attention since it claims to provide a theoretical framework for the great powers' behavior. Yet, its assumptions have been criticized by other theoretical points of view: it is argued that the predictions of structural realism regarding the balancing behaviors of great powers against US hegemony have not actually transpired.<sup>2</sup> In response to these criticisms, some structural realists claim that

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<sup>1</sup>For the analysis of behaviors of great powers after the end of the Cold War see: Barry Buzan, *The United States and the Great Powers: World Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (Polity, 2004); Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security* 25, no. 1 (2000): 5–41; John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (1990): 5–56; G. John Ikenberry, "Strategic Reactions to American Preeminence: Great Power Politics in the Age of Unipolarity," 2003; G. John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno, and William C. Wohlforth, "Unipolarity, State Behavior, and Systemic Consequences," *World Politics* 61, no. 1 (2009): 1–27.

<sup>2</sup> William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *International Security* 24, no. 1 (1999): 5–41; Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "Hard Times for Soft Balancing," *International Security* 30, no. 1 (2005): 72–108; Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton University Press,

the balancing against the US will occur eventually, but the exact timing of said balancing is not a matter of concern for structural realist theory.<sup>3</sup> Taking on from this scholarly debate, this study aims to contribute to the discussion regarding the behaviors of great powers by testing and developing the structural realist assumptions about unipolarity. This study argues that the unipolar international structure provides clear incentives for the US to pursue a hegemonic grand strategy in order to maintain its security interests. Additionally, the same unipolar structure makes balancing against the US difficult, due to the power gap between the US and the second-tier powers; yet, unipolarity presents alternative forms of balancing strategies as viable options for states that perceive the US's global dominance as a security concern. Accordingly, this study argues that wedging strategies, designed to mitigate the relative power capabilities of the dominant power by targeting the actual or potential allies of the hegemon, are one of the alternative balancing methods used by the great powers against the US in a unipolar structure.

This study focuses on three things: Firstly, to test and examine the premises of structural realism regarding the great powers' behaviors in a situation of unipolarity. Secondly, this study intends to contribute to the structural realist literature by developing a new perspective regarding alternative balancing behaviors by applying wedging strategies onto new cases. Moreover, by introducing a wedging strategy as a viable option, this study also seeks to contribute to the literature on the balance of power. Lastly, this study aims to provide a theoretical framework for analyzing the current crisis, namely the Georgian War of 2008, the Ukraine Crisis, and China's

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2008); Keir A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, "Waiting for Balancing: Why the World Is Not Pushing Back," *International Security* 30, no. 1 (2005): 109–139.

<sup>3</sup> Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War."

declaration of Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in 2013 - all through the lenses of the structural realism.

The organization of the chapters in this study is as following: after introducing the main discussion and laying out the methodology in the first chapter, the second chapter discusses the features of the concept of a grand strategy by drawing on different definitions and approaches in the literature, and subsequently specifies the applied definition in this study. The definition of grand strategy employed in this study is broad in the sense that it encompasses both peacetime and wartime objectives and military and non-military instruments used in order to pursue defined ends. Additionally, the ideal types of a grand strategy available for the US to pursue in the post-Cold War era are discussed by relying on the categorizations of Posen and Ross, and Dueck. After elaborating the main premises, primary instruments, and assumptions about the nature of the world politics of each strategy, this chapter specifies which grand strategy has been pursued by the US following the demise of the USSR. Consequently, this study argues that the US has pursued a liberal hegemony that is a combination of primacy and liberal internationalist strategy. The fourth chapter will discuss this claim in further detail.

The third chapter outlines the theoretical framework this study is based on. The main assumptions of structural realism about the great powers' behavior in the case of unipolarity are discussed. It is followed by an analysis of the US grand strategy preference, which is liberal hegemony, through the assumptions of structural realism, and concludes that unipolarity provides the most powerful state incentives to pursue a hegemonic grand strategy. This is the case because the hegemon equates its own security with the maintenance of the established world order, which in the case of US hegemony, is built upon liberal premises. Subsequently, the expected behaviors of

other great powers' in unipolarity is analyzed through the lens of the structural realism. I argue that other great powers - particularly the ones which perceive the increased dominance of the US as a security threat or are dissatisfied with the prevailing international order - seek balance against the US liberal hegemony. They do so because the unconstrained nature of US supremacy creates uncertainty and poses a permanent threat to their own security. Then, the fundamental assumptions of the established balance of power theory are discussed and it is argued that unipolarity compels other great powers to carry out the expected balancing strategies. While distinguishing between military and non-military balancing, positive and negative balancing strategies, and direct and indirect balancing behaviors, alternative forms of balancing behaviors available to other great powers in unipolarity are presented. This chapter concludes that unipolarity makes positive and direct balancing strategies hard to implement, whilst opening new room for negative and indirect balancing strategies. Finally, the wedge strategy is introduced as one available balancing strategy with which other great powers can challenge US liberal hegemony.

The fourth chapter discusses the underpinnings of the US grand strategy in the post-Cold War period by concentrating on the US's hegemonic position as it emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. After detailing the US's supremacy in multiple areas, this chapter traces the roots of the liberal internationalist tradition in US political history. Then, by focusing on National Security Strategy documents from post-Cold War US administrations, it analyzes elements of primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategy. The chapter ends with the claim that all successive administrations after the end of the Cold War have stressed the importance of preserving the global leadership, and the promotion of democracy and free market economies abroad as the most important components of US grand strategy. Following this, the assumptions of

a democratic peace theory and the economic interdependency hypothesis are discussed as part of the main motivation lying behind the US's pursuit of liberal hegemony. Additionally, this chapter deals with alternative narratives about the possible ways in which other great powers can respond in the presence of a hegemon. Two competing approaches towards the likely behaviors expected from other great powers are highlighted. It starts by discussing the arguments of liberal scholars who argue that others would respect US hegemony due to its benevolence and benignity. The chapter then looks at the other side of the coin by bringing forth arguments concerning the ongoing great power challenges to the US' unchecked power. Several examples of the great powers' balancing behaviors against the US hegemony are presented from existing literature, as well. Overall, the fourth chapter ends with the conclusion that in a unipolar structure, states demonstrate resentment in spite of the public good provided by a hegemon.

The fifth chapter examines the tenets of structural realism by applying them to three case studies: the Georgian War of 2008, the Ukrainian Crisis of 2014, and China's declaration of an Air Defense Identification Zone in 2013. This chapter focuses on the NATO enlargement process and EU's Neighborhood Policy and Eastern Partnership Program as the basic strategies of the US's Eastern Europe policy. By relying on the statements of key decision makers and secondary sources, this chapter holds that the US's overall Eastern Europe strategy is built upon the ideal of establishing a liberal hegemony in the Europe. Following this, the war between Russia and Georgia, and the Ukraine Crisis are analyzed with reference to the NATO enlargement process and EU's integration programs. The analyses reveal that Russia's actions can be classified as wedging strategies in that they are designed to challenge US liberal hegemony by preventing Georgia and Ukraine from joining the EU and

NATO alliances. Additionally, this chapter analyzes the underpinnings of China's declaration of ADIZ in 2013 in the context of the US liberal hegemonic strategy in East Asia. After detailing the scope of the Japan – US security alliance, this chapter ends with the conclusion that China's ADIZ decision can be regarded as a wedging strategy aimed at undermining the US-Japan coalition, which is also a strategy to challenge the unchecked US dominance in the region.

The final chapter ends with an overview of the general arguments presented in the study, and evaluates its findings. Lastly, it points out some of the caveats regarding this study, as well as areas requiring further research.

## **Methodology**

This study applies a process-tracing research methodology on three cases in order to test the proposed assumptions of structural realism. Collier defines process tracing “*as the systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analyzed in light of research questions and hypotheses posed by the investigator. Process tracing can contribute decisively both to describing political and social phenomena and to evaluating causal claims.*”<sup>4</sup> He further claims that process tracing helps identify new incidents, describe them systematically, assess previously proposed assertions and provide insights into causal linkages.<sup>5</sup> This study pays a great deal of attention to the unfolding of events and attempts to reach causal inferences to evaluate the existing assumptions. Considering the merits of the process tracing method in evaluating the causal linkages between the proposed assumptions and the social events, it fits well with the objectives of this study.

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<sup>4</sup> David Collier, “Understanding Process Tracing,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44, no. 4 (2011): 823.

<sup>5</sup> Collier, “Understanding Process Tracing.”

Moreover, this study looks at the behavior of three great powers throughout three different case studies. The selections of the states, namely the US, Russia and China, to employ process-tracing method are made with regards to their power capabilities in the system. The US is considered the most preeminent and sole super power in the international system.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, analyzing the patterns of US grand strategy matters as its policies are expected to have reverberations on other great powers and on the conduct of the international affairs. Russia and China have been selected on the grounds that they occupy the next great power status after the US, and are emerging as powerful actors in the international system.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, relying on power transition theory's distinction between satisfied and dissatisfied powers, Russia and China may also be categorized as dissatisfied great powers who view the functioning of the international system as uncondusive towards their interests. The power transition theory assumes that some states may not be content with the international order and leadership of a single state because they believe they cannot receive their due share in such an arrangement. Therefore, if these dissatisfied great powers attempt to change the status quo in a way as to redesign the international order, conflict and war between challengers and the dominant nation is highly probable. Departing from this suggestion, this study focuses on the behaviors of Russia and China owing to their dissatisfaction with the American-led world order after the end of the Cold War, and posits them as potential challengers to the system.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, Lim, after analyzing China's level of satisfaction with the prevailing order by employing power transition theory's indicators, concludes that "*the 'extraordinary*

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<sup>6</sup> Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Cornell University Press, 2013)

<sup>7</sup> Randall Schweller, "Emerging Powers in an Age of Disorder," *Global Governance* 17, no. 3 (2011): 285–297.

<sup>8</sup> Jacek Kugler and Abramo FK Organski, "The Power Transition: A Retrospective and Prospective Evaluation," *Handbook of War Studies* 1 (1989): 171–194.

*growth' of Chinese military expenditures, the consolidation of the 'China model' and China's behavior towards the rules of regional institutions all suggest that Beijing is—or perhaps simply remains—strongly dissatisfied with the existing regional status quo.*<sup>9</sup> Therefore, analysis of the Chinese and Russian reactions can help observe the balancing behaviors of great powers against hegemony.

The selection of the case studies was made on the basis of their relevance to contemporary world politics, particularly with regard to their influences on great power politics. The Georgian War of 2008 is the first incident where Russia militarily engaged another sovereign country since the end of the Cold War.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, this landmark event deserves scrutiny because it displays a breakthrough in Russia's pattern of behavior in the new world order. Moreover, the Ukraine crisis and particularly Russia's annexation of Crimea, is regarded as one of the most significant development that affecting and shaping the Europe's entire security structure.<sup>11</sup> Analyzing this incident can provide insight into the underpinning of the new dynamics in great power politics. Additionally, China's unilateral declaration of the Air Defense Identification Zone has not only exacerbated the security architecture of the region but also increased the risk of drawing the US into the crisis.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, an examination of this issue can help reveal the patterns within China's strategy in checking the increased US dominance in the region while showing the US policies to achieve its objectives in the East China Sea.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Yves-Heng Lim, "How (Dis) Satisfied Is China? A Power Transition Theory Perspective," *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 92 (2015): 296.

<sup>10</sup> Robert McMahon, "Ukraine in Crisis," *Council on Foreign Relations* 5 (2014).

<sup>11</sup> Roy Allison, "Russian 'Deniable' Intervention in Ukraine: How and Why Russia Broke the Rules," *International Affairs* 90, no. 6 (2014): 1255–1297.

<sup>12</sup> Harry Kazianis, "China and Japan's Game of Chicken in the East China Sea," *The Diplomat*, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Zhang Yun, "The Diaoyu/Senkaku Dispute in the Context of China-US-Japan Trilateral Dynamics" (RSIS Working Paper, 2014).



Although different accounts can provide varying explanations regarding the phenomenon of the great powers' behaviors, this study tests and employs structural realism due to its expected benefits. Firstly, structural realism deals only with the behaviors of great powers in the international system, ruling out the relatively smaller countries. This helps understand and explain the fundamental dynamics of the international relations by providing greater room for making generalizations and predictions about the actions of great powers.<sup>14</sup> In this study, the countries of concern are great powers, namely the US, Russia and China. Secondly, structural realism gives utmost attention to the role of power in determining the international politics.<sup>15</sup> This is helpful in analyzing the grand strategies of great powers because, as will be stated in second chapter, the grand strategies are consequences of the power politics implemented to increase the relative security of the states. Lastly, structural realism, through its emphasis on the role of international structure, provides an opportunity to see how systemic changes affect the behaviors of great powers.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the assumptions of structural realism are instrumental in analyzing the behaviors of great powers in a unipolar structure, as this study covers the period that emerged as a result of the structural shift.

Furthermore, this study analyzes the post-Cold War period as a unipolar period. Although there are rival accounts on the nature of the new era, such as unimultipolarity<sup>17</sup> and nonpolarity,<sup>18</sup> this study is built upon the generally accepted notion that the collapse of the Soviet Union has brought about a unipolar structure.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (WW Norton & Company, 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979).

<sup>17</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," *Foreign Affairs*, 1999, 35–49.

<sup>18</sup> Richard N. Haass, "The Age of Nonpolarity: What Will Follow US Dominance," *Foreign Affairs*, 2008, 44–56.

<sup>19</sup> Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (1993): 5–51.

Moreover, the questions of how the structure has changed, and what caused this structural shift are not tackled in this study as these questions require analysis of the sources of the structural changes. Therefore, unipolarity will be taken as a starting point in this study.

Regarding the analysis of the US grand strategy, this study draws on the statements of state officials and the National Security Strategy Documents (NSS), which constitute the basis of a grand strategy. The NSS documents were born in 1968 when the US congress required to have concrete, consistent and transparent formulation of foreign policy choices.<sup>20</sup> The rationale behind the formation of NSS lies in the fact that the incumbent administrations should reveal their plan of actions with the subsequent expectations and intentions regarding the foreign policy issues before choices are made. Therefore, this mentality has been maintained with every new administration announcing their foreign policy goals, means and defined interests by making administrations accountable for their performances. However, some argued that NSS documents or declared grand strategy choices are far from being reliable referent points to evaluate the foreign policy preferences since there might be a discrepancy between the political rhetoric and what is actually implemented.<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding the gap between the reality and rhetoric, analysis of grand strategy articulations can reveal significant insights into how state officials perceive the strategic interests of a country and with which resources and policies defined interests would be attained. In this sense, grand strategies are reflective of the expectations and intentions of administrations' likely behaviors in dealing with foreign policy issues.

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<sup>20</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, "A Grand Strategy of Transformation," *Foreign Policy*, no. 133 (2002): 50–57.

<sup>21</sup> David M. Edelstein and Ronald R. Krebs, "Delusions of Grand Strategy: The Problem with Washington's Planning Obsession," *Foreign Aff.* 94 (2015): 109.

They involve the core assumptions and thinking of the administrations.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, this study deals with the grand strategy as it is perceived by the state officials. In other words, the expectations of administrations will be presented rather than to what extent these expectations are implemented. For instance, in the case of spread of democracy, the US administrations' records proved the opposite in several occasions by engaging in authoritarian leaders and establishing good ties with the non-democratic countries. However, even these situations do not repudiate what lies in the perception of the US administrations in their understanding of the nature of the global politics.



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<sup>22</sup> Peter Feaver, "What Is Grand Strategy and Why Do We Need It," *Foreign Policy* 8 (2009).

## Chapter II: Grand Strategy

### What is Grand Strategy?

Every state has a foreign policy and security goals, and possesses limited national resources to meet these goals. This leads states to engage in a process that attempts to produce a roadmap to reconcile the desired objectives with the scarce resource at their disposal. This is the point where the need for a grand strategy is born. With this reasoning, Colin Dueck claims, “‘Grand strategy’ involves a self-conscious identification and prioritization of foreign policy goals; an identification of existing and potential resources; and a selection of a plan which uses those resources to meet those goals.”<sup>23</sup> Therefore, grand strategy begins with the identification of interests or goals, requires the assessment of assets that can be used in pursuing these interests, and then necessitates a plan of action to relate the ends with the resources. Especially, considering the disparity between great powers’ global ambitions and their limited national resources, the need for a grand strategic design becomes even more important for great powers.<sup>24</sup> Although grand strategy, in the broadest sense, embraces the idea of relating ends to means, the way this term is conceptualized affects how we use grand strategy as a tool for analysis. Therefore, this section discusses the distinct characteristics of grand strategy by comparing and contrasting it with the concept of strategy. Additionally, by bringing forward different definitions of grand strategy, this section aims at clarifying the conceptual framework and main components of the grand strategy. Following these, I will discuss how this study deals with the grand strategy.

Distinguishing between a grand strategy and a strategy can help elucidate the distinctive features of the concept of a grand strategy. These two concepts, grand

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<sup>23</sup> Colin Dueck, “Ideas and Alternatives in American Grand Strategy, 2000–2004,” *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 4 (2004): 512.

<sup>24</sup> Hew Strachan, “Strategy and Contingency,” *International Affairs* 87, no. 6 (2011): 1281–1296.

strategy and strategy, are sometimes used interchangeably, and despite sharing certain characteristics, they are still distinct courses of action. In its contemporary meaning, strategy refers to a plan for applying resources to attain purposes.<sup>25</sup> In his definition of strategy, Gaddis employs a similar rationale by claiming that strategy is a process of relating ends to means, intentions to capabilities and objectives to resources.<sup>26</sup> Colin Grey, who views strategy as the use of means to reach desired ends, also uses similar reasoning.<sup>27</sup> What is common in these definitions, according to Peter Layton, is that the emphasis is on the application of resources, that is to say, the means.<sup>28</sup> In other words, strategy concentrates on the methods or means designed to reach defined objectives. However, grand strategy encompasses more than that. According to Layton, grand strategy requires both the development and allocation of resources. In other words, grand strategy is distinctive in that it deals with building, establishing and developing resources in order to create the means necessary to pursue defined goals. How to reach or develop these resources, whether through private or public initiative or by drawing on internal or external sources, falls under the scope of grand strategy. This also means that grand strategy supplies the means that are used for strategy.<sup>29</sup> According to Layton, grand strategy is also different from strategy in its approach to application of the means. Layton argues that while strategy employs singular means to reach the desired ends, grand strategy applies a variety of power instruments that consist of the entire capabilities of nations instead. Here the integrative role of grand strategy is considerably significant because dealing with various resources and

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<sup>25</sup> Terry L. Deibel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy: Logic for American Statecraft* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>26</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Peter Layton, "The Idea of Grand Strategy," *The RUSI Journal* 157, no. 4 (2012): 56–61.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

instruments requires complex and well-integrated mechanisms. Grand strategy manages to integrate and incorporate different components in a way that produces a coherent set of plans to achieve the objectives. Thus, one of the fundamental features of a grand strategy is its integrating characteristic, through which it creates a cohesive and coherent whole by developing, directing and allocating different and diverse units into one major plan.<sup>30</sup>

When defining grand strategy, scholars may underline a variety of features. Some prefer a narrow definition of grand strategy which rules out some of the elements mentioned in the beginning of the section. One of the widely accepted definitions is of Basil Liddell Hart who describes it as direction and coordination of all resources of a country to achieve political objectives of the war defined by the higher authority.<sup>31</sup> Although this definition is widely accepted, certain aspects of it remain contested. Liddell Hart's definition is narrow in the sense that although it includes all military and nonmilitary instruments as the resources of a country, it only focuses on the goals of a war. Therefore, the definition is confined to the wartime aims, excluding peacetime objectives. Robert Art's definition of grand strategy highlights another feature about its scope. Art claims "*Grand strategy, too, deals with the full range of goals that a state should seek but it concentrates primarily on how the military instrument should be employed to achieve them.*"<sup>32</sup> This definition incorporates all the objectives that state can pursue; yet it excludes all instruments except military ones. Therefore, other power instruments like diplomatic pressures, economic sanctions, technological tools or moral authority are not included within the scope of the grand

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> BH Liddell Hart, "The Theory of Strategy," *From Strategy, 2nd Rev. Ed. (New York: Meridian)*, 1991; Deibel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy*, 6.

<sup>32</sup> Art, *A Grand Strategy for America*, 2.

strategy. This definition rules out non-military resources that can be converted into assets for pursuing a grand strategy. On the other hand, other scholars have extended the definition of grand strategy and included both peacetime and wartime objectives, as well as all resources including the military ones in its scope. For instance, Paul Kennedy's understanding of grand strategy encompasses both peacetime and wartime strategizing and military and non-military instruments. Kennedy claims "*The crux of grand strategy lies therefore in policy, that is, in the capacity of the nation's leaders to bring together all of the elements, both military and non-military, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation's long-term (that is, in wartime and peacetime) best interests.*"<sup>33</sup> Layne also applies a similar approach while defining grand strategy. He holds that grand strategy is "*the process by which a state matches ends and means in the pursuit of security. In peacetime, grand strategy encompasses the following: defining the state's security interests; identifying the threats to those interests; and allocating military, diplomatic, and economic resources to defend the state's interest.*"<sup>34</sup> Strachan contributes to the grand strategy discussion by bringing in a new aspect which is the visionary nature of the grand strategy. For him, grand strategy is ambitious and aspirational in its objectives as it offers actionable plans that will work in the future contexts as well.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, it is not a pragmatic and temporary plan but rather a visionary one that takes into account the prospective developments that can affect the calculation of the ends-means reconciliation process in the long term.

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<sup>33</sup> Paul M. Kennedy, *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (Yale University Press, 1991), **quoted in** James D. Boys, *Clinton's Grand Strategy: US Foreign Policy in a Post-Cold War World* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 9.

<sup>34</sup> Christopher Layne, "Rethinking American Grand Strategy: Hegemony or Balance of Power in the Twenty-First Century?," *World Policy Journal* 15, no. 2 (1998): 8.

<sup>35</sup> Strachan, "Strategy and Contingency."

It must also be noted that there is also discussion regarding which states can have a grand strategy. The point of discussion is whether or not every state, regardless of its size or power, can design a grand strategy. Edward Luttwak contends that all states have their own grand strategy whether they are aware of it or not. Having a written document, as in the US, is not a necessary condition since grand strategy is constructed in the minds of the policy makers.<sup>36</sup> However, Williamson Murray comes up with the opposite idea and claims that grand strategy matters only for great powers. He based his claim on the conviction that grand strategy should propose an ideal world design that requires states to have enormous power projection capabilities in order to shape the future order.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, for Murray, only great powers can have a grand strategy.

Consequently, grand strategy is distinct from strategy in terms of its handling of the nation's entire resources, the application of its diverse means, and the integrative nature that enables the state to produce a coherent set of actions through incorporating different components. Moreover, the scope of the grand strategy can be either narrow, that is, limited to cover military purposes and military instruments, or broad, in the sense that it encompasses military and non-military means and also peacetime and wartime objectives. Additionally, determining which states can have a grand strategy is a matter of discussion whose answer depends on where one stands. Relying on these assertions, this study employs a broad definition of the grand strategy in order to operationalize this concept during the period analyzed. Therefore, Layne's definition, which includes peacetime and wartime objectives and the entirety of a nation's instruments, shall be employed in this study. While applying a broad definition may

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<sup>36</sup> Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2009).

<sup>37</sup> Williamson Murray, Richard Hart Sinnreich, and James Lacey, *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy, and War* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).



imply blind spots resulting from the issue of concept stretching, it will be logical to include peacetime and wartime objectives into the discussion since this study is focused on the US grand strategy in the post-Cold War period, where peacetime and wartime periods have been experienced mutually. Additionally, as will be seen in the coming chapters, this study assumes that both military and nonmilitary resources and instruments are utilized in the formation of the US grand strategy. Therefore, employing a broad definition will not weaken this analysis. In addition, since this study analyses US grand strategy, the issue of whether small states can or cannot have a grand strategy lies out of its scope.

### **Alternative Forms of Grand Strategies**

The literature on grand strategy offers a variety of options which have been proposed by various scholars. Although there are certain nuances in each of the grand strategy proposals, some share similar (even identical) assumptions and policy implications which enables their grouping under a single category. For the sake of providing a clear understanding of how grand strategies are clustered around different theoretical views, this section discusses five categories of grand strategy proposals. These are neo-isolationism, selective engagement, cooperative security, primacy and liberal internationalism. These categories are borrowed from the studies of Barry Posen and Andrew Ross,<sup>38</sup> and Colin Dueck<sup>39</sup>. By putting different grand strategy proposals into context, this section aims at providing a basis for the analysis of the US grand strategy in the post-Cold-War period.

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<sup>38</sup> Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1996): 5–53.

<sup>39</sup> Dueck, "Ideas and Alternatives in American Grand Strategy, 2000–2004."

Posen and Ross have compiled four ideal types of competing grand strategies from the literature. Their classification is according to each grand strategy's assumptions and proposals about the strategy's main objectives, basic premises about international politics and preferred instruments to pursue their interests.<sup>40</sup> Depending on their typology, the following features appear as the determining factors of each grand strategy's main tenets. As regarding the grand strategies' major objectives and goals, grand strategies are rather diverse, as they may have narrower vital interests limited to homeland security or broader interests defined by internationalist ambitions. As for their basic premises, they vary depending on their perceptions of the fragility of the international system, that is to say, whether the international system would create favorable or unfavorable conditions for the US. Therefore, grand strategies' stances towards international politics depend on their assumptions regarding whether states pursue balance of power or bandwagoning, the role of nuclear power in providing security and the influence of the US in the global politics. Concerning the grand strategies' preferred military and political instruments, assumptions about the role of alliances and military force structure become the determining factors. Colin Dueck also comes up with four ideal types of US grand strategy options. Dueck's categorization is made across two theoretical stances, liberalism and realism, and across the level of ambitions which grand strategies have. Although his classification uses different names and employs criteria different from that of Posen and Ross, it is wise to combine two typologies together to make sense of the ideal types of grand strategies possible for the US. While both articles analyze alternative US grand strategies, it is worth noting that they can be applicable to other countries as well, since the categorizations are made on the basis of defined criteria.

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<sup>40</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

## Neo-Isolationism / Strategic disengagement

Neo-isolationism defines the national interests of the US on narrower terms than other grand strategy alternatives. For neo-isolationism, the vital interest for the US is to maintain the *security, liberty and prosperity* for the citizens of the US.<sup>41</sup> Nothing other than the interests of the American people are worth pursuing outside the US homeland. This understanding is predicated on the assumption that after the demise of the Soviet Union, the US has been enjoying the role of sole super-power in the international system. This renders the maintenance of ambitious policies unnecessary and unproductive due to the lack of any immediate threat posed to the US territory.<sup>42</sup> Having powerful military forces, a competitive economic system and geopolitical security, the US can attain prosperity and safety simply by playing a low-profile role in international affairs.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, the US should spend its money and efforts on the true interests of the American people, which do not lie outside of its borders. Being an insular power is the most important guarantee of the US homeland security, which keeps the country strategically immune to direct attacks.<sup>44</sup>

Regarding the instruments of the neo-isolationist strategy, intervention abroad is considered unnecessary and counterproductive. The US should not intervene into third-world regional conflicts, since they have nothing to do with the national security of the US.<sup>45</sup> The neo-isolationists argue that it is not the responsibility of the US to resolve crises or conflicts in other parts of the world, especially those in the third world.<sup>46</sup> These interventions are also counterproductive in the sense that they might

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<sup>41</sup> Doug Bandow, "Keeping the Troops and the Money at Home," *Current History* 93, no. 579 (1994): 10.

<sup>42</sup> Earl C. Ravenal, "The Case for Adjustment," *Foreign Policy*, no. 81 (1990): 3–19.

<sup>43</sup> Bandow, "Keeping the Troops and the Money at Home."

<sup>44</sup> Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion."

<sup>45</sup> Dueck, "Ideas and Alternatives in American Grand Strategy, 2000–2004."

<sup>46</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

antagonize the third world countries against the US, which might result in imminent threats to the US territory and American people.<sup>47</sup> For instance, in the case of the threat of terrorism, neo-isolationists believe that the US will be more secure if it manages to distance itself from the foreign conflicts. There will be no reason for terrorists located in Middle East to attack the US homeland if the US avoids intervening in the Middle East's problems.<sup>48</sup> In addition to disengagement from regional conflicts, neo-isolationists hold that the US should maintain its freedom of action, that is, its "strategic independence," by dismantling binding alliance commitments.<sup>49</sup> No matter how collective security concerns are aroused, the US should leave the NATO in order to have a free hand in unilaterally deciding its true interests.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the US should completely withdraw its military forces from the European continent, since the EU countries can protect their own interests in case of any conflict with Russia. In addition, in any instances of conflict, the balance of power in the European continent could be managed with the involvement of the EU countries.<sup>51</sup>

For the force structure, advocates of neo-isolationism propose small military force structure especially with regard to general-purpose army. The size of the army should be reduced so that the budget spent on military expenditures can be converted to investments in the other social areas in domestic issues. However, for neo-isolationists, preserving nuclear superiority is still an important asset for the maintenance of homeland security of the US. US nuclear capacity should be good enough to provide deterrence to its nuclear-armed enemies through its second-strike

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<sup>47</sup> Ravenal, "The Case for Adjustment."

<sup>48</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>49</sup> Dueck, "Ideas and Alternatives in American Grand Strategy, 2000–2004."

<sup>50</sup> Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion."

<sup>51</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

capabilities.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the naval forces should be further advanced since the prosperity of the US depends on the free market economy that operates mostly through the sea transportation.<sup>53</sup> Intelligence-gathering technologies are also important for the safety of the US territory, especially against terrorist attacks. Therefore, the strategy to counter terrorism would be intelligence-gathering, and if any terrorist threat were to be identified, the naval and Special Forces should be able to remove these menaces.

### **Selective Engagement / Balance of Power Realism**

The proponents of the selective engagement strategy contend that the most dangerous wars are those among great powers who have substantial military capabilities and weapons of mass destruction. If great powers go to war with one another, it affects the security and prosperity of the American people by drawing the US into the war, even if it wants to stay outside the conflict.<sup>54</sup> According to proponents of selective engagement, history proves that even when the US tried to remain out of both WWI and WWII, it could not manage to do so. A new large-scale war among great powers in Europe or Asia would pose even greater dangers to the US interests, considering advancements in weapons of mass destruction and improvement in nuclear missiles. The US would find itself at the heart of the war.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, the selective engagement strategy is aimed at ensuring the peace between great powers in the European and Asian continents, namely China, Russia, Japan, and powerful European countries.

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<sup>52</sup> Ravenal, "The Case for Adjustment."

<sup>53</sup> Patrick J. Buchanan, "America First—and Second, and Third," *The National Interest*, no. 19 (1990): 77–82.

<sup>54</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>55</sup> Stephen Van Evera, "Why Europe Matters, Why the Third World Doesn't: American Grand Strategy after the Cold War," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 13, no. 2 (1990): 1–51.

The advocates of the selective engagement strategy hold that the international system works with balance of power mechanisms, and nuclear weapons serve as deterrents against revisionist powers. However, the US should take the lead in preserving peace in case of a failure on the part of the other great powers to balance against the expansionist states, and in case of a deficiency in nuclear deterrence. If the greatest power shows a credible commitment to maintaining the peace, then expansionist powers will see no chance to gain victory at the end of the war.<sup>56</sup> Thus, this strategy is based on maintaining peace among great powers. One of the reason for being content with merely ensuring peace between great powers is that the US's resources are not sufficient to compensate for any great war, due to its declining position in the global economic market. Moreover, public opinion is not in favor of a new war that may necessitate the outflow of a huge amount of money and more importantly, many lives.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, rather than putting itself in such a conundrum, the US should simply prevent any possibility that could bring about expensive and deadly consequences.

With regards to the instruments of the selective engagement strategy, nonproliferation comes forward as one of key ways with which to deflect potential threats to US interests. Especially after the end of the Cold War, the geopolitical logic of security has been replaced by concern for nuclear security. The US is no longer in danger of being conquered by an external state and the nuclear threat of the Soviet Union has been diminished to the extent that it is far from posing a real threat. However, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by disloyal leaders and terrorist

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<sup>56</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

organizations poses direct and indirect threats to US interests.<sup>58</sup> Even if a low-level nuclear war starts, the US could find itself drawn into the center. Therefore, nuclear nonproliferation remains the primary concern for US security. However, according to proponents of selective engagement strategy, not every state possessing nuclear weapons poses the same level of threat to US interest. Countries like Iraq, Iran and North Korea are the most important states that should be monitored carefully together with the terrorist groups.<sup>59</sup>

For the advocates of selective engagement strategy, the competition between regional powers merits intervention only if it could lead to a war among the great powers. In this sense, the security of the Persian Gulf is important for the US not only because the US is dependent on oil, but because many countries who are dependent on the Persian oil may begin to compete for control over it, triggering great power involvement.<sup>60</sup> This situation would put the control of oil prices at risk and complicates US access to the oil resources. Therefore, for the proponents of selective engagement, Europe, East Asia and the Middle East are the most important. There is no consensus among proponents of the selective engagement strategy on how to intervene in these regions without large-scale deployment of military forces. Relying on the alliance systems appears to be the most suitable way for the US to pursue its interests in these regions.<sup>61</sup> NATO should thus maintain its functions without pursuing an expansionist policy. Nevertheless, the US should maintain a number of troops overseas sufficient enough to deter any possible attacks or threats in the aforementioned regions. Accordingly, the size of US military deployment in the European continent should be

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<sup>58</sup> Robert J. Art, "A Defensible Defense: America's Grand Strategy after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 4 (1991): 5–53.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

decreased since there is no longer any risk of Russian annexation. However, the troops should not be completely withdrawn. Additionally, the nuclear deterrence capacity should be high enough to prevent any group or state from attempting to pose a threat to the US through nuclear weapons.<sup>62</sup>

### **Cooperative Security**

The cooperative security strategy contends that peace is not indivisible and that the US has substantial interest in the maintenance of peace. According to this understanding, the scope of the US interests is defined in a very broad sense, to the point that it views any aggression anywhere in the globe as a threat to world peace and US security.<sup>63</sup> This strategy is informed by the liberal understanding, rather than a realist one which primarily focuses on the power dimension. The cooperative security strategy pays great attention to international institutions and collective actions taken through these mechanisms. It is a transformed version of the collective security approach.

For advocates of the cooperative security strategy, great powers are not an intrinsic security problem, unlike what realist accounts claim. The reasoning is that since most great powers are either already democracies or on the road to democracy, they are not prone to fight one another, in accordance with democratic peace theory.<sup>64</sup> Although Russia and China are not established democracies and could pose problems

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> John R. Oneal and Bruce M. Russett, "The Kantian Peace: The Pacific Benefits of Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations, 1885–1992," in *Bruce M. Russett: Pioneer in the Scientific and Normative Study of War, Peace, and Policy* (Springer, 2015), 74–108.



to a certain extent, the solution is to engage these countries with democratic systems and to help turn them into democracies.<sup>65</sup>

For the advocates of the cooperative security strategy, regional conflicts, civil wars and ethnic aggressions are the biggest problems, which could turn into international wars. This is predicated on the assumption that there is strategic interdependence between all countries regardless of the remoteness of a country from the conflicting regions. If a conflict breaks out in one part of the world, it could spread to other territories.<sup>66</sup> Civil wars are dangerous to international peace since they risk turning into internationalized conflicts with the involvement of external powers, and could cause a spillover of the conflict into neighboring countries.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, it is the responsibility of the international community to intervene in these crises using all means necessary. Humanitarian interventions are one of the important component of the cooperative security strategy, and widely accepted and legitimate international institutions should plan and organize effective humanitarian interventions.<sup>68</sup>

With regards to the instruments of cooperative security, international institutions undertake important functions as the pioneers of international peace. The United Nations in particular plays an important role in coordinating the interaction between great powers regarding when and where intervention is seen as necessary.<sup>69</sup> NATO is also an important actor; however, its structure, being an inheritance from the Cold War rivalry, should be transformed in a way that enhances the participation of

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<sup>65</sup> Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford A. Kupchan, "Concerts, Collective Security, and the Future of Europe," *International Security* 16, no. 1 (1991): 114–161.

<sup>66</sup> Madeleine K. Albright, "Realism and Idealism in American Foreign Policy Today," *Pt1 Department of State Dispatch* 5 (1994): 434.

<sup>67</sup> Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, Idean Salehyan, and Kenneth Schultz, "Fighting at Home, Fighting Abroad: How Civil Wars Lead to International Disputes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 4 (2008): 479–506.

<sup>68</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>69</sup> Gareth Evans, "Cooperative Security and Intrastate Conflict," *Foreign Policy*, no. 96 (1994): 3–20.

other countries. According to the supporters of the cooperative security strategy, weapons of mass destructions pose one of the most profound threats in the age of nuclear weapons. Therefore, nuclear proliferation agreements and arms control mechanisms are the main methods with which to prevent states from acquiring offensive capabilities.<sup>70</sup> The objective of control mechanisms is to direct nations into pursuing defensive military weapons rather than offensive ones. By doing so, no nation will have a first strike advantage that could spark a war. Countries possessing nuclear weapons should be treated in the same manner regardless of what their intentions are, and nuclear power-seeking countries should be inhibited since every effort towards acquiring nuclear weapons increases the global risk level.<sup>71</sup> So it is best if very few countries possess nuclear weapons.

Concerning the force structure, it is necessary to keep a sufficient amount of troops to conduct simultaneous operations in different parts of the world. As opposed to the traditional collective security approach, the cooperative security strategy holds that military intervention is better than no action. Therefore, apart from implementing economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures, this approach also proposes real military actions where necessary. With respect to humanitarian intervention, the US military forces should assume the greatest role since the US occupies the position of the hegemon in the international system.<sup>72</sup> However, these operations should still be taken collectively under the scrutiny of the United Nations or NATO.

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<sup>70</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

## Primacy

The primacy strategy aims at maintaining global peace and stability through the preponderance of US hegemony. The provision of global stability also serves the economic and security interests of the US. Therefore, pursuing US preeminence across the world contributes not only to the interests of other countries, but also to those of the US.<sup>73</sup> Proponents believe that the international power structure, having emerged after the end of the Cold War, provides suitable room for the US to act unilaterally, in terms of thwarting those who challenge the system and the stability of the world order.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, this strategy is built upon conviction in hegemonic stability predicated upon the active involvement of the US in global affairs for the sake of world peace. Similar to the logic of the selective engagement strategy, war between great powers - namely China, Russia, Japan and biggest European powers - constitutes the most dangerous threat to the international order. Additionally, great powers' attempts to aspire for regional hegemony presents one of the most serious threats to peace and stability.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, this strategy seeks to prevent the emergence of either regional hegemons or war among great powers, and to maintain US supremacy.

The advocates of the primacy strategy believe that if the US manages to conduct itself as a benevolent hegemon which does not pose threat to other countries and that shows respect to the sovereignty of others, its hegemony will gain wide acceptance.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, through its policies, the US should convince potential system challengers that the system led by the US offers a wide range of advantages for

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<sup>73</sup> Henry R. Nau, *At Home Abroad: Identity and Power in American Foreign Policy* (Cornell University Press, 2002).

<sup>74</sup> Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>75</sup> Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World."

<sup>76</sup> William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Aff.* 75 (1996): 18.

everyone and that any attempts to destabilize or challenge US hegemony will result in a strong retaliation. The resources for pursuing primacy strategy come from various assets including military, economic and political superiority, as well as cultural and moral supremacy. The soft power tools like mass media instruments, exporting of culture, and computer and internet networks, are of critical importance in terms of giving the US an upper hand in underpinning its hegemony.<sup>77</sup>

As regarding the instruments of primacy strategy, the US should continue to deploy military forces to the regions where potential for the outbreak of war exists. The US should intervene in regional conflicts and humanitarian crises if there is a risk of war between great powers or the emergence of a new regional hegemon which could challenge US hegemony.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, excluding the countries in the Persian Gulf region, other third world countries should not be of concern since they do not carry the potential to trigger a great war. With regard to European politics, the US should maintain its military presence in Europe by expanding the role of NATO through new members and functions, and by increasing the activity of the United Nations. With respect to Middle Eastern politics, the US should not allow the fulfilment of the aspirations of any country or leader that could endanger whole region, and firmly support the status quo against new competitors.<sup>79</sup>

The advocates of the primacy strategy are very skeptical about the role of international institutions. However, they believe that these organizations should maintain their positions because they can become an important tool for the hegemon to uphold its interests.<sup>80</sup> For example, NATO is still an important instrument for the

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Posen and Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> James Kurth, "America's Grand Strategy: A Pattern of History," *The National Interest*, no. 43 (1996): 3–19.

containment of Russia. Although Russia has not been in a position to challenge the US owing to the discrepancy between their economic and military capabilities, Russia still has to be explicitly or implicitly contained for the security of the European continent. Apart from Russia, the second country which could try to challenge the US hegemon in the future is China. Therefore, it should also be contained using regional alliances and partners.<sup>81</sup>

The anticipated military force structure for the primacy strategy is the largest when compared to other grand strategy proposals, since this strategy requires permanent military deployment in certain regions as well as the conducting of simultaneous operations in different parts of the world.<sup>82</sup> Apart from the size of the army, the improvement of military capabilities through research and development projects are crucial for preserving US military preeminence.

### **Liberal Internationalism**

Like primacy strategy, liberal internationalism is based on the conviction that global stability can be maintained through active US involvement in international affairs, with the duty of transforming other countries into parts of an “Americanized” world. However, it differs from the primacy strategy in that liberal internationalism aims at promoting liberal values abroad.<sup>83</sup> In addition to this feature, liberal internationalism also shares the assumptions of cooperative security strategy in terms of its objectives of spreading democracy and a free market economic system. Additionally, liberal internationalism concerns itself with violations of human rights and seeks to uphold basic freedoms worldwide. Therefore, violations of human rights

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<sup>81</sup> Zalmay M. Khalilzad, “From Containment to Global Leadership? America and the World After the Cold War” (RAND Corp Santa Monica Ca, 1995).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Dueck, “Ideas and Alternatives in American Grand Strategy, 2000–2004.”

in individual countries are viewed as international issues which require the intervention of the international community.<sup>84</sup>

The advocates of the liberal internationalism strategy claim that the fundamental cause of war and instability is the lack of democratic norms in international politics.<sup>85</sup> Relying on the democratic peace assumption that assumes democracies rarely fight one another, liberal internationalism seeks to eliminate autocratic regimes which represent the biggest obstacles on the road to democracy, through various instruments.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, they claim that when democratic norms and governments are supported and autocratic regimes are removed, the world will be more peaceful and stable. Additionally, the promotion of the market economy and free trade is regarded as conducive to world stability and peace. This reasoning is predicated on the notion of economic interdependence. Interdependence among countries established through the market economy and free trade help prevent countries from going to war with their economic partners in order not to ruin their channels of wealth.<sup>87</sup> Consequently, liberal internationalism pays a great deal of attention to democratic reforms in great power states like China, Russia, and views autocratic states and terrorists as primary menaces to the world order.

As regards the instruments of the liberal internationalism, international institutions and intergovernmental organizations play a prominent role in carrying out the mission of promoting democracy. NATO, the EU, and other regional organizations are operative in helping, monitoring and forcing countries to make democratic reforms. Financial institutions like the WTO and IMF are also important actors which help

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Stanley Hoffmann, "The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism," *Foreign Policy*, no. 98 (1995): 159–177.

<sup>86</sup> Beate Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism: Theory, History, Practice* (Springer, 2013).

<sup>87</sup> G. John Ikenberry, "Why Export Democracy?," *The Wilson Quarterly* (1976-) 23, no. 2 (1999): 56–65.

transform domestic economies into liberal ones.<sup>88</sup> International organizations and institutions can carry out their duties by applying positive sanctions such as the provision of political, economic and technical incentives to the non-democratic countries. Additionally, negative sanctions and pressures are other important means that can be employed in order to sustain democratic reforms. In case these measures are insufficient, military action is another alternative method that can be exerted, especially against autocratic regimes. Particularly, since humanitarian crises are regarded as one of the most important concerns for liberal internationalism, humanitarian interventions should be carried out in the countries where they are committed.<sup>89</sup> Although Dueck highlights the importance of multilateral actions and significance of soft power tools for the implementation of liberal internationalism, others claim that hard power tools and unilateral actions are also viable and highly preferable options. For the advocates of liberal internationalism, the US has the responsibility to interfere in humanitarian crises, peace building efforts, and regime changes in autocracies, using military hardware if necessary. Hence, military interventions are commonplace for liberal internationalism.<sup>90</sup>

## **Conclusion**

After specifying the available grand strategy options for the US to pursue in the post-Cold War period, this study argues that primacy and liberal internationalism strategies have coexisted after the demise of the Soviet Union. Since primacy and liberal internationalism espouse similar assumptions, in terms of viewing US leadership and its active involvement in world affairs as necessary conditions for peace

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<sup>88</sup> Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism*.

<sup>89</sup> Roland Paris, "Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (1997): 54–89.

<sup>90</sup> David Chandler, "The Responsibility to Protect? Imposing the 'Liberal Peace,'" *International Peacekeeping* 11, no. 1 (2004): 59–81.

and stability within the US and across the world, this study defines US grand strategy in the post-Cold War period as a combination of primacy and liberal internationalism. Both of them approach and embrace the idea of establishing an Americanized world through US supremacy. They share the same rationale regarding how to sustain peace and stability in world politics. Hence, what the US has pursued is to establish a liberal hegemony by consolidating US preponderance in accordance with liberal principles.<sup>91</sup> The roots of the liberal internationalist tradition in US political thought and the policies of primacy strategy will be discussed together below. Additionally, this study also interchangeably uses the terms hegemony, preeminence, preponderance, supremacy and liberal internationalism when referring to the policies designed to maintain US global leadership role through promoting liberal notions with every means at disposal including hard and soft power instruments.

The debate in the literature over whether or not the US has a post-Cold War grand strategy worth noting here.<sup>92</sup> Although some scholars argue that the US has not had a consistent and coherent grand strategy after the end of the Cold War, this study claims that there is a consistent pattern observable in the aftermath of the Cold War, which is the US pursuing the maintenance of US global leadership and liberal world order. The analysis of the statements of US administrations and National Strategy Documents in the forthcoming sections will support this claim. Although there are certain differences in how the practice or pursuit of US global leadership was sustained during different periods, what has remained constant in the aftermath of the Cold War

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<sup>91</sup> John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "The Case for Offshore Balancing: A Superior US Grand Strategy," *Foreign Aff.* 95 (2016): 70.

<sup>92</sup> Daniel W. Drezner, "Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy: Why We Need Doctrines in Uncertain Times," *Foreign Aff.* 90 (2011): 57.



is the US's conviction in its super-power role and its responsibility to provide peace as the leader of the globe.<sup>93</sup>



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<sup>93</sup> James M. Lindsay, "George W. Bush, Barack Obama and the Future of US Global Leadership," *International Affairs* 87, no. 4 (2011): 765–779.

## **Chapter III: Theoretical Framework**

This section aims at providing a theoretical framework for analyzing why the US has preferred to implement a primacy strategy and seeks to promote liberal values abroad, as well as why the great powers China and Russia have reacted with resistance to US hegemony and attempted to balance it out. In order to explain the reasons behind the occurrence of these behaviors, the assumptions of structural realism will be employed. This chapter is concerned with two major aspects: the main driving force behind the US primacy grand strategy, and the sources of the responses of the other great powers.

### **Structural Realism**

Before discussing the main driving force behind state behavior from a structural realist perspective, it is vital to grasp the basic tenets of realist theories. Although realism is non-monolithic, with multiple variants, there are certain assumptions regarding international politics that are generally shared by the realist school of thought. The first core assumption is that states are the most important actors in the international system. Other actors are viewed in secondary position, and their influence on the running of international affairs are less profound compared to that of states. Therefore, realists do not pay much attention to other actors like individuals, transnational organizations and non-state actors. Secondly, the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no overarching authority presiding over the international system. No authority is competent enough to rule the other actors, resolve crises or provide justice. Since there is no authority and guarantee for states to proceed with, states must develop their own strategies in order to survive in an anarchic environment. This compels states to rely on self-help systems to be able to protect their interests. Thirdly, realists assume that states seek to maximize their power or security, which

makes power an important component of security and one of the most important driving forces in the international politics.<sup>94</sup> For neo-realists, in addition to these intractable features, the distribution of power in the system is the determining factor in international politics. The changes in the distribution of power affects the polarity of the system, thereby defining the borders of possible actions that states can perform.<sup>95</sup>

### **Security Concerns and Primacy Strategy**

The first question that should be answered is: why does a dominant state pursue a primacy strategy? According to Waltz, the most important concern for states is to survive in the anarchic international structure that renders security considerably scarce for the states. Scarce security means states should be prepared for likely attacks or threats at present or in the future. This in turn entails that states should mobilize all the means they possess in favor of protecting their autonomy. This is the case because the anarchic international structure compels states to provide their own protection without relying on others, as no one can be trusted and anyone could hamper their security.<sup>96</sup> No other international organization or actor can help secure the survival of the states. The best way to survive in such a system is to become more powerful - the most powerful, if possible, by attempting to attain hegemony with which to counter or deter threats. As Mearsheimer puts it, *the structure of the international system encourages states to pursue hegemony.*<sup>97</sup> Therefore, states should maximize their relative power by weakening potential rivalries and improving their relative power position vis a vis

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<sup>94</sup> Robert G. Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (1984): 287–304.

<sup>95</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory," *Journal of International Affairs*, 1990, 21–37.

<sup>96</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 111.

<sup>97</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 12.

other states. According to Mearsheimer, sometimes the best way to consolidate power for the eligible states that have potential or latent power to do so is to engage in aggressive and confrontational behavior. Provided that the expected benefits and gains of offensive action for a state's maintenance of security are higher than the costs and risks, states are inclined to carry out assertive behaviors.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, the reason states employ conflict-oriented and aggressive strategies stems from the anarchic nature of the system which causes states constant concern over their security.

The second question that needs to be answered is: why should a superior state implement an ideologically oriented grand strategy? According to Waltz, states that have substantial power capabilities and are capable of thwarting security threats on their own have the luxury of developing their grand strategy in accordance with their ideological inclinations, owing to the freedom of action they possess.<sup>99</sup> Waltz claims, *"In the absence of counterweights, a country's internal impulses prevail, whether fueled by liberal or by other urges."*<sup>100</sup> With similar reasoning, Miller argues that regardless of the types of ideological orientations a dominant power possesses, it can design a grand strategy promoting its values, principles, and ideals because the lack of peer competitors that could build a countervailing coalition lowers the cost of pursuing an ideological grand strategy.<sup>101</sup> Hence, it can be argued that the unipolar structure has allowed the US to promote its ideology and values, which mostly consist of liberal premises. The promotion of liberal values is not a cause but a result of the unipolar system and uneven distribution of capabilities favoring the US. If the hegemon was the Soviet Union, the promotion of Communism through the Soviet supremacy would

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<sup>98</sup> Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future."

<sup>99</sup> Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War."

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>101</sup> Benjamin Miller, "Explaining Changes in US Grand Strategy: 9/11, the Rise of Offensive Liberalism, and the War in Iraq," *Security Studies* 19, no. 1 (2010): 26–65.

likely have been the consequence. Therefore, the post-Cold War American grand strategy materialized as a result of the unipolar system that allowed the possibility of implementing the primacy strategy. The ultimate shape of American grand strategy emerged after being molded by the liberal internationalist tradition. As Robert Jervis puts it, the liberal tradition has always been influential in the US foreign policy; however, it is becoming a hegemon and the absence of peer competitors that have allowed the US to pursue the strategy of spreading democracy and reaching areas beyond its geographical borders to spread forth its liberal values.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, the American grand strategy after the Cold War is built upon two elements: military preponderance and liberal internationalist ideology.

As per Waltz, “*the interest of the country in security came to be identified with the maintenance of a certain world order. For countries at the top, this is predictable behavior... Once a state’s interests reach a certain extent, they become self-enforcing.*”<sup>103</sup> Therefore, the reason behind the US’s attempt to bolster its liberal order by expanding its supremacy on military, economic, political and cultural areas after the end of the Cold War has been its fear of being challenged by other countries, and the way out is the maintenance of the established order. Consequently, maintaining the American-led liberal order is viewed as the fundamental component of the US security interests.

### **Balance of Power and Hegemonic Backlash**

On the other side of the coin, the question arises: why do other great powers prefer to challenge a hegemon that delivers public goods and benefits? According to

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<sup>102</sup> Robert Jervis, “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2003): 365–388.

<sup>103</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 200.

Layne, no great power in modern history has achieved the position of the US in the international system. However, attaining hegemony is not the same as maintaining it, as being dominant may turn out to be counterproductive by giving way to resistance. For that reason, being powerful might be good, but being too powerful is self-destructive.<sup>104</sup> For Layne, the reason that makes hegemony unattainable or unsustainable stems from the fact that unbalanced hegemony threatens the security of the others. Since international politics relies on the self-help system, other states will be afraid of the hegemon's likely attack and possible threats, and thereby start searching for ways to deter a possible attack by the hegemon.<sup>105</sup> As Waltz puts it "*A self-help system is one in which those who do not help themselves, or who do so less effectively than others, will fail to prosper, will lay themselves open to dangers, will suffer. Fear of such unwanted consequences stimulates states to behave in ways that tend toward the creation of balances of power.*"<sup>106</sup> Additionally, states are responsive to the changes in the relative power positions since in a self-help system states should rest upon their own power projection capabilities in order to maintain their individual survival. If one state is too powerful in a way which creates a skewed, one-sided distribution of power within the system, the others become concerned about this power disparity. Therefore, when power is concentrated in a single pair of hands, the others fear that it will be directed against them one day. This leads states to act defensively to counter the hegemon.<sup>107</sup> Correspondingly, the competitive nature of the anarchic structure which requires paying attention to the relative power positions, engenders security dilemmas for states. Jervis describes a security dilemma as a circumstance in

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<sup>104</sup> Christopher Layne, "Offshore Balancing Revisited," *Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2002): 233–248.

<sup>105</sup> Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States' Unipolar Moment," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (2006): 7–41.

<sup>106</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 118.

<sup>107</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

which “*the means by which a state tries to increase its security decreases the security of others.*”<sup>108</sup> Thus, if one side improves its power capabilities with the purpose of enhancing its security, this causes others to worry about their security as they start feeling increasingly insecure as a result of mounting power gap between them and the aspiring power. This causes them to undertake activities with the purpose of advancing their power capabilities by paying close attention to their security, and all states embark upon power maximization process, making everyone less secure at the end of the day.<sup>109</sup> The security dilemma illustrates how states are sensitive to distribution of power in the system and their relative position compared to others, which in turn leads to the emergence of balancing behavior.

Consequently, due to the anarchic nature of the international system which yields uncertainty, competition and necessitates a self-help system, member states can never be sure about the present and future distribution of power. Therefore, the competitiveness of the international system which is generated as a result of the self-help system and uneven power distribution in the system ultimately brings about balancing behavior. This assertion will also be tested in the next chapter.

### **Balance of Power in Post-Cold War Period**

Many have claimed that as opposed to what the balance of power theory posits, the world has not yet witnessed counter-balancing behavior against the US after the end of the Cold War.<sup>110</sup> Nevertheless, structural realists have insisted on their prediction for the prospective balancing behavior without specifying any period when that will occur.<sup>111</sup> Other structural realists have attempted to revise their assumptions

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<sup>108</sup> Robert Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (1978): 178.

<sup>109</sup> Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, “Security Seeking under Anarchy: Defensive Realism Revisited,” 2006.

<sup>110</sup> Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World.”

<sup>111</sup> Waltz, “Structural Realism after the Cold War”; Layne, “The Unipolar Illusion.”

about the balancing behavior of the states. For instance, in order to correct the balance of power assumptions, Walt came up with balance of threat theory with some modification on the previous version. The balance of threat theory suggests that states do not balance against the most powerful but the most threatening states. As such, aggregating power, geographical proximity, offensive capability, and offensive intentions are the factors that should be counted to measure the threat level posed by a state. Accordingly, the reason why the US has not experienced counterweight reaction has been explained as a result of the geographic distance that reduces the threat posed by the US and the good intentions of the US when approaching other great powers.<sup>112</sup> However, these assumptions overlook certain points. First, the inclusion of state's intentions in the threat level measurement causes considerable problems because it veils the role of power as a determinant of state behaviors, which is one of the most established feature of the structural realism. Second, even if it would be possible to correctly read the intentions of others, states cannot risk their security simply because of the perceived good intentions of others, since today's good intentions can transform into bad ones in the future. At the end of the day, what states are most concerned about is the distribution of power regardless of what intentions the power is held for. Additionally, as Layne argues, the unipolar system renders the importance of intentions less significant than in a multipolar system. In a multipolar system, the intentions of states can be counted as a reliable reference point (as a last resort), as multiple poles of power increase the number of possible threat sources. In such a situation, evaluating intentions may help to assess the threat posed by a certain state or a coalition. However, as the hegemon is the only pole and the only one which can pose

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<sup>112</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9, no. 4 (1985): 3–43.



a threat in a unipolar world, relying on intentions does not help.<sup>113</sup> Thus in a unipolar system, regardless of individual states' intentions, states worry about the latent and actual power held by the most powerful state, as the most probable threat is from the most dominant actor.

As opposed to Walt, Schweller proposes another revision to the balance of power expectation: the balance of interest theory which suggests that states more frequently perform bandwagoning by succumbing to the most powerful state. For him, bandwagoning is not necessarily the result of the states' surrender to the hegemon, as balance of power theorists claim it. He argues instead that states might choose bandwagoning simply because of the incentives and rewards provided by the more powerful side. The spoils of victory or any possible gains can be helpful in drawing other states to voluntarily join the side of the powerful.<sup>114</sup> By this logic, it is argued that the reason why others do not balance against the US lies in the fact that the US provides spoils for the states that bandwagon with it. However, this explanation also misses an important point about the nature of the international system. States are attentive to their relative power positions in the system. Bandwagoning with the hegemon would not yield relative gains for the followers which can surpass the gains provided by the hegemon, and render the bandwagoning state less powerful and tilt the power balance in favor of the hegemon. States may bandwagon with the hegemon, but they bear the consequences of doing so. Bandwagoning is often carried out by weak states which have no capacity or hope to win against the hegemon.<sup>115</sup> However, eligible states concerned for their security mobilize every means at their disposal to

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<sup>113</sup> Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited."

<sup>114</sup> Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 72–107.

<sup>115</sup> Eric J. Labs, "Do Weak States Bandwagon?," *Security Studies* 1, no. 3 (1992): 383–416.

counter any possible threat rather than give in to the hegemon.<sup>116</sup> As Mearsheimer maintains “*Great powers that care about their survival should neither appease nor bandwagon with their adversaries.*”<sup>117</sup>

Consequently, the balancing behavior has not been employed by great powers after the end of the Cold War in the way structural realists have assumed. The following attempts to revise the balancing assumptions also weaken the explanatory power of structural realism. In fact, the absence of countervailing responses does not necessarily falsify the main assumptions of structural realism. Rather, a closer examination of what balancing stand for and how balancing is employed is required. The following section highlights the main features of the traditional understanding of the balance of power and discusses the new forms that should be considered within the scope of the balancing strategies.

### **New Forms of Balancing**

The balance of power theory mostly relies on hard power tools requiring the use of military force or the formation of alliances against the most powerful state or coalition. Therefore, the definition of balancing in the literature is made in military terms. For instance, Schweller defines balancing as “*the creation or aggregation of military power through internal mobilization or the forging of alliances to prevent or deter the territorial occupation or political and military domination of the state by a foreign power or coalition.*”<sup>118</sup> Mearsheimer’s approach to balancing contains military elements as well. According to Mearsheimer, states can perform balancing behavior either internally or externally, and even apply both. Internal balancing rests upon

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<sup>116</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>118</sup> Randall L. Schweller, “Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing,” *International Security* 29, no. 2 (2004): 166.

building military might and improving the economic and industrial foundations which foster military capacity. On the other hand, external balancing can be undertaken by joining or forming counterweighting alliances and coalitions against the prospective adversary.<sup>119</sup> Waltz's approach to balancing behavior is not different from that of Mearsheimer.<sup>120</sup> However, this understanding of balancing behavior excludes many strategies that should be counted as instances of balancing behavior. For example, soft balancing differs from hard balancing in that it pursues diplomatic channels in order to counterweigh a rival without appealing to military hardware. Robert Pope introduces the term soft balancing as an alternative to hard balancing. With soft balancing strategies, states do not openly challenge US primacy with their hard power but put into effect "*nonmilitary tolls to delay, frustrate, and undermine aggressive unilateral U.S. military policy.*"<sup>121</sup> According to Pope, soft balancing can be implemented through international institutions, diplomatic maneuvers, and economic statecraft done with the aim of increasing the cost of US dominance. Pope enumerates four mechanisms for soft balancing that states can apply. These include territorial denial, entangling diplomacy, economic strengthening, and signals of resolve to balance.<sup>122</sup> Therefore, soft balancing does not aim at encountering the hegemon with military tools; the objective is simply to decrease the impact of the military power possessed by the US.

Moreover, the balance of power theory assumes that balancing occurs as a state strengthens its capabilities vis a vis the threatening power. For instance, Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Thompson define balancing as "*the attempt on the part of*

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<sup>119</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 156–57.

<sup>120</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

<sup>121</sup> Robert A. Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States," *International Security* 30, no. 1 (2005): 10.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

*one nation to counteract the power of another by increasing its strength to a point where it is at least equal, if not superior, to the other nation's strength.*"<sup>123</sup> In this definition, balancing equates with an increase in the strength of a country. However, balancing does not always require augmenting the capacities of a state, rather, may be a strategy designed to undermine the capabilities of the rival state. For this distinction, Kai He comes up with a new typology that conceptualizes balancing behaviors under positive and negative balancing. While positive balancing refers to a state strengthening its own abilities, negative balancing equates to weakening of the rival's power.<sup>124</sup> The conventional understanding of internal and external balancing, military buildup and military or security alliances, can be considered as positive balancing since they are designed to improve power capabilities of the state. As for the negative balancing strategies, they include strategies like soft balancing since it aims at reducing the power of the rival. To clarify the distinction between negative and positive balancing, Kai He employs the differences between absolute and relative gain. In order to categorize a strategy as positive balancing, that strategy should provide both absolute and relative gain, however, for negative balancing, only relative gain should be in considerations. Therefore, strategies that subtract from the capabilities of aggressor should bring about relative gain without causing an increase in absolute gain.<sup>125</sup> In unipolar system positive balancing strategies might not be feasible since it might provoke the resistance of the hegemon.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> H. Morgenthau and K. W. Thompson, *Principles and Problems of International Politics* (Knopf, New York, 1950), **quoted in** Kai He, "Undermining Adversaries: Unipolarity, Threat Perception, and Negative Balancing Strategies after the Cold War," *Security Studies* 21, no. 2 (2012): 160.

<sup>124</sup> He, "Undermining Adversaries," 157.

<sup>125</sup> He, "Undermining Adversaries."

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

By the same token, balancing does not always occur by directly confronting the aggressor. Unipolarity especially makes direct balancing hard to achieve and costly due to the power gap between the hegemon and the others.<sup>127</sup> Layne argues that directly confronting the US is too costly and risky for a state or a coalition unless they are certain that they would act in a unison and make their way through an achievement.<sup>128</sup> Therefore, unipolarity renders the option of direct confrontation with the hegemon less likely and hard to achieve. This situation compels the state to employ new form of balancing strategies by indirectly taking action.

Consequently, the counterweighting behaviors designed to offset the US's unchecked power have acquired new forms.<sup>129</sup> The reason why hard power or positive balancing through defense coalitions or military build-ups has not been observed stems from the fact that the US hegemony does not allow for a profitable direct, military and positive balancing strategy. Alternatively, the unipolar structure following the end of the Cold War, leads states to employ negative and indirect balancing strategies to ensure and deter potential future threats from the US. The following section will discuss wedging strategy, a relatively new and specific form of balancing, in order to contribute to explaining and understanding the great power balancing behaviors against the US hegemony since the end of the Cold War.

### **Wedging Strategies**

As discussed previously, scholars of international relations opt to treat alliance formation and internal buildups as essential forms of balance of power politics. Yet, some of the deviant, anomalous cases in balancing politics are neglected as pathologies

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<sup>127</sup> Thaza V. Paul, "Soft Balancing in the Age of US Primacy," *International Security* 30, no. 1 (2005): 46–71.

<sup>128</sup> Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited."

<sup>129</sup> For a variety of balancing strategies see: He, "Undermining Adversaries."

of alignment.<sup>130</sup> The unexplained cases are treated as a non-significant aspect of the international politics which occur only rarely, thereby undeserving of further exploration. Consequently, the dominant approach to the states' balancing behavior are mostly limited to alliance formation and internal buildups. This situation has failed to explain why states sometimes do not follow the pattern of the balance of power, breaking the essential rule of the international politics. However, a deeper examination of the alliance politics including the deviant cases can reveal significant aspects of the international relations. With this understanding, Crawford has operationalized wedge strategies to provide an explanation for why states fail to meet the expectation of balance of power theory. He emerges with a theory of wedging strategies in order to account for the situations where states are expected to form alliances but remain reluctant and neutral. With this notion, Crawford analyzes Spain's position during the WWII. Crawford argues that Spain's decision to remain neutral and declare non-belligerence against the Allied Powers between 1940 and 1941 constitute a deviant case in alliance politics as this happened in spite of the ideological affinity between Hitler and Franco, and Spain's historical links to the Axis powers. After analyzing this incident, Crawford contends that Spain did not ally with Hitler due to Britain's wedging strategy to draw Spain away from the Axis Powers, by giving positive incentives, particularly economic support for resolving the domestic economic crisis in Spain at the time.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, he concludes that wedge strategy played a critical role affecting the trajectory of a world war.

Beginning from this point, it can be argued that understanding the nature of wedge strategy can help to grasp the basic tenets of external balancing behavior as it

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<sup>130</sup> Timothy W. Crawford, "Wedge Strategy, Balancing, and the Deviant Case of Spain, 1940–41," *Security Studies* 17, no. 1 (2008): 1–38.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

differs from arms and alliance building mechanisms. Wedge strategy opens new room for explaining the available strategies of states to counter a possible threat by employing an alternative form of balancing. The inclusion of wedge strategies into the balancing discussion would also help to acknowledge the relevance of the balancing behavior within international politics. As Crawford claims it, wedge strategies are an important asset of a state to deal with an actual or likely threat - with the aim of reducing the main threat by neutralizing or eroding the alliance cooperation. This strategy can have significant outcomes since it can mitigate the relative power of the enemy, compromise its ambitions and makes it less likely for the enemy state to resort to force to reach its objectives.<sup>132</sup> Izumikawa shares similar concerns with Crawford. He points out that there is an immense focus on alliance formation dynamics in the literature, yet lesser attention is given to the prevention of alliance formation.<sup>133</sup> It is worth noting that revealing the causes of why and how states prefer not to join an alliance or to break up an already allied coalition would contribute to the alliance formation debate too. Thus, it becomes an important task to explain the role of the third parties in blocking the formation of alliances. Moreover, the criticisms directed against structural realist accounts regarding the balancing failures after the Cold War can be answered with the introduction of wedging strategies.

The significance of wedge strategies in international politics, particularly during wartime, has been underlined since centuries ago. For instance, Sun Tzu drew attention to the importance of dividing adversaries. He holds that “*When he is united, divide him. . . . Sometimes drive a wedge between a sovereign and his ministers; on other occasions separate his allies from him. Make them mutually suspicious so that*

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Yasuhiro Izumikawa, “To Coerce or Reward? Theorizing Wedge Strategies in Alliance Politics,” *Security Studies* 22, no. 3 (2013): 498–531.

*they drift apart.*"<sup>134</sup> Thus, the idea of dividing an enemy coalition is not a new phenomenon. It can be employed both by the dominant state and others against the dominant state. On one hand, wedging strategy can be employed by the weaker side in order to degrade the relative power of the powerful state. On the other hand, a powerful state can also resort to wedging strategies in order to prevent formation of a countervailing coalition. On this account, Stuart Kaufman et al. brings forth the cases of ancient Chinese dynasty of Qin. He argues that Qin dynasty survived for a long time by operationalizing the divide and conquer strategy designed to isolate its enemies and weaken the balancing coalition.<sup>135</sup> Although dividing enemy coalitions is a centuries-old strategy, it was not analyzed within a theoretical framework until recently. The studies of Crawford and Izumikawa have provided a theoretical ground for this strategy.

Crawford defines wedge strategy as the "*state's attempt to prevent, break up, or weaken a threatening or blocking alliance at an acceptable cost.*"<sup>136</sup> According to this definition, the objective of wedge strategy is to prevent the formation of a coalition or to break up an already established grouping with the purpose of ensuring deterrence against a future possible power exertion from the rival. Mainly, states employ wedging strategies in order to incite a power shift in favor of the divider state. This can be a preventive act aimed at decreasing the number of enemy states and their size. This strategy would help the divider state to deal with a less powerful enemy in the time of aggression. Therefore, the wedge strategy can be employed before enmity between

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<sup>134</sup> Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), **Quoted in** He, "Undermining Adversaries," 502.

<sup>135</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman, Richard Little, and William Curti Wohlforth, *The Balance of Power in World History* (Springer, 2007).

<sup>136</sup> Timothy W. Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions: How Wedge Strategies Shape Power Politics," *International Security* 35, no. 4 (2011): 156.



two parties even appears. The Soviet Union's attempt to keep Japan neutral through the 1941 Soviet – Japan pact enabled the Soviets to secure their Far East from Japanese aggression during the WWII. This strategy of preventing Japan from joining Axis Powers gave flexibility to Soviets in the warfare unfolding in the Western borders and increased the relative power capacity of the Allied Powers by cutting off a possible Japanese addition to the Axis Powers.<sup>137</sup> According to Crawford, states can implement wedging strategies for four main objectives. These are realignment, de-alignment, pre-alignment and dis-alignment.<sup>138</sup> Realignment refers to the changing of a member of an enemy alliance into a friendly state, which is a difficult task to achieve because the cost of defection for the target state would be high if the enemy coalition has a cohesive alliance. De-alignment aims at inducing a state to become neutral by giving up its alliance with the main enemy. This is a less costly objective compared to realignment strategy because becoming neutral is less risky than becoming part of an adversary coalition, according to Crawford. Pre-alignment means keeping neutral a state that has not allied with the enemy yet, but has the potential to do so. This requires the divider state to act beforehand to ensure the neutrality of the state before an enemy alliance can be formed. Dis-alignment refers to eroding the cooperation between the target state and enemy alliance without aiming at shifting the target state to its side or neutrality. Therefore, the dis-alignment objective is concerned with reduction of the interaction within the enemy coalition. According to this categorization of the possible objectives behind wedging strategies, realignment appears to be the most difficult and costly strategy, while dis-alignment seems relatively easier but less conducive to serious strategic outcomes. Therefore, Crawford claims that de-alignment and pre-alignment

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions."

objectives aiming at keeping the target state neutral are more reachable objectives and potentially more likely to produce significant strategic outcomes.<sup>139</sup>

Izumikawa specifies two forms of wedging strategies. These are reward wedging and coercive wedging. Reward wedging strategies are designed to break a state away from its alignment through the use of “carrots,” that is to say, positive sanctions or inducements. Reward wedging includes economic benefits and access to crucial resources. Coercive wedging strategies uses “sticks,” such as coercive means including military intimidations, massive military exercises or missile launches to prevent groupings.<sup>140</sup> Reward wedging works if the divider state holds a benefit that is of strategic and existential importance to the target state. The divider state also has to have control over these benefits and the enemy alliance should not be able to provide them. The reward wedging strategy can divide an enemy alliance by creating a new conflict line or exacerbate an already prevailing conflict within the enemy coalition as a result of adding a conflict of interest into the enemy alliance. Equally important, a reward wedging strategy can mitigate the perception of common threat held by the coalition members, thereby creating a friendly relationship with the target state.<sup>141</sup> The coercive wedging strategy is grounded in the notion that consistent toughness and firmness against a member of the coalition can increase the intimidation felt by the target state, and can harden the cooperation between coalition members. Coercion can send a signal to the target state that initially thinks the cost of alignment with the enemy coalition is low, but with the coercion of the divider, the target state can understand how it would be costly if it prefers to ally with the enemy coalition. Therefore, the coercion can dissuade the target state by showing the resilience of the divider and the

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Izumikawa, “To Coerce or Reward?”

<sup>141</sup> Crawford, “Preventing Enemy Coalitions.”

costly consequences of the alignment.<sup>142</sup> Additionally, if the links between the target state and the enemy coalition are weak and the enemy coalition shares little common interests, the success of the coercive wedging strategy can be higher compared to a coalition having strong internal links. The First Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1954 can be considered as China's coercive wedging strategy aimed at dissuading the US and Taiwan from continuing their attempt to form an alliance.<sup>143</sup>

Crawford views reward wedging strategy (what he calls selective accommodation) as less risky and more effective, and claims that it is more frequently used by states. The reason for Crawford is that reward wedging does not prompt a balancing backlash as negative balancing does.<sup>144</sup> Crawford argues that coercive methods can unite the enemy coalition by increasing the threat perception of the target state whereby encouraging the target state to further ally with the divider state's main enemy. However, contrary to this argument, Izumikawa claims that coercive strategy can be a viable option in case reward power, which is a state's resources to give incentives for another state, is insufficient to lure a target state.<sup>145</sup> Additionally, even if the coercive wedging can yield backlash in the short run, the divider sends a strong message about its disapproval of the alliance, preventing the target state from repeating the same strategy in the future. Izumika gives the example of China's use of force during the first presidential elections of Taiwan between the period of 1995 and 1996 as an example of long-term benefit of coercive wedging strategy. He claims China's military exercises and missile launches in the waters off Taiwan during this crisis induced the US to send aircrafts to the Taiwan Strait. Izumika goes on by claiming that

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<sup>142</sup> Izumikawa, "To Coerce or Reward?"

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions."

<sup>145</sup> Izumikawa, "To Coerce or Reward?"

although China's coercion prompted a backlash from the US, Washington understood the Chinese sensitivity about Taiwan and abstained from furthering cooperation with the Taiwan government in the future.<sup>146</sup>

Consequently, wedging strategies are among the methods used to counter a potential or actual threat before it turns into a real conflict. The main objective is to reduce the relative power of the main enemy by dissuading an already formed coalition or by degrading the cooperation within the enemy alliance. In the case of unipolarity where the dominant power pursues a grand strategy of hegemony, the other great powers which perceive the dominance of the hegemon as a highly risky and dangerous security threat to their own interests can employ wedging strategies in order to mitigate the influence of the hegemon. Additionally, even if their strategies might fall short of producing desired outcomes, the wedging strategies are a compelling way of showing the resolve of the divider state over the way the hegemon dominates the international system. Consequently, wedging strategies are indirect balancing behaviors in that the divider does not directly target the main enemy, yet shows its resentment by targeting the weak allies of the hegemon. Threatened great powers take actions before being routed by the hegemon's expansionist agenda in the form of enlargement of alliance commitments, expansion of international institutions, or other forms of containment or encirclement. Therefore, wedging strategies are observable even in the military interventions that might otherwise be seen as an interstate war. The ultimate objective of certain uses of hard power may be to display resentment towards the hegemonic order rather in response to a regional or dyadic issue.

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

## Assertions

The following assertions are made based on the theoretical explanations laid out in this chapter. These assertions will be tested through the use of case studies in chapter V.

- 1- States, regardless of their size and strength, are sensitive to their security. This directs states to resort to aggressive actions insofar as their capability enables them to do so. In the case of unipolarity, the dominant state pursues offensive strategies with the conviction that the security of the state is dependent upon the persistence of the established system. Therefore, the hegemon ventures upon policies that consolidate the international order formed by the hegemon itself for defensive concerns. With the case of US hegemony, the liberal internationalist tradition constitutes the basis of the US-led international order. Therefore, US grand strategy aims at the maintenance of the free market economy and the spread of democracy across the world in order to protect American interests and security. That is to say, the offensive practices of the US result from these defensive intentions.
  
- 2- In a system of unipolarity, second-tier states which are either concerned with their security or dissatisfied with the existing international order end up attempting to balance against the hegemon. The unchecked power of the hegemon frightens other states since no state is sufficiently trustworthy in an anarchic environment, and thus states must rely on their own might in order to survive. However, regardless of whether the nature of the hegemonic power is truly benevolent or not, other states will always act with suspicion towards to the dominant power's increased influence in the system. They make a point of resisting the dominance of the most powerful state, and their reaction to the

hegemon usually depends on their capacity and willingness to pursue countervailing strategies against the dominant state.

- 3- In the case of unipolarity, states might not be powerful enough to bear an overt counterbalance against the hegemon, yet they may apply alternative balancing techniques. The presence of a huge power disparity between the hegemon and the following states makes positive and direct balancing strategies less likely and viable. Therefore, unipolarity gives incentives to pursue negative and indirect balancing strategies, and a wedging strategy is one of the available options for the states.

The next chapter will test these assertions through the cases of the Russian invasion of Georgia, the Ukraine Crisis, and China's disputed island policy.

## **Chapter IV: The US Liberal Hegemony and Its Dissidents**

This chapter discusses the underpinnings of the grand strategy of the US, with a special focus on the post-Cold War period by relying on the available primary and secondary resources. The chapter begins with the analysis of the nature of the international order that emerged after the demise of the Soviet Union, specifying in particular the position of the US in this new structure and ends with the conclusion that the US's grand strategy is characterized by a combination of primacy and liberal internationalist strategies. After this, this section will argue that the claim that other powers respect US liberal hegemony due to its benevolent nature is untrue, and that the unchecked US dominance in fact provokes resentment and resistance across the world.

### **Post-Cold War US Ascendancy**

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought about a shift in the international structure: moving it from bipolar to unipolar.<sup>147</sup> This systemic change has heralded the emergence of the US as the most dominant actor in the international system, laying down the foundations of US hegemony. With this systemic change, the world has been witnessing an unprecedented period in the history of modern international politics where such a powerful state has been able to expand its global reach extensively.<sup>148</sup> Immediately after the end of the Cold War, the security and foreign policy community began to express that the new era would be marked by the supremacy of the US. For instance, in 1990, Charles Krauthammer defined this new era as the “unipolar moment” where the US enjoyed being the first-rate power and no

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<sup>147</sup> Layne, “The Unipolar Illusion.”

<sup>148</sup> Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World.”

peer competitor could rival its dominance in the near future.<sup>149</sup> In his 1991 article, Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis also contended: “*The end of the Cold War has left Americans in the fortunate position of being without an obvious major rivalry.*”<sup>150</sup> In 1993, Samuel Huntington drew attention to the primacy of the US and highlighted that the preservation of the primacy would serve to the interest of the global peace and security.<sup>151</sup> When it came to the late 1990s, French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, used the term “hyperpower” to describe the unique American strength that had become predominant in all categories of power.<sup>152</sup>

The supremacy of the US has continued in various fields since then. Its predominance in all fields including that of military, economic, diplomatic and cultural assets render the US capable of intervening in any conflict in any part of the world.<sup>153</sup> The sophistication of its military technology and the precision of its weaponry in comparison to other countries is out of the question.<sup>154</sup> With regards to defense expenditures, the US is by far the world’s largest military spender, accounting for at least 36% of the world’s total military spending. Moreover, the US spends almost three times more than China; the second largest spending country, and more than next seven military spender countries combined.<sup>155</sup> The US has also dominated the world by scattering military bases around the globe, in addition to alliance systems that help enhance its power projection capabilities. As such, the US also has great influence over

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<sup>149</sup> Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990): 23–33.

<sup>150</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, “Toward the Post-Cold War World,” *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 2 (1991): 102.

<sup>151</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “Why International Primacy Matters,” *International Security* 17, no. 4 (1993): 68–83.

<sup>152</sup> “To Paris, U.S. Looks Like a ‘Hyperpower,’” *The New York Times*, February 5, 1999, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/02/05/news/to-paris-us-looks-like-a-hyperpower.html>.

<sup>153</sup> Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment.”

<sup>154</sup> Barry R. Posen, “Command of the Commons: The Military Foundation of US Hegemony,” *International Security* 28, no. 1 (2003): 5–46.

<sup>155</sup> Dr Nan Tian et al., “Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2016,” *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, April 2017, <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2017/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-world-military-expenditure-2016>.



international institutions which are for the most part designed and formed by the US - paving way for US influence in the international economy and politics.<sup>156</sup> Additionally, the values, principles and popular culture promoted by the US have global reach and recognition which in turn increase the soft power capabilities and cultural and ideological appeal of the US across the world.<sup>157</sup> For Wohlforth, the raw power dominance of the US has reached such a level that it has eradicated the possibility of hegemonic rivalry, which was one of the most profound causes of the conflict in the previous world system. According to Wohlforth, no state can dare challenge the US now.<sup>158</sup> The difficulty in finding three or more consequential powers that could surpass or balance against the US power is the most obvious indicator of the US hegemony, according to Posen.<sup>159</sup>

The US strategy of War on Terror in the wake of 9/11 was a clear indication of the US supremacy for many. After being targeted by the terrorist group Al-Qaeda, the US carried out a preventive war on terrorist organizations and states sponsoring terrorism. This war has resulted in military operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban strongholds, followed by the invasion of Iraq. For Layne, the successive operations against the terrorist organizations and their sponsors, strategized as a global war on terror, has demonstrated the extent of the US preponderance: that it is capable of unilaterally fighting against any enemy threatening the homeland, regardless of whether the threat is coming from terrorists or rogue states.<sup>160</sup> Layne further argues that the formation of the Coalition of Willing in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks

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<sup>156</sup> Dueck, "Ideas and Alternatives in American Grand Strategy, 2000–2004."

<sup>157</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2003).

<sup>158</sup> Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World."

<sup>159</sup> Barry R. Posen, "European Union Security and Defense Policy: Response to Unipolarity?," *Security Studies* 15, no. 2 (2006): 149–186.

<sup>160</sup> Layne, "Offshore Balancing Revisited."

was achieved due to the fierce US pressure on the remaining countries to join on its side. He concedes that only a true hegemon can convince countries to choose a side. Krauthammer also argues that 9/11 was important in that it definitely unleashed the asymmetry of power that favored the US. He further holds that the Afghanistan operation heightened US dominance in three ways. Firstly, it showed within weeks that the US was capable of destroying a radical and fanatical regime in an infamous climate and geography located 7000 miles away from the mainland. This operation allowed the US to exhibit its latent strength. Secondly, Krauthammer argues, it recovered from the political and economic turmoil experienced right after the 9/11 attacks in a short span of time. The market was back on its feet within days and the political authority mobilized the nation together with the Congress, setting out to retaliate to the terrorist attacks with an enormous military campaign. This showed another strength of the US, which was the resilience and the ability of the US to recover quickly with its economic, political and technological reserves. Finally, the 9/11 attacks precipitated a new alignment pattern among great powers. According to Krauthammer, history proves that great powers form alliances against the most dominant power, but after the 9/11 attacks great powers like Russia, China, and states like Pakistan and India showed varying degrees of solidarity with the US.<sup>161</sup> Layne and Krauthammer highlight that 9/11 served as a watershed moment revealing US supremacy was undisputable and unrivaled. On one hand, the primacy strategy is underway; on the other hand, the strategy is shaped by liberal internationalism. The following section will lay out the building blocks of the liberal internationalist tradition embedded in the US strategic thinking.

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<sup>161</sup> Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," *The National Interest*, no. 70 (2002): 5–18.

## The Premises of Liberal Internationalist Tradition

Although the US highlights the importance of democratic rule and human rights, and defends these principles in its foreign policy decisions, it does not promote democracy and market economy out of altruistic motives. The main driving force behind the liberal internationalism tradition is the belief that a world composed of liberal democracies would best serve the interest of the US and its citizens by providing security, prosperity and wealth.<sup>162</sup> Therefore, this hardheaded strategy is actually designed to increase the security and economic interests of the US. In similar light, Ikenberry argues that American liberal strategy is a pragmatic and realistic approach aimed at maintaining stability and peace in the world. This in turn serves the economic and security interests of the US. He claims, “*It amounts to what might be called an American "liberal" grand strategy. It is a strategy based on the very realistic view that the political character of other states has an enormous impact on the ability of the United States to ensure its security and economic interests.*”<sup>163</sup> Ikenberry enumerates a set of assumptions which the liberal internationalist tradition is built upon: the spread of democracy and democratic institutions abroad, promotion of free trade and economic liberalization, and the establishment of international and regional organizations.<sup>164</sup> According to Ikenberry, these are the assumptions that liberal internationalists believe bring peace and security to the world and help improve the US interests.

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<sup>162</sup> Colin Dueck, “Hegemony on the Cheap: Liberal Internationalism from Wilson to Bush,” *World Policy Journal* 20, no. 4 (2003): 1–11.

<sup>163</sup> Ikenberry, “Why Export Democracy?,” 57.

<sup>164</sup> Ikenberry, “Why Export Democracy?”

Therefore, one of the building blocks of the liberal internationalist tradition is the democratic peace theory.<sup>165</sup> The democratic peace theory assumes that democracies rarely, if ever, fight one another. Regardless of their poor record with non-democratic countries, history almost proves the complete absence of a war between two democracies.<sup>166</sup> Levy takes the issue further and claims that the democratic peace theory is the closest thing to empirical law in social sciences.<sup>167</sup> This assumption leads to the deduction that the greater the number of democracies spread around the world, the less likely war occur. Therefore, spreading democracy and market economy potentially bring about an international environment in which states embrace similar values and principles, which in turn thwarts the possibility of conflict. Beyond scholarly engagements, American decision makers have taken this fact seriously by designing their grand strategies accordingly.<sup>168</sup> M. Lynn-Jones lists several merits of the democratic peace theory in its contributions to the interests and security of the US. He argues the US will be more secure as democracies will not go to war with the US, as assumed by the democratic peace theory. Moreover, democracies are expected to respect their citizens by properly putting the rule of law and human rights into effect. This helps mitigate the possibility that democracies will commit violence towards their citizens, thereby reducing the need for the US to conduct humanitarian interventions in other countries. Thus, the US will not be expected to take action for humanitarian concerns in other countries as frequently. It also diminishes the flow of refugees into the US homeland since democracies should

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<sup>165</sup> For detailed analysis of the democratic peace theory see: James Lee Ray, "Does Democracy Cause Peace?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1, no. 1 (1998): 27–46.

<sup>166</sup> Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 1983, 205–235.

<sup>167</sup> Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (1988): 653–673.

<sup>168</sup> John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (1994): 87–125.

be less prone to creating refugees. In addition to this, democracies would not typically be the cause for the creation or support of terrorist groups which threaten American values, as the values and principles adopted by the US would presumably be the same as those of other democracies around the world. Last but not least, democratic peace is expected to advance US security and economic interests, since democracies that have open markets and liberal economies are deemed as good economic partners which can help foster US trade and economic interactions.<sup>169</sup>

The other component of the liberal internationalist tradition is economic interdependency. Apart from promoting democracy abroad, the US also pays a great deal of attention to the establishment of a fully-functioning international economic system, based on the market economy. The merit of the market economy derives from the interdependence among trading countries. The traditional liberal approach assumes that an open international market will increase the prosperity of every country leaving states in a situation in which they will not be willing to lose their prosperity and economic gains by going to war with their commercial partners.<sup>170</sup> Therefore, increased economic interdependence is a decisive component of the international peace and stability. As to the importance of economic interdependence for the US administrations, Layne argues that historical lessons experienced during the period running up to WWII played crucial role. With the Great Depression of 1939, the world plunged into economic turmoil that forced states to invoke protectionism, bringing about nationalized economies with quotas and barriers. These developments were also regarded as the basis for the totalitarian and fascist regimes that later caused the Second

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<sup>169</sup> Sean M. Lynn-Jones, *Why the United States Should Spread Democracy* (Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1998).

<sup>170</sup> John R. Oneal and Bruce M. Russett, "The Classical Liberals Were Right: Democracy, Interdependence, and Conflict, 1950–1985," *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (1997): 267–294.

World War. The other lesson learned is regarding the destructive repercussions of states' ambitions of economic expansion through controlling new territories and resources to make conjure benefits, which was the case before the WWII. States competed to expand their economic reach in the period leading up to WWII, which resulted in the logical deduction that the demolition of the free market economy and lack of economic interdependence led to the eruption of the WWII.<sup>171</sup> Therefore, according to Layne, the US decision makers came believe that the establishment of a market economy and interdependence would obstruct the possibility of instability and war.

### **The Roots of Liberal Internationalism in the US History**

The impact of the liberal internationalist tradition can be found in the history of the American grand strategy. As articulated above, the liberal internationalist tradition is built upon the ideal of promoting democracy and ensuring the maintenance of the open market economy across the world in the belief that this liberal system best serves the interests of the US. Colin Dueck traces the roots of the liberal internationalist tradition to a hundred years ago, when Secretary of State John Hay introduced the Open-Door Notes in 1899 to promote an open market and equal opportunities for trade and commercial activities. That same year, McKinley also defended the US intervention in the Philippines with similar arguments pertaining to commercial opportunities.<sup>172</sup>

The influence of the traditional liberal internationalist understanding in the US grand strategy was also obvious in the time of Woodrow Wilson. President Wilson believed that the flourishing of democracies would protect the US interest and keep

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<sup>171</sup> Layne, "Rethinking American Grand Strategy."

<sup>172</sup> Dueck, "Hegemony on the Cheap."

the world safer and more peaceful. With this in consideration in 1917, he stated: “A *steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants.*”<sup>173</sup> He also declared his conviction in free trade and an open market economy as a means of maintaining global peace in his famous fourteen-point statement in 1918. He listed “*the removal so far as possible, of all economic barriers and establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance*”<sup>174</sup> as one of the main pillars of world peace. Additionally, Wilson set to form League of Nations as the pioneer of the new international order. The Wilsonian principles possessed liberal ambitions in the sense that they intended to establish a collective security organization that would ensure the maintenance of peace, by preventing any conflict through the principles of open trade, national self-determination and global progress, as well as through the policies of arbitration, deterrence and economic sanctions.<sup>175</sup> The role given to the USA was to lead this organization in order to preserve the US interests across the globe and to gain and maintain moral superiority. Although the League of Nations did not succeed, the mentality behind the formation of new world order around the League is very much in line with the subsequent liberal internationalist grand strategy.<sup>176</sup> In similar light, Kissinger argues that Woodrow Wilson was the founder of the idea of American exceptionalism and Wilson introduced the notion that peace

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<sup>173</sup> “Woodrow Wilson: Address to a Joint Session of Congress Requesting a Declaration of War Against Germany,” *The American Presidency Project*, April 2, 1917, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65366>.

<sup>174</sup> Woodrow Wilson, “Fourteen Points Speech,” *US Embassy*, 1918, <https://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/democrac/51.htm>.

<sup>175</sup> G. John Ikenberry, “Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order,” *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 1 (2009): 71–87.

<sup>176</sup> Christopher Layne, “America’s Middle East Grand Strategy after Iraq: The Moment for Offshore Balancing Has Arrived,” *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 1 (2009): 5–25.

can be attained through the promotion of democratic institutions. According to Kissinger, this understanding has become one of the main pillars of the American grand strategy ever since.<sup>177</sup>

Franklin Roosevelt had a similar agenda in his mind when the WWII was over: to establish a liberal world order. Ikenberry argues that although the Soviet Union stood as a significant obstacle on the road to a liberal world order, the US aimed at and succeeded in becoming the leader and the operator of the world order during the Cold War through liberal institutions and principles.<sup>178</sup> Dueck claims the strategy of containment also encompassed the essence of the liberal internationalist tradition in the sense that its function was not only limited to controlling and balancing Soviet expansion, but also the spread of liberal values to develop interdependencies through military, diplomatic and economic tools outside the Communist bloc.<sup>179</sup> Gaddis also espouses a similar idea by claiming that the US had already assumed itself the leader of the new world well before the Soviet Union emerged as an obvious adversary.<sup>180</sup> With a parallel understanding, Layne argues that the strategy of American preponderance has been in effect since 1945 - when the US intended to create a world order designed around American military and economic values, as well as its cultural primacy.<sup>181</sup> According to Layne, the objective of the US has been to attain a unipolar moment since the world started to plunge into turmoil with the onset of WWII. He argues that regardless of the Soviet threat, the US strategy was to attain global preponderance. The Cold War in fact served as the legitimizing ground to this objective, as the US found its way to global expansion with the pretext of a Soviet

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<sup>177</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (Simon and Schuster, 1994).

<sup>178</sup> Ikenberry, "Liberal Internationalism 3.0."

<sup>179</sup> Dueck, "Hegemony on the Cheap."

<sup>180</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, "The Tragedy of Cold War History," *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 1 (1993): 1–16.

<sup>181</sup> Layne, "Rethinking American Grand Strategy."



rival.<sup>182</sup> This ambition was clearly indicated in the NSC-68 document, a policy paper marking the American Cold War policies in 1950, that described the role of US as one of establishing an international system where the values of the US could flourish.<sup>183</sup> The possibility of becoming a hegemon came with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990s.

### **Liberal Internationalism in the Post-Cold War Period**

Following the demise of the Soviet Union, the US has attained global preeminence. This hegemonic power status has enabled the US to materialize the traditional liberal internationalist ambitions that it inherited from Wilson. The various American administrations over the years have embarked upon a process in which they put the requisites of the democratic peace and economic interdependence in practice. For Paul Miller, since the end of the Cold War, US grand strategy is based upon attaining democratic peace.<sup>184</sup>

Right after the Cold War ended, the George H. W. Bush administration's 1993 National Security Strategy document discussed emerging opportunities in the new era for the US interests and concluded that the US should take the leadership role for there to be peaceful change. The following statement reveals the essence of primacy grand strategy which assumes a leadership role for the US: "*...our status as the preeminent world power with unique capabilities places great responsibilities upon us. And... that the world needs the leadership that only America can provide.*"<sup>185</sup> The same document also includes elements of the liberal internationalist traditions when defining the

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz, "American Hegemony: Without an Enemy," *Foreign Policy*, no. 92 (1993): 5–23.

<sup>184</sup> Paul D. Miller, "American Grand Strategy and the Democratic Peace," *Survival* 54, no. 2 (2012): 49–76.

<sup>185</sup> George H. W. Bush, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," *The White House*, 1993, <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-1993/>.

promotion of democracy and free market economies as the core interests of the US in this new era. For the importance of the helping foster democratic countries, the document reads “... *we should foster open and democratic systems that secure human rights and respect for every citizen, and work to strengthen respect for international norms of conduct. The active promotion of increased political participation, especially now in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, is in our national interest.*”<sup>186</sup>

Appearing in the same document, the following statements are the representation of the belief in the democratic peace that constitutes one of the fundamental building blocks of liberal internationalism: “*history teaches that representative governments responsive to their people are least likely to turn to aggression against their neighbors. Democracies also ensure individual civil and human rights, support economic freedom, and promote stability.*”<sup>187</sup> As to the significance of the free market economy for US interests and global peace, the strategy document states, “*A global economic system which encourages the free movement of goods, capital and labor is also one which best contributes to our prosperity and to that of others. Steady, non-inflationary economic growth will help reduce social and political tensions, thus contributing to global peace, and will also provide a means for ensuring the health of our environment.*”<sup>188</sup>

The Clinton administration’s grand strategy was not different from that of the Bush administration. It in fact capitalized on the democratic enlargement that meant to spread free market economy and democracies around the world. During his presidency, Clinton put great emphasis on the humanitarian interests in the conflicts and spent great efforts to the peacekeeping and nation building operations. Promotion

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

of open market economy, free trade, democratic governments were at the top of the foreign policy agenda.<sup>189</sup> Clinton's 1994 National Security Strategy documents, called Engagement and Enlargement, compels the American leadership to fight against the new dangers and to capitalize on opportunities. The assets to pursue these ends are defined as "*our military strength, our dynamic economy, and our powerful ideas...*".<sup>190</sup> He defines the central goal of the US security strategy is "to promote democracy abroad" among others.<sup>191</sup>

The essence of Clinton's grand strategy, which was built upon the premise of democratic peace and the economic interdependence, is illustrated in this passage: "*Secure nations are more likely to support free trade and maintain democratic structures. Nations with growing economies and strong trade ties are more likely to feel secure and to work toward freedom. And democratic states are less likely to threaten our interests and more likely to cooperate with the US to meet security threats and promote sustainable development.*"<sup>192</sup> Defining the US as the world's 'greatest power,' Clinton claims that the US has certain interests and responsibilities in pursuing an internationalist strategy based on liberal values. He says, "*We have global interests as well as responsibilities. ... We can find no security for America in isolationism, nor prosperity in protectionism*".<sup>193</sup>

The George W. Bush administration retained the strategy of preponderance of his predecessors, by saying that the US will hinder any other states from acquiring the

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<sup>189</sup> Anthony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement," 1993, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>.

<sup>190</sup> Bill Clinton, "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement," *The White House*, July 1, 1994, <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-1994/>.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Bill Clinton, "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement," *The White House*, February 1, 1996, <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-1996/>.

ability to possess military power that will exceed or equate that of the US.<sup>194</sup> In his speech at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, George Bush described a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East which underscores the democratization of the region as a necessary path to the security of the world and the American citizens, with the conviction that “*the advance of freedom leads to peace*”.<sup>195</sup> As Dueck puts it, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt - or Bill Clinton, all whom share the same views on traditional liberal internationalism, could have delivered the same speech.<sup>196</sup>

The national security strategy of the George W. Bush administration contains many details that prioritize the liberal internationalist convictions. Bush favors the promotion of democracy abroad by stating, “*We will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent.*”<sup>197</sup> The reason for the promotion of democratic peace lies behind the following statement: “*America will encourage the advancement of democracy and economic openness in both nations, because these are the best foundations for domestic stability and international order.*”<sup>198</sup> Together with the belief in democratic peace and stability, Bush holds a strong conviction in the significance of economic interdependence: “*...The United States will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe. We will actively work*

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<sup>194</sup> George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” *The White House*, September 2002, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/>.

<sup>195</sup> George W. Bush, “Remarks by President George W. Bush at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy,” *National Endowment for Democracy*, accessed August 6, 2017, <http://www.ned.org/remarks-by-president-george-w-bush-at-the-20th-anniversary/>.

<sup>196</sup> Dueck, “Hegemony on the Cheap.”

<sup>197</sup> George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, The White House, September 2002, p. (unnumbered), available at <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf>

<sup>198</sup> Bush, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” September 2002.

*to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world.”*<sup>199</sup>

Obama’s grand strategy, although softer in tone, was also composed of assumptions springing from the liberal internationalist tradition. The emphasis on American primacy and its leadership role preserves its significance in the Obama’s strategy, as well. In his first National Security Strategy document in 2010, Obama says, *“we must pursue a strategy of national renewal and global leadership- a strategy that builds the foundation of American strength and influence.”*<sup>200</sup> Similar to Bush’s concerns of not being surpassed or equalized by other powers, Obama too was wary of the occurrence of similar unwanted possibilities. He emphasizes the need of being the most prominent power in the world by saying *“...no nation should be better positioned to lead in an era of globalization than America...”*<sup>201</sup>. With similar considerations to pursue American interests, Obama also put weight on the necessity of democratic peace. He stated, *“The United States supports the expansion of democracy and human rights abroad because governments that respect these values are more just, peaceful and legitimate. We also do so because their success abroad fosters and environment that supports America's national interests.”*<sup>202</sup>

To conclude, the US grand strategy after the end of the Cold War is carved out with the possibility provided by the unipolar structure. With the military, economic, political and cultural preponderance, the US has found the possibility to realize its predated liberal internationalist agenda right after the Cold War. Thus, the US grand strategy is designed to establish a liberal world order so that democratic peace and

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Barack Obama, “National Security Strategy 2010,” *The White House*, 2010, <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2010/>.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

economic interdependence would bring about international peace and stability, thereby contributing to the advancement of the US interests and security as well.

### **Is Hegemony Sustainable?**

Now that the US has aspired to hegemony, a fierce debate has sparked on the endurance of the US primacy. The main concerns of this debate have raised the following questions: How long lasting is US hegemony going to be? Will there be a counter-balancing response to US predominance? Alternatively, will other states welcome US hegemony and accept its dominance in the determination of the international affairs? With some divergences, the literature can be classified into two: those who argue for the endurance of the US hegemony and those who are skeptics about the life of the US preeminence due to its provocative nature.

Proponents of the sustainability of hegemony mostly ground their assumptions on the unique nature of US hegemony, arguing it is not as threatening as the previous aspiring hegemons. Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon I and Hitler all tried to attain the hegemony and succeeded to some extent, but encountered resentment and countervailing reactions resulting in the demise of their respective hegemonies. The argument goes that unlike the previous failures, the system formed under the US hegemony is exceptional in a way that others do not perceive it as a menace to their existence and well-being, and thus feel themselves secure and better off. This has become the case because of its benevolent nature.<sup>203</sup> For Krauthammer, the unique characteristic of the American power that leads other states to consider the policies of the US different from previous imperialist states is its lack of imperial ambitions.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>204</sup> Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited."

According to Kagan, other states welcome the US preeminence because they are benefiting from its benevolent nature. He says no power in the history has showed this sort of generosity in protecting the interest of others.<sup>205</sup>

Ikenberry espouses the same perspective of US benevolence by arguing that the US is a benign hegemon that considers the interests of the other states and develops strategies that diminish the security concerns of the others. He specifies that international institutions put limits and constraints on the US exertion of its predominance and the US accepts these constraints in order not to be perceived as threatening by other states. Additionally, the democratic structure of the American political system, with its transparent administration and democratic institutions, sends signals of trust to other countries by reducing their perception of threat.<sup>206</sup> In similar vein, Nye appreciates the predominance of the US hard power, however, argues that what makes America great are its soft power capabilities. Soft power encompasses American cultural influences and capacity to conduct international institutions. Nye points out that if the US manages to pursue a grand strategy that is based on the multilateral institutions and cooperation with the other powers, others will respect its hegemony thereby making the life of US supremacy longer.<sup>207</sup> Owen puts emphasis on the ruling elites in the potential challengers and concludes that the liberal elites who share similar views, values and norms with the US rule enough number of countries across the world. The like-minded liberal elites constitute the basis for the endurance of the US hegemony. Therefore, Owen argues that identity convergence between

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<sup>205</sup> Robert Kagan, "The Benevolent Empire," *Foreign Policy*, 1998, 24–35.

<sup>206</sup> G. John Ikenberry, "Introduction," in *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, ed. G. John Ikenberry (Cornell University Press, 2002).

<sup>207</sup> Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*.

ruling elites will serve to maintain the US hegemony.<sup>208</sup> Thomas Risse draws attention to another feature of the US-led international system and points that the current order is dominated by liberal states, most of them EU countries. The security community formed among these liberal powers precludes the adverse effect of the security dilemma among liberal countries by diminishing each country's security concerns. Therefore, a security community created out of collective identities, shared values, economic interdependence and cultural interdependence enforces the endurance of US hegemony.<sup>209</sup> For liberal scholars, if the US manages to develop a respectful and wise grand strategy, the life cycle of its hegemony will be longer.

Provision of public goods with regard to economic and security issues is one of the fundamental capabilities with which the hegemon might render its predomination welcomed by other states.<sup>210</sup> For Kindleberger, the hegemon warrants public goods by perpetuating the stability of the international economic system thereby increasing the gains of other states. He argues that the stability of the international economic system is something that all states benefit from without looking at their contribution to the system. The provision and maintenance of the public good can only be realized by a hegemon that has the power and motivation to do so.<sup>211</sup> As far as the hegemon distributes collective goods, other states will respect a benign hegemon due to the benefits gained from the hegemonic stability. In terms of security provision as a public good, Mastanduno claims that subordinate states can be receptive to the security

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<sup>208</sup> John M. Owen, "Transnational Liberalism and American Primacy; or, Benignity Is in the Eye of the Beholder," in *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, ed. Ikenberry G. John (Cornell University Press, 2002), 239–259.

<sup>209</sup> Risse Thomas, "US Power in a Liberal Security Community," in *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, ed. Ikenberry G. John (Cornell University Press, 2002).

<sup>210</sup> Duncan Snidal, "The Limits of Hegemonic Stability Theory," *International Organization* 39, no. 4 (1985): 579–614.

<sup>211</sup> Charles P. Kindleberger, "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy: Exploitation, Public Goods, and Free Rides," *International Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1981): 242–254.



provision of the US against the potential threat environments. This is the situation in Asia, where states are unable to know what would happen if the US security umbrella were to be removed. Instead of unforeseeable security problems, they prefer to continue with the hegemonic security and do not engage in resistant behavior.<sup>212</sup> In similar vein, Selden holds that due to the threat posed by the other regional great powers such as China and Russia, countries adjacent to great powers prefer to align with the US in order to benefit from the security umbrella provided by the US hegemony. Their alignment, in turn, helps the endurance of US hegemony by bolstering the US military's reach through subordinate states' contributions through national military builds up, deployment of troops to the US-led operations and allowing usage of military bases by the US.<sup>213</sup>

From a hard power perspective, Wolforth brings forth what can be described as the coercive leadership of America, where other states are unable to show resentment or counter balancing behavior due to the power disparity between them and the hegemon. Wolforth underscores the undisputable power projection capability of the US hegemony defining it as the US hegemonic exceptionalism. He asserts that US hegemony will be longer-lasting due to the new doors opened by the durable and peaceful nature of the unipolar world. He argues that second-tier states will be unable to balance against US hegemony due to the enormous power gap between the US and would-be challengers. Therefore, he expects other states to prefer bandwagoning with the US or inaction in the face of US unilateralism in order to prevent instigating the

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<sup>212</sup> Michael Mastanduno, "Incomplete Hegemony: The United States and Security Order in Asia," in *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, ed. G. John Ikenberry (Cornell University Press, 2002), 181–221.

<sup>213</sup> Zachary Selden, "Balancing against or Balancing with? The Spectrum of Alignment and the Endurance of American Hegemony," *Security Studies* 22, no. 2 (2013): 330–364.

enmity of the hegemon. This will reduce the risk of war for security or prestige concerns on the side of the US and increase the life of the US hegemony.<sup>214</sup>

### **Hegemonic Backlash**

As oppose to the conviction that US primacy will be stable due to its benevolent nature, Layne concedes that US primacy suffers from a paradox. While it is good and necessary to sustain the global order in a peaceful manner, it also has some pitfalls that might perils the roots of the order that America has established on its own.<sup>215</sup> He argues states cannot rely on other's good intentions since security is the number one concern for states. Relying on other's help and altruism will not work because intentions are fluid rather than constant.<sup>216</sup> This is the reason why states determine their strategies by taking into account their power position relative to that of others. If the power gap is huge, it triggers an alarm on the weaker side. Thus, Layne argues, lesser powers might view even benign US primacy as threatening to their security by evaluating the future, if not today. The US viewing itself as a benevolent power that upholds the principles of democracy and human rights across the world does not imply that other powers consider it so.<sup>217</sup>

According to Rodman, other great powers and countries from the third world do not welcome US hegemony and appear reactionary in the sense of balance of power politics. He argues that Russia and China have already undertaken strategies that push for the recreation of multipolarity.<sup>218</sup> Western countries also demonstrated their willingness to have independent security and foreign policies with the Maastricht

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<sup>214</sup> Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World."

<sup>215</sup> Layne, "Offshore Balancing Revisited."

<sup>216</sup> Layne, "Rethinking American Grand Strategy."

<sup>217</sup> Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower."

<sup>218</sup> Peter W. Rodman, "The World's Resentment: Anti-Americanism as a Global Phenomenon," *The National Interest*, no. 60 (2000): 33–41.

Treaty of 1993, according to Rodman. Frequently recalling the necessity of the decisions of the United Nations Security Council regarding military actions towards third parties, as in the case of Kosovo intervention and American intervention of Afghanistan and Iraq, members of UNSC have applied an alternative method to check the US use of power unilaterally. NATO also serves as the medium for weaker states to place restraints on American power by pressing the US to act multilaterally.<sup>219</sup> According to Voeten, there has been a trend after the end of the Cold War that has indicated that the preferences of the US have been diverging from the other individual countries in the United Nations Security Council. He argues that the gap in preferences between the US and other member states has been widening on crucial issues, leaving the US alone in the international scene.<sup>220</sup> According to Chaziza, this situation has been observed during the recent Syria Crisis. He claims that Russia and China showed their resentment towards US dominance during the Arab spring by using their veto power in the United Nations Security Council. Although they did not display hard balancing behavior, their repeated vetoes in the Syrian Crisis were indication of the counter balancing act against the US's growing interference in the world affairs.<sup>221</sup> These sort of actions in international institutions to put limits on the US power are described as soft balancing strategies in the literature.<sup>222</sup>

Barry Posen interprets the European attempts to establish a common Foreign and Security Policy for the EU as an act of checking the US power. The European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) was first launched in 1998 upon the agreement

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Erik Voeten, "Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to US Dominance," *Journal of Politics* 66, no. 3 (2004): 729–754.

<sup>221</sup> Mordechai Chaziza, "Soft Balancing Strategy in the Middle East: Chinese and Russian Vetoes in the United Nations Security Council in the Syria Crisis," *China Report* 50, no. 3 (2014): 243–258.

<sup>222</sup> Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States"; Paul, "Soft Balancing in the Age of US Primacy."

of French and Britain ministers in St. Malo meeting. The motivation behind establishing a joint security strategy was to have a capability for autonomous action with their own military might in the face of security threats and international crisis. The Balkan Wars in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1998 showed that the security of the EU was dependent on the US and that the EU countries did not have the autonomy to develop their own security policies in a conflict unfolding in the European continent.<sup>223</sup> Hence, this attempt was a way out of the dependence on the US power, which would lead the EU to gain strategic independence and become autonomous in their command and control of operations in their neighborhood. For Posen, the initiation of the ESDP was the result of the thinking that the security of the EU could not be left to the hands of the US, which could adopt malign policies toward the EU countries in the future.<sup>224</sup> Responding harshly to these attempts, the US officials described this act as the most serious threat to the future of the NATO.<sup>225</sup> The steps towards to ESDP demonstrated that states respond to the concentration of power in one hand, regardless of how benign the nature of the power-holder may be.

According to Wang, China's increasing concerns over strategic encirclement by the West have resulted in a smart balancing strategy against the US. He claims China seeks to reduce the relative power gap with the US by resorting to internal balancing and external soft balancing strategies with the intention of increasing its security in the case of possible US aggression. While internal balancing comes in the form of the mobilization of domestic economic resources and military modernization, soft external balancing appears as China's diplomatic effort to cut off the US influence

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<sup>223</sup> Posen, "European Union Security and Defense Policy."

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Stephen Castle, "Nato Calms US Fears of European Defence HQ," *The Independent*, October 21, 2003, sec. Europe, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/nato-calms-us-fears-of-european-defence-hq-92375.html>.

on the issues pertaining to its interests through multilateral international institutions and bilateral relations.<sup>226</sup> In similar vein, Layne also argues that China has paid close attention to the maintenance of stability in East Asia with the purpose of gaining more time to complete its economic development. China's achievements in the economic field, according to Layne, will help it counter balance against US dominance.<sup>227</sup> Mearsheimer also emphasizes that China has been in the process of building up military forces that allow China to project its military capabilities. Its policy of building naval forces with the capacity to operate in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean is underway and will have potential to challenge the US forces.<sup>228</sup> From another point of view, Ayson and Pardesi claim that China has been challenging US primacy in East Asia through its coercive policies. According to them, the instances of coercive diplomacy in the history of China-US relations goes back to early years of the PRC. Recently, China's use of coercive diplomacy in the disputes on South China Sea and East China Sea are the examples of its challenge to the US primacy in the region.<sup>229</sup> Although these coercive policies are not intended to lead to full-fledged war, they signal the resolve of China against the US's ambitions in the region. Moreover, Chwee argues that the US's mounting military relations with its allies in Asia have increased China's fear of being encircled by the US and its allies. This in turn placed pressure on China to implement assertive policies in its regional issues in order to deter neighboring countries from further enhancing their alignment with the US.<sup>230</sup> China

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<sup>226</sup> Yuan-Kang Wang, *China's Grand Strategy and US Primacy: Is China Balancing American Power?* (Brookings Institution Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, 2006).

<sup>227</sup> Christopher Layne, "China's Challenge to US Hegemony," *Current History* 107, no. 705 (2008): 13.

<sup>228</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3, no. 4 (2010): 381–396.

<sup>229</sup> Robert Ayson and Manjeet S. Pardesi, "Asia's Diplomacy of Violence: China–US Coercion and Regional Order," *Survival* 59, no. 2 (2017): 85–124.

<sup>230</sup> Kuik Cheng-Chwee, "Explaining the Contradiction in China's South China Sea Policy: Structural Drivers and Domestic Imperatives," *China: An International Journal* 15, no. 1 (2017): 163–186.

also looks at other continents in order to strengthen its position vis a vis the US. According to Campbell, China's intensified African policy after commencing a new partnership framework with Africa in 2006, is intended to challenge US hegemony. China has begun injecting its financial resources into Africa since then and has increased its bilateral relations with African countries. China's increased influence in Africa can become assets used to show resentment against the US supremacy in the future.<sup>231</sup>

In similar vein, Tsygankov argues that just like China, Russia also shows its unhappiness with the US-centered world order and engages in balancing strategies. He claims that in order to challenge the American dominance; Russia seeks to rely on its soft power tools. For Tsygankov, Russia has had strong soft power instruments that are particularly influential in Eurasia via its shared history and institutions with the countries in the region. This is especially so in the post-Soviet region, with the countries sharing external borders and a similar history in which they fought against a common enemy and were exposed to similar cultural and linguistic policies. Although Russia's project of forming a common ideal around Eurasia is still in the process, the values and principles it advocated have the potential to attract not only Slavs but also many Muslim dominated countries in Eurasia using ties established since the times of Catherine the Great. To achieve this ideal, Russia has started economic, politic and cultural initiatives. The establishment of a Customs Union with Belarus and Kazakhstan and Eurasian Union is one of the examples of this sort.<sup>232</sup> Additionally, Russia initiated a soft power strategy starting in the mid-2000s, formalized in 2013 after being taken into Russian foreign policy doctrine which incorporates hard power

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<sup>231</sup> Horace Campbell, "China in Africa: Challenging US Global Hegemony," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (2008): 89–105.

<sup>232</sup> Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Moscow's Soft Power Strategy," *Current History* 112, no. 756 (2013): 259.

tools as well, as the important component of this strategy.<sup>233</sup> The Russian attempts to consolidate its neighboring countries around Russian ideals through soft power instruments can be read as attempts to challenge the US-led liberal world order and limit its influence in the region. An example of the usage of Russian hard power to show resilience in the face of the US dominance can be seen in the Georgian War. According to Karagiannis, Russia's intervention in Georgia was Russia's use of hard power to challenge the US hegemony. For him, Russia waged war against Georgia and invaded South Ossetia because of the US's increased efforts of encircling Russia through NATO enlargement. The last nail in the coffin came when Georgia was offered to join NATO in 2008, which provoked an immediate Russian responses.<sup>234</sup> This case will be analyzed in depth in the next chapter.

Consequently, contrary to claims that the benevolent character of US hegemony prevents other great powers from challenging it, states have already begun seeking ways to show their resentment and limit the US's unchecked power. Russia and China have developed strategies in order to stand against the US-centered world order by increasing their influences in their neighborhood and other regions, as well as by putting constraints on the US actions in the international organizations like the UN Security Council. Additionally, by initiating the European Security and Defense Policy, the EU aims at developing independent security policies by diminishing its reliance on the US for acting independently from the US, in particularly during crises in the European continent.

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<sup>233</sup> Alexander Sergunin and Leonid Karabeshkin, "Understanding Russia's Soft Power Strategy," *Politics* 35, no. 3–4 (2015): 347–363.

<sup>234</sup> Emmanuel Karagiannis, "The 2008 Russian–Georgian War via the Lens of Offensive Realism," *European Security* 22, no. 1 (2013): 74–93.

## Other Mediums for Resistance and Non-State Actors

Regional organizations also serve as gateways to counterbalancing US hegemony. According to a Stratfor report, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) allow rising powers, particularly Russia and China, to countervail US global dominance.<sup>235</sup> The SCO consists of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, China, Kazakhstan and Russia. India and Pakistan have started the formal process of membership and are due to join the organization. With its economic capacity, the SCO provides a forum in which countries might utilize their convergence in the economic field as an alternative to the Western-dominated economic system. Although Russia and China view the function of the organization from different perspectives, they share the idea that the SCO is an alternative to US-based organizations. The former considers SCO as a possible military or security bloc against the US dominance while the latter regards the organization as an economic space that can contribute to adding up to further economic growth.<sup>236</sup> Hettiarachchi and Abeyrathne both believe that rising powers, especially the BRICS countries, are seeking more voice in the international affairs through forming regional organizations. They use their influences in order to challenge US dominance and calling for a more pluralist and multipolar global system.<sup>237</sup> According to Degaut and Meacham, the emergence of the BRICS countries as a result of their economic successes can bring about changes in the dynamics of international relations by giving more political and economic influence to those countries. They argue that increased role of BRICS countries can lead to the undermining of US hegemony by

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<sup>235</sup> "China, Russia: Interests Converge in Regional Blocs," *Stratfor Worldview*, July 10, 2015, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/china-russia-interests-converge-regional-blocs>.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> Nishantha Hettiarachchi and Upul Abeyrathne, "The US Attempt of Supremacy in the Twenty First Century: Russian and Chinese Response," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 10, no. 7 (2016): 96–104.



starting an era of multipolarity in which power would be diffused around several rising powers.<sup>238</sup> Kaya also argues that although still too immature to be a full-fledged challenge, BRICS countries are dissatisfied with the prevailing order and they show their resentment to the Western order through demanding a greater role particularly in determination of international economic affairs.<sup>239</sup> Their growth rates have been higher than that of the Western countries for decades and their share in the global economic is rapidly increasing, while the West loses its share. Therefore, the BRICS countries have been increasing their influence in global affairs by reducing the role of the US.

Cyberspace is another area where US hegemony is being challenged by the rising powers. Ebert and Maurer argue that the BRICS countries are contesting US dominance in cyberspace. Although they differ in their strategies to counter US primacy in computer networks, they all attempt to challenge it.<sup>240</sup> Ebert and Maurer specifies two different policies advocated by the BRICS countries concerning which authority should rule the cyberspace. Accordingly, first policy proposal puts emphasis on establishing sovereign territories in cyberspace in the traditional geopolitical sense, diminishing the US's monopoly. The other proposal advocates the formation of an International Governmental Organization that has the authority to govern the entire cyberspace limiting US dominance through rules and institutions.<sup>241</sup> Consequently, cyber space has become an arena for balancing US dominance. Apart from contentions over how cyberspace will be governed, countries also engage in cyber warfare. Although other states are not capable of engaging in direct military confrontation with

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<sup>238</sup> Marcos Degaut and Carl Elliott Meacham, *Do the BRICS Still Matter?* (Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2015).

<sup>239</sup> Zeynep Kaya, "BRICS and Geopolitics: A Match Made in Heaven?," *International Relations* 3, no. 6 (2015): 389–398.

<sup>240</sup> Hannes Ebert and Tim Maurer, "Contested Cyberspace and Rising Powers," *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 6 (2013): 1054–1074.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

the US, they launch cyber-attacks on the US strategic targets in order to gain strategic information and advantages. According to Hjortdal, China has been improving its cyber capabilities to make it an important element of its security and foreign policy. China's cyber-attacks against US servers carry out several functions including gaining military and economic advantages through military and technological espionage, and deterrence by infiltrating critical infrastructures. These attempts are of critical importance because having knowledge of what the US has been planning in the military and economic fields will give China the advantage of adopting its policies beforehand. Therefore, China's cyber strategy is part of its overall strategy of countering the US and acquiring ascendancy in the international system. Attacks on a nuclear laboratory, the defense ministry and the economic grid are some examples of China's cyber-attack on the US.<sup>242</sup>

Revolution in military affairs is another issue that has the potential to bring about a possibility of countering US military supremacy. According to Cohen, the rise of information technologies and efficacy of capitalism has brought about military revolution in the United States.<sup>243</sup> The debate on revolution in military affairs began in 1970s when Soviet leaders were concerned with an American-led military revolution that could leave Soviet Union desperate in the face of the US military. After rapid and decisive victory in America's Operation Desert Storm in Iraq in 1991, the debate once again gained momentum in the American leadership circles as it was viewed as a military revolution resulting from successful rapid, high-precision air

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<sup>242</sup> Magnus Hjortdal, "China's Use of Cyber Warfare: Espionage Meets Strategic Deterrence," *Journal of Strategic Security* 4, no. 2 (2011): 1.

<sup>243</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, "A Revolution in Warfare," *Foreign Affairs*, 1996, 37–54.

operations.<sup>244</sup> However, the current debate opens room for the likelihood of a military revolution in rising powers which implies that the military superiority of the US might be superseded due to revolutions in the systems and operations within the military establishment in rising countries. With this logic, Krepinevich argues that rising powers might exploit improvement in the information technology in a way that brings major changes and effectiveness to military operations in war.<sup>245</sup> According to Newmyer, Chinese strategists carry the belief that military revolution will provide an historic opportunity for China to counter the US military. Newmyer argues that China's military revolution strategy is based on improving kinetic and information attacks and replacing nuclear deterrence with information deterrence.<sup>246</sup> Although Newmyer mentions some caveats, such as the Chinese Military revolution provoking an American response, China is still looking for a possible breakthrough that will enable it to challenge US supremacy.

Although the unprecedented US dominance renders it hard to form traditional balancing behavior by the states, its imperial overreach creates its functional equivalents. Troublemaking states and terrorists alike become one of the main sources of resistance against the US's offensive use of force. According to Snyder, because the power of the US is hard to defeat, terrorists and rogue states might come to believe that the only way to bridge this power disparity is to acquire weapons of mass destruction which can pose a major threat to US hegemony.<sup>247</sup> Layne defines this kind

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<sup>244</sup> Stephen Peter Rosen, "The Impact of the Office of Net Assessment on the American Military in the Matter of the Revolution in Military Affairs," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 4 (2010): 469–482.

<sup>245</sup> Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Military-Technical Revolution: A Preliminary Assessment* (Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments Washington, DC, 1992).

<sup>246</sup> Jacqueline Newmyer, "The Revolution in Military Affairs with Chinese Characteristics," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 4 (2010): 483–504.

<sup>247</sup> Jack Snyder, "Imperial Temptations," *The National Interest*, no. 71 (2003): 29–40.

of terrorism as the counter-hegemonic balancing of the weak.<sup>248</sup> Particularly, the increase in terrorism in the Middle East after the US's imperially ambitious policy of democracy promotion in the region has revealed that these hegemonic ambitions provoke resistance. Therefore, Layne points out that US assertiveness and hegemonic strategies in the Middle East increased terrorism.<sup>249</sup>

In a similar vein, Betts argues that terrorist groups in the Middle East like Al-Qaeda and Taliban have emerged as a reaction to the American political and cultural imperialism. He says:

*“American global primacy is one of the causes of this war (war against terrorism). It animates both the terrorists' purposes and their choice of tactics. To groups like al Qaeda, the United States is the enemy because American military power dominates their world, supports corrupt governments in their countries, and backs Israelis against Muslims; American cultural power insults their religion and pollutes their societies; and American economic power makes all these intrusions and desecrations possible.”*<sup>250</sup>

Betts further claims that the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in 1993 were also the reaction of the radical fundamentalists to the US policies favoring Israel and the Shah of Iran, and its negative attitudes towards Islamic culture.<sup>251</sup> Therefore, the US's attempts to reform political landscapes, change economic structures and adjust new social life caused backlash in the Middle East. Scheurer, in similar line, concedes that Muslims' resentment and anger towards to the US has not sprung from

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<sup>248</sup> Layne, “America's Middle East Grand Strategy after Iraq.”

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Richard K. Betts, “The Soft Underbelly of American Primacy: Tactical Advantages of Terror,” *Political Science Quarterly* 117, no. 1 (2002): 19–36.

<sup>251</sup> Richard K. Betts, “The New Threat of Mass Destruction,” *Foreign Affairs*, 1998, 26–41.

their opposition to the American way of life or democracy, but because of US actions in the form of imperialism. It is not a matter of religious, ideological or cultural divergence but rather a matter of domination being imposed on the Muslim people, he argues.<sup>252</sup> As to why US policies generate resentment, Walt and Mearsheimer claim that democracy promotion missions in unknown places might require military interventions and dealing with local political structure, which brings about rise of nationalistic sentiments within the local community. If local opponents are too weak to countervail US efforts, this resentment can turn into terrorism against the US. Moreover, regime changes in another country can weaken the prevailing institutions and government structure, thereby creating safe haven for terrorists and an environment in which they can flourish.<sup>253</sup> Sobek and Braithwaite also argue that American dominance invites more terrorism. They consider terrorism as a weapon of the weak who have no power or capacity to change the status quo through conventional military and diplomatic methods, which leads to an increase in terrorist attacks against the US world order. Consequently, the concentration of economic, military and diplomatic capabilities in one hand leaves little room for unsatisfied power groups to change their inferior positions in international system except by appealing to terrorism.<sup>254</sup>

Consequently, in addition to the state's internal efforts to balance against the US supremacy, other platforms like international institutions, regional organizations and cyberspace are arenas where balancing behavior against US hegemony can be

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<sup>252</sup> Michael Scheuer, *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror* (Potomac Books, Inc., 2004).

<sup>253</sup> Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Case for Offshore Balancing."

<sup>254</sup> David Sobek and Alex Braithwaite, "Victim of Success: American Dominance and Terrorism," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 22, no. 2 (2005): 135–148.

observed. Additionally, besides states, non-state actors like terrorists also challenge US dominance by carrying out terrorist activities in order to deter American policies.

### **Overall Evaluation of the Chapter**

This section has laid out that the unipolar structure which came out after the end of the Cold War has enabled the US to put into action a grand strategy of primacy. The embedded liberalism in the US political history has also added the notion of promotion of democracy and open market economy to US grand strategy preferences. The combination of US primacy and a liberal internationalist tradition has resulted in the US pursuing a liberal hegemony after the end of the Cold War. The emphasis on democratic peace and economic interdependence has become the fundamental aspect of the US grand strategy.

In the face of US liberal hegemony, some scholars argue that contrary to previous hegemonic attempts, US supremacy has not been challenged by other powers because it has had a benign nature. According to them, other countries do not perceive US domination as a threat to their security: rather, they view the US as a caring hegemon that provides public goods such as security and economic prosperity. However, many others claim the opposite by pointing out that unchecked power always dictates counter balancing because the benignity of the hegemon is not something that states can rely on. Rising powers, especially China and Russia, are engaging in balancing moves. They appeal to soft balancing mechanisms in order to diminish US supremacy in international institutions and form regional organizations in political and economic fields. They show their resentment through coercive strategies on strategic issues. They also seek to increase their influence in cyberspace. Additionally, terrorist attacks appear as the method employed by non-state actors to

countervail the dominance of the US. The next chapter will look at in detail the cases where the wedging strategies are employed in order to check the US hegemony.



## **Chapter V: Resistance against Hegemony**

This chapter applies the theoretical framework deduced from the structural realism's assumptions about the great power behaviors in unipolarity to three cases: the Russian invasion of Georgia, the Ukraine Crisis and China's ADIZ decision of 2013. Therefore, this chapter, for the most part, focuses on the US's policies towards Eastern European countries, particularly Ukraine and Georgia, and the responses given to these policies by Russia. In addition, although not being as detailed as in the cases with Russia, this chapter also looks at the US's East Asian policy and China's responses to it.

### **The US's Eastern Europe Strategy**

The following part looks in detail at the processes of NATO enlargement and the EU's Eastern Partnership program since these strategies constitute the basis of the post-Cold War US grand strategy. The reason of including the EU's policies into the discussion lies in the conviction that EU's Eastern Europe policy has proceeded in line with the wider US strategy of spreading liberal principles in the former Soviet countries. On this account, the policies of the EU can be regarded as complementary to the US grand strategy of liberal internationalism.

Before going into the details of the US's liberal hegemonic strategies, it is vital to have a sense of the relationship between Russia and the West, particularly at the turn of the unipolar era. After the end of the Cold War, the US appeared to strive for integrating Russia into the West by eliminating the old rivalry and divisions inherited from the Cold War, particularly in the European continent. According to Rumer and Stent, the US aimed at bringing peace and stability into region through the transformation of Russia into liberal democracy and free market economy. Therefore,



they claim that the US has employed a liberal internationalist approach from the very beginning.<sup>255</sup> The hope and optimism for the integration was high especially during the Yeltsin presidency and early years of Putin presidency. For these ends, NATO and Russia established NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in 1997 that constituted the formal basis of the relationship between Russia and the West, particularly with the US. This was followed by the formation of NATO-Russia Council in 2002, which aimed at increasing cooperation and consultation between Russia and individual member countries.<sup>256</sup> However, ensuing developments together with the Cold War legacy in relations, have affected the trajectory of the Russian-West rapprochement. For Hamilton, one of the reason for the deterioration of the relations was the Russia's increased concern of being encircled by liberal institutions and democracies. Hamilton claims "*The prospect of a ring of liberal democracies with open societies around Russia is seen as threatening to the Kremlin, especially since Russia believes the West is actively promoting the overthrow and enforced democratization of regimes friendly to it.*"<sup>257</sup>

Just like the US-Russia relationship, EU-Russia relations started with the hope of mutual understanding and increased cooperation. The period between 1992 and 1994 particularly exhibited significant developments on the way to Russian integration into the EU. To this end, Russia and the EU signed the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation in 1994. This agreement articulated the founding principles of the future relationship. Article Two of the agreement set respect for democracy and human rights

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<sup>255</sup> Eugene Rumer and Angela Stent, "Russia and the West," *Survival* 51, no. 2 (2009): 91–104.

<sup>256</sup> "About NRC," *Nato-Russia Council*, accessed August 10, 2017, <http://www.nato.int/nrc-website/EN/about/index.html>.

<sup>257</sup> Col. Robert E. Hamilton, "Georgia's NATO Aspirations: Rhetoric and Reality," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, July 8, 2016, <http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/07/georgias-nato-aspirations-rhetoric-reality/>.

as the essential condition of the continuation of the relationship. Haukkala claims that, from the Russian perspective, this conditionality gives the EU an upper hand in terms of acting as a moral authority that has the right to assess the appropriateness of Russian behavior and suspend relations if it sees it necessary.<sup>258</sup> Haukkala argues that Russia was discontent with this article as it conferred utmost authority to the EU to define the rules of the game, claiming “*The EU has been the most adamant in its attempts at locking Russia into a pan-European economic and political order based on liberal values and practices as they have been understood by the EU itself.*”<sup>259</sup> Thus, it can be argued that following the Cold War, EU-Russia relations have revolved around the tension between the EU's policy of establishing an EU-based order with liberal values and norms, and the Russian reactions to this policy.

The Kosovo War in 1999 has constituted another turning point in the future relations between Russia and the West. On March 1999, NATO forces led by the US started bombing Serbian troops in Kosovo in an attempt to halt the human killings there. According to Bix, this was an attack on Serbian sovereignty from the eyes of Russia and marked an important alteration in the NATO's strategy since it entered into a war that had no association with the alliance.<sup>260</sup> Therefore, the intervention in Kosovo showed that the alliance could intervene in any part of the world by violating the sovereignty of other states, possibly even Russia. More importantly, the Kosovo bombing was carried out unilaterally without authorization from the United Nations Security Council. Unilateral military intervention has sparked Russian fears that the

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<sup>258</sup> Hiski Haukkala, “From Cooperative to Contested Europe? The Conflict in Ukraine as a Culmination of a Long-Term Crisis in EU–Russia Relations,” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23, no. 1 (2015): 25–40.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>260</sup> Herbert P. Bix, “The Russo-Georgia War and the Challenge to American Global Dominance,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, 2008.

West has imposed its own world order without considering the demands and concerns of Russia.<sup>261</sup> As per Asmus, “*It was an exercise in Russia’s humiliation and exclusion that needed to be avenged and never repeated*”<sup>262</sup> and claims that the Kosovo intervention was the beginning of the end of the West-Russia rapprochement. Similar patterns were observed during the Color Revolutions, according to Haukkalu. He claims that the optimism that emerged as a result of Putin's ascendancy to power and his talk of Europeanization and European integration ended after the Color Revolution in Ukraine in 2004.<sup>263</sup> The conviction that the West sponsored regime changes and supported conflicts caused Russia to distance itself from the West.

To conclude, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov’s words summarize the essence of the relationship between Russia and the West. He claims, “*They opted to expand NATO eastward and to advance the geopolitical space they controlled closer to the Russian border. This is the essence of the systemic problems that have soured Russia’s relations with the United States and the European Union.*”<sup>264</sup>

## **NATO Enlargement**

Throughout the Cold War, the world witnessed a mounting rivalry between two blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Pact allies, which brought the US and Soviet Union to the brink of direct military confrontation. Although this did not happen during the Cold War, the strife continued via proxy wars which were waged to acquire new orbits or maintain existing spheres of influence. Over the course of the Cold War, US grand strategy, as put by George Kennan, was “*long-term, patient but firm and vigilant*

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<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Ronald Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West* (St. Martin’s Press, 2010), 94.

<sup>263</sup> Haukkala, “From Cooperative to Contested Europe?”

<sup>264</sup> Sergey Lavrov, “Russia’s Foreign Policy: Historical Background’,” *Russia in Global Affairs* 3 (2016).

*containment of Russia expansive tendencies.*"<sup>265</sup> NATO was the main instrument for the US to project its power and implement its policy of containment. The alliance was established with the purpose of uniting member countries for collective defense and preserving peace and stability, through Article V of NATO, which accepts an attack on Europe or North America as attack on all.<sup>266</sup> Consequently, NATO acted as a security cooperation among member states against the Soviet threat.

During the Cold War, protecting Western Europe from possible Russian aggression was one of the main rationales behind the formation of NATO.<sup>267</sup> The US's strategy in Europe was to prevent emergence of a continental hegemony that could threaten the security of the US by harnessing the resources embedded in the continent.<sup>268</sup> Keeping Western Europe within the orbit of the US not only defended the continent but also served to the security interests of the US, which rested upon preventing the Soviet Union from becoming a regional hegemon. Therefore, the US's commitment to European security became an important component of US grand strategy in order to protect its sovereignty in the face of Russian hostility. According to Flanagan, the importance of NATO for the preservation of peace and stability in Europe has remained even after the Cold War.<sup>269</sup> With this logic, President Clinton was set to enlarge NATO by including new members, particularly countries in the Central and Eastern Europe close to the Russian borders. Clinton's statement in 1994 that read, "*Now the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members but when and how*" decisively revealed that NATO's expansion would be the main

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<sup>265</sup> George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Aff.* 25 (1946): 575.

<sup>266</sup> NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty," *NATO*, April 4, 1949, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm).

<sup>267</sup> Karl Kaiser, "Reforming NATO," *Foreign Policy*, no. 103 (1996): 128–143.

<sup>268</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "The Future of America's Continental Commitment," in *No End To Alliance* (Springer, 1998), 221–242, [http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-26959-4\\_11](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-26959-4_11).

<sup>269</sup> Stephen J. Flanagan, "NATO and Central and Eastern Europe: From Liaison to Security Partnership," *Washington Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (1992): 141–151.

strategy for the US.<sup>270</sup> Six months later, Clinton continued by saying, “*Now what we have to do is to get the NATO partners together and to discuss what the next steps should be.*”<sup>271</sup> As Holbrooke puts it, this was the case because even though the Cold War has ended, US interests in the region have not yet disappeared. An unstable Europe still threatens the security of the US as it did during the Cold War.<sup>272</sup> Although the threat posed by European instability is not an existential one which could damage the sovereignty of the US, the likelihood of a war in the Europe still threatens the American security and economic interests regarded as connected to stability of the continent.<sup>273</sup>

The enlargement process started during the Cold War, and the first enlargement occurred in 1952 after joining of Greece and Turkey. This was followed by the inclusion of West Germany in 1955 and Spain in 1982. The enlargement continued with the entry of three countries; Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic in 1999. Seven new members, from Central and Eastern European countries; Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, joined the alliance in 2004. Finally, in 2009, Albania and Croatia joined the alliances as the last members.<sup>274</sup>

### **The US Interest in NATO Enlargement**

NATO is considered a mechanism for protect the interests of the US by bringing stability and peace into the former Soviet Union countries. This is expected to be carried out through the transformation of these countries into democratic

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<sup>270</sup> James M. Goldgeier, “The US Decision to Enlarge NATO: How, When, Why, and What Next?,” *The Brookings Review* 17, no. 3 (1999): 20.

<sup>271</sup> James M. Goldgeier, “NATO Expansion: The Anatomy of a Decision,” *Washington Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (1998): 96–97.

<sup>272</sup> Richard Holbrooke, “America, a European Power,” *Foreign Aff.* 74 (1995): 38.

<sup>273</sup> Van Evera, “Why Europe Matters, Why the Third World Doesn’t.”

<sup>274</sup> NATO, “Enlargement,” *NATO*, June 16, 2017, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49212.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49212.htm).

governments. Clinton's remarks at the North Atlantic Council in Brussels in 1994 reveal the US's conviction that the democratization of the East Europe was central to American security interests. He claims, "*If democracy in the East fails, then violence and disruption from the East will once again harm us and other democracies.*"<sup>275</sup> He further claims, "*the best strategy against this threat (instability) is to integrate the former Communist states into our fabric of liberal democracy, economic prosperity, and military cooperation.*"<sup>276</sup> In line with Clinton, the Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott also highlighted NATO's role for promotion of democratic principles abroad in 1995, especially in Europe. He held that NATO expansion would contribute to the spread of democracy in the Eastern European countries.<sup>277</sup> These statements reveals the motive behind the NATO enlargement that was to spread liberal democracies into former Soviet countries through the expansion of the alliance. Clinton's statement in 1996 regarding the future of NATO also tells a lot about the underpinnings of the US's Europe policy and enlargement strategy. In his speech, Clinton clearly outlined the importance of Europe for the security of the US by following words; "*Nowhere are our interests more engaged than in Europe. When Europe is at peace, our security is strengthened. When Europe prospers, so does America.*"<sup>278</sup> These words explain why the US has maintained an interest in Europe even after the Soviet threat disappeared following the end of the Cold War. The security of Europe has been identified with the security of the US. Furthermore, Clinton revealed that NATO would be the main instrument for the provision of security in Europe by saying "*The bedrock of our*

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<sup>275</sup> "William J. Clinton: Remarks to the North Atlantic Council in Brussels," *The American Presidency Project*, January 10, 1994, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=49710>.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Strobe Talbott, "Why NATO Should Grow," *The New York Review of Books*, August 10, 1995, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1995/08/10/why-nato-should-grow/>.

<sup>278</sup> "NATO Speech by President Clinton," *NATO*, October 22, 1996, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1996/s961022a.htm>.

*common security remains NATO.*<sup>279</sup> Stability and peace in Europe depend upon the flourishing of the “*democratic family*”, which in turn makes the US safer and stronger, according to Clinton.<sup>280</sup> After relating what NATO achieved during the Cold War, Clinton set similar objectives for the future of NATO. He held: “*I came to office convinced that NATO can do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West: prevent a return to local rivalries, strengthen democracy against future threats, and create the conditions for prosperity to flourish.*”<sup>281</sup>

NATO's expansion could help the stabilization of Eastern Europe in three ways. Firstly, by providing security to the former Soviet Union countries through NATO membership, it would reduce the prospects for Russian resurrection and aggression. Secondly, it would diminish the possibility of a conflict between NATO member states because member countries would respect the existing borders, mitigating offensive intentions and reducing the security dilemma. Thirdly, as claimed in the democratic peace theory, NATO enlargement would help the democratization of the region thereby decreasing the likelihood of conflict between NATO members as democracies rarely fight each other.<sup>282</sup> According to Epstein, NATO enlargement could contribute to the democratization of the former Soviet countries by playing a constitutive role and by promoting democratic values throughout countries. Accordingly, by encouraging military subordination to civil authorities, allowing parliamentary oversight over defense budget and promoting respect for human rights and civil authority, NATO could install democratic standards in the new member

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Dan Reiter, “Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy,” *International Security* 25, no. 4 (2001): 41–67.

countries.<sup>283</sup> In similar line, Reiter enumerates the mechanisms with which NATO could pave the way for democratization. Firstly, the prospect of NATO membership would be used as an incentive for candidate countries to make democratic reforms thereby pressing potential member countries to take the necessary steps under the inspection of NATO. Secondly, NATO can put pressures on the member countries regarding their compliance with the democratic values and punish them with the suspension or termination of membership if they fail to remain democratic or turn into an autocracy. Lastly, NATO membership would regulate civil military relations by reducing the risk of military interventions and coups, giving way to more democracy and civilian administrations through trans-governmental contacts between military personnel that adopt civilian norms and principles.<sup>284</sup> As articulated in Clinton's statements, the objective to transform former Soviet Union countries into democracies through NATO enlargement reflects the liberal internationalist agenda of the US. In his vital speech called *From Containment to Enlargement* at Johns Hopkins University in 1993, Anthony Lake, a fierce supporter of the NATO expansion, revealed the Clinton administration's strategy of spreading democracy abroad by saying, "*The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement, enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies.*"<sup>285</sup>

Consequently, this section shows that the motives behind NATO enlargement are very much in line with the premises of liberal internationalism. As articulated in the argumentation chapter, the US is not bereft of security concerns even after the end of the Cold War. With reference to the stated objectives of the NATO enlargement, it

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<sup>283</sup> Rachel A. Epstein, "NATO Enlargement and the Spread of Democracy: Evidence and Expectations," *Security Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 63–105.

<sup>284</sup> Reiter, "Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy."

<sup>285</sup> Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement."



may be argued that the security of the US is equated with the maintenance of the US-led order in Europe and consolidation of liberal democracies in the former Soviet Union countries. NATO serves as one of the main instrument for fulfilling these interests and protecting US security as it was during the Cold War.

### **NATO Enlargement and the Russia's Response**

Although NATO expansion was regarded as a way of providing stability and peace in Europe through the transformation of former Soviet countries into democracies, others worried that NATO expansion would provoke a Russian reaction by further alienating Russia from the West.<sup>286</sup> For instance, George Kennan, founder of the containment strategy, described NATO expansion as “...*the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold-war era.*”<sup>287</sup> He claims the NATO enlargement decision would provoke Russia by igniting nationalistic and anti-Western sentiments, hampering the tendency towards democratization in Russia and reviving the Cold War rivalry between Russia and the West.<sup>288</sup> In similar line, Gaddis also contends that NATO enlargement policy violates core strategic principles to provide peace and stability and is “*ill-conceived, ill-timed, and above all ill-suited to the realities of the post-Cold War.*”<sup>289</sup> Mandelbaum also criticizes NATO expansion on the grounds that it is irrelevant to the current problems faced in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe. It is also counterproductive and far from promoting democracy,

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<sup>286</sup> Andrew T. Wolff, “The Future of NATO Enlargement after the Ukraine Crisis,” *International Affairs* 91, no. 5 (2015): 1103–1121.

<sup>287</sup> George F. Kennan, “A Fateful Error,” *New York Times* 5, no. 02 (1997): 1997.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>289</sup> J. Caddis, “History, Grand Strategy and NATO Enlargement,” *Survival* 40, no. 1 (1998): 145.

if that was the aim.<sup>290</sup> The Russian reaction to the Enlargement process appears to be proving the critics right.

Russia did not welcome the expansion of NATO from the inception of the process. For instance, as a reaction to NATO's operations in Serbia in 1995, Russian president Boris Yeltsin said that this campaign is an indicator of what would happen if the NATO comes to the borders of Russia.<sup>291</sup> Russia raised similar concerns right after the Cold War ended and maintained its opposition to the expansion of NATO to the Eastern European countries.<sup>292</sup> Soviet deputy foreign minister Anatolii Adamishin (who served in 1990), claimed in 1997 that during the German Unification talks in 1990, the US had pledged Russia not to expand eastward. This has constituted one of the controversies between the US and Russia over NATO expansion. Then afterwards, Russia repeatedly claimed that the West has broken the promise it gave Russia by starting the enlargement process.<sup>293</sup> In 18 April 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin echoed a similar claim in his address to the Russian parliament by saying "*They have lied to us many times, made decisions behind our backs, placed us before an accomplished fact. This happened with NATO's expansion to the East, as well as the deployment of military infrastructure at our borders.*"<sup>294</sup> He further claimed that the centuries-long containment policy continues and NATO expansion is part of it. Contrary to what the Russian side claimed, the US side repeatedly refuted the

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<sup>290</sup> Michael Mandelbaum, "Preserving the New Peace: The Case against NATO Expansion," *Foreign Affairs*, 1995, 9–13.

<sup>291</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin," *Foreign Aff.* 93 (2014): 77.

<sup>292</sup> Michael Rühle, "NATO Enlargement and Russia: Myths and Realities," *NATO Review Magazine*, accessed August 10, 2017, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2014/Russia-Ukraine-Nato-crisis/Nato-enlargement-Russia/EN/index.htm>.

<sup>293</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "The Anatomy of a Misunderstanding," *The New York Times* 25 (1997).

<sup>294</sup> "Address by President of the Russian Federation," *President of Russia*, March 18, 2014, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603>.

allegations that their promise had been broken.<sup>295</sup> Although the debate still goes on with opposing assertions, the Russian objection was real at that time and continues to be as real as previously, according to Goldgeier.<sup>296</sup>

At present, Russia continues to voice its concerns about the NATO expansion. For instance, on 21 November 2016, Russian president Vladimir Putin reiterated that Russia would take counter measures in response to the NATO expansion towards Russian borders.<sup>297</sup> The same reaction was given several months earlier in May 2016 when the NATO's top commander, US General Curtis Scaparrotti, announced that NATO's presence would be strengthened in Eastern Europe against Russian aggression after deploying four new NATO battalions in Poland and the Baltic countries. The Russian response was that if this proposal actualizes, it would necessitate retaliatory measures.<sup>298</sup> Moscow's responses have followed a similar pattern since the beginning of the enlargement process. Therefore, over the course of the enlargement process, at every opportunity it found, Russia declared its objection to the NATO expansion.

The likelihood of Georgia and Ukraine's acceptance into the alliance further raised Russia's objections. In the 2008 NATO summit, NATO did not officially invite Georgia and Ukraine to join the alliance yet it confirmed that NATO appreciated both countries' aspirations to become members of NATO, declaring that they would eventually become member countries without specifying a precise date.<sup>299</sup> Although

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<sup>295</sup> Mark Kramer, "The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia," *The Washington Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2009): 39–61.

<sup>296</sup> Goldgeier, "NATO Expansion."

<sup>297</sup> "Putin Says Russia Will Respond to NATO Expansion: RIA," *Reuters*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-putin-nato-idUSKBN13G0ZN>.

<sup>298</sup> "Russia Vows Response to NATO Plan in Poland and Baltics," *Al Jazeera*, May 4, 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/05/russia-hit-nato-east-europe-expansion-plan-160504175351330.html>.

<sup>299</sup> Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault."

Georgia and Ukraine did not join the alliances due to France and Germany's opposition in order to avoid provoking Russia, this development was nevertheless taken seriously by Russia. The Russian deputy foreign minister Alexander Grushko claimed that, "*Georgia's and Ukraine's membership in the alliance is a huge strategic mistake which would have most serious consequences for pan-European security.*"<sup>300</sup> Additionally, Putin firmly declared that, "*The presence of a powerful military bloc on our borders, whose members are guided, in particular, by Article 5 of the Washington treaty will be seen by Russia as a direct threat to our country's security.*"<sup>301</sup> To show its resolve against the enlargement, Russia reiterated its opposition to the NATO expansion in its military doctrine released in 2010 by listing NATO enlargement among the primary threats to the country.<sup>302</sup>

Consequently, the Russian reaction to the NATO enlargement shows that Russia has viewed it as an imminent threat to the country. Art argues that taking former Soviet Union countries including Ukraine and the Baltic states into the alliance would alienate Russia because this would bring about the fear of encirclement and of exclusion from the Western camp.<sup>303</sup> In similar line, French further argues that NATO expansion entails great risks for European security. Considering the inclusion of Georgia into alliance, he claims Russia would perceive this step as escalation of the strategic encirclement.<sup>304</sup> By drawing attention to longer-term repercussions of the

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<sup>300</sup> "Russia Criticizes NATO Pledge to Ukraine, Georgia," *Reuters*, April 4, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-georgia-ukraine-russia-idUSL0315483920080404>.

<sup>301</sup> "NATO Expansion a 'Direct Threat to Russia,'" *Russia Today*, April 4, 2008, <https://www.rt.com/news/nato-expansion-a-direct-threat-to-russia-putin/>.

<sup>302</sup> "Text of Newly-Approved Russian Military Doctrine," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 5, 2010, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2010/02/05/text-of-newly-approved-russian-military-doctrine-pub-40266>.

<sup>303</sup> Robert J. Art, "Creating a Disaster: NATO's Open Door Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 113, no. 3 (1998): 383–403.

<sup>304</sup> Bill French, "A Bad Move: Further NATO Expansion," Text, *The National Interest*, (May 2, 2014), <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/bad-move-further-nato-expansion-10350>.

expansion, Russet and Stam concede that NATO enlargement instigates the return of the old fear of the West among Russians who see NATO enlargement as a direct threat to the country. If continued this way, it could pave the way for a Russia-China alliance against the US in the future.<sup>305</sup> The ensuing crisis in Georgia and Ukraine can be read through the lens of Russia's challenge to the US's attempt to encircle Russia through the expansion of NATO. In this line, Kavadzade argues that "*The Kremlin had several options how to respond to the NATO expansion: to use economic and financial means, trade sanctions, halting the delivery of oil and gas to applicant countries and member-states—heavily dependent on Russian natural resources, and as a last resort direct military intervention. In the cases of Ukraine and Georgia Russia has efficiently used all its possible resources to prevent these countries from joining the alliance.*"<sup>306</sup>

### **European Neighborhood Policy and Eastern Partnership Program**

In 2003, the EU launched the European Neighborhood Policy in order to control its relations with its new Eastern and Southern borders. The objectives were set in order to dissolve the dividing lines between the EU and its neighbors and to reinforce peace, stability and wealth across these countries. The founding principles of the European Neighborhood Policy are built upon democratic values, rule of law and respect for human rights.<sup>307</sup> Overall, the ENP is designed to resolve challenges expected to emerge as a result of the EU's 2004 enlargement that brought about new neighborhoods.<sup>308</sup> The ENP's concerned Eastern borders are composing Armenia,

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<sup>305</sup> Bruce Russett and Allan C. Stam, "Courting Disaster: An Expanded NATO vs. Russia and China," *Political Science Quarterly* 113, no. 3 (1998): 361–382.

<sup>306</sup> Amiran Kavadze and Tina Kavadze, "NATO Expansion to the East: Georgia's Way to NATO Membership, Perspectives and Challenges," *Journal of Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (2014): 21–27.

<sup>307</sup> "European Neighbourhood Policy," *European Commission*, n.d., /neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/overview\_en.

<sup>308</sup> Sevilay Kahraman, "The European Neighbourhood Policy: A Critical Assessment," *Ankara Review of European Studies* 5, no. 3 (2006), <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/16/6/463.pdf>.

Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Haukkala argues that ENP has served to two functions. First, to develop a new mechanism of EU enlargement. Second, but more importantly, to re-inject the moral authority of the EU and to apply conditionality to the non-member countries.<sup>309</sup> Therefore, the mentality behind the ENP was to force neighboring countries to carry out democratic and economic reforms and embrace European values, and in return gain increased economic and political interaction with the EU. Haukkala describes EU's Eastern neighborhood policy as an attempt to establish a normative hegemony over the regional countries and Russia by conditioning them to endorse the European values of democracy, rule of law and market economy.<sup>310</sup>

EU's Eastern Partnership Program, launched in 2009, is a revised version of ENP that covers Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova Armenia and Ukraine. The program is designed to include former Soviet Union countries with the objective of increasing political and economic cooperation between EU and these countries by enhancing relations on many issues including home affairs. The program also aimed at adding to economic interaction through free trade agreements between EU and Eastern countries.<sup>311</sup> In a 2013 joint declaration at the Eastern Partnership Summit the principles of the program are described as follows: *The Partnership is based on commitments to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good*

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<sup>309</sup> Hiski Haukkala, "Russian Reactions to the European Neighborhood Policy," *Problems of Post-Communism* 55, no. 5 (2008): 40–48.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>311</sup> "Eastern Partnership," *European External Action Service*, October 19, 2016, [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/419/Eastern Partnership](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/419/Eastern%20Partnership).

*governance*.<sup>312</sup> One integral part of the program is the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. This forum aims at establishing a platform for civil society organizations to monitor and contribute to the issues pertaining to human rights and democratization.<sup>313</sup> Therefore, the founding principles of the Eastern Partnership program are correlated with the objectives of the NATO enlargement. They are both devoted to spread of democratic values together with building market economies. In this sense, the pressure felt by the Russian side from the West has doubled, both by NATO and EU expansions, leaving Russia in a position cornered by the Western institutions. Consequently, Russia has not viewed NATO and EU enlargement as separate issues, but rather as a common threat to Russian existence.

Russia reacted to the Eastern partnership program by protesting that it will lead to an increase in the sphere of influence of the EU. Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said in March 2009: “*We are accused of having spheres of influence. But what is the Eastern Partnership, if not an attempt to extend the EU's sphere of influence, including to Belarus*”<sup>314</sup> Two months after Lavrov’s statement, the president Medvedev accused the EU of creating dividing lines between Russia and former Soviet Union countries. He said, “*We would not want the Eastern Partnership to turn into partnership against Russia.*”<sup>315</sup> Russia reiterated its objection to the European initiative before the EU Eastern Partnership’s summit in Latvia in May 2015, by

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<sup>312</sup> “Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit,” *Council of the European Union*, November 29, 2013, [http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu/euronest/webdav/site/mySite/shared/general\\_documents/eap\\_summit/2013-11-28-joint-declaration.pdf](http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu/euronest/webdav/site/mySite/shared/general_documents/eap_summit/2013-11-28-joint-declaration.pdf).

<sup>313</sup> “Civil Society Forum | EaP CSF,” accessed August 10, 2017, <http://eap-csf.eu/index.php/civil-society-forum/>.

<sup>314</sup> Valentina Pop, “EU Expanding Its ‘Sphere of Influence,’ Russia Says,” March 21, 2009, <https://euobserver.com/foreign/27827>.

<sup>315</sup> “Russia Alarmed over New EU Pact,” *BBC*, May 22, 2009, sec. News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8061042.stm>.

declaring that they view the program negatively and will provide principled reactions since it is anti-Russian.<sup>316</sup>

According to Zagorski, one of the concerns about the Eastern partnership program in the eyes of Russia is that the program aims at the disconnection of eastern countries from Russia by offering those countries association with the EU, visa liberation and new trade agreements. Secondly, offering free trade agreements also undermines the Russian policy of establishing free trade area with the Eastern European countries complicating its economic activities with its neighborhood.<sup>317</sup> In similar vein, Rozoff argues that the ultimate objective of the Eastern Partnership program is to move former Soviet Union countries away from Russia in the economic, military, and political areas, and integrate them into first EU structure and then NATO.<sup>318</sup> Consequently, Russia regards the Eastern Partnership Program as a zero-sum game in that if former Soviet countries go further with the EU integration, Russia will lose its influence in the region and its security and economic interests will be undermined. By putting emphasis on the partnership programs' dividing role, Baunov argues that the Eastern Partnership program does not make sense in terms of economic and political integration of the mentioned countries into the EU because the EU's current efforts concentrate on dividing former Soviet Union countries into two blocs, which are Russia and 'not Russia.' Therefore, he claims that the expectation of economic and political cooperation with the partner countries has not been met so far because the program is designed to fill the void in Eastern Europe by binding countries

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<sup>316</sup> "Moscow Wary Of EU Partnerships," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, April 24, 2015, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-eu-eastern-partnership/26976376.html>.

<sup>317</sup> Andrei Zagorski, "Eastern Partnership from the Russian Perspective," *Internationale Politik Und Gesellschaft* 3, no. 5 (2011): 41–61.

<sup>318</sup> Rick Rozoff, *Eastern Partnership: The West's Final Assault on The Former Soviet Union*, 2009, [http://www.gab-bn.com/IMG/pdf/Re5-\\_Eastern\\_Partnership\\_-\\_The\\_West\\_s\\_Final\\_Assault\\_On\\_The\\_Former\\_Soviet\\_Union.pdf](http://www.gab-bn.com/IMG/pdf/Re5-_Eastern_Partnership_-_The_West_s_Final_Assault_On_The_Former_Soviet_Union.pdf).



to the European Union rather than to each other.<sup>319</sup> These circumstances left partner countries in a situation in which they are sandwiched between choosing a side between the West and Russia.<sup>320</sup>

Consequently, this section reveals that the EU's Eastern Europe policy is predicated on getting former Soviet Union countries to converge on the values of liberal democracy and open market. This approach reflects the objective of the EU to establish itself as the moral or normative authority that puts conditions on Russia and neighbor countries in order to integrate them into the Western system. Therefore, Russia has regarded the EU's Eastern Europe strategy as a stepping-stone for former Soviet Union countries to become part of NATO and the Western bloc, which is another security concern for Russia.<sup>321</sup>

### **The Case: Annexation of Georgia**

The Russian military incursion into Georgia was Russia's first every military engagement in a sovereign country after the end of the Cold War.<sup>322</sup> Starting from this point, the reasons why Russia resorted to use of force in Georgia requires a closer examination. There are competing accounts for the causes of the war between Georgia and Russia. Before detailing these accounts, I will present the happenings of August 2008.

On the night of 7 August 2008, Georgian troops started to move into the border of breakaway region of South Ossetia. Georgian forces entered into the capital city and took control of it. However, on the morning of 8 August, Russia sent its armored

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<sup>319</sup> Alexander Baunov, "Not Against Russia: Why the Eastern Partnership Makes Increasingly Less Sense," *Carnegie Moscow Center*, June 1, 2015, <http://carnegie.ru/commentary/60256>.

<sup>320</sup> Korosteleva, Elena. "The Eastern Partnership initiative: A new opportunity for neighbors?" *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 27, no. 1 (2011): 1-21.

<sup>321</sup> McMahon, "Ukraine in Crisis."

<sup>322</sup> Karagiannis, "The 2008 Russian–Georgian War via the Lens of Offensive Realism."

vehicles together with airplanes into South Ossetia. The clashes continued two days and ended with the defeat of Georgian troops forcing them to withdraw completely from South Ossetia. On the next day, Russia continued moving its military into Georgian territory invading several cities and bombing strategic positions.<sup>323</sup> On August 15-16, with the initiative of French President Sarkozy, Russia and Georgia agreed on a peace plan to halt the aggression. The agreed plan ruled that both sides end hostilities and pull their troops back to the pre-conflict positions, also called for the international community to assume greater role in peace building and keeping process. Following the end of the War, Russia declared that it recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent regions due to humanitarian reasons. The follow-up agreement in September 2008 resulted in the deployment of around 200 EU observers to the conflict zone and Russia's withdrawal of its troops from the regions next to South Ossetia and Abkhazia.<sup>324</sup> During the war, more than 400 Georgians including civilians, 365 South Ossetians including civilians and 67 Russians were killed. Both side accused the other of starting the war.<sup>325</sup> Georgians claimed that the military involvement was carried out in response to the South Ossetia's shelling of Georgia whereas Russia claimed that they involved in order to protect the lives of South Ossetian and Russian citizens from the Georgian incursion.<sup>326</sup>

As to the causes of the war between Georgia and Russia, some pointed out the simmering tensions between two countries over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In 1990,

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<sup>323</sup> Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008: Context and Implications for US Interests" (Library of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service, 2009), <http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA496306>.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> "2008 Georgia Russia Conflict Fast Facts," *CNN*, March 26, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/13/world/europe/2008-georgia-russia-conflict/index.html>.

<sup>326</sup> George Friedman, "The Russo-Georgian War and the Balance of Power," *Stratfor Global Intelligence*, 12th August, 2008, <http://blog.cafewall.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/09/rus-v-geo-analysis.pdf>.

South Ossetia declared its independence from the Tbilisi government. This was followed by two years of conflict between Tbilisi and South Ossetia. Georgia accused Russia of supporting secessionists and giving supplies to South Ossetia during this conflict. In 1992, Russia declared that if Georgia continues to kill South Ossetians, they can consider Joining Russian Federation. The same year, Georgia and Russia agreed on a peace plan over south Ossetia. According to the agreement, a Joint Peacekeeping Forces, composed of Russia, Georgia and South Ossetia, would be deployed to help provision of the peace and end the conflict.<sup>327</sup> Although the conflict has been mitigated as a result of the peacekeeping mission, the tension in South Ossetian towns continued between Georgians and South Ossetians. Moreover, Georgia never viewed Russia as honest broker and called on international community to commission impartial peacekeepers. With this background, when Sahashvili came to power in 2004, he promised to restore Georgia's territorial unity to that prior to the eruption of war, implying that the breakaway regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia would be taken back into Georgia. This drawn criticism from Russia and the conflict in South Ossetia increased with the clashes between Georgians and South Ossetians.<sup>328</sup> Therefore, according to this account, the long-lasting disagreement over the control of two separatist regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, between Georgia and Russia caused the eruption of the war. The last blow came as South Ossetians and Georgians intensified clashes and military exchanges prior to August 2008.

Although the ongoing tension in the region was an important factor in terms of transforming the frozen tension into a war, it was not a new incident. Even the

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<sup>327</sup> Greg Jentzsch, "What Are the Main Causes of Conflict in South Ossetia and How Can They Best Be Addressed to Promote Lasting Peace," *The BSIS Journal of International Studies* 6 (2009): 1–21.

<sup>328</sup> Roy Allison, "Russia Resurgent? Moscow's Campaign to 'Coerce Georgia to Peace,'" *International Affairs* 84, no. 6 (2008): 1145–1171.

exchange of shelling between South Ossetians and Georgian forces were routine for years.<sup>329</sup> Therefore, others claim that the Georgian War of 2008 was associated not only with the disagreement between Georgia and Russia but also with the tension between Russia and the West. In this line, Rumer and Stent argues that the War between Georgia and Russia in 2008 was the consequence of the 17 years of tension between Russia and the West.<sup>330</sup> Medvedev's statement over the US's plan to include Georgia into the Alliance reveals Russia's motive behind the military incursion into Georgia. Medvedev claimed that if Russia did not intervene into Georgia, it would become a member of NATO now. He continued "*And a number of countries which (NATO) tried to deliberately drag into the alliance, would have most likely already been part of it now.*"<sup>331</sup> From this point of view, Russian military intervention into Georgia in 2008 was a clear sign of Russian resolve in stopping the Western activities in Eastern Europe.

Georgia's ambition to join NATO goes back to 1994 when the country signed NATO's Partnership and Peace program. Following this, Georgia became the first country to sign Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO in 2004, which was designed to increase the cooperation mechanism through domestic reforms and other necessary measures for full candidacy.<sup>332</sup> In 2005, Georgia passed a security concept that confirmed adaptation of the reforms necessitated by the IPAP. Later, in February 2008, Georgian president Saakashvili formally requested to join the Alliance. Although in the next summit Georgia was not invited to the Alliance, it has given

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<sup>329</sup> Friedman, "The Russo-Georgian War and the Balance of Power."

<sup>330</sup> Rumer and Stent, "Russia and the West."

<sup>331</sup> Denis Dyomkin, "Russia Says Georgia War Stopped NATO Expansion," *Reuters*, November 21, 2011, sec. World News, <http://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-60645720111121>.

<sup>332</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs)," *NATO*, June 9, 2017, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49290.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49290.htm).

promise that it will eventually become a member country.<sup>333</sup> According to Asmus, Russia may have hoped to gain two things from the military incursion into Georgia: to punish Georgian leader Saakashvili and to give a strong message to other former Soviet Union countries showing what the Russian reaction would be if they continued to press for joining western institutions, particularly NATO. Asmus further argues *"Moscow had warned Georgia many times that its desire to "go West" would have consequences and that any cooperation on resolving the separatist conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia would depend on Tbilisi's deference to Russian demands."*<sup>334</sup> However, according to Asmus, Georgia refused to consider the concerns of Russia and continued its rapprochement with the West. Therefore, he argues that the war in Georgia was in response to NATO's promise to eventually accept Georgia as a member of the alliance. Consequently, Russia did not target only Georgia but also NATO, the US and the West. Russia's objective was to prevent Georgia and other countries like Georgia from getting too close to the West. Russia's response was thus designed not only to teach Georgia but the West a lesson as well.<sup>335</sup> In similar understanding, Bix argues that the Georgian War of 2008 was the result of the US's NATO enlargement policies. He claims that the US pushed NATO forward till the Russian border and supported Georgia through financial and military aid and training of Georgian troops in an attempt to make the US sole super power and deter emergence of regional dominants. Russia reacted strongly to this policy.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Jim Nichol, "Georgia [Republic] and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications" (Library of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service, 2009), <http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA500414>.

<sup>334</sup> Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World*, 1.

<sup>335</sup> Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World*.

<sup>336</sup> Bix, "The Russo-Georgia War and the Challenge to American Global Dominance."

Consequently, although Russia and Georgia had quarreled over the control of breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia since 1992, the military involvement into the issue can be read as a Russian reaction to the US's policy of consolidating its grip on power through the NATO enlargement process. From this perspective, Russia intervened into the issue in order to prevent Georgia from joining the alliances. This step can be considered as Russia's wedging strategy designed to impede the formation of a more powerful alliance next to its borders.

### **The Case: Ukraine Crisis**

Ukraine's 2004 presidential elections were a turning point for igniting the first spark of turmoil in the country. At that time, presidential election candidate Yanukovich became the target of mass protests after he won the elections against the chief opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko. Yushchenko's supporters objected to the election results alleging that there had been fraud. People took to the streets in mass protests and named their demonstrations as Orange Revolution. As a result of the increased tension in Ukraine, the elections were renewed and this time, Yushchenko was proclaimed winner.<sup>337</sup> The election of pro-western Yushchenko confirmed that the influence of the West would continue in Ukraine leading Russians to think that the West orchestrated the protests.<sup>338</sup> Ten years later, in 2014, Yanukovich again, this time as the president, was at the center of a domestic crisis. Yanukovich's government was toppled down in February 2014. What caused his imminent collapse were the protests and unrest against his government. The main issue that sparked the eruption of protests was President Yanukovich's suspension of signing a historical deal with the EU which had been long awaited by the pro-western Ukrainian people. In

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<sup>337</sup> Adrian Karatnycky, "Ukraine's Orange Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, 2005, 35–52.

<sup>338</sup> William Schneider, "Ukraine's' Orange Revolution'," *The Atlantic*, 2004.

November 2013, the government objected to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union in a last-minute decision.<sup>339</sup> This step led to widespread popular protests against the government. The government's response was to crack down on protesters, which further increased their frustration.

On 18 February 2014, over 100 people were killed in Maidan after police's attempt to remove the protesters.<sup>340</sup> The parliament declared a resolution that ordered the withdrawal of police forces from the capital and forbade the police from using firearms. This led to the downfall of Yanukovich, causing him to flee to the eastern part of the country with some other parliamentarians.<sup>341</sup> Following his collapse, the elections for a new government had been scheduled for May 25, yet Russia declared the unfolding events against the Yanukovich government as a coup and marched its troops to Crimea on March 25. Shortly after, the protests in Ukraine turned into an armed conflict, and particularly in eastern Ukraine armed men captured government offices.<sup>342</sup>

Several factors are highlighted in the literature as to the reason of the Ukraine Crisis.<sup>343</sup> The first line of arguments blamed the crisis on Russia by describing its behaviors in neo-imperialist and revisionist terms. According to this account, the Ukraine crisis is the outcome of Russia being a revisionist and aggressive state that attempted to extend its sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union countries while

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<sup>339</sup> "Ukraine Protests after Yanukovich EU Deal Rejection," *BBC News*, November 30, 2013, sec. Europe, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563>.

<sup>340</sup> Olga Rudenko and Jennifer Collins, "As Many as 100 Killed in New Ukraine Clashes," *USA Today*, February 20, 2014, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/02/20/ukraine-protests-truce-eu-leaders/5634235/>.

<sup>341</sup> Nick Thompson, "Ukraine's War: Everything to Know about How We Got Here," *CNN*, February 3, 2017, <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/02/10/europe/ukraine-war-how-we-got-here/>.

<sup>342</sup> Steven Woehrel, "Ukraine: Current Issues and US Policy," *Current Politics and Economics of Russia, Eastern and Central Europe* 29, no. 2 (2014): 305.

<sup>343</sup> Elias Götz, "Russia, the West, and the Ukraine Crisis: Three Contending Perspectives," *Contemporary Politics* 22, no. 3 (2016): 249–266.

aiming at reviving its old glory days and resurrecting the Russian empire once again by wrecking the European order. Taking control of Ukraine is part of this imperial ambition of re-establishing a Russian Empire.<sup>344</sup> The proponents of this argument go further, claiming that the ultimate objective of Russia is to countervail the US-led world order, and establish itself as the leader of the anti-Western world.<sup>345</sup> In similar line, Speck further claims that what Russia seeks to achieve goes far beyond the sphere of influence of politics and is rather a search for means to have sphere of domination that would render Russia one of the leaders of the world. Having control of Ukraine would make Russia one step closer to this leadership role, according to Speck.<sup>346</sup> Blank also argues that Russia's objectives are beyond the territorial expansion in the Ukrainian case where Russia tries to reorganize European security in a way which resembles the cold war bipolarity by becoming the counterweight of the US in Europe.<sup>347</sup>

Contrary to this line of thought, others argue that Russia's actions were defensive and reactionary while the increasing influence of the West on its borders has been challenging Russia for a long while.<sup>348</sup> For Charap and Troitskiy, the attempts of NATO enlargement accompanied with EU's particular programs towards to eastern European countries ignited fear of being pressured by the West, in the eyes of Moscow.<sup>349</sup> What Russia wants from Washington, the argument goes, is to halt the expansion of NATO and to end supporting anti-Russian governments in its

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<sup>344</sup> Aurel Braun, "Tougher Sanctions Now: Putin's Delusional Quest for Empire," *World Affairs* 177, no. 2 (2014): 34–42.

<sup>345</sup> Masha Gessen, "Russia Is Remaking Itself as the New Leader of the Anti-Western World," *Washington Post*, 2014.

<sup>346</sup> Ulrich Speck, "Russia's Challenge to the International Order," *Carnegie Europe*, 2016.

<sup>347</sup> Stephen Blank, "Russia's Vladimir Putin Clearly Wants to Dominate All of Europe," *Washington Post* 28 (2014).

<sup>348</sup> Götz, "Russia, the West, and the Ukraine Crisis."

<sup>349</sup> Charap, Samuel, and Mikhail Troitskiy. "Russia, the West and the integration dilemma." *Survival* 55, no. 6 (2013): 49-62.



neighborhood and non-governmental organizations that fuel anti-Russian sentiments.<sup>350</sup> In similar vein, Mearsheimer concedes that the West must hold responsibility for the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis and describes the West's policies concerning the Eastern Europe as faulty. He goes further and claims that the *taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement*.<sup>351</sup> In addition to expanding NATO onto the doorsteps of Russia, Mearsheimer says the EU's expansion into the Eastern European countries and the West's support for the prodemocracy movements have constituted the basis for the Russian reaction in Ukraine.<sup>352</sup> Putting critical developments into context provides insights into why Russia stepped into the Ukraine crisis. Russia's objection to Ukraine's signing of Eastern Partnership program is especially telling. Additionally, according to Stegnyy, the Georgian War of 2008 was a clear signal sent by Russia to the West with regard to its policies towards Eastern Europe. However, by viewing Russian aggression in Georgia from different perspective, the EU set to implement Eastern Partnership program one year later by further increasing its efforts in Eastern Ukraine.<sup>353</sup> The Eastern Partnership Program included the transformation of the Ukrainian people towards the West with an increasing acknowledgment of the liberal values of democracy, rule of law and human rights by the Ukrainians. It was part of a wider European strategy of integrating Ukraine into the Western values.<sup>354</sup> This initiative has been only one component of a longer process of integration between Ukraine and the EU. In 1998, the Ukraine has embarked upon processes with some fluctuations that would ensure the integration of the country into Europe after the

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<sup>350</sup> Andrei Shleifer and Daniel Treisman, "Why Moscow Says No: A Question of Russian Interests, Not Psychology," *Foreign Affairs*, 2011, 122–138.

<sup>351</sup> Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," 77.

<sup>352</sup> Michael McFaul, Stephen Sestanovich, and John J. Mearsheimer, "Faulty Powers: Who Started the Ukraine Crisis," *Foreign Aff.* 93 (2014): 167.

<sup>353</sup> Oleksandr Stegnyy, "Ukraine and the Eastern Partnership: 'Lost in Translation'?", *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 27, no. 1 (2011): 50–72.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*

signing of Strategy for Ukraine's Integration into the EU. This followed by the implementation of Partnership and Co-operation agreement in the same year. When came to 2005, EU-Ukraine Action Plan was signed as part of the European Neighborhood Policy designed to govern relations with the Union. In 2009, the Eastern Partnership program was put into effect.<sup>355</sup> In addition to the political support given to the Ukrainian governments via bilateral agreements, the economic assistance provided by the EU has exceed 3.5 billion dollars since 1991<sup>356</sup> and the EU promised to give around €12.8 billion support package for the reforms for the coming years.<sup>357</sup>

As a response to the increasing presence of the EU in the post-Soviet countries, Russia formed Eurasian Customs Union in 2010 together with Belarus and Kazakhstan<sup>358</sup> and turned it into Eurasian Economic Union in 2015. Ukraine was an important and strategic country for the success of the Russia's Eurasian economic community project and Russia insisted that Ukraine join Customs Union.<sup>359</sup> Adomeit lists several factors as to why Ukraine is a significant country for the EU and Russia. Ukraine is the second largest country (after Russia) in Europe with regard to territorial size. It is strategic because it is located adjacent to the Black Sea shores and shares a border with several EU countries. Ukraine is also a transit country for Russian gas to reach Europe. Additionally, there are large numbers of Russian minorities especially in the Eastern Ukraine and Crimea where they account for 17 percent of entire

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<sup>355</sup> "Chronology of Bilateral Relations," *Delegation of European Union to Ukraine*, October 14, 2016, [http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/ukraine/eu\\_ukraine/chronology/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/ukraine/eu_ukraine/chronology/index_en.htm).

<sup>356</sup> "Ukraine and the EU," *European External Action Service*, May 16, 2016, [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine\\_en/1937/Ukraine and the EU](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine_en/1937/Ukraine%20and%20the%20EU).

<sup>357</sup> "EU-Ukraine Relations, Factsheet," *European External Action Service*, July 10, 2017, [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/4081/EU-Ukraine relations, factsheet](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/4081/EU-Ukraine%20relations,%20factsheet).

<sup>358</sup> Andrew Kramer, "Russia and 2 Neighbors Form Economic Union," *The New York Times* 5 (2010).

<sup>359</sup> Anders Aslund, "Ukraine's Choice: European Association Agreement or Eurasian Union?," *Policy Brief*, no. 13–26 (2013), <http://www.petersoninstitute.org/publications/pb/pb13-22.pdf>.

population.<sup>360</sup> Therefore, Russia's steps to establish an Eurasian Union and to include Ukraine into Eurasian Customs Union can be considered as a reaction to the EU's project of gathering former Soviet Union countries under the EU-centered order in Europe. Additionally, according to Dragneva and Wolczuk, this was also a repercussion of the EU's Russia policy especially European Neighborhood policy.<sup>361</sup> Russia sought to use the Eurasian Economic Union as a carrot to hold together Eastern European countries by showing what they would gain if they chose Russia. According to Haukkala, just like the EEU, in order to avert Ukraine from signing the Association Agreement in Vilnius summit in 2013, Russia used stick and carrot mechanisms against Ukraine. Russia first implemented economic sanctions on Ukrainian products by showing the likely negative consequences of it choosing Europe. Later, Russia used economic inducements in order to pull Ukraine onto its side by offering about 17 billion dollars economic concessions and discounts.<sup>362</sup> These attempts were direct indicators of Russia's willingness to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence and prevent Ukraine from signing an association agreement with the EU. Russia's endeavor to prevent Ukraine from joining EU Customs Union can be considered as a Russian wedge strategy. It includes both reward wedging and coercive wedging strategies in that both inducement and coercion were employed in order to impede Ukraine from allying with the EU.

In addition to the EU's initiatives and political and economic support, the US policy of supporting regime change in Ukraine further exacerbated the situation for Russia. According to Trenin, the US, which was supporting pro-western groups in

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<sup>360</sup> Ebert and Maurer, "Contested Cyberspace and Rising Powers."

<sup>361</sup> Rilka Dragneva and Kataryna Wolczuk, "Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?," 2012, [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2125913](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2125913).

<sup>362</sup> Haukkala, "From Cooperative to Contested Europe?"

Ukraine for a long while, openly encouraged the pro-western leaders' grip on power.<sup>363</sup> While Russia denounced the newly established government after the fall of Yanukovich, the US publicly showed its support to the Kiev government by sending high level officials including Vice president, secretary of state and chief of intelligence to pay visits.<sup>364</sup> The statement of US top official to EU, Victoria Nuland that the US spent about \$5 billion to promote democracy since the end of the Cold War<sup>365</sup> was also viewed as a confession of the US's role in the eruption of the Ukraine Crisis. Moreover, Obama's acknowledgment of the US role in a deal brokered by the US to transition of power in Ukraine<sup>366</sup> further strengthened the belief in Russia that the US is behind the Ukraine Crisis.<sup>367</sup> In addition to the direct US support to the Ukrainian governments, the NATO enlargement process was another issue that exacerbated the Russian fear of being encircled by the Western order. Particularly, Ukraine's bid for joining NATO for a long while and its ambition to be formally invited into alliance in 2008 increased Russian worries. In this respect, Russian President Vladimir Putin's statement in a TV interview in April 2014 reveals the Russian security concerns during the Ukraine Crisis. Putin said that the military decision to seize Crimea was partially triggered by the NATO expansion and by the proposed plan to deploy NATO defense missiles near to Russian borders. He voiced the concern that if Ukraine was taken into the alliance, NATO ships would be docked to Sevastopol which was considered as a strategic port city by Putin. He said that if Ukraine joined NATO, the US would deploy their troops

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<sup>363</sup> Dmitri Trenin, *The Ukraine Crisis and the Resumption of Great-Power Rivalry*, accessed August 10, 2017, [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/ukraine\\_great\\_power\\_rivalry2014.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/ukraine_great_power_rivalry2014.pdf).

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Mick Krever, "EXCLUSIVE: Russia Can't Be 'Firefighter and Arsonist' in Ukraine, Says U.S.," April 21, 2014, <http://amanpour.blogs.cnn.com/2014/04/21/exclusive-russia-cant-be-firefighter-and-arsonist-in-ukraine-says-u-s/>.

<sup>366</sup> Interview with President Barack Obama, interview by Fareed Zakaria, CNN, February 1, 2015, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1502/01/fzgps.01.html>.

<sup>367</sup> "Brokering Power: US Role in Ukraine Coup Hard to Overlook," *Russia Today*, February 19, 2015, <https://www.rt.com/news/233439-us-meddling-ukraine-crisis/>.

to Sevastopol and ultimately block Russian access to the Black Sea by leaving Russia with a small coastline. This would completely oust Russia from the Black Sea region according to Putin.<sup>368</sup>

Consequently, as Trenin puts it, what Ukraine did in February 2014 was to move too close to the West and this caused the Ukraine War and annexation of Crimea. Russia's main objective was to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO and the European integration project.<sup>369</sup> Therefore, it can be argued that Russian motivation behind its support for the armed groups in Eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea was wedging strategies designed to dissuade Ukraine from joining western alliances.

### **Conclusion: US Liberal Hegemony and Russian Wedging Strategy**

Although several explanations could possibly account for the Georgian War of 2008 and Ukrainian Crisis of 2014, this study provides an account based on structural realist assumptions. Therefore, starting from these assumptions, the fundamental reasons leading to both crises lie in the US's ambition of establishing liberal hegemony in Eastern Europe. Through NATO enlargement process and EU's European Neighborhood Policy and European Partnership Program, the US aimed at integrating former Soviet Union countries into the liberal world order.

The structural realist perspective holds that anarchic international structure renders security scarce and the best way to ensure security is to increase relative power and if possible attain hegemony. Even attaining hegemony does not relax the security concerns because "*security is not permanent*"<sup>370</sup> forcing the superior power to maintain its preeminence by expanding its influence farther and by accumulating more power.

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<sup>368</sup> "NATO Expansion a 'Direct Threat to Russia.'"

<sup>369</sup> Trenin, *The Ukraine Crisis and the Resumption of Great-Power Rivalry*.

<sup>370</sup> Christopher Layne, "US Hegemony and the Perpetuation of NATO," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 23, no. 3 (2000): 59–91.

Therefore, from this point of view, the expansion of US interests eastward towards Russia through NATO enlargement and EU programs stem from the fact that the US has been seeking to enhance its own security and protect its own interests. Additionally, in international relations, overwhelming power compels others to balance against it since it poses a potential threat, be it imminent or distant. When states are encountered with unbalanced power they try to re-balance the distribution of power. As Waltz puts it “*As nature abhors a vacuum, so international politics abhors unbalanced power.*”<sup>371</sup> Russian respond to the growing influence of the West, the US and EU, on its border is, therefore, a balancing act against the unchecked power of the hegemon. In the case of Russian incursion into Georgia, it can be argued that Russia employed coercive wedging strategy in order to deter Georgia from joining NATO. In the case of the Ukrainian crisis, Russia first employed reward-wedging strategy by offering economic inducements, yet, when it failed, Russia enacted a coercive wedging strategy by moving troops into Crimea. Consequently, both cases support the structural realist assumptions and give sufficient clues to consider Russian acts in these cases as wedging strategy.

As to the success of the Russia’s wedging strategy in keeping Ukraine and Georgia outside of the Western bloc, NATO and EU, it could be maintained that the wedging strategy has shown signs of success with regard to preventing both countries from joining NATO alliance. The Ukraine Crisis has not terminated the Ukraine ambition of becoming a member state, rather it has increased the need for a security umbrella in the case of a repeated Russian aggression. In this sense, in July 2017, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko reiterated their commitment to becoming a

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<sup>371</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, “NATO Expansion: A Realist’s View,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 21, no. 2 (2000): 23–38.

NATO member by saying the country is determined to carry out political, military and economic reforms that are necessary to apply for the formal membership action plan until 2020.<sup>372</sup> Although Ukrainian administration has repeatedly revealed their ambition of becoming a member state, the membership conditionality requires Ukraine to resolve all international crises including the one with Russia, therefore, hardening the prospect for membership due to the tractable nature of the problem.<sup>373</sup> Considering the fact that Montenegro has become a member of NATO without meeting the requirements of membership conditionality including adopting domestic reforms and resolving international crisis,<sup>374</sup> it can be claimed that Ukraine's long-awaited membership might be a result of NATO's reluctance and hesitance due to the possible Russian response. From this perspective, it can be argued that the wedging strategy has led NATO to abandon what has been given to Ukraine in 2008 as a promise to eventually become a member state. The situation for Georgia is not different from Ukraine. Georgian administration has shown their dedication to become a member state by implementing reforms required by NATO particularly in the areas of modernization of defense forces, civilian control over military and fighting with corruption.<sup>375</sup> Georgia also contributed to the NATO missions in several occasions, particularly in Afghanistan and Kosovo.<sup>376</sup> Yet, contrary to the alliance's ostensibly

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<sup>372</sup> Roland Oliphant, "Ukraine to 'Seek Nato Membership' as Alliance Sends Kiev Equipment to Fight Cyber Attacks," *The Telegraph*, July 10, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/07/10/ukraine-seek-nato-membership-alliance-sends-kiev-equipment-fight/>.

<sup>373</sup> Pavel Polityuk and Natalia Zinets, "Pledging Reforms by 2020, Ukraine Seeks Route into NATO," *Reuters*, July 10, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-nato/pledging-reforms-by-2020-ukraine-seeks-roadmap-to-nato-membership-idUSKBN19V12V>.

<sup>374</sup> Associated Press, "Montenegro Ratifies Nato Membership in Historic Shift to Western Alliance," *The Guardian*, April 28, 2017, sec. World news, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/28/montenegro-ratifies-nato-membership-in-historic-shift-to-western-alliance>.

<sup>375</sup> Judy Dempsey, "NATO Membership for Montenegro but Not for Georgia," *Carnegie Europe*, December 7, 2015, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/62197>.

<sup>376</sup> Philip Seib, "The Case for Georgia Joining NATO," *Huffington Post*, April 8, 2016, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/philip-seib/the-case-for-georgia-join\\_b\\_9644762.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/philip-seib/the-case-for-georgia-join_b_9644762.html).

increased support for the Georgia's membership, with a reframed partnership programs called "more NATO in Georgia and more Georgia in NATO", the membership process has not vitalized yet.<sup>377</sup>

Although Russia's wedging strategy succeeded hindering Ukraine and Georgia from joining NATO alliance, it failed producing desired outcomes when it came to both countries' rapprochement with the EU. Considering the ensuing developments in the aftermath of the Georgian War and the Ukraine Crisis, it can be argued that both Ukraine and Georgia have taken significant steps towards to the EU by signing Association Agreements and granting visa free travel across the European Union. Georgia and Ukraine granted visa free travel in March 2017 and June 2017 respectively despite overwhelming Russian objection. These long-awaited deals have further moved both countries closer towards the EU by enabling not only free travel of people but also allowing the enjoyment of EU values through societal interaction.<sup>378</sup> In addition to this, Association Agreement aiming political and economic integration has come into force in July 2016 for Georgia<sup>379</sup> and July 2017 for Ukraine<sup>380</sup>. Considering the importance of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) for removing import duties and other trade restrictions, it can be argued that both countries will enhance their economic integration into the EU. Consequently, relying on the assessment of short term developments, it can be claimed that Russia's wedging

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<sup>377</sup> Caucasus Cable, "Georgia after Montenegro's NATO Accession," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, July 11, 2017, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/07/georgia-montenegros-nato-accession/>.

<sup>378</sup> Emily Tamkin, "Georgia and Ukraine Come Closer to 'European Family' With Visa-Free EU Travel," *Foreign Policy*, December 8, 2016, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/12/08/georgia-and-ukraine-come-closer-to-european-family-with-visa-free-eu-travel/>.

<sup>379</sup> "EU-Georgia Association Agreement Fully Enters into Force," *European Commission*, July 1, 2016, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-2369\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2369_en.htm).

<sup>380</sup> "A Bittersweet Victory: Ukraine's Association Agreement with the EU," July 10, 2017, <http://neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/2404-a-bittersweet-victory-ukraine-s-association-agreement-with-the-eu>.



strategy has worked for preventing Ukraine and Georgia from becoming NATO members, yet has not affected their move towards to the EU.

### **The Case: China's Air Defense Identification Zone**

This section examines China's Air Defense Identification Zone decision of 2013 with a specific focus on the US's East Asia Policy and its alliance with Japan. After detailing the reasoning behind the US's China policy, this section continues with the discussion of the China's resentment towards US supremacy in the region. Following this, the details of the ongoing disputes between China and Japan over East China Sea islands will be presented. Additionally, this section ends with an analysis of China's declaration of the Air Defense Identification Zone as a wedging strategy against the hegemony.

### **US's East Asia Policy**

According to Ikenberry, the US's East Asian strategy in the post-Cold War period has been built upon the liberal hegemonic order established through bilateral security alliances with Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Southern countries and a complex system of economic interdependencies that allow East Asian countries to export their products to America while America provides security for them. Therefore, in exchange for the economic and security arrangements, the US maintains its leadership role by gaining geopolitical presence in East Asia.<sup>381</sup> The US – Japan alliance constitutes the basis of the security policies while Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and trans-pacific trade agreements function as the anchor of the economic system. Therefore, security and economic alliances have gone hand in hand in order

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<sup>381</sup> G. John Ikenberry, "American Hegemony and East Asian Order," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 58, no. 3 (2004): 353–367.

to provide stability in the region under the leadership the US.<sup>382</sup> Embracing the idea that the US pursues liberal hegemony in East Asia, Layne argues that the US's China strategy consists of both engagement and containment strategies designed to push China to accept the US's geopolitical and ideological hegemony.<sup>383</sup> Layne claims that in accordance with liberal hegemony grand strategy, the US views China's rise as a significant threat to the US's security and economic interests due to China's political and economic system challenging the liberal ideology of the US. Moreover, the emergence of China as a regional hegemon would also hinder the US's activities in East Asia, particularly the US's ideological appeal for the regional countries.<sup>384</sup> Additionally, the US seeks to integrate China into the US-based liberal world order as a responsible member of international community. Yet, this responsibility requires China to make domestic and economic reforms to become a liberal country compatible with the US-led order. Therefore, on several occasions, the US has declared its support for Chinese transformation into market economy and liberal democracy. With regard to the Chinese military development and modernization, Layne argues, the US holds any Chinese attempt designed to increase its hard power capabilities as directed against the US. This is the case because the US believes that no state poses a threat to China in the region, therefore, the only reason for China to build up its military might must be to confront the US. Therefore, the US simultaneously implements an engagement and containment strategy towards China, according to Layne.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> Ibid.

<sup>383</sup> Layne, "China's Challenge to US Hegemony."

<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

The Japan-US alliance is of critical importance in terms of containing China and enabling the US leading role in regional security issues.<sup>386</sup> Since the aftermath of WWII, the US-Japan alliance has remained a strong and resilient security cooperation in East Asia. The two countries first designed their security agreement by signing Mutual Security Pact in 1952. This pact later revised in 1960 with the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. This treaty warrants the US to have military bases in Japan and in return the US guarantees the defense of Japan in the case of an attack.<sup>387</sup> At present, around 50,000 American troops are located in Japan, half of them are found in Okinawa.<sup>388</sup> In 2015, Japan and the US revised their defense cooperation agreement for the first time since 1997. The revised agreement allows Japan to militarily engage other countries to defend its allies and also ensures further integration of both countries' military operations and cooperation.<sup>389</sup> Consequently, the US, through its security and economic alliances, seeks to establish itself as the leadership of East Asia and to prevent China from attaining regional hegemony, and Japan stands as the primary ally of the US in pursuing these interests.

### **China's Challenge**

According to Lieberthal and Jisi, since the end of the Cold War, China's strategy has been to play a low-profile role in its relations with the US. This strategy has built upon abstaining from confrontation with the US, improving cooperation,

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<sup>386</sup> Beina Xu, "The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance," *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 1, 2014, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-japan-security-alliance>.

<sup>387</sup> John Allen and Benjamin Sugg, "The US-Japan Alliance," *Brookings Institute*, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Paper-2v2.pdf>.

<sup>388</sup> Chanlett-Avery Emma and E. Rinehart Ian, "US-Japan Alliance," *Washington: Congressional Research Service*, 2011.

<sup>389</sup> "China Voice: U.S. Reanimates the Ghosts of Japan's Ugly Past," *Xinhuanet*, accessed August 10, 2017, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-04/30/c\\_134200576.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-04/30/c_134200576.htm).

reducing disagreements, and establishing a mutual trust mechanism.<sup>390</sup> Yet, Lieberthal and Jisi further argues that Chinese leaders believe that the US seeks to prevent China from realizing its potential to become a great power and the US strategy of democracy promotion is designed to establish a hegemony across the world. Therefore, the US has utilized concepts like human rights, freedom, and democracy in order to uphold its supremacy.<sup>391</sup> Additionally, the US's continued military support for the Taiwan government has added to the Chinese suspicion over the US's intentions towards China. Moreover, contrary to the US's assurance that it does not aim to contain China, the US naval and air forces' close-in surveillance off China's borders increase China's concerns. In addition, the pivot policy of the US against China has added to the existing distrust in the eyes of China and has inclined it to view the US as a state seeking to constrain China's economic growth while consolidating its preeminence in the region.<sup>392</sup> In similar line, Wang claims that Chinese decision makers and analysts believe that the US has committed itself to remain as the sole super power of the world after the end of the Cold War and is determined to maintain its supremacy in Asia.<sup>393</sup> Therefore, from the Chinese point of view, the US regards China's ascendancy as an obstacle to the global ambitions of the US and as a security threat directed to the US-led order. Therefore, Chinese leaders believe that the US seeks to contain China, regarding it as a strategic rival in order not to challenge the US hegemony.<sup>394</sup> From this perspective, the US presents an existential threat to China, not the reverse. The US's diplomatic and military activities with the regional countries further exacerbated

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<sup>390</sup> Kenneth Lieberthal and Wang Jisi, *Addressing US-China Strategic Distrust*, vol. 4 (Brookings Washington, DC, 2012), [http://yahuwshua.org/en/Resource-584/0330\\_china\\_lieberthal.pdf](http://yahuwshua.org/en/Resource-584/0330_china_lieberthal.pdf).

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

<sup>393</sup> Wang, *China's Grand Strategy and US Primacy*.

<sup>394</sup> Yong Deng, "Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on US Global Strategy," *Political Science Quarterly* 116, no. 3 (2001): 343–365.

China's fear of the US's containment strategy especially its strong alignment with Japan.<sup>395</sup>

As to the trilateral relationships, Japan, China and the US stand as the most important actors and major players in East Asia region. In terms of the size of the economy, they occupy the top three positions in the globe,<sup>396</sup> and with regards to security arrangements, their policies and strategies are determinant of the regional security architecture. Their embedded and intersecting interests and priorities constitute a complex and dependent network of relationships in the form of a triangle. What is striking and intricate about this triangular relationship is that economic and security calculations go into different directions, for the most part, opposite ways.<sup>397</sup> Among them, the US appears as the most authoritative military power dominating the whole security architecture of the region and is determined to maintain its primacy while China, with its growing economy and steadily increasing military capabilities, has gradually becomes more and more influential and is committed to have an independent and autonomous stance that is freed from the US supremacy. Japan being a close economic and security partner of the US, enjoys wealth and prosperity and becomes prominent particularly in terms of production of high technology. However, it suffers from the dilemma of facing abandonment or entrapment by the US and considers rise of China as a potential security concern.<sup>398</sup> Hence, this complex relationship requires cooperation and dependency in the field of economy on the one

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<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Alex Gray, "The World's 10 Biggest Economies in 2017," *World Economic Forum*, March 9, 2017, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/03/worlds-biggest-economies-in-2017/>.

<sup>397</sup> Takashi Inoguchi and G. John Ikenberry, "Introduction," in *The Troubled Triangle* (Springer, 2013), 1–11.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

hand, and a concern for the security configurations and alterations in the distribution of powers among actors on the other.

Several factors amounting to generate security dilemma for each actor are worth to mention here. Firstly, China being one of the leading powers of the international economy, seeks to maintain its economic growth by concentrating on internal developments and improving domestic economic structure as well as having good relationships with its trading partners including Japan and the US. In fact, the US and China are strong trade partners that topped \$578 billion in merchandise in 2016<sup>399</sup> and the volume of Japan-China bilateral trade reached \$23 billion in 2017 rendering China the first destination for Japan's export and second destination for its import.<sup>400</sup> In addition to this, China's growth also brings self-confidence and determination to become an autonomous actor particularly in issues pertaining to its neighborhood, which makes China extremely sensitive to any alterations in the US-Japan security alliances since it is perceived as a mechanism designed to contain the rise of China. Any attempt to add up to the offensive capabilities of Japan risks triggering security dilemma leading China to take counter-measures. Secondly, the US views its alliance with Japan as the cornerstone of its overall East Asia strategy and is keen to maintain its military presence in the Japanese soil, however, the US is uncomfortable with the fact that Japan free rides the security provision of the US, as it is claimed, leaving the cost of its defense to the US's shoulders.<sup>401</sup> Therefore, the US wants Japan to share the burden and pay the cost of defending itself to some extent. With this notion, the US

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<sup>399</sup> Frank Lavin, "China-U.S. Trade Relations: Better Than You Think," *Forbes*, May 22, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/franklavin/2017/05/22/china-us-trade-issues-how-bad-is-it/>.

<sup>400</sup> "Statistics on China-Japan Trade in January 2017," *Ministry of Commerce People's Republic of China*, March 2, 2017, <http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/article/statistic/lanmubb/ASEAN/201704/20170402551445.shtml>.

<sup>401</sup> Jerry W. Sanders, "America in the Pacific Century," *World Policy Journal* 6, no. 1 (1988): 47–80.

encouraged Japan to develop defensive weapons, increase the capacity of Japanese Self Defense Forces and take active responsibility in maritime control. However, these sorts of developments have the capacity to exacerbate the Chinese fear of encirclement leading China to invest in offensive weapons and to take measures in order to deter any aggression with Japan or the alliance.<sup>402</sup> Historically rooted animosities and mistrust against Japan are some of the factors causing China to worry about a revived Japan. The past legacies have created an understanding in the eyes of the Chinese society and elite circles that Japanese leaders are not trustable partners and they are downplaying what they did during the WWII. Several other incidents such as Nanjing massacre, Japanese prime minister's visit to Yasukuni Shrine that dedicated to Japan's war dead, have served bolstering the feeling of humiliation and exploitation on the Chinese side.<sup>403</sup> Consequently, China faces a two-edged sword, on the one hand, an autonomous Japan, independent of the US control, is a potential threat in case Japan assumes to become a global military power. Hence China has never explicitly opposed the US-Japan alliance, however, China also concerns with the strengthening of the alliance in a way that extend the offensive capabilities of both Japan and the US in the region. What is best for China is the maintenance of the US-Japan alliance at the same level during the Cold War and not directed against China.<sup>404</sup> For the US, China does not appear as a military threat at present, yet its rapid economic growth has been the focal point of concern. In many areas, China proves its economic prowess that surpass the US in recent years. For instance; China has replaced the US's leading position in terms of purchasing power in 2014 becoming the biggest economy. China has already become the largest manufacturer, largest exporter of goods and had largest trade

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<sup>402</sup> Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (1999): 49–80.

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*

volume in the world.<sup>405</sup> These developments are considered as potential threats curbing the US dominance in the region leading the US to further deepen its alliance with Japan and rely more on bases and forward deployments in Japanese territories. For Japan, Yoshida doctrine which is articulated as business for the sake of business by relying on the alliance with the US, constitutes the basis of the Japanese foreign policy since the aftermath of the WWII.<sup>406</sup> Japan-US alliance is considered as a destiny that has enabled Japan to reconstruct the country from the ruins of the WWII and also to strengthen its economy with the comfortability provided by the US security umbrella that allowed Japan not to spend its resources for defense. However, this situation has left Japan in an intricate dilemma between abandonment and entrapment.<sup>407</sup> After the end of the Cold War, Japan contributed to the UN peace keeping operations, US's War on Terror operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and Sudan. This situation increased the fear of being entrapped by the demand of the US for Japanese contribution to the military operations. However, Japan is not willing to lose any Japanese soldiers in a war far from the homeland and has nothing to do with the homeland security.<sup>408</sup> On the other hand, Japan has experienced a feeling of abandonment when the US sends signals to develop good relationships with China by bypassing Japan.<sup>409</sup> The Japanese fear of abandonment rises when the US officials visits Chinese counterparts without paying visit to Japan or the US attempts to reduce its military deployment in

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<sup>405</sup> Key-young Son, "Multihegemony, Sutured Regionness, and the US-China-Japan Triangle," *Asian Perspective* 40, no. 1 (2016): 79–103.

<sup>406</sup> Takashi Inoguchi, "Japan's Foreign Policy Line after the Cold War," in *The Troubled Triangle* (Springer, 2013), 35–62.

<sup>407</sup> David Leheny, "Sibling Rivalry? Domestic Politics and the US-Japan Alliance," in *The Troubled Triangle* (Springer, 2013), 129–155.

<sup>408</sup> Inoguchi and Ikenberry, "Introduction."

<sup>409</sup> Victor D. Cha, "Powerplay: Origins of the US Alliance System in Asia," *International Security* 34, no. 3 (2010): 158–196.



Okinawa.<sup>410</sup> Therefore, the possibility of being abandoned by the US further renders Japan dependent on the US.

As to the complex relationship between China-Japan-US, Dittmer provides a triangular analysis through which he scrutinizes the dynamics among each actors' relationships with the other two.<sup>411</sup> Dittmer enumerates four logically deduced arrangements that can possibly happen in a three actors case which he calls unit-veto, stable marriage, romantic triangle and menage a trois. These possibilities are contingent upon the negative and positive relationships between the actors. Unit veto triangle refers to the situation where each of three actors have hostile relationships with the other two actors separately, therefore, all relationships are negatives. Stable marriage triangle denotes the relationship in which two actors have positive relationships whereas they are against the third actor. Romantic triangle refers to the situation where there is a pivot that has good relations with the other two; yet, other two actors have negative relationships with one another. Lastly, menage a trois refers to the situation where all actors have positive relationships with one another.<sup>412</sup> According to this classification, the most profitable relationship for a state in such a trilateral context is to be pivot in a romantic triangle because it can act as a stabilizer and broker between two rival groups and benefit from both sides. Although being pivot is an ideal situation, due to the nature of international politics, states develop their relations by considering distribution of powers, structural concerns and cultural affinity, according to Dittmer. For instance; the US-China and Russia relationships during the Cold War, especially during 1970s, constituted a romantic triangle where

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<sup>410</sup> Yoichiro Sato, "Japan's US Policy under DPJ and Its Domestic Background: Still Recovering from the Unarticulated 'Changes,'" in *The Troubled Triangle* (Springer, 2013), 87–105.

<sup>411</sup> Lowell Dittmer, "Japan, China, Russia, and the American 'Pivot': A Triangular Analysis," in *The Troubled Triangle*.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

the US served as the pivot between China and Russia thereby facilitating the negotiation of both countries, reducing the risk of conflict between them and gaining concessions from both sides.<sup>413</sup> However, in the case of Japan, China and the US triangle, due to the structural conditions, and changing relative power capabilities, the US could not play the role of pivot between Japan and China, whereas tilted towards Japan causing emergence of stable marriage triangle. The most important reason for the US siding with Japan stems from the fact that China's growth is considered as a significant threat to the US supremacy in the region necessitating containment strategy.<sup>414</sup> This situation has added not only to the Japan-China disputes but also to the threat perception of China posed by the US-Japan alliance. Degrading cooperation level within the alliance or keeping it at a bearable level are the strategies pursued by China in this intractable circumstance. This strategy was implemented by China during 1950s. According to Yoo, in order to eliminate the US's policy of containment, China attempted to target the US-Japan alliance by using incentives to pull Japan on its side.<sup>415</sup> The first inducement came as China released Japanese prisoners of war in a crucial time when the US and China were engaging in a confrontation over Taiwan Strait in 1954. This step was appreciated by the Japanese side. Another inducement strategy was to implement what is called people's diplomacy designed for separating the government and people of Japan and make Japanese people favorable to China. With this aim, China started inviting many Japanese people including academics, artists, students and various non-governmental groups to China while supporting and allowing more number of Chinese people to go Japan during 1950s. Another step was taken as China promoted unofficial trade between the private companies of both

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<sup>413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> Hyon Joo Yoo, "China's Friendly Offensive Toward Japan in the 1950s: The Theory of Wedge Strategies and International Relations," *Asian Perspective* 39, no. 1 (2015): 1–26.

countries knowing that Japan was attracted by the Chinese market and its raw materials.<sup>416</sup> Although these attempts appeared effective in the short run leading a rapprochement between two countries, due to the US's objection and counter measures, it backlashed causing strengthening of the US-Japan alliance. This analysis shows how past considerations prevails at present Japan, China and the US triangular relationships.

### **Senkaku islands and Air Defense Identification Zone**

The disputes between Japan and China on the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands have not been settled since 1972 when two countries normalized their diplomatic relations. Although the disagreement on the islands has continued till today, the two countries have been cautious enough not to escalate tensions to the level that endanger the bilateral engagements. However, since 2010, China has started showing its discomfort with Japan's claim of sovereignty on the Islands. China reacted strongly when Japan purchased the Senkaku Islands from the family that owned three of the five islands in April 2012. China reacted to these attempts by sending patrol ships off the Japanese coasts and organizing nationwide protests in major Chinese cities.<sup>417</sup> In response to Japan's action, the Chinese military stated that "*The Chinese government and military are unwavering in their determination and will to defend national territorial sovereignty. We are closely following developments, and reserve the power to adopt corresponding measures.*"<sup>418</sup> Right after the purchasing of Senkaku Islands by Japan in 2012, the Chinese maritime activity increased dramatically and this has become a routine in the following years. Chinese patrol vessels entered into the Senkaku

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<sup>416</sup> Ibid.

<sup>417</sup> "Japan Government 'Reaches Deal to Buy' Disputed Islands," *BBC News*, September 5, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19485565>.

<sup>418</sup> "Japan Buys Disputed Islands, China Sends Patrol Ships," *Reuters*, September 11, 2012, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-china-idUSBRE88A0GY20120911>.

territorial waters 68 times in 2012 which was the highest number compared to previous years and the patrolling campaign continued with an increased trend with 188 ships intruding territorial water in 2013, 88 in 2014 and 86 in 2015.<sup>419</sup> Although some research showed that from the late 2013 onward the frequency of Chinese patrol vessels' intrusion into the Senkaku territorial waters revealed a declining trend,<sup>420</sup> this can be attributed to the fact that the number of Chinese penetration was so high in 2013 that it has become a new normal around 80, which is still high. These coercive actions are significant signals showing Chinese resentment with the Japanese attempt over the disputed islands.

Although the disputes on the islands are seemingly a matter of concern for China and Japan, the US plays a critical role in the development of the process, according to Yun. Especially, the military alliance between Japan and the US and trilateral dynamics between these countries are the chief element of the disputes.<sup>421</sup> Yun claims that from the Chinese point of view, competition between China and the US is the most important determinant factors in the regional developments, particularly security issues. Japan is regarded as a subordinate player that perform its role as dictated by the US. Therefore, the islands disputes are not considered as a territorial issue but a maritime security problem that pose threat to the safety of China. Yun argues, in this sense, the disputes on the islands are the consequence of the China-US relations rather than China-Japan. Hence, the reactions given by China was directed against the US rather than Japan.<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Lyle J. Morris, "The New 'Normal' in the East China Sea," *The RAND Blog*, February 27, 2017, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2017/02/the-new-normal-in-the-east-china-sea.html>.

<sup>420</sup> M. Taylor Fravel and Alastair Iain Johnston, "Chinese Signaling in the East China Sea?," *Washington Post* 12 (2014).

<sup>421</sup> Yun, "The Diaoyu/Senkaku Dispute in the Context of China-US-Japan Trilateral Dynamics."

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*

The disputes on the islands further fueled with China's decision of establishing Air Defense Identification Zone. China declared on November 2013 that it has established an air defense identification zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea.<sup>423</sup> US-China Economic and Security Review Commission report defines an ADIZ as *a publicly declared area, established in international airspace adjacent to a state's national airspace, in which the state requires that civil aircraft provide aircraft identifiers and location. Its purpose is to allow a state the time and space to identify the nature of approaching aircraft prior to their entering national airspace to prepare defensive measures if necessary.*<sup>424</sup> China's declared ADIZ claims control over civil and military aircrafts and use of defensive measures in the case they do not comply with reporting their identification. More importantly, the defined area covers the disputed Senkaku Islands on which both China and Japan claim sovereignty. China took this decision unilaterally without consulting with other regional countries causing overlapping of China's ADIZ with other countries. For instance, it overlaps with the 50 percent of the Japan's already defined ADIZ.<sup>425</sup> Moreover, China's ADIZ also covers the area where Japan and the US air forces conduct joint military trainings, and also encompasses the US bombing range in the East China Sea.<sup>426</sup> This unilateral action caused the objection of countries in the region and the US as well. The US warned that this step was intended to change the status quo in the region and the US would not abstain from carrying out its military operations in East China Sea.<sup>427</sup> Japan

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<sup>423</sup> "China Establishes 'Air-Defence Zone' over East China Sea," *BBC News*, November 23, 2013, sec. Asia, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-25062525>.

<sup>424</sup> Michael Pilger, *ADIZ Update: Enforcement in the East China Sea, Prospects for the South China Sea, and Implications for the United States* (US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2016), 2, [https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/ADIZ%20Update\\_0.pdf](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/ADIZ%20Update_0.pdf).

<sup>425</sup> Roncevert Ganan Almond, "Troubled Skies Above the East China Sea," *The Diplomat*, November 24, 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/11/troubled-skies-above-the-east-china-sea/>.

<sup>426</sup> Jun Osawa, "China's ADIZ over the East China Sea: A 'Great Wall in the Sky'?" *Brookings Opinion*, December 17 (2013).

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid*

also echoed the US's concerns by claiming that this unilateral move was aimed at changing the status-quo but also warned that this development could have unintended consequences. In the following days, in order to show the US did not recognize China's decision, the US warplanes entered China's new ADIZ without complying with the rules.<sup>428</sup> Recently, China has reiterated that the US should respect China's ADIZ decision after a US bomber warplane violated the ADIZ; yet, the US has declared that it would continue its operations in the region without recognizing China's self-declared ADIZ.<sup>429</sup> Although the standoff continued until the end of 2013 and then dissipated, and while China does not have the sufficient capacity to control the defined areas due to lack of radar coverage, refueling capacity and early warning systems,<sup>430</sup> the disputed islands and China's ADIZ decision remain one of the significant issues among China, the US and Japan.

### **The US Hegemony and China's Wedging Strategy**

One of the US diplomats, Kurt Campbell, in 2012, declared that the security agreement of 1960 between Japan and the US requires the US to defend the islands from a possible Chinese attack.<sup>431</sup> In addition, in 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry reiterated the US position by claiming, "*Commitment to Japan's security remains ironclad and covers all territories under Japan's administration, including the Senkaku islands.*"<sup>432</sup> These statements reveal that the disputes concerning the islands

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<sup>428</sup> Julian E. Barnes and Jeremy Page, "U.S. Sends B-52s on Mission to Challenge Chinese Claims," *Wall Street Journal*, November 27, 2013, sec. World, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/us-flies-b52s-into-china8217s-new-air-defense-zone-1385483936>.

<sup>429</sup> "China Says U.S. Should Respect China's Air Defense Zone," *Reuters*, March 23, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-usa-defence-idUSKBN16U0SB>.

<sup>430</sup> Osawa, "China's ADIZ over the East China Sea."

<sup>431</sup> Paul Eckert, "Treaty with Japan Covers Islets in China Spat: U.S. Official," *Reuters*, September 20, 2012, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-japan-usa-idUSBRE88J1HJ20120920>.

<sup>432</sup> John J. Xenakis, "World View: US Reaffirms Defense of Japan's Senkaku Islands," *Breitbart*, April 28, 2015, <http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2015/04/28/world-view-us-reaffirms-defense-of-japans-senkaku-islands/>.

are not a bilateral concern between Japan and China but also includes the US. Therefore, China does not only consider Japan's claim but also views the US as an actor in the development of the disputes. The main factor relating the US into the disputes is the US – Japan alliance that is the primary component of the US liberal hegemony strategy towards East Asia. Although promoting liberal values does not come in the direct form in this issue, the overall attitude of the US towards East Asia reflects the tenets of liberal hegemony and the disputes on the islands are a culmination of this strategy. Therefore, although one can attribute the ongoing disputes to islands' strategic importance or oil reach reserves<sup>433</sup>, analyzing the disputes on the islands and China's decision to declare ADIZ without acknowledging the role of the US and Japan alliance gives flawed results.

This study contends that China's decision to declare Air Defense Identification Zone can be regarded as a wedging strategy designed to undermine the Japan – US alliance. There are several reasons to interpret this development as such. First, from the Chinese perspective, the US has been implementing a strategy of containment to constrain the rise of China as a superpower, which would challenge the US liberal hegemony.<sup>434</sup> Considering the fact that Japan plays important role in terms of providing bases, military contributions to the US operations, allowing US troops on its soil and enabling offensive in East Asia, the Chinese's reaction to Japan means much more than a struggle to have sovereignty of the disputed islands. Since China's ADIZ covers the disputed islands where the US warrants to defend them and encompasses the area where the US and Japan military forces carry out joint military operations,

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<sup>433</sup> Meenakshi Viswanathan, "Senkaku/Daiyou Islands: Significance, Challenges and Opportunities," *International Strategic and Security Studies Programme*, June 11, 2015, <http://issp.in/senkakudaiyou-islands-significance-challenges-and-opportunities/>.

<sup>434</sup> Paul Eckert, "Disputes over Small Islands Pose Big Conundrum for U.S.," *Reuters*, December 16, 2012, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-asia-maritime-idUSBRE8BF0I020121216>.

this decision definitely had an impact on both Japan and the US, as well as the US – Japan alignment. Consequently, although the disputes on the Senkaku Islands and China’s ADIZ declaration are ostensibly between Japan and China, the US role is not negligible since China’s reaction also targets the US. Therefore, this decision can be considered as a wedging strategy directed against the US – Japan alliance with the intention of weakening a rival coalition’s power.

As to the success of China’s wedging strategy, the indications appeared in the aftermath of the ADIZ decision show that it has not led to the deterioration of the US-Japan alliance or decrease in the cooperation between two allied countries. Although it is difficult to analyze the implications of the strategy in the short run, it can be concluded that China’s wedging strategy has failed to produce desired outcomes. Contrary to the breakup of the alliance, the US and Japan agreed on what is called Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation on April 2015 that designed to enhance the bilateral cooperation regarding possible security threats. The revised agreement enables Japan to take on increased role in the global affairs in the face of the increased Chinese pressure and North Korean aggression in the region.<sup>435</sup> The new agreement notes that the nature of the present security threats for Japan are not limited to the geographical challenges. New areas including space and cyber security have become focus of concern for the Japanese security, therefore, it envisions a further cooperation between two countries in new areas.<sup>436</sup> With regard to the disputed islands, the US reiterated its commitment to back Japan in any case of aggression when US Defense Secretary James Mattis held in February 2017 that “*I made clear that our*

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<sup>435</sup> Arshad Mohammed, “U.S., Japan Unveil New Defense Guidelines for Global Japanese Role,” *Reuters*, April 28, 2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-japan-defense/u-s-japan-unveil-new-defense-guidelines-for-global-japanese-role-idUSKBN0NI08O20150428>.

<sup>436</sup> Yuki Tatsumi, “4 Takeaways From the New US-Japan Defense Guidelines,” *The Diplomat*, April 29, 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/4-takeaways-from-the-new-us-japan-defense-guidelines/>.



*long-standing policy on the Senkaku Islands stands...the US will continue to recognize Japanese administration of the islands and as such Article 5 of the US-Japan Security Treaty applies*".<sup>437</sup> The US also continued to reject recognizing China's unilaterally declared ADIZ borders by showing its disapproval by violating the declared areas in several occasions by flying its bomber jets. Taking into account the US commitment to defend Japan even the aftermath of the China's ADIZ decision, it can be argued that China's coercive wedging strategy incited backlash leading two countries strengthening their security alliance.

Independently of the Chinese wedging strategy, the Japan-US alliance has strengthened as a result of the emergence of an external factor that is the increased security threat posed by North Korea. North Korea's recent aggression in the region with the stepped-up missile tests and harsh rhetoric against the regional countries and particularly the US have contributed to the improvement of cooperation between Japan and the US. Among continued brazen missile tests, two of them, launched on August 29 and September 15, 2017, were a new kind of provocations because of the proven range of the missiles that revealed that North Korea could target U.S. territory of Guam. Additionally, North Korea has already proved its capability to hit Japanese territories.<sup>438</sup> In this extremely volatile situation, two countries announced that they would step up their defense cooperation against the possible attacks of North Korea.<sup>439</sup> Consequently, measuring the success of Chinese wedging strategy of decreasing US-Japan cooperation becomes a mission impossible due to the recently emerged external

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<sup>437</sup> Ankit Panda, "Mattis: Senkakus Covered Under US-Japan Security Treaty," *The Diplomat*, February 6, 2017, <http://thediplomat.com/2017/02/mattis-senkakus-covered-under-us-japan-security-treaty/>.

<sup>438</sup> Ankit Panda, "The Calculated Logic Behind North Korea's Missile Tests," *The Diplomat*, September 21, 2017, <http://thediplomat.com/2017/09/the-calculated-logic-behind-north-koreas-missile-tests/>.

<sup>439</sup> Yeganeh Torbati, "U.S., Japan Step up Defense Cooperation to Counter N.Korea," *Reuters*, August 18, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles/south-koreas-moon-says-north-korean-nuclear-tipped-icbm-is-a-red-line-idUSKCN1AX0A4>.

factor that complicated the implications of the implemented strategies. Nevertheless, in the short-run, it can be claimed that China's wedging strategy has not worked in terms of ending US alignment with Japan.



## **Chapter VI: Conclusion**

This study analyzes the sources of great power behaviors in the presence of unipolarity. Therefore, the main puzzle this study seeks to solve has two elements. On the one hand, this study looks at how the most dominant power, that is to say the hegemon, behaves in unipolarity while on the other hand; this study discusses how other great powers react to the hegemonic order. To analyze the great power behaviors, structural realist assumptions are employed in three case studies which are the Ukraine Crisis of 2014, Georgian War of 2008, and China's Air Defense Identification Zone decision in 2013.

By examining the post-Cold War US National Security Strategy Documents and remarks and statements of relevant leaders and state officials, this study finds that post-Cold War US grand strategy is based on a liberal hegemony. In all subsequent administrations after the end of the Cold War, one thing has been common: the conviction in the US leadership role as a requisite for maintaining global peace and stability, in addition to US security. The analysis shows that bringing peace to the world and ensuring the homeland security and prosperity of the US can be accomplished only through the US involvement into global affairs. This requires establishing a hegemonic order around the world and shaping the international system in a way that serves best these interests. Moreover, the study demonstrates that the US's leadership role is based upon two components: democratic peace and economic interdependence. Depending on the democratic peace theory assumptions, particularly the one which states that democracies rarely (if ever) fight one another, the US administrations pursue a strategy of spreading democracy abroad in order to sustain peace in the world. Autocracies are seen as enemies that should be defeated and transformed into democracies. In addition, free and open market economies have been

promoted abroad since they are perceived as conducive to creating economic interdependence between countries. It is believed that economic interdependence helps prevent conflict eruption between two trading states because no one wants to harm their economic gains by fighting with their economic partners. Consequently, this study reveals that the combination of three factors, US global leadership role, promotion of democracy and creating economic interdependence, renders post-Cold War US grand strategy as a liberal hegemony. The possible direction of the US grand strategy during the Trump administration is worth to note here. With the election of Donald Trump, some maintain that the new administration would not pursue a liberal hegemonic grand strategy.<sup>440</sup> Rather they maintain that the definition of American interests is made with a narrow lens that is abandoning its global leadership role. They claim the “America first” strategy suggests a withdrawal from global commitment to the liberal norms and international alliance structure.<sup>441</sup> Regarding the economic policies, they claim that the new administration calls forth economic nationalism and mercantilist policies degrading the basis of free market economy.<sup>442</sup> Therefore, it is argued the new administration dramatically diverges from the decades long strategy of liberal hegemony. However, it is too early to reach such a conclusion about the US grand strategy since the period at stake does not allow a comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of the US grand strategy.

As to the sources of the US liberal hegemonic grand strategy, this study finds two determining factors. Firstly, the anarchical nature of the international system

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<sup>440</sup> Jeremi Suri, “How Trump’s Executive Orders Could Set America Back 70 Years,” *The Atlantic*, January 27, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/trumps-executive-orders-will-set-america-back-70-years/514730/>.

<sup>441</sup> Robert Kagan, “The Twilight of the Liberal World Order,” *Brookings*, January 24, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-twilight-of-the-liberal-world-order/>.

<sup>442</sup> Colin Kahl and Hal Brands, “Trump’s Grand Strategic Train Wreck,” *Foreign Policy*, January 31, 2017, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/31/trumps-grand-strategic-train-wreck/>.

renders security scarce for the states. In an anarchical environment where no state is trustable and every state is potential threat in the future (if not today), states are expected to rely on a self-help system. For a state, the best way to protect its own security is to become a hegemon if possible. Even becoming a hegemon does not make a state immune from future threats because a hegemon cannot be sure about the distribution of power capabilities in the future. Therefore, the hegemon views the continuation of the global system in a stable and peaceful manner as a necessary condition for its security thereby attempting to consolidate its hegemony through implementing primacist strategies. The means to achieve these ends can range from hard power tools to soft power instruments. In addition to use of force, international institutions and alliance politics are also significant means that can be used in order to strengthen the hegemonic order. Moreover, being a hegemon means absence of peer competitors in the international arena, which allows the hegemon to pursue policies otherwise risky and costly. Implementing ideological grand strategies or promoting domestic norms and values can be viable options for a hegemon since the risk and cost of these policies can be bearable. As a result of this, ideological orientation of the hegemon can become one of the important components of hegemonic grand strategy. In the case of the US hegemony, the liberal values and norms, particularly democratic values and free market economy, have constituted the main component of the US grand strategy. Consequently, this study reveals that the US liberal hegemonic grand strategy after the end of the Cold War has become possible due to the new international structure. Unipolarity has allowed the US to implement primacy to realize its global leadership ambitions and it has also enabled the US to pursue liberal ideology promotion abroad.

The case study analyses in this study showed that the US has pursued a liberal hegemonic grand strategy in Eastern Europe and East Asia. The strategy has been implemented through international institutions and alliance politics. In the case of the Eastern Europe, the US has attempted to include the former Soviet Union countries into the liberal international system by bringing the democratic norms and market economy structures into these countries. The NATO enlargement process is one of the most influential tools employed by the US to expand the reach of the US-led international system. Although NATO is a security organization established during the Cold War against the Soviet threat, it has become an alliance that shares and complies with the values promoted by the US after its transformation. Apart from the former Soviet Union countries, Russia is also one of the important concern during the NATO enlargement process. By surrounding and encircling Russia through the expansion of NATO, the US strategy has been to prevent Russia from challenging or posing a threat to the maintenance of the global order. With this understanding, the talks with Ukraine and Georgia were started as part of NATO enlargement. EU integration programs are also analyzed as instruments used by the US to perform liberal hegemony in Eastern Europe in order to integrate former Soviet Union countries into the liberal world system and to encircle Russia by surrounding it with US-led order friendly countries. Therefore, this study revealed that having similar considerations with NATO enlargement process, the EU's Eastern Partnership Program is also concerned with pushing Russia into the liberal world by transforming its neighboring countries into liberal democracies. Moreover, for the US's East Asia strategy, this study demonstrated that one of the main concerns for the US is to make China a responsible member of the international community. With this aim, the US has improved its alliance with Japan in many areas particularly in security field in order to establish a

pivotal platform to prevent China from engaging in activities that challenge the US hegemony in the region.

With regards to the responses given by other great powers in the system to the US liberal hegemonic grand strategy, this study comes up with two findings. First, the anarchical nature of the international system does not allow any state to rely on other's good intentions. This means that instead of depending on one's positive attitudes, states do not risk their security in the future because good intentions can turn into bad ones. Therefore, even if the US liberal hegemony provides public goods to other states in terms of security and economic aspects, this does not mean that other states would welcome the dominance of the US because skewed distribution of power causes other states to worry about the potential attacks of the most powerful state in the future. Therefore, in the case of unipolarity, states tend to view the most powerful state as a potential menace to their security leading them to find a way to check the unchecked power of the hegemon. Second, unipolarity renders traditional balancing mechanisms hard to achieve; because of the enormous power gap between the hegemon and second tier powers. Confronting the most powerful state directly becomes an unviable option due to its high risks and costs. In addition, positive balancing strategies designed to increase the power capabilities of a state through internal buildup or external alliances are not preferable as well because of the risk of inciting a strong response from the hegemon. Therefore, unipolarity put constraints on the balancing alternatives, yet, makes other forms of balancing strategies feasible. This study found that wedging strategy, preventing formation of a rival coalition or breaking up already established counter group by using reward and coercion mechanisms, appears as one of the alternative balancing strategy for states to perform in unipolarity. It becomes possible because wedging strategy is an indirect and negative form of balancing that requires

confronting the hegemon's ally and undermining the relative power capability of the hegemon.

The case studies showed that the reaction of Russia and China to US liberal hegemony reveals the patterns of wedging strategies. The analysis of the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 and Georgia Crisis of 2008 demonstrates that Russia implemented a wedging strategy in both cases by targeting two potential US allies. One of the reasons of these two crises was to prevent Ukraine and Georgia from joining NATO and engaging in EU programs thereby reducing the dominance and influence of the US over Russia. Considering the fact that the US uses international organizations and alliances politics as critical instruments of the US liberal hegemony, targeting these coalitions was a message to the US showing the resentment and challenge of Russia over increased US encirclement of the region. These attempts were also aimed at degrading the cooperation between these countries and alliances in the future. Similarly, the analysis of China's decision to declare Air Defense Identification Zone that covers the disputed Senkaku Islands with Japan reveals that, besides the dyadic level disagreements, China's decision was aimed at undermining the US-Japan alliance. This decision was a Chinese show off signaling its resilience over the US's increased attempt to surround and pivot China through alliance politics in the region especially with Japan alignment. Therefore, this decision of China can be analyzed as a wedging strategy towards to the US liberal hegemony.

As to the overall assessment of Russia's and China's wedging strategies, certain similarities and differences are worth noting. Firstly, considering the difference in the level and extent of the coercions employed by Russia and China, it appears that Russia used more assertive and offensive methods in order to coerce targeted countries than China. In the case of Georgia, Russia did not abstain from waging war and in the



case of Ukraine, Russia annexed Crimea and deployed its troops. On the one hand, two countries challenge the imposed liberal norms and values including democracy, rule of law and human rights; on the other hand, China seems content with the free market regime since it benefits from the system whereby not demonstrating dissatisfaction with the economic interdependency. This factor might carry Russia onto a more dissatisfied level thereby paving way for more assertive strategies. Moreover, another reason might be that the US commitment to defend its alignment with Japan seems much stronger than its determination to integrate Ukraine and Georgia into liberal world order. For the US, integration of former Soviet Union countries is an important task for the maintenance of the US leadership, yet, Ukraine and Georgia do not stand for as the most significant building bloc of the US's overall strategy. The US security alliance with Japan constitutes the central piece of the US's East Asia strategy in terms of economic and security considerations pertaining to the region, therefore, it can be deduced that any attempt to deteriorate this partnership would trigger a blowback. The consequences of previous incidents where China coercively engaged in with Japan was illustrative of how the US has been sensitive for defending Japan in the case of a possible confrontation. For instance, fishing trawler incident where a Chinese fishing boat collided with two Japanese control boats off the disputed Senkaku islands in 2010, triggered a coercive diplomacy between Japan and China resulting in Chinese government's arrest of Japanese nationals in China.<sup>443</sup> During the heyday of the row, the US firmly declared its support for Japan and reiterated that the defense of the disputed islands are major concern for the US falling under the protection of the security treaty between Japan and the US.<sup>444</sup> Relying on this deduction, China's

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<sup>443</sup> "Row over Japan-China Boat Crash," *BBC News*, September 8, 2010, sec. Asia-Pacific, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11225522>.

<sup>444</sup> Sheila A. Smith, "Japan and the East China Sea Dispute," *Orbis* 56, no. 3 (2012): 370–390.

relatively less coercive strategy compared to that of Russia might be derived from the alliance's staunch internal unity and US's commitment to it. Secondly, in the case of Russia's wedging strategy, Russia implemented a combination of reward and coercive wedging strategies, yet, China employed only coercive wedging strategy. This situation can be interpreted as Russia had a reward power which is the ability to provide incentives or rewards to change the behaviors of the target power, that could attract the targeted states through its potential to provide benefits particularly in terms of economic interests. Yet, these rewards were not sufficient to produce expected results leading Russia to implement coercive strategies just as China did. However, China performed a merely coercive strategy in the first instance due to the lack of reward power that would geo-strategically contribute to Japan. The staunchness of the US-Japan alliance might reduce the attractiveness of the potential Chinese reward power. Last but not least, Russia's wedging strategy worked in the case of preventing NATO's further enlargement, yet it failed in keeping Ukraine and Georgia away from the European Union. The EU has recently signed association agreements and granted visa free travel to Ukraine and Georgia, however, even if Russia did not implement wedging strategy, two countries would not be able to join the EU. China's wedging strategy did not work at all. Although it is much more likely to have a better understanding and assessment of the implications in the long-run, considering the short run implications, it can be claimed that Russia's success in hindering NATO enlargement can be attributed to its position as being the energy supplier of European countries. This situation might be a consideration for the US or western bloc to not further provoke Russia in a way that threatens the energy security of the EU countries. As to the failure of China and Russia's EU strategy, both caused backlash and increased the cooperation by revealing a reverse effect.

Regarding the general implications, this study shows that unipolarity has enabling and constraining effects on the behaviors of great powers in a way that both hegemon and second-tier states perform offensive strategies with defensive purposes. While unipolarity enables hegemon to pursue ideologically oriented and assertive grand strategies, it constrains second-tier states from directly confronting with the hegemon; however, enabling alternative strategies feasible. This study also shows that wedging strategy is an available balancing behavior in a unipolarity whereas its success, intensity and type, reward or coercive, are contingent upon several factors. As to the type of the wedging strategy, if a state has ability to provide benefits and inducements to attract a target state, it prefers reward wedging as the first option. However, if a state, after implementing reward wedging, comes to the understanding that reward power does not suffice to lure a target, or it lacks any such ability at the onset, it tends to prefer coercive wedging strategy. Regarding the intensity of coercion, if the target alliance enjoys high level of group unity and cohesion, level of coercion is likely to be lessened compared to the situation where low level unity exists. As to the success of a wedging strategy, it can be claimed that the extent of the commitment of the leading power in the enemy coalition is the determinant factor of the success of a wedging strategy. Moreover, the level of leading power's commitment is influenced by the role and significance of a target state for the alliance's overall strategy to reach its objectives.

Although this study provides significant insight into the likely behaviors of great powers in unipolarity, there is still room for further research. Considering the power transition between the hegemon and dissatisfied powers, this study does not tell a lot because the study starts with a structure which has newly emerged. A new research regarding how power transfers from one state to another can be conducted

with a particular focus on the effects of alternative forms of balancing methods during the power transition process. Additionally, this study is concerned with the behaviors of states, yet non-states actors' reactions including NGOs, multinational corporations and terrorist groups can be examined in a new study in order to have a better understanding of the international politics in unipolarity. Their methods to deal with the hegemonic order can reveal important new aspects of the balance of power behaviors that are neglected in the literature.



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