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**THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHINA'S GLOBAL RISE ON THE EU**

**YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ**

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## **Abstract**

China's rise as a significant player in the global affairs in the post-Cold War era has become a prominent issue in the wider context of international relations. China's economic rise reflected in its enhanced world share of gross domestic product and rapid increase in its growth rate has attracted worldwide attention. Likewise, China's defense spending trends and military modernization patterns introduce a debate over the system wide impacts of China's rise. On the other hand, frequent mention to China's rise has been on its self-attached 'Peaceful Rise/ Development' discourse that is linked to discussions on whether or not China will be content with the current international order as its power grows.

This thesis aims at examining the implications of China's rise specifically in the post-Cold War period for the European Union (EU) through the lens of neorealist international relations theory with special reference to the unipolar distribution of power in the same period. In doing so, the thesis provides an analysis of China's rise in terms of economic, military, and 'peaceful rise' rhetoric dimensions which are largely based on Kenneth Waltz's depiction of power parameters.

Applying neorealist international relations theory to the relationship between the EU and China after the post-Cold War era, this thesis makes two principal arguments. First, it is found out that the extent of China's economic, military, and peaceful rise is of huge relevance to the international actorness of the EU. As the EU represents a blend of overlapping characterizations that encompasses the elements of nation-state, international organization, and a sui generis political community, so that it becomes a complicated political organization encountered in international relations. Of particular relevance here is that the reflections of each of the parameters of China's rise directly target questioning the unique and sui generis features of the EU largely stemming from the absence of some of the elements that make up a traditional state.

Secondly, the thesis makes its claim based on the notion of 'soft balancing'. The term 'soft balancing' refers to implicit balancing that involves the use of international institutions, international law, and diplomacy in order to constrain and delegitimize the actions of the preponderant state within the context of balance of power. The thesis argues that the EU and China have responded to the unipolar power structure in

the form of soft balancing as a complementary to the hard balancing methods (where possible) particularly after the 2000s in relation to their power capabilities.

***Key words:*** EU, China, neorealism, soft balancing, unipolarity, China's rise



## Özet

Çin'in Soğuk Savaş sonrası küresel düzlemde önemli bir oyuncu olarak yükselişi, uluslararası ilişkilerin geniş kapsamında öne çıkan bir konu olmuştur. Gayrisafi yurtiçi hasılasının dünya payındaki artışı ve büyüme oranının hızla yükselmesiyle vuku bulan Çin'in ekonomik yükselişi dünya çapında ilgi uyandırmıştır. Aynı şekilde, savunma harcama eğilimleri ve askeri modernleşme modelleri Çin'in yükselişinin sistem genelindeki etkilerini tartışmayı ortaya koymaktadır. Diğer taraftan, Çin'in yükselişiyle ilgili sıklıkla zikredilen ve kendi-iliştirdiği 'Barışçıl Yükseliş/Gelişim' söylemi Çin'in gücü arttıkça mevcut uluslararası düzenle yetinip yetinmeyeceği tartışmalarıyla bağlantılandırılmaktadır.

Bu tez, Çin'in özellikle Soğuk savaş sonrası dönemde yükselişinin Avrupa Birliği (AB)'ne etkilerini, tek kutuplu güç dağılımına vurgu yaparak ve neorealist uluslararası ilişkiler teorisiyle incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bunu yaparken, büyük ölçüde Kenneth Waltz'ın güç parametleri tasvirine dayandığı Çin'in ekonomik, askeri ve barışçıl söylem yükselişi boyutlarının bir analizini sunmaktadır.

Neorealist uluslararası ilişkiler teorisini, Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde AB ve Çin arasındaki ilişkiye uygulayan bu tezin iki temel argümanı vardır. Birincisi, Çin'in ekonomik, askeri ve barışçıl yükselişinin AB'nin uluslararası aktörlüğüyle muazzam ilgisi bulunmaktadır. AB'nin ulus-devlet ve uluslararası örgütlerin unsurlarını içeren ve nevi şahsına münhasır siyasi bir toplum şeklinde nitelendirilen tanımlamalarla tarif edilmesi, AB'yi uluslararası ilişkilerde karmaşık bir siyasi örgütlenme olarak ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Burada özellikle ilişkili olan husus ise; Çin'in yükselişindeki her bir parametrenin yansımalarının, AB'nin büyük ölçüde geleneksel devleti oluşturan öğelerin eksikliğinden kaynaklanan nevi şahsına münhasır özelliklerini doğrudan sorgulamayı hedeflemesidir.

İkinci olarak, bu tez 'yumuşak dengeleme' kavramına dayanan bir argümanı öne sürmektedir. 'Yumuşak dengeleme' terimi, uluslararası sistemde hakim olan devletin eylemlerini kısıtlamak ve meşruiyetini bozmak maksadıyla uluslararası kurumların, uluslararası hukukun ve diplomasinin kullanılmasını içeren zımni bir dengelemeye işaret etmektedir. Bu tez, AB ve Çin'in özellikle 2000'li yıllardan sonra tek kutuplu güç yapılanmasına, mümkün olduğu yerde sert dengelemeye ve bütüncü olarak yumuşak dengeleme şeklinde tepki verdiklerini savunmaktadır.

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## *Abbreviations and Acronyms*

AFR	Asian Regional Forum
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CEECs	Central and Eastern European Countries
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
EAS	East Asian Summit
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defense Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDP	European Security and Defense Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union (EU)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs

NSC New Security Concept  
PLA People's Liberation Army  
PRC People's Republic of China  
RMB Renminbi  
TCA Trade and Cooperation Agreement  
TIPP Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership  
TPP Trans-Pacific Partnership  
USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union)  
WTO World Trade Organization  
US United States of America

## 1. INTRODUCTION

China's rise over the course of the last four decades has been at the heart of many key issues within world politics. Indeed, this rise has been accompanied by and realized against the backdrop of a transition from a bipolar to mostly a unipolar international setting with the United States (US) having an accumulation of extraordinary economic, military, and political power touted as 'unmatched amongst others'. As with the European Union (EU), the attempts to initiate a process of deeper integration within European states beginning with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952 have transformed Europe into the European Union (EU). Categorized as neither a conventional state nor an international organization, the EU's endeavors to enhance its global role and its interactions with other states were also formed within this broader context. Drawn on this sketch of international setting, the rise of China as a global actor bears significance to the international relations of the EU in the sense that it reflects the EU's response to an emerging power and sheds light to comprehend the actorness of the EU in that regard.

This thesis aims at examining the consequences of China's material rise specifically in the post-Cold War period for the international relations of the EU through the lens of neorealist international relations theory with special reference to the unipolar distribution of power in the same period. To this end, the main research question raised is: 'To what extent the precepts of neorealism contribute to the understanding of the implications of the recent rise of China for the international actorness of the EU?'

In order to address the research problem the Master's Thesis organized as five parts. The first part outlines the core assumptions of neorealism that frame the theoretical foundations of the theory with reference to the commonalities and differences between realist international relations theory. In a very general sense, in social sciences a theory is described as general statement or proposition that offers systematic explanations for the causes or the effects of classes of empirical data (Van Evera, 1997: 7, Heywood, 2007: 20). In this regard, theory is treated as a simplification tool, which allows structuring the world through specific sets of concepts, assumptions, and key themes (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2011: 3). Considering the nature of social sciences theory, one may situate neorealist theoretical positioning as 'a theory fundamentally about the strategic interaction of a small number of units in an anarchically ordered realm' (Hanami, 2009: 8). Following this logic, the key concepts that neorealism

emphasizes to reflect its own vision of the modus operandi of world politics are; anarchy, self-help, balance of power, survival, sovereignty, security, polarity configuration.

With such a focus on the international system, the second part discusses the applicability and relevance of neorealism to the study of the recent rise of China. In reference to the definition of power as relative and dynamic in the neorealist lexicon, this section further analyzes China's rise in terms of economic, military, and 'peaceful rise' rhetoric dimensions which are largely based on Kenneth Waltz's depiction of power parameters. The methodology followed to gauge the economic rise of China has been to compare statistically the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of China in relation to the most advanced nations from roughly 1980s to the late 2000s. As the economic power is viewed as the main building block of a comprehensive national power in neorealist understanding, the possibility to convert economic power into military power, and relatedly the possibility of an increase in confidence that lead the concerned country to assume greater role in great power politics are questioned.

Observed with these traits, China's behavioral pattern during and after the Global Crisis of 2007 is examined for case study. On the other hand, under neorealist mindset, the symbiotic relationship between economic growth and great power emergence fuelled with the balance of power rationale cause concerns over the durability of the unipolar structure. Thus, China's rapid economic growth is also analyzed with respect to the possibility of a shift in the global distribution of economic power. Given the anarchic international structure largely characterized by possibility for conflict and self-help, it is hardly surprising that worldwide frequent mention to China's rise has been on military grounds. In this vein, this section proceeds to analyze China's recent military rise by examining its military modernization pattern, defense spending trends, and military spending in relation to its GDP from the period starting from 1990s to the late 2000s. The ensuing dimension attempts to answer whether or not China will be content with the current international order as its power grows. This argument is explored through China's self-attached 'Peaceful Rise/ Development' rhetoric supported with a historical perspective.

Since the international system is portrayed as the interplay between major powers by neorealism, it is widely held that in terms of distribution of power the structure of the international system after the Cold War era is unipolar with the US enjoying an overwhelming economic, military, and political power with respect to the other states in the international order. From this perspective, the incentives and costs of this polarity configuration enable

states to consider relevant responses to the unipole. In this regard, this section also examines the balancing behavioral pattern of a rising China in response to the US and introduces the notion of 'soft balancing' as a strategy pursued by China as complementary to the hard balancing methods under the unipolar international structure.

Part Three applies neorealist theory to provide a theoretical base for understanding the integration dynamics of the EU, and the institutional dynamics that make up the Union by linking the discussion to the international structure. Within this theoretical frame, however, the EU constitutes a puzzle for a theory that develops an anarchical international environment for the primary actors (states). Indeed, considered as 'politically undefined' entity, the EU's typology in terms of international actorness forms the basis of contention. Against this backdrop, this section critically examines the EU as normative power, and as civilian power and reviews the international actorness of the EU in the global balance of power dynamics. In addition, the EU's response to the unipolar structure is addressed through the concept of soft balancing.

Part Four examines the history of the relations between Europe and China starting with the Cold War period till recently. The historical overview is expected to shed light to the relevant questions regarding the extent and depth of the Sino-European relationship.

Part Five looks at the consequences of China's global rise for the international relations of the EU. To that aim, the argument is structured into four major parts. Section 1 examines the response of the EU to the rise of China within two dimensions. First, it reviews the European reaction as a sui generis actor in the international system, and then it outlines the official response of the EU with respect to the evolving weight of China in the international affairs. Second section addresses the dimensions of China's rising power in relation to the EU; namely, economic, military, normative dimensions. To begin with, the economic dimension is observed particularly with specific reference to the underlying structural dynamics behind the motive of 'primacy of trade' between two sides. In focusing on the structural dynamics to account for the evolution of economic forces between the EU and China, this part further relates the analysis to the neorealist assumption, which argues that in an anarchic environment relative gain concerns prevail over absolute gain. On the other hand, to display the implications of China's economic rise, the argument is also examined with respect to the relation between increase in economic weight and increase in assertiveness. The last section of this part attempts to critically examine the normative role of the EU in transforming China

through engagement. The last part outlines the implications of China's rise for the EU in the context of transatlantic relations. The first section applies the notion of soft balancing to the triangular relationship between the EU, the US, and China, and argues that the EU and China have attempted to involve in the soft-balancing process against the US particularly during the early 2000s. In the specific case of the EU and China, soft balancing takes the form of strategic partnership, multipolarity and multilateralism discourses. The rest of the section assesses the impact of China's economic and military rise specifically in Asia on the overall route of the transatlantic relations following the year 2005. To that aim, a noticeable shift in the European approach -albeit with mixed responses- towards Asia is related to the recent developments in the frame of power struggle between the US and China in Asia.





## 2. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF NEOREALISM

### 2.1. REALISM AND NEOREALISM

‘The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails’<sup>1</sup>

It might be said that realism has been the dominant theory of world politics since the beginning of academic international relations, although as a tradition of thought it has a much longer history that can be predicated to Thucydides (c.460-406 BC). By and large, the ‘Great Debate’ between Idealism and Realism that took place in the late 1930s and early 1940s provided the historical background of the realist theory (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2011: 86-89). Basically, rejecting the prescriptive and utopian elements in Idealism for the sake of science, realism as a theory was first coined by E. H. Carr: ‘The impact of thinking upon wishing which, in the development of a science, follows the breakdown of its first visionary projects, and marks the end of its specifically utopian period, is commonly called realism.’ (Cited *in* Hollis & Smith, 2009: 21).

Resting on the timeless insights of classical realist thought<sup>2</sup>, the realist theory of international relations essentially can be considered as a call for the application of scientific method to international relations (Hollis & Smith, 2009: 45). Moreover, it might be argued that the shared concept of scientific explanation is a unifying theme among the proponents despite the distinctive diversity within the tradition (Donnelly, 2002: 6).

However, attributing an essentially scientific feature to realism is mostly associated with Kenneth N. Waltz. The reformulation of realism was reflected as a school of thought known as neorealism or structural realism. With the publication of Kenneth N. Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics (TIP)* in 1979, realism gained a theoretical sophistication and extended its scope to explaining international politics rather than simply describing it (Hyde-Price, 2012: 17). On the other hand, Waltz restricted the scope of neorealism to a theory of the international system instead of a theory that provided a general account of all the aspects of international relations (Hollis & Smith, 2009: 42). Obviously, the most distinctive departure

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<sup>1</sup> (William Arthur Ward Cited *in* Vincent, 2013:1).

<sup>2</sup> Gilpin defines realist thought as ‘a political disposition and a set of assumptions about the world rather than a scientific theory’ (Gilpin, 1984: 289) in which common core elements are state centricity, the main goal of survival and a self-help system.

point of Kenneth Waltz from classical realism was his focus primarily on the structure to explain the international political system rather than attributing it to human nature or the goals and make-up of individual states (Waltz, 2010: 131).

As neorealism firmly derives from the realist paradigm, it is thus crucial to highlight the commonalities and differences between two canons in order to capture a better account of neorealism. All realists -classical and neorealist alike- subscribe to four assumptions that constitute the core premises of the paradigm. The first one being; humans do not face one another primarily as individuals, but as members of groups who command their loyalty. Known as state-centricity, this assumption considers the legitimate representative of the collective will of the people as the fundamental unit of political analysis (Schweller & Priess, 1997: 6). So, be it city-states, polis states or in the contemporary world 'states' are major actors in world affairs (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2011: 87). The second assumption is centered on the state of anarchy where it leads to the proposition that in order to ensure their survival, states must rely on themselves. The third one is the assertion that whether derived from the selfish nature of human or the anarchic international structure, international relations have essentially conflicting nature. Finally, power is accepted as the fundamental feature of international relations to all sorts of realists (Schweller & Priess, 1997: 6).

On the other hand, in general, six major differences divide classical realists and neorealists. The first one is related to the reference point in terms of philosophical basis. Whereas traditional realism is rooted mainly in history and sociology, neorealism grounds its basis mostly on microeconomics (Schweller & Priess, 1997: 7). More specifically, the founder of neorealism, Kenneth Waltz bases his assumptions partly on Karl Popper's philosophy of science, and partly on microeconomic theory (Neumann & Weaver, 2005: 72). Adhering to Popperian philosophical tradition, Waltz holds an anti-inductivist<sup>3</sup>, anti-reductivist<sup>4</sup> view on methodology. Kenneth Waltz regards theory as 'an intellectual construction by which we select facts and interpret them' (Waltz, 2003: 22). Theories, according to Waltz (2010) deal with regularities and repetitions and are possible only if these can be identified. Contrary to

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<sup>3</sup> Waltz opposes the 'inductivist illusion' by claiming that data never speak for themselves. Trying to make sense by observation and experience leads to deal with only pieces of problems. Moreover, Waltz questions the validity of inductionism only at the theory level, indeed he argues that induction runs better at the level of hypothesis and laws (Waltz, 2010: 3-7).

<sup>4</sup> Instead of ascribing the outcomes to the attributes of and interaction of parts as in a reductionist way, Waltz suggests a systems level approach that explains the outcomes by forces that operate at the level of system (Waltz, 2010).

reality wherein everything has relevance with everything, theory isolates one realm from others to deal with it intellectually. Therefore, theories must not be expected to account for accidental or unexpected events. The second assumption is related to the issue of approaching power whether as a means or as an end. In general, while realists assume that states can seek power as well as security, neorealists tend to view security as the highest end<sup>5</sup> (Schweller & Priess, 1997: 7). Third, realists argue that interests and power are main drivers of state behavior. National interest is considered as a moral idea that must be defended and promoted by state leaders (Jackson & Sorensen, 2003: 87). On the other hand, neorealists assume that anarchy and distribution of power are two key variables that drive state behavior. The fourth and fifth ones are focused on capabilities. On one side, realists explain capabilities with regards to the relationships between states, more as a product of unit interactions. On the other side, the emphasis on system level analysis is one of the most distinctive explanations of neorealism that distinguishes it from traditional realism. Thus, to neorealists, the polarity structure of the system along with the distribution of power account for explaining the international system. In this way, it might be deduced that traditional realism is more a theory of foreign policy (Schweller & Priess, 1997: 7) whereas neorealism can be regarded as a broad theory of international relations.

The final difference arises from the meaning of 'system'. To realists, system refers to units, interactions, and structure. At this point, incorporating the term interactions into the system implies that the system involves norms, rules, and institutions. However, neorealist theory defines system composing of a structure and of interacting units (Schweller & Priess, 1997: 7). It is important to elaborate on the details of this divergence over the concept system as it holds a clear departure point between two paradigms. According to Waltz, in order to gain a whole account of international relations, the relevant constituent of the system that needs to be focused on is structure (Waltz, 2010: 79). Since neorealism asserts to provide a systemic account of international relations, for the sake of coherence and vigor, Waltz deliberately abstains from addressing the aspects of interacting units<sup>6</sup>. He goes on to argue that in order to make a distinction between variables at the level of units and at the level of the system; the characteristics, the behaviors and the interactions of units are to be omitted from the definition of structure (Waltz, 2010: 79). In particular, the kinds of political leaders, personality of

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<sup>5</sup> It should be remarked that there exists a divide between neorealists on the conceptual assesment of power as well.

<sup>6</sup> Waltz argues that failing to distinguish between the structure and its units means confusing the unit level and system level variables. (Brown & Ainley, 2005: 106)

actors, their behavior, and their interactions and cultural differences among states (Dunne, Kurki & Smith, 2013: 72) are left aside<sup>7</sup> since they fall into the category of unit level explanations. At the end of the day, one ends up with arriving a purely positional picture of society within which the personality, behavior, and interactions vary while the structure endures<sup>8</sup>. This trait suggests interpreting structure as defined by the arrangement of its parts (Waltz, 2010: 80). At any level of analysis, structure is defined specifically by three elements: ordering principles, the character of units, and distribution of capabilities across units (Donnelly, 2002: 83). Yet, in order to distinguish systems level from unit level and mark off political systems from other international systems, Waltz introduces the distinction between national level and international level analysis. In the domestic level, the ordering principle is hierarchy and centralized whereas the international system is anarchic and decentralized (Waltz, 2010: 88) In fact, it is this sharp distinction between anarchy among actors and hierarchy within them that constitutes the essence of structural realism (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999: 13). The structure of the system acts as a constraining and disposing force, and because it does so systems theories explain and predict the continuity within a system (Waltz, 2010: 69).

In a nutshell, the core tenets of Waltz's neorealism might be summed as a triangular relationship. Waltz depicts an international setting in which anarchy is a constant structural element and polarity is the variable. In this international system, the dynamic distribution of power capabilities runs as an intervening element that enables to generate the question 'what reactions are expected in response to the increasing relative capabilities of another state?' (Kelly, 2007: 29)

## **2.2. WHAT TO EXPECT FROM NEOREALISM?**

'For more than a decade 'Theory of International Politics' has been shot at, embellished, misunderstood, and caricatured, but never quite displaced'<sup>9</sup>

Neorealism is criticized mostly for failing to explain or predict events or behaviors, which in neorealist research agenda have never been set out at first place.<sup>10</sup> For example, much

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<sup>7</sup> Systemic factors cannot be reduced to beliefs, values, motives, or capabilities of the units that comprise the system (Hollis & Smith, 2009: 98).

<sup>8</sup> Despite changes that constantly take place in the relations of nations, the basic structure of international politics continues to be anarchic (Waltz, 2010: 59).

<sup>9</sup> (Barry Buzan, cited in Neumann & Weaver, 2005: 82)

criticism was reflected to realist paradigm on the failure of the prediction of the abrupt end of Cold War. Aside from the fact that the critics also did not predict it either (Donnelly, 2002: 110) if the core assumptions of neorealism are reviewed, it does seem clear that the domain of neorealism involves the events that represent 'biggest' issues in the international relations such as war, power seeking, and security competition.<sup>11</sup> As such, it is an explanatory theory, which attempts to explain why, and under what circumstances certain kinds of phenomena such as wars occur (Brown & Ainley, 2005: 10).

Hence, neorealism provides logical first-cut for explaining the phenomenon instead of predicting specifics concerning each case. This suggests to conclude that neorealism is concerned mostly with issues and puzzles surrounding inter-state relations and major power interactions and rather it devotes less attention - if not dismiss- to explain all issues in international relations (Laksmana, 2013). In this respect, within the margins of the paradigm one should be cognizant of the fact that neorealism intentionally does not provide accounts in some specifically determined realms such as the patterns of change in international system, the properties of leaders, the relevance of non-state actors in explaining the international system. On the contrary, the emphasis is on the recurrent patterns and characteristics of the international political system based on competition and struggle for power when responding to the questions on the international relations. In that regard, it is imperative to provide the theoretical underpinnings of neorealism prior to launching into the drivers of European-Chinese encounter from the perspective of the neorealist research program.

### **2.3. THE GENERAL PREMISES OF NEOREALISM**

This section provides the fundamental concepts of neorealism which largely have been built upon the works of neorealist scholars such as Kenneth N. Waltz, John Mearsheimer, Christopher Layne, Barry Posen, Stephen Walt, Fareed Zakaria, Adrian Hyde-Price and Randall Schweller. In introducing the relevant topics, it is aimed at highlighting the underpinnings of neorealist theory with respect to the key components that form general the framework of the theory.

#### **2.3.1. ANARCHY**

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<sup>10</sup> For instance, Waltz asserts that a theory's ability to explain is more important than its ability to predict. Indeed, a theory does not provide an account of what has happened or of what may happen. (Waltz, 1997: 915-916). By the same token Gilpin (1996: 4) notes that 'Realism is at best an explanatory science'

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.popularsocialscience.com/2013/11/06/neorealism-in-international-relations-kenneth-waltz/>

Despite being one of the most slippery terms in the international political discourse, the term anarchy is widely associated with the ‘absence of world government’ (Baldwin, 1993: 14). In the neorealist lexicon, the concept of anarchy is meant to emphasize the lack of a central authority rather than to denote chaos and lawlessness (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 87).

In order to account for the explanation of the international system, the basic reference point for structural realism is the acknowledgement of an anarchic international order which refers to a system comprising of independent states that have no central authority (Mearsheimer, 2001: 30). Indeed, the rule of anarchy in the international system is the key to define the core concepts of neorealism such as self-help, competition, and the continuity of great power politics. Likewise, the predominance of power politics is largely explained by the international anarchy (Donnelly, 2002: 49). As anarchy is placed at the heart of the theory (Donnelly, 2002: 82), a set of consequences emerges with respect to the absence of world government logic. In that, the anarchic setting enables states to be own judges in their own causes and not to expect completely enforceable international law (Brown& Ainley, 2005: 102). This largely highlights ‘self-help’ as a principle of action in an anarchic system (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 87). As a matter of fact, states are assumed to be concerned with their security and regard other states as potential threats (Brown& Ainley, 2005: 42). In this way, it might be concluded that anarchy places constraints on state behavior to the extent that it shapes the behavior of states as less cooperative and highly competitive (Baldwin, 1993: 5). This anarchy-based competitiveness of the international system compels the states with capability to become great powers to attain that incentive (Layne, 1993: 11) and become less reliant to on more powerful states (Jones, 2007: 246).

What is more, the sameness in the quality of international life is also ascribed to the persistent structure of international anarchy (Waltz, 2010: 66, Layne, 1993: 12). As Waltz (2010) contends, a constancy of structure accounts for the recurrent patterns and features of international-political life. So to say, according to the theory, ‘history repeating itself’ scenario is bound to the persistent character of the international system which leads states to act rationally self-interested and competitive.<sup>12</sup> Finally, this anarchic setting cannot be

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<sup>12</sup> <http://richmondjw.wordpress.com/2012/09/16/which-theories-are-most-useful-for-accounting-for-the-rise-of-china-introduction/>

escaped and cannot be transcended. Anarchy can only be mitigated (Hollis& Smith, 2009: 102).

### **2.3.2. STATE, SURVIVAL, SOVEREIGNTY**

Of all the tenets of neorealism, the most distinctive one would be the primacy of state in explaining the international system. The states in neorealist framework are considered unitary and rational actors. For that reason, states are expected to situate themselves according to the dictates of the anarchic international order -constraints and incentives- within the boundaries of rationality assumption (Hyde-Price, 2012: 20). Thus, it is assumed that to achieve their ends, states select a strategy by choosing the most efficient available means in which are subject to an important degree of constraints like uncertainty and incomplete information (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999: 12). Nonetheless, the reference to rationality is the key for neorealists to explain, justify, and predict the course of actions that rational actors have or ill take.<sup>13</sup> On the other side, the emphasis on unitary actorness refers to defining states in terms of differentiation by capability not by functions. Therefore, to neorealist thinking, in terms of functions states perform tasks most of which are common to all.<sup>14</sup> Yet, they perform different tasks in relation to their varying capabilities (Waltz, 2010: 96-97).

Given this outlook of the state-centric perspective, states are treated as billiard balls that act similarly whether they are Communist or Capitalist, dictatorial or democratic (Legro& Moravscik, 1999: 5). Structural realism assumes that whatever other goals may have the primary goal of states is security (Waltz, 1997: 915). States seek survival and pursue their national interests by exercise of power. As the ordering principle of the international system is acknowledged as anarchy, hence the security of the units are not assured, the basic motivation of the units is taken as 'survival' basically as a ground of action (Waltz, 2010: 90). As a result, in a self-help system, considerations of security subordinate economic gain to political interest (Waltz, 2010: 107). In that regard, security is said to be a prerequisite for other goals such as wealth (Jones, 2007: 19) and survival is the sine qua non of the existence of the international order itself (Smith, 2008: 4).

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<sup>13</sup> Waltz argues that those who conform to accepted and successful practices more often rise to the top, while those who do not fall by the wayside (Mearsheimer, 2009: 242).

<sup>14</sup> All states collect taxes, conduct foreign policy...etc. (Jackson& Sorensen, 2010: 85).

Within neorealist research agenda, sovereignty is a defining feature of the international system (Brown& Ainley, 2005: 113) since there is no ultimate decision-making power under the anarchic international order. On the other hand, states regard themselves as the highest authority and order domestic affairs in their own fit (Cox& Stokes, 2008: 11). Thus, to neorealist understanding, sovereignty is linked to the structure of the international system in the sense that the internal hierarchy of sovereign states creates external anarchic sovereignty relations (Donnelly, 2002: 94-95)

### **2.3.3. POWER**

In international relations, the concept of power is regarded as an essentially contested term where it is difficult to define an exact meaning (Nye, 2011: 5, Evans& Newnham, 1998: 446). Notwithstanding, neorealism is no exception in this regard –in a theory where power is acknowledged as a currency in the international system and as the ultimate determinant of the most basic elements in international life (Krauthammer, 1991: 139), apparently it seems there has not arrived a consensus on the exact meaning of power. As Kenneth Waltz (1993: 15) contends ‘although power is a key concept in realist theory, its proper definition remains a matter of controversy’

Mostly to realists, international relations are largely a realm of power and interest due to the fact that whether human nature or the anarchic international structure constraints much on the political system (Donnelly, 2002: 9). In realist view, power is linked to the relative share of aggregate global resources (Moravcsik, 2009: 406). Following this logic, there can be found a strong correlation between the capabilities (power) and interests of states. For instance, it is acknowledged that as the relative power of the US compared to other states has increased after the Second World War, relevantly so did its interests (Cox& Stokes, 2008: 11).

It might be argued that to traditional realists, power is defined narrowly in militarily terms (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 87) that military force is the final and legitimate arbiter of disputes among states because of the absence of a world government (Schweller, 1997: 6). However, they recognize other forms of power such as economic and psychological power as well (Gilpin, 1996: 8). By the same token, although as a proponent of structural realism Mearsheimer (2001) argues that great powers attain their status by merit of military capabilities. On the other hand, from the perspective of neorealism, power is more than the



accumulation of military resources instead notably Waltz regards power as the combined capabilities of states (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 117).

It should be stressed that structural realism focuses on great powers because as Mearsheimer (2003) points out these states have the largest impact on what happens in international politics. In the same vein, Waltz (2010) puts it: 'A general theory of international politics is necessarily based on the great powers because in a self-help system the units of greatest capability set the scene of action for others as well as for themselves'. A good example of this could be observed when Soviet-American rivalry spread throughout the world during the Cold War like a domino effect (Mearsheimer, 2001: 5). Since it is the great powers that determine the structure of the system, a rank ordering of states is necessary to be able to differentiate and count the number of great powers that exist at a particular point in time (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 92). According to Waltz (2010), the rank of great powers depends on the combination of the following items: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability, and competence. Hence, it is the capabilities of state -without being separated as economic, military, and political realms- that should be used to gauge its ability to act (Waltz, 2010: 130-131).

For neorealism, examined in the context of self-help system, power is particularly important to the extent that it allows a state to increase its security and increase its ability to influence others (Jones, 2006: 20). Yet, in the absence of power the opposite scenario may lead weaker states to be more reliant on ones that are more powerful. Thus, power is perceived as relative in the neorealist lexicon. Moreover, in the logic of neorealist theory, the relative distribution of power is an important causal variable (Jones, 2006: 246), which has a direct influence on the state behavior (Cox& Stokes, 2008: 11). States care very much about their relative power positions due to the fact that power is the key to survival (Posen, 2004: 22) as there is always a possibility to use force to advance own interests (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 92). States are assumed wise to be concerned about capability improvement and any power increases by other states, which would qualify as a potential to outmatch their own power position (Posen, 2006: 155). Indeed, the international structure may change because of the changes in distribution of capabilities among units. It is thus crucial in the sense that if the structure changes, and then the range of possible outcomes to unit interactions changes (Brown& Ainley, 2005: 110-115). Therefore, the relative distribution of power along with the dictates of anarchy is the key explanatory variables to comprehend the nature of the international politics.

The interpretation of the definition and measurement of power among structural realists forms the basis of a major subdivision within the paradigm; namely, defensive realism and offensive realism. Whereas the former is associated with Kenneth N. Waltz arguing that power is a means to the end of security, and that states should strive for appropriate amount of power (Dunne, Kurki & Smith, 2013: 75), the latter is led by John Mearsheimer and asserts that in order to ensure their survival, states should maximize power and their ultimate goal should be hegemony. At first glance, Waltz rejects the common relational definition of power that equates it with control<sup>15</sup> because power as a cause confuses process with outcome. Rather he identifies power with a notion arguing that ‘an agent is powerful to the extent that he affects others more than they affect him’. Such categorization suggests reading power largely as a means independent of the outcomes of its use (Waltz, 2010: 191-192). Furthermore, Waltz argues that power is not contingent upon intentions rather power operates even when those who directly affect may not be conscious of the consequences of their actions (Tote, 2010: 24). According to Waltz, states are unitary actors who at a minimum pursue own survival, and at a maximum seek for universal domination. In achieving these aims, states mobilize internal efforts (increase economic capability, increase military strength, and develop clever strategies) and external efforts (enlarge one’s own alliance or weaken an opposing one (Waltz, 2010: 118).

On the other hand, offensive realism defines power in relation to particular material capabilities that a state possesses and upholds the notion that a state’s effective power is a function of its military power (Mearsheimer, 2001: 55). Along similar lines with defensive realism, offensive realism rejects attaining power a causal role based on influence or control. Mearsheimer (1994) contends that states seek to survive under anarchy by maximizing their power relative to other states. Because this is so, states seek to improve their relative power position at the expense of absolute levels of power. Under offensive realism’s framework, power is fungible.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, relations between states are zero-sum. With regard to zero-sum definition of power, two assumptions can be deduced from the theory. First, in an international system within which one state gains for one means a loss for the other, the opportunity for cooperation decreases. Second, since countries are engaged in zero-sum rivalry, decline or increase in aggregate economic and demographic performance matter to an

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<sup>15</sup> Most notably Robert Dahl’s definition of power: ‘Power is the ability to get people to do what one wants them to do when otherwise they would not do it’ (cited in Waltz, 2010: 191).

<sup>16</sup> Fungibility signifies the ease with which capabilities in one issue-area can be used in other areas (Baldwin, 1993: 20).

important degree (Moravcsik, 2009: 4). Yet, because states ensure their survival and guard against offensive attacks by being as powerful as possible in relation to their rivals, any increase in economic strength of a state will be inherently equated to the translation into increase in military power.

#### **2.3.4. THE BALANCE OF POWER**

The term 'balance of power' can be traced back to the sixteenth century, but it was theorized in the eighteenth century (Brown & Ainley, 2005: 97). However, there exists much diversity on the definition of the concept. The term has been accorded to many meanings such as a system of states as a whole<sup>17</sup> or a system emerging of necessity when states seek their survival<sup>18</sup>. Within the realist paradigm, the balance of power is widely acknowledged as the primary operating principle of the international system wherein states seek to ensure an equilibrium of power by establishing formal alliances (external balancing) or increasing military capabilities (internal balancing) towards a hegemonic state or coalition of states (Cox & Stokes, 2008: 12). Waltz (2010) explicitly views balance of power as a distinctive theory of international politics. On the other hand, it is important to note that apart from arguing that balance of power will always emerge, Waltz stresses that it is an outcome when states adjust their policies to the changes in the distribution of power (Hollis & Smith, 2009: 101) rather than a uniformity of behavior (Waltz, 2000: 38). Balances of power are accepted by states because there is no effective alternative in the international system (Waltz, 2010: 101).<sup>19</sup>

To defensive realism, balancing and bandwagoning are two contrast behaviors of security-seeking states to their situations (Waltz, 1997: 915). In that, Waltz links the decision to the ordering principles- i.e. hierarchy or anarchy. To his account, in hierarchic orders, political actors tend to bandwagon<sup>20</sup> since losing does not jeopardize their security (Waltz, 2010: 126). However, in an anarchic international order, security is the highest end. Rather than maximizing their power, states aim to maintain their positions in the system. Thus, when a

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<sup>17</sup> Inis Claude's definition of balance of power (cited in Brown & Ainley, 2006: 100).

<sup>18</sup> Morgenthau's definition, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Kenneth Waltz (1999: 694) mentions Morgenthau's analogy of a statesman not believing the balance of power to a scientist not believing in the law of gravity. To Waltz, laws can be broken but breaking them risks punishment.

<sup>20</sup> Deriving from the American electoral system, the term implies increasing gains by siding with the stronger party (Donnelly, 2009: 189).

state faces with a rising state that presents a potential threat (Donnelly, 2009: 116), it balances power rather than maximizing (Waltz, 2010: 127). In explaining the logic of balance of power, Waltz stresses the modus operandi of the self-help system. Operating under an anarchic order of international system in which there is no central authority, states thus pay considerable attention to their own security. Consequently, they keep a watchful eye open for ways of enhancing their own power<sup>21</sup> and reducing that of others (Hollis& Smith, 2009: 97). In a self-help system, the possibility of failing to prosper and suffering -by not obeying the abovementioned rules of the system- stimulates states to behave toward the creation of balances of power. (Waltz, 2010: 118). Once the balance is disrupted, it will be restored in one-way or another. Balances of power recurrently form and states engage in balancing behavior regardless of their intentions and will (Waltz, 2010: 126). In this sense, it might be argued that balance of power is a mechanism that preserves order of a kind and to a degree in the anarchic international system (Brown& Ainley, 2005: 97). However, it should be noted that according to Waltz, structures shape and shove state behavior instead of determining it. Therefore, the theory does not maintain any predictive concerns on policies of states. Waltz presents example from Mussolini's Italy's bandwagoning behavior with Hitler's Germany. He posits that Italy should have chosen balancing Germany rather than bandwagoning, in order to prevent it to further conquest (Waltz, 1997: 915).

On the other hand, offensive realism employs the same line of argument from a different departure point. Contrary to defensive realism, which argues that states specifically aim to maintain their positions within the system, offensive realists argue that states strive to maximize their share of world power and at the same time prevent others to gain power at their expense. The methods advised by offensive realism to shift the balance in great powers' favor or prevent others shifting against are primarily balancing and buck-passing (Mearsheimer, 2001: 139). In that regard, Mearsheimer assumes that balancing behavior realizes via three measures. Faced with an aggressor, the threatened states might send clear signals to the aggressor by diplomatic channels on the commitment of the status quo in own favor such as US sending to Soviet Union throughout the Cold War. Secondly, by external balancing, threatened states can create a defensive alliance to assist them in containing their opponent. On Mearsheimer's account, this option is limited to bipolar structures but since the costs of checking an aggressor are shared in alliance, states pay considerable attention to

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<sup>21</sup> It is important to mention that Waltz focused on power maximization. Waltz (2010: 126) warns that power maximization instead of creating safer situation poses more dangers in the sense that this would lead other states to strengthen themselves. In order to seek security, increased power may or may not serve to that end.

external balancing. As a final strategy, Mearsheimer contends that by internal balancing, threatened states might mobilize additional resources such as increased defense spending (Mearsheimer, 2001: 156).

To put the debate all in context, it might be argued that defensive realism demonstrates a tendency towards balancing behavior whilst offensive realism praises buck-passing as a stronger strategy for survival. As far as the departure points of the two paradigms considered, it can be said that the question 'how much power' plays a divisive role in arriving the differences in conclusions.

### **2.3.5. POLARITY CONFIGURATION**

In general, the concept of polarity in international relations refers to the distribution of power among actors in the international system (Tote, 2010: 163). It should be noted that within realist tradition, there exists a spectrum of different approaches to the stability and the durability of the poles. On the other hand, polarity configuration as well as anarchy occupies a prominent place as key systemic characteristics in neorealist lexicon. In that, neorealism formulates the stability of the international system as bound to two factors: anarchy and the lack of consequential variation in the number of principal parties that constitute the system (Waltz, 2010: 161). In this regard, neorealists maintain that given the anarchy is a constant variable, the stability of the system is highly related to the number of great powers and the distribution of power among the leading states (Mearsheimer, 2001: 336).

Historically two patterns have existed in terms of distribution of capabilities: multipolarity and bipolarity<sup>22</sup> (Posen, 2004: 24). According to neorealism, these two polar structures slightly differ in terms of stability and respective balancing behavior. Generally accepted as a system comprising three or more great powers<sup>23</sup>, multipolarity is regarded as quite war prone due to its complexity and having room for possibility of high miscalculation (posen,p.24). The role of alliances in a multipolar system demonstrates a flexible and constantly shifting feature with ideology playing no role in determining the membership (Hollis& Smith, 2009: 103). To Waltz, the basic incentive under multipolarity is to balance against the strongest pole either by internal or external ways (Kluth& Pilegaard, 2010,). On the other hand, offensive realism led

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<sup>22</sup> It is widely acknowledged that the state system was multipolar from 1648 to the Second World War and was bipolar during the Cold War (Mearsheimer, 2001: 78).

<sup>23</sup> To Waltz, multipolarity consists of two or more states. On the other hand, M.A. Kaplan estimates the number of actors to be at least five (Tote, 2010: 163).

by Mearsheimer (2001) adds further dimension to the organization of multipolar systems. He distinguishes between multipolar systems with or without a potential hegemon. In that, whereas a system that contains an aspiring hegemon is named as unbalanced, a system without such a dominant state is regarded as balanced. Mearsheimer concludes that on most occasions, unbalanced multipolarity is the most dangerous of all polarity configurations as potential hegemons are likely to get into costly and long wars with all of other great powers in the system. In terms of stability, balanced polarity is situated between bipolarity and unbalanced multipolarity (Mearsheimer, 2003: 337-338). Compared to multipolarity, bipolar structure with two dominant power centers (Tote, 2010: 163) that characterized the Cold War is viewed as a more stable pattern by the structural realists since calculation of relative capabilities is easier than multipolar systems. Contrary to multipolar systems, the alliances in bipolar systems do not shift and seem to be held by ideological glue (Hollis& Smith, 2009: 103). However, tension and over-reaction are the principal problems of the bipolar systems (Posen, 2004: 23-24). In bipolarity, Waltz (2000: 6) argues generally states provide for their security by alliances and own internal efforts. Hence, basic incentive suggested by Waltz is to bandwagon with one of the superpowers. On the other hand, Mearsheimer (2001) argues that balancing is the proper reaction of great powers under bipolarity.

As neorealism tends to explain change of polarity in virtue of change in the distribution of capabilities among the great powers (Tote, 2009: 169), it might be argued that since the end of Cold War, a new pattern of polarity configuration has emerged as the US acquired an unusual relative power (Posen, 2004: 24). As such, the US has been the sole superpower, with no state or combination of states providing an effective counterweight (Waltz, 1997: 699), and since the Roman Empire power has never been concentrated in one state as in US (Waltz, 2000:17). According to Waltz (2000), unipolarity might be seen as least durable international configuration. Two broad arguments account for this. One is by taking on many tasks beyond own borders, dominant powers weaken themselves in the long run, namely 'imperial decay'. In the specific case of the US, Waltz notes that the country's physical capabilities and political will cannot sustain present world burdens indefinitely (Waltz, 1997: 700). The other reason is, as unbalanced power is perceived as a potential danger to others, some states will tend to increase their own strength or will ally with others to bring the international distribution of power into balance. Regardless of the intention of the dominant power, overwhelming power repels and leads others to try to balance against it. In that, the intentions may conflict with the preferences and interests of others, and concentration of power invites

distrust because it is so easily misused (Waltz, 2000: 28-29). Indeed, it is argued that in a unipolar structure, power talks and informs, but rarely consults and listens (Serfanty, 2012: 32). Therefore, in the case of the US, Barry Posen (2004) posits that if the country is acknowledged as benign today, there is no reason to assume that this will always be so. As might be seen in the Iraq War in 2003, the US and the UK invaded Iraq contrary to the United Nations Security Council's authorization.<sup>24</sup>

Considering the responses to the unipolarity of the rest of the states in the international system, Posen (2004: 24) contends that most small states should be expected to bandwagon whereas the larger states have more available options in their disposal. They may choose to bandwagon with the hope of gaining more from the greatest power and for the aforementioned reasons they might support a strategy of buckpassing<sup>25</sup> and ultimately directly balancing the power of the US (Posen, 2004: 24). Alternatively, Mearsheimer reads the unipolar power configuration of the international system as more peaceful in comparison to multipolar and bipolar systems. In terms of international instability, he contends that since unipolarity includes one great power there cannot be a security competition between states. This is particularly the case with the US's hegemonic position in the Western Hemisphere where no state willingly starts a war against the hegemon for the fear of being defeated (Dunne & Kurki & Smith, 2013: 80).

### **2.3.6. STATUS QUO VS. REVISIONISM**

The definition of status quo or revisionist power in international relations literature is largely vague and under theorized albeit the concepts are at the core of international relations theorizing (Johnston, 2007: 8). Overall, status quo means the existing state of affairs. The term is usually associated with E. H. Carr who referred it to types of foreign policies practiced by certain states in the inter-war period (Evans & Newnham, 1998: 517). Nonetheless, the term involves a range of definitions from 'maintenance of the distribution of power' (Morgenthau, cited *in* Johnston, 2007: 9) to 'participating in the designing the rules of the game and standing to benefit from those rules' (Organski and Kugler, cited *in* Johnston: 9). On the contrary, revisionism is usually used to denote the challenges to the status quo

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<sup>24</sup> The theory and practice of international law legitimizes the use of force only when it is an act of self-defense or is authorized by the UN Security Council (Mahubani, 2008: 114).

<sup>25</sup> During buckpassing they might wait for another truly great power to emerge in front of the US (Posen, 2004: 24).

(Evans& Newnham, 1998: 480). To Organski, a revisionist state expresses a general dissatisfaction with its position in the system (Johnston, 2007: 9).

The divergence in neorealist paradigm with respect to power typology has a direct reflection on their depiction of states' positioning within the international system. To defensive realism, since states seek relative security, they maintain their position in the existing global balance of power. To use Waltz's terms, states are defensive positionalists. As mentioned above, Waltz holds the view that states at minimum seek their own survival and at maximum search for universal domination. Thus, acquiring ever-larger amounts of power is not an objective in itself (Waltz, 2010: 119). On the contrary, offensive realism proclaims absolute security for states, therefore depicts a more force prone scenario. For offensive realism, major or emerging powers are rarely satisfied with the current distribution of power. This proposition is backed by two assumptions, which argue, that the uncertainty of other states' intentions and fear of possible miscalculation of proper amount of power for survival propel states to maximize power (Hancock& Lobell, 2010: 146). Drawn on the conditions of anarchy, fear and uncertainty are the engines that drive the competitive behavior of the states in the international system. Thus, states are expected to act according to the dictates of anarchy rather than the intentions or plans of other states (Posen, 2004: 155). Unlike Waltz, Mearsheimer maintains that since the international system creates incentives for gaining power at the expense of rivals, status quo powers are hard to find (Casarini, 2009: 7).

### **2.3.7. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE, AND COOPERATION**

Given its preoccupation with systemic pressures, structural realism does not consider international institutions as having an independent causal effect (Laksmna, 2013: 2). The reason for this argument mainly derives from neorealist logic that identifies the structure with respect to the rules of anarchy. As such, self-help behavior imposed by the anarchic system enables the leaders of states to fend for themselves with or without the cooperation of others (Waltz, 1993: 59). On the ease and likelihood of its occurrence, neorealists tend to view international cooperation as 'harder to achieve, more difficult to maintain, and more dependent on state power' (Baldwin, 1993: 5). Writing from the perspective of offensive realism, Mearsheimer (2001) contends that states can cooperate -albeit it is difficult- yet, two factors constraint cooperation: considerations about relative gains and concern about cheating. To Mearsheimer, in a fundamentally competitive environment, great powers focus on relative



gains than absolute gains along with the logic of balance of power. Despite these impediments, Mearsheimer states, great powers form alliances and cooperate against common rivals, as European states did forty years before World War I. He goes on to argue that however this cooperation did not prevent going to war in 1914. He concludes by asserting that 'no amount of cooperation can eliminate the dominating logic of security competition' (Mearsheimer, 2001: 53).

On the other hand, neorealists argue that institutions matter to the extent that they cause states to behave in ways they otherwise would not behave such as choosing short-term interest over long-term (Schweller, 1997: 3). Given the rise of the number and the role of the international institutions, Mearsheimer counters the arguments over the power of institutions to have an independent effect on state behavior by claiming that 'institutions are arenas for acting on power relationships'. In other words, he offers an explanation of a possible cooperation under which powerful states in the system create and shape institutions. To his understanding, neither the United Nations nor any other international institution has much coercive leverage over the great powers (Mearsheimer, 2001: 363-364).

The interdependence, Waltz contends, promotes peace by multiplying contacts among states and contributing to mutual understanding, and at the same time it might promote war by multiplying the occasions for conflicts that may promote resentment. He goes on to argue that despite the fact that being each other's second best customers, Germany and Britain fought a bloody war during World War I. Therefore, given the uneven consequences of interdependence, he concludes that among the world shaping factors, interdependence is a relatively weak one (Waltz, 2000: 14). It might be said that the general emphasis of neorealism is on the significance of states –specifically the governments- in explaining the international-political events while recognizing the economic relations of states. To Waltz, governments instead of economic interests and market forces create blocs. He goes on to argue that the decisions and acts of governments shape international and economic institutions (Waltz, 1999: 698-699). As Binclair remarks, the relationship between global finance and politics has not been static in which an inclination towards greater state intervention in preserving worldwide financial stability can be observed. Before Second World War, the governments had interest and particular role in the smooth working of finance to fund the activity of state. After the Second World War, the US assured the central role in the design and implementation of new global financial rules and institutions that shaped the international political economy (Beeson& Bisley, 2013: 12). As Geller argues the rules of the system can

be highly read as a reflection of the interests of the dominant power(s) (Tote, 2010: 170). In line with Geller, Waltz (1999: 700) maintains that it is the capability of the US to regulate the global finance system most notably via IMF-- as an enforcement system of the US. Thus, instead of interpreting the post-Cold War system as an increased interdependence of states, neorealism views the post- Cold War system as growing inequality across states in terms of distribution of capabilities.



### **3. APPLICATION OF NEOREALIST THEORY TO THE GLOBAL RISE OF CHINA**

Having surveyed the general tenets of neorealism, this section attempts to analyze the rise of China in the post-Cold War era from the lens of neorealist theory. After examining the affinity and the applicability of neorealism to explain the rise of China, this part proceeds as elaborating on the dimensions of China's rise. As the theory places a heavy emphasis on the structure as an explanatory variable, the interpretation of the international system after the end of Cold War among neorealist scholars is outlined. Within the margins of the theory, the balancing behavior of China and the greatest power under the current international system is briefly discussed.

#### **3.1. NEOREALISM AND CHINA**

Given its origin and association with Western historical traditions, the applicability of international relations theories to Asian states forms the basis of the much of the disagreement as to whether international theories are relevant to Asia (Shambaugh & Yahuda, 2008: 58). On the applicability and relevance of neorealism- a theory deriving from Western experience- to China, Kang Wang (2004: 176) argues that despite the differences between Asian and European state systems, Asian states demonstrated similar behavior qualities to their European counterparts. According to Wang, historically balance of power was dominant in China. Analyzing the tribute system in imperial China, Wang concludes that imperial China placed a high premium on the utility of force as well. Wang supports his claim by outlining the strategies that China adopted throughout Song and Ming Dynasties periods- roughly between 960 and 1644-. In that, he explores that the tribute system as an institution to manage Chinese foreign relations served as a defense mechanism (Wang, 2004: 188). Throughout the given episode of time, China went through offensive, to defensive, and then to appeasement strategies, which are much in tune with balance of power. As a more recent phenomenon, Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth (2009) similarly posit that since Asian state system has integrated into the modern international system, it can be said that they contain much of the features of Westphalian system. Thus, the concepts such as the distribution of power, hegemony are relevant in the Asian context.

Overall, neorealism considers states regardless of their culture, regime type. Yet, it instead focuses on the constraints and incentives over states imposed by the anarchic international

system. To a systemic account, one may tackle the nature of international relations without identifying even which states are involved (Hollis & Smith, 2009: 104). Therefore, it is hardly surprising to discover parallel lines between the current discussion over the implications of the material rise of a communist state for mostly the liberally governed international order with the traits of neorealism. As Mearsheimer (2012) puts it: ‘If you are the leader of China, even if you do not know a lot about Chinese history, it does not matter. You quickly figure out what the structure of the system demands and you behave accordingly’. This line of neorealist reasoning leads to take the structural constraints and incentives over the sovereign states as a point of reference. Thus, along with its focus on international structure, and with its particular emphasis on the relative distribution of power neorealism suggests an explanatory account for the global rise of China.

### **3.2. THE RISE AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHINA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM**

‘China may well be the high church of realpolitik in the post-Cold world’<sup>26</sup>

Napoleon Bonaparte, the emperor of France, would be the first Western statesman to comment on China’s significance (Lai, 2011: 29). In 1803, he stated that: ‘China is a sickly, sleeping giant. Let China sleep, for when she wakes up, she will shake the world’<sup>27</sup> Notwithstanding, given Chinese economic and military superiority for about three thousand years throughout Asia and Europe, an awakening China in the form of ‘re-emergence’ would be a more proper identification than a rising China (Nye, 2006: 2). Indeed, the timing of Napoleon’s assertion matches with the start of Chinese humiliation period characterized by wars and colonialism that lasted a hundred years. On the other hand, apart from rising economic, military, and political presence in international arena, Jonathan Pollack (1989) points out China’s significance to be found in her style of relating to the other powers. Towards the superpowers, Pollack states, China has raised her credibility as an emergent major power by pursuing eclectic strategies in which confrontation, armed conflict, as well as informal alignment have taken place. In this respect, it is possible to define China as a distinctive international actor within the dynamics of the international system. What is more, given the unipolar structure of the international system in the post Cold War era, China is widely acknowledged as the most potential state to restructure the dynamics of the world

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<sup>26</sup> (Mearsheimer, 2003: 375)

<sup>27</sup> (Stumbaum, 2007: 12; Lai, 2011: 29; Zakaria, 2010: 100).

order (Oğuzlu, 2014: 1) mostly as a peer competitor to balance the US (Mearsheimer, 2001: 37).

Obviously, the rise of China since the end of Cold War ranks among the most important developments over the last century<sup>28</sup>. Considering China's rapid pace of transformation on one hand, and at the same time the complex set of interconnected economic, political and strategic processes realizing that transformation on the other hand; it is possible to argue that 'the rise of China' proves to be one of the most consequential developments of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century (Beeson, 2013: 233). On the other hand, Legro (2007: 515) points out the direct connection of 'China's rise' as a pressing political issue to a critical gap to be filled in the academic field. As a response to the rising political, military and economic power of China, much of the debate over China has centered on how much power China really has, whether or not it can translate its power resources into preferred outcomes, how China can avoid using its power in a self-defeating manner (Blanchard, 2013: 146) and what will China do with all this newly acquired power and influence? (Beeson, 2013: 233). Given the current concerns on China's rise as to whether it will rise peacefully or not; what will be the future direction of its rise; will China overtake the US in terms of economy and military; and as China grows more will it be loyal to the status quo, it might be said that the re-emergence of China as a global power necessitates to query China's material potential and consequent intentions. From this perspective, the argument put forward on China's rise corresponds quite well to the domain of neorealism that involves core concepts such as uncertainty, self-help, an anarchic international setting, and balance of power.

### **3.3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE POST-COLD WAR PERIOD FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM**

The structure of the international system in the post-Cold War era has been interpreted in a number of different ways. Nonetheless, the realist school envisioned the Cold War era as a bipolar international structure that was characterized by two-superpower (US and USSR) rivalry and largely operated under the balance of power mechanism (Heywood, 2007: 134). Accordingly, for the implications of the post-Cold War international structure, the dissolution of Soviet Union shifted the structure from bipolar to a unipolar one. As Krauthammer (1992)

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<sup>28</sup> According to the Global Language Monitor that tracks the top 50,000 media sources throughout the World, the 'rise of China' has been declared as the most read-about news story of the twentieth century (Beckley, 2012: 41).

defined, a 'unipolar moment' was created.<sup>29</sup> Possessing military, diplomatic, political, and economic power at a degree with no coequal America had become preeminent power in the international structure (Krauthammer, 1992: 24), which is the only great power with a global power projection capability (Kurowska& Breuer, 2011: 31). This unipolarity, Krauthammer defines, reflects the gap between the leading nation and all the others that is so unprecedented as to yield an international structure unique to modern history. Moreover, in a revised article written after twelve years Krauthammer (2002) argues that the defining feature of post-Cold War order - 'unipolar moment'- largely remains true. Indeed, it has been translated into 'unipolar era'. At this point, Mearsheimer opposes the idea that the US is a global hegemon. Rather, he categorizes the US as a regional hegemon in the Western Hemisphere (Mearsheimer, 2001: 381). On his account, there would hardly be any security competition in Europe and Northeast Asia if the international system were unipolar. Mearsheimer briefly considers China and Russia as great powers that have strong potentials<sup>30</sup> to challenge the US. Thus, it is the preponderance of the US that features as dominant political reality after the Cold-War era, since neorealism recognizes the distribution of material power as a crucial property of the international system (Hurrell, 2006: 5).

Contributing to the debate, Christopher Layne (1993) argues that the 'unipolar moment' is a geopolitical interlude that will give way to multipolarity between the years 2000-2010. The departure point for such claim is grounded on two neorealist premises on unipolarity. The first one is the assumption that the hegemon's unbalanced power creates the emergence of new powers. Whilst, the second one is the entry of new great powers into the international system erodes the hegemon's relative power and ultimately its preeminence (Layne, 1993: 7). Along similar lines, Schweller and Pu (2012) anticipate a structural transformation from unipolarity to multipolarity in the post-Cold War era. They portray a multipolarity scene in which under the current juncture several poles will emerge to join the US as poles.

On the structure of the international system in the post-Cold War period, it seems clear that more or less there exists a consensus among the proponents of neorealism. In terms of

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<sup>29</sup> As a consequence of the end of systemic rivalry with the demise of Soviet Union, the leaders of the United States would tout the triumph of 'Pax-Americana' in a confident manner. In his last presidential speech of 20th century, President Bill Clinton rendered America as the 'world's indispensable nation...at the dawn of 21st century...' (Brezinski, 1997: 44). Indeed, Joseph Nye named the US as 'bound to lead' reflecting the position of US in the international system (Nye, 1990).

<sup>30</sup> With both having nuclear arsenals, the capability to contest and thwart a US invasion of their homeland. (Mearsheimer, 2003:381)

distribution of power, the post-Cold War international system is widely accepted by structural realists as a unipolar order with the US wielding extraordinary economic, military, and political power whether label it as hegemon, sole super power, preponderant major power. On the other hand, as outlined above there occurs a disagreement over the durability of this new polarity configuration. At one side, Waltz and Layne argue that unipolarity would be a short-lived transitional phase from bipolarity to multipolarity (Layne, 2012: 204). In particular, Waltz (2000) posits that the upcoming balance is approaching slowly, yet it will come in the blink of an eye. Likewise, looking to the future, Krauthammer (1992) anticipates unipolarity to transform into multipolarity within decades as new powers emerge—around thirty or forty years.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, Posen asserts that the full implications of unipolarity cannot be understood the day after the collapse of Soviet Union. He goes on to argue that the distribution of power will slowly produce the behavior patterns and problems as states explore the geo-political terrain of the post Cold-War world (Posen, 2006: 160).

Whether short-lived or more, in terms of balance of power logic- since ‘power will check power’- unipolarity is expected to be transcended to either bipolarity or to multipolarity. It seems clear that unipolarity is assigned ‘a period of transition’ feature in which for the part of preponderant power it is inevitable to be counterbalanced.

### **3.3.1. UNIPOLARITY AND CHINA**

‘The relationship between the United States and China will shape the 21<sup>st</sup> century’<sup>32</sup>

In 2008, Joseph Nye predicted that the rise of China would be one of the great dramas of the twenty-first century. The bottom line of his argument rested on questioning whether China will overthrow the existing order as its power and influence grows more? (Ikenberry, 2011: 23). Along similar lines, from the standpoint of neorealism China’s comprehensive rise in all terms of power covering economic, military, and political strands against the backdrop of an American dominated system raises questions about the relationship between the emerging power (proto peer) and the prevailing power (Weiqing, 2013: 1). Having examined the premises of neorealism and the post-Cold War structure defined by the theory as unipolar, the question of when and particularly who will be the likely challenger is of central importance.

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<sup>31</sup> Reexamining his assertion in 2002, Krauthammer argues that the durability will largely depend on the US’s ability.

<sup>32</sup> In a speech in US-China Economic and Strategic summit in 2009, President Barack Obama’s statement (cited in Lai, 2008: 1).

From a structure-wide perspective, neorealism situates China's rise coterminous with the unique position of the US. So to say, the material rise of China, if sustained, has a potential to alter the dynamics of the existing international system. As Mearsheimer (2012) writes: 'If China continues its impressive rise, there will be two billiard balls in the system'. This perspective inevitably entitles to ask whether the extent of the relationship will bear resemblance to previous interaction of the US and the Soviet Union. It might be argued that in general neorealism offers an answer that is based on historical record, since it is postulated that the enduring characteristics of anarchy dictates states to act in the same manner. Paul Kennedy, in his book examining the rise and the fall of Great Powers over the past five centuries, contends that on the evidence of existing trends, the international system remains anarchical- no overarching authority above states. Thus, it is plausible to assume that these trends of the past five centuries will likely to continue in many ways (Kennedy, 1989: 440).

It should be noted that one of the central claims of neorealism is the assumption that an increase in relative power of a state can deteriorate the others' power position. One can establish that the collapse of Soviet Union led to the improvement of the US power position and increase in European security. Following this logic, if one state improves its relative power position, others will likely respond due to the imperatives of anarchic international system (Posen, 2006: 153-154). Given the unipolar structure after the end of Cold War, it is thus particularly noteworthy to question the consequences of China's increase in its relative power for the unipole and the rest of the states within the international system. Nonetheless, the argument put forward by structural realism over unipolarity invites to dwell on the questions: as an emerging power how will China behave given the constraints imposed by unipolar structure and correspondingly what will be the pattern of strategy of the other states in the system—notably the US and China's neighboring states. Put simply, can the elements of balancing be observed whilst examining the global rise of China? To that aim, in the next section strategies offered by neorealist paradigm in the current polarity configuration with special reference to China will be elaborated.

### **3.3.2. BALANCING UNDER UNIPOLARITY**

In neorealist view, the system's structure is distinctive as it forms the expected behavior patterns of states to an important extent. Put simply, the rules of the games change as the number of great powers change. It may be said that within the paradigm, there exists divergences with respect to the strategies for survival under unipolarity. As discussed earlier,



Waltz's main assumption on unipolarity is; unbalanced power, whoever wields it, is a potential danger to others. The powerful state may think of itself acting for the sake of peace, yet these may conflict with the interests and preferences of others. According to Waltz, states that face unbalanced power have two options in their disposal. They either try to increase their own strength or ally with others to bring the international distribution of power into balance (Waltz, 1997: 916). Contending that the US is preponderant power in the current international system, Waltz maintains that China will act to restore a balance and thus move the system back to bi- or multipolarity. On the other hand, Christopher Layne (2012) argues that due to the magnitude of US power that precludes other states from balancing against, China bandwagons with the US to endure its ongoing economic growth and modernization as well. However, to Layne this should not enable to label China as benign in terms of long-term intentions. Indeed, he asserts that China aims at becoming wealthy enough to acquire military capabilities it needs to compete with the US (Layne, 2012: 205). As outlined above, according to the standard measurement of the distribution of material capabilities, such as concentration of military power and overall economic potential, the preponderance of American power is so large that it renders counter balancing in-operational.<sup>33</sup> To Schweller and Pu (2012), in multipolar and bipolar systems balancing is the primary mechanism to preserve the status quo, but unipolarity is the only system in which balancing is a revisionist rather than status quo policy. Hence, any state seeking to balance is, by definition, revisionist.

With its focus on the structure of the international system, neorealism considers any change in distribution of power within the international system as highly relevant to its understanding of world order. Therefore, the theory regards the recent material rise of China as a potential to change the distribution of power within the system, so a highly potential to change the polar configuration of the system.

### **3.3.3. SOFT BALANCING UNDER UNIPOLARITY**

As emphasized earlier, polarity narrows the range of choice and provides incentives for typical behavior patterns. In that regard, it might be said that unipolarity increases the incentives for counterbalancing, but at the same time raises the costs (Ikenberry, 2009: 19). Given the review of China's rise in economic, military, and political realms, it might be concluded that China adopts internal hard balancing as well as soft balancing strategies. On the other hand, in addition to the traditional hard balancing methods, 'soft balancing' has been

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<sup>33</sup> [http://unipolarity.com/?page\\_id=16](http://unipolarity.com/?page_id=16)

coined to reflect the balancing behavior of states under unipolarity (Weiqing, 2013: 2). The fundamental basis of this proposition maintains that as the extraordinary imbalance between the unipole and all other states within the international system in terms of material capabilities demonstrate, the traditional balance of power is inoperative. Indeed, special types of balancing are occurring (Ikenberry& Mastanduno& Wohlforth, 2009: 22). The term covers a more tacit and indirect balancing approach to frustrate, delay and undermine the prevailing power by the use of international institutions, economic statecraft, and diplomatic arrangements (Weiqing, 2013: 2).

Following this logic, Schweller and Pu (2012) contend that as the unipolar systems involve significant deconcentration of power, secondary states do not have the capability to balance against the unipole. Indeed, rising powers attempt to shape the environment without directly confronting the hegemon. Schweller and Pu further shift the neorealist emphasis away from military confrontation or even the threat of such conflict and argue that the rising challenger must delegitimize the hegemon's global authority and order prior to hard balancing. Against this backdrop, they argue that in the current juncture China, as a potential challenger, practices resistance to the US along two lines. On the one spectrum, China pragmatically accommodates US hegemony. Given the relative strength of China, it would not be plausible for it to directly challenge the international order. Indeed, to sustain its economic and military growth China needs stable relationship with the US. On the other hand, since the end of Cold War the US has pursued a strategy of engagement rather than directly containment towards the country that paved the very way for a rising China.<sup>34</sup> On the other part of spectrum, it contests the legitimacy of US hegemony. As such, China does not need to match US military power to pose problems. Rather, China challenges the legitimacy of US-led order in a number of ways (Schweller& Pu, 2012: 54-57). First, Schweller and Pu argue that by placing 'multilateralism' to the part of its diplomacy, China has expanded its political influence in Asian regional affairs. Since 1990s<sup>35</sup>, in an increasing manner China has actively participated in most of the regional multilateral institutions<sup>36</sup> such as Asia-Pacific Cooperation, ASEAN

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<sup>34</sup> The US was instrumental in bringing about Chinese economic land off by providing China access to worldwide markets. In doing so, Lai argues that the US primarily aimed at gaining an ally in counterbalancing the Soviet threat. Then, there occurred an expectation that by economic development gradually China would transform into democracy (Lai, 2009: 51).

<sup>35</sup> Prior to mid-1990s, China followed predominantly reactive and bilateral pattern on the regional security issues (Xinbo, 2004: 2) due to the concern over possible erosion of state sovereignty (Nadkarni& Nookan, 2013: 115).

<sup>36</sup> In 1994, China subscribed to 50 intergovernmental organizations compared to that of 26 in 1982 (Yee, 2011 :175).

plus China whose common feature is the sanctioning of common security (Ahrari, 2011: 30). Regarding Chinese activism in the multilateral international grounds, Ahrari contends that Chinese approach to multilateralism is a part of its portrayal of preferred international order. In essence, Ahrari attributes increasing ambition of China to participate in multilateral forums to Chinese interpretation of multilateralism as an effective mechanism to oppose US hegemony. To his account, China finds its expression of multipolar global order by supporting multilateralism. At this point, it should be noted that when the inner structures of these organizations are examined, the relationship between multilateral cooperation and Chinese incorporation of it into its national security as a strategy could be comprehended. For instance, Susan Shirk argues that ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994 was particularly a prelude for China to ease itself into regional cooperation (Shirk, 2007: 118). Although it was primarily set out to enhance multilateral security cooperation (Xinbo: 1), the structure of the organization did not allow interfering in any member's domestic political situation (Shirk, 2007: 118). On the other hand, as China's comfort with the organization has increased, it proposed to address military issues in 2004. Along similar lines, when the departure point of ASEAN Three is concerned, it is significant to note that it was established by China, Japan and Korea during the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis as a counterbalance mechanism to Asia Pacific Economic Forum (APEC) led by the US (Shirk, 2007: 118).

On a larger scale, Andrew Hurrell similarly points to the substance of the orientation of the international institutions in the contemporary political system. In his view, 'hierarchy' and 'inequality' remain central to international institutions despite the growing emphasis on 'sovereign equality' (Hurrell, 2006: 10). To support his view, Hurrell presents evidence from the structure of the international institutions such as IMF. In that, for instance, the special rights and duties embodied in the UN Security Council or the weighted voting structures of the IMF or World Bank reaffirm the importance of 'playing the game of institutionalized hierarchy' by aspiring major powers. In this respect, Oğuzlu (2013) provides a link between Chinese support for the fundamental principles of the UN, which covers both praising the territorial integrity of member states and delegitimizing outside involvement in states' internal affairs and the very realist stance of Chinese foreign policy behavior. Oğuzlu argues that China, specifically with its P5 status in the Security Council of the UN<sup>37</sup>, reflects its realist argument that great powers should have more say in global international order. Following this

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<sup>37</sup> China is one of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council out five which has veto power over all Security Council decisions (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 313).

logic, within an international system characterized by US-led order that is built around the institutional and multilateral structures (such as UN, GATT), the attempts of Chinese activism within the multilateral fora are highly attributable to instrumental concerns. Therefore, China is likely to use institutions to provide assurance to weaker states-especially to ASEAN - and as a means of taming the power of the most powerful (Hurrel, 2006: 11). Such considerations can also be observed in Chinese persistent pressure on West to allow emerging economies to have a bigger presence in the established financial system. In that sense, Daniel Xie proclaims the setting of BRICS Development Bank in 2014 as a remarkable exemplifier of the culmination of Chinese attempts to reform the global financial system and simultaneously to pave the way for newly emerged economies like Brazil, India to play in that global financial system (Xie, 2014).

As an additional point, it should be noted that post-Cold War structure of the international system demonstrated a tendency towards multilateralism. As a response to this increasing global trend, by participating in the multilateral institutions, China not only accredited it as committed to rule-based international order, but also attempted to involve in shaping the distribution of power in its favor (Nadkarni& Noonan, 2013: 115). In this regard, international institutions could be seen as mechanisms where China effectively communicates its core messages that are mostly related to its core interests. Evidence for this could be provided when the behavior pattern of China on multilateral platforms is examined. As Zhao contends, concentrating on its strategic interests, China's participation in international institutions is conditional upon the inputs of other states. What is more, he asserts that China's contributions to the global commonwealth are not contradictory to its core interests.<sup>38</sup> As evident in 2009 Copenhagen Climate Summit, China opposed mandatory emission reductions while pressing Western governments for deep carbon reductions. Another conditionality came from China on its occasion to assist European countries in 2012 over 'multilateralism'. Another precedent can be seen in 2010 in the UN when China has resisted tougher sanctions to Iran over its nuclear program. Surprisingly, China's ultimate concern was Iran's position as its second-largest oil supplier although it was sharing Western concerns on nuclear proliferation. Indeed, Zhao describes China as 'reluctant and very selective in taking on the global and regional responsibilities' (Nadkarni& Noonan, 2013: 115-116). Contributing to the debate, Oğuzlu observes that China clearly avoids taking a particular side in any confrontation within the

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<sup>38</sup> Ahrari points out that after the end of Cold War, China's main area of cooperation notably with the US was non-traditional security threats such as natural disasters, terrorism, environmental degradation (Ahrari, 2011: 30).

international organizations that might be seen such as in Chinese stance on Russian-Ukrainian conflict. In that, while China did not approve Russian annexation of Crimea and Russian involvement in eastern Ukraine similar to its Western counterparts, for understandable reasons<sup>39</sup> it did not join Western sanctions put on Russia (Oğuzlu, 2013: 3).

It should be noted that, as Cabestan argues, as soon as an international issue coincides with the issues related to Chinese territorial integrity, domestic order or economic organization, China mostly resorts to the notions such as ‘political exceptionality’ or ‘equality’ to shield against its co-operation with the international community (Vogt, 2012: 10). According to a review on China’s attitude towards international institutions, Cohen and Van Dyke conclude that despite the fact that China exhibits more positive attitude towards international organizations than before, China plays a ‘responsible role’ in multilateral organizations that specifically deal with countries in which it has maritime disputes. To their assessment, the particular aim for China is to restrict the institutions’ actions to its own understanding of international law (cited *in* Etzioni, 2011: 549).

Yet somehow, it seems apparent that recent Chinese efforts to create an international development bank aiming to rival organizations like the World Bank<sup>40</sup> has a well-measured enduring pattern as Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji put it in 2002 Boao Forum: ‘Regional organizations are like railroads, planes and ships. They can compete. If people don’t like them, they don’t have to come’<sup>41</sup>. Thus, the transition of Chinese international diplomacy from bilateralism to multilateralism when read through the lens of neorealism tends to manifest a traditional power character.

Second, by applying a gradualist reform strategy, China uses international institutions to project power, specifically with regard to agenda setting issues. As a third way, China is increasingly using its financial power to achieve political and diplomatic influence. To Schweller and Pu, there are some indications that signal the Chinese dissatisfaction with the

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<sup>39</sup> China has signed an important energy deal with Russia on importing Russian gas to China within the next ten years (2024) (Oğuzlu, 2013: 3). Additionally, China has a significant arms trade with Russia since arms embargo imposed upon itself in 1989 (Segal, 2009: 2).

<sup>40</sup> The Asian Infrastructure Bank led by China has proposed to offer financing for infrastructure projects in underdeveloped countries across Asia to counterbalance other related multilateral organizations. India, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam joined the Bank whereas Australia, South Korea, and Japan did not. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/25/world/asia/china-signs-agreement-with-20-other-nations-to-establish-international-development-bank.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/25/world/asia/china-signs-agreement-with-20-other-nations-to-establish-international-development-bank.html?_r=0) retrieved on :25 October 2014

<sup>41</sup> (Cited *in* Shrink, 2009: 129).

existing international monetary order. To that end, it attempts to lay down a new currency reserve system and gradually enhance the international status of the Chinese currency. Moreover, China targets to abolish exchange controls on Renminbi (RMB) and expects a freely RMB to overtake the USD and Euro<sup>42</sup>. Fourth, China continues to expand its influence by defining legitimate norms in international institutions. Thus, they discuss that the recent activism of China in international institutions such as in UN peacekeeping operations and on human rights within UN can be read as a reflection of China's shifting emphasis on international institutions as an arena for addressing its normative concerns. Moreover, rather than solely focusing on the extent and degree of China's engagement with the existing international order, Schweller and Pu point to the importance of analyzing the reverse process. Hence, they argue that how China might influence the evolution of norms in international institutions must be theorized as well (Schweller & Pu, 2012: 55-56).

From a similar angle, Ahsari (2009) contends that for the very fact that the US remains as an enduring factor for China- as a model for emulation, as a competitor or as a potential threat-, China employs blend of strategies towards the hegemon rather than directly challenging it. He depicts an essentially competitive relationship since he argues that the US does not tolerate a peer competitor and retrospectively China strives for being superpower since the leadership of Mao Zedong. To that end, he notes, China implements a mix of strategies that would enable it to emerge as a superpower. These moves contain soft balancing, selective cooperation, and competition with major powers. Nonetheless, Ahrari stresses that China is fully focused on adopting American military and economic template as a path to super-powerdom. To his account, this constitutes one of the sources of concerns over China's global rise.

#### **3.3.4. THE BALANCING BEHAVIOR OF THE GREATEST POWER UNDER UNIPOLARITY**

Despite contrasting perspectives over unipolarity, what is essential to the logic of neorealist theory is the consensus that after the end of Cold War anarchy remained with its imperatives insecurity and self-help along with the emergence of the US as a preeminent global power (Hanami, 2003: 133). More specifically, the end of Cold War meant the US was no longer facing a peer competitor (Ahrari, 2009: 176). For the subscribers to the neorealist theory, the unipole's behavior would be contingent upon the incentives and constraints according to its

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<sup>42</sup> [http://www.iiea.com/event/archive\\_view?urlKey=what-china-has-to-offer-europe](http://www.iiea.com/event/archive_view?urlKey=what-china-has-to-offer-europe)

structural position. That being said, inherently, the unipolar system would be affected by the behavior pattern of the unipole (Ikenberry, 2009: 11).

Under this new power configuration, for the part of the propended power, a set of possible scenarios of behavior patterns is offered by neorealism. Barry Posen sketches typical attitudes that are expected from the unipole within the margins of structural realism. It may be presumed that the US may exploit its opportunity to organize international politics; it can be expected to behave capricious to its allies; or will not see itself particularly constrained by the risk that another great power or coalition might particularly opposes any action it chooses (Posen, 2006: 157). Confronted with an emerging power, starting from the assumptions of defensive realism over unipolarity, it can be concluded that the most plausible response of the unipole to the rise of a possible new power would be maximizing security through balance of power (Goswami, 2013: 7). From defensive realist point of view, strategies for checking aggressors include balancing and buck-passing. Mearsheimer (2001: 155) notes that building up impressive military capability is usually a main hindrance to the challenging of balance of power by emerging powers. However, on the occasions when potential hegemony emerge with possible capability to challenge the existing power, it is difficult to contain. In that, threatened powers either chooses to balance or buck-pass. Specifically for the rise of China, Mearsheimer (2001: 422) contends that a policy of preemptive containment by the US would be the most viable strategy to be pursued.

On the other hand, Bustelo (2005: 61) points to a strategic dilemma that the US faces with regard to China's rise. Had the US accept the possibility of China's rise and consequently adopt pertinent measures to contain the country such as military reinforcement, and then China could find itself involved in arms race. A strong US defense capability would deter a possible Chinese aggression however to avoid a possible security dilemma, the US should carefully strive a balance (Schildt, 2006: 245).

First and foremost it should be noted that in the aftermath of the Cold War, the US seemed committed to maintain this post-Cold War power distribution. In its Defense Policy Guidance<sup>43</sup> in the immediate after the Cold War, the US proclaimed its core objectives, which are of particular relevance to its quest for assigning permanence to American global primacy (Ahrari, 2011: 176). The document read the first two objectives of the US as:

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<sup>43</sup> It is an official Congressionally-mandated document issued every four years (Ahrari, 2011:186).

‘to prevent re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union...to address sources of regional conflict and instability for the purposes of promoting international law and reducing international violence.’

It seemed that under this new unipolar configuration, the US envisioned a world order quite pertinent to the premises of structural realism. On the other hand, concerning China the document suggested that the US should maintain its status as a significant military power in the Pacific Rim; contribute to regional security and stability by acting as a balancing force and prevent emergence of a vacuum or a regional hegemon (Ahrari, 2011: 177). This quest for the perpetuation of American eminence was continuously reiterated in the following Defense Reviews in 1997 and 2001 respectively.

Under Clinton administration, in the 1997 Defense Paper, the phrase ‘The US is the only superpower today, and is expected to remain so throughout the 1997-2015 period’ was noted as an underlying premise. In the same document, the US’s core goal of grand strategy was mentioned as ‘to prevent emergence of a hostile regional coalition or hegemony’. In a strikingly similar manner, in 2001 Defense Review, it was stated that the US sought to maintain favorable power balances in key regions like East Asia, the Persian Gulf, and Europe by maintaining overwhelming military superiority so that it can dissuade other countries from initiating future military competitions against the US (Layne, 2004: 7-8). The pattern is clearly observable in the subsequent Defense Reviews as well.

It should also be noted that for over two decades, the US has pursued a two-pronged strategy towards China. On the one side of the equilibrium, the US has sought ‘strategic engagement’ policy towards China. As a part of this strategy, it was believed that by integrating China into the world economy<sup>44</sup> and fostering its economic development, China would be a status quo power content with the norms<sup>45</sup> and rules of the existing order. (Mearsheimer, 2001: 422).

However, the notion that economic integration would transform China’s political system seemed increasingly illusory, given the ruling party CCP has been demonstrating no signs

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<sup>44</sup> Strategic engagement has been followed by the US since President Nixon opened the door to China in 1971. <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub61.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> In that regard, converting to democracy constituted the biggest expectation.



toward undergoing democratization.<sup>46</sup> In fact, even if China were to become democracy, there seems no assurance that the strategic competition between the US and China will disappear. Ahrari (2011) remarks that Russia's democratic political setting after the disappearance of Soviet Union did not alter or transform the strategic competition between the US and Russia.

The second strategy sought by the US towards China is namely 'strategic containment', which relies mostly on hard power tools of military might and diplomacy in order to curb Chinese power (Layne, 2008: 2). By building up alliance ties in East Asia, the US has contained a possible revisionist China. Indeed, at the epicenter of American policy towards Asia-Pacific lies the US's rebalance to Asia policy and its focus on the rise of China (Goswami, 2008: 7). As declared in the US Defense Department's 2012 strategic guidance document, recent activism of the US in Asia highly reflects the US initiative to 'will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region'.<sup>47</sup>

Drawn on the premises of neorealism with particular reference to anarchy and self-help, it might be concluded that China's rise poses a threat to the unipole in terms of power configuration. In general, neorealist understanding of world politics would suggest containment as a plausible strategy to manage the rise of a new power. However, unlike Cold War Soviet posture as a direct threat to the US, China has been inward looking for most of the recent three decades. What is more, the 'peaceful rise' rhetoric of China makes it difficult for the US to pursue a strict containment policy. On the other hand, as mentioned above the validity of engagement strategy is subject to criticism. In that, the expectation that as China becomes so engaged with the international institutional system, it will have strong interests in cooperation, thus it will not be inclined to pursue security competition with the US or its Asian neighbors is questioned on the grounds that there is little support in history for the direct relation between economic interdependence and peace. Layne (2008: 2) argues that on the eve of World War I, when the European powers were so intermingled in terms of economic gains of trade, European states fought two devastating wars.

All in all, given the rise of China as a potential destabilizing factor within the current international system, devising a sound strategy is of particular importance. Therefore, to

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<sup>46</sup> The notion of democracy in China does not seem to be in tune with emergent norms of international society. The power resides in the hands of the Communist party, political competition is rare, the press is tightly managed. What is more, China insists that it will follow its own style of democracy and timing (Legro: 518).

<sup>47</sup> [http://archive.defense.gov/news/Defense\\_Strategic\\_Guidance.pdf](http://archive.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf)

preclude from the potential for serious trouble emanating from a global power shift, structural realism offers to develop strategies that would likely to mitigate the dangers of international anarchy such as balance of power (Dunne & Kurki & Smith, 2013: 86). Considering the fact that American primacy in the global distribution of capabilities is one of the significant features of the contemporary international relations, it is thus so important to comprehend how the US will play its role as the world's preeminent power (Goswami, 2008: 17).

### **3.4. THE DIMENSIONS OF CHINA'S RISE IN THE POST- COLD WAR ERA**

This section analyzes the rise of China through military, economic, and peaceful rise rhetoric dimensions in line with the neorealist definition of power as relative and dynamic that is largely drawn on Kenneth Waltz's depiction of power parameters.

#### **3.4.1. MILITARY RISE**

Regardless of the perspective that has been interpreted, the military resources that provide the ability to prevail in war has been depicted as the most important form of power in global politics considering the continuing reality of war in the contemporary world (Nye, 2011: 28). In international politics, military power is considered as the 'ultima ratio' of power since military capabilities can be used to destroy, to back up coercive threats, and to provide protection and assistance (Beckley, 2012: 57). Furthermore, it can generate wealth as well as provide the means to coerce other countries into making economic concessions. Since economic resources are necessary to support a large-scale military establishment and both wealth and power are always relative, there is a very clear connection in the long run between an individual great powers' economic rise and fall and its growth or decline as a military power (Kennedy, 1989: xxii).

However, it should be noted that economic prosperity does not always and immediately translate into military effectiveness (Mearsheimer, 2001: 438). As Waltz (2010) contends prosperity and military power, although connected, cannot be equated. As in 1860s Britain and 1890s America, an economically expanding power may prioritize becoming wealthier to military build up (Kennedy, 1989: xxiii). Moreover, Waltz argues that for about five decades the US had utilized economic means to promote its security and other interests. At this point, Waltz provides a link between national economic capability and great power status within the context of self-help system. According to his account, earlier the road to great power status could be equated to national economic productivity to sustain a large military force. The link

was weakened during nineteenth century. However, he posits that in the contemporary international system the states are trying to maximize their value as an added concern to secure their future (Waltz, 2010: 60-63).

Therefore, it is plausible to argue that as survival is the first and foremost goal of states in the hierarchy of state goals, non-security goals such as national unification and economic prosperity can be incorporated to margins of the balance-of-power logic (Mearsheimer, 2001: 46) largely as a complementary to the pursuit of power. Respectively, Mearsheimer (2001) notes the possible implications of greater economic prosperity for security since wealth is the foundation of military power. To Mearsheimer, there is a correlation between state's security maximization and its attempts to afford powerful military forces to that end as its economy grows.

Against this backdrop of structural realist approach to military power and the possible link emphasizing the relationship between economic and military power, it might be argued that increased worldwide attention has followed from China's expanding military capabilities in parallel to its rising global profile that has been largely associated with its recent economic growth. In making such points, the modernization of People's Liberation Army (PLA)<sup>48</sup>, gradual increase in Chinese defense spending and consequently gradual increase in China's military power projection capabilities form the basis of the argument being offered by neorealist perspective.

China's internal balancing-military modernization- has been an issue of constant attention both on the part of its Asian neighbors and US alike (Ahrari, 2011: 26). In fact, for PLA modernization is an ongoing process that can be traced back to 1949. During 1950s and 1960s, modernization meant supplying weaponry from Soviet Union whereas by the mid 1980s PLA was reorganized in order to prepare a mobile force for threats beyond its borders and coasts. It is apparent that China's remarkable investment in military hardware and technology since 1980s and its rapid increase in defense spending since 1998 Divestment Act are the central themes of China's military modernization. Nonetheless, the modernization pattern involved increased naval power, new equipment, enlarged space program, and enhanced military training and education.<sup>49</sup> It is argued that in the case of China it would be

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<sup>48</sup> PLA is the main arm of China's military and composed of ground forces as well as navy, air force and strategic missile forces. <http://www.cfr.org/china/modernizing-peoples-liberation-army-china/p12174>

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

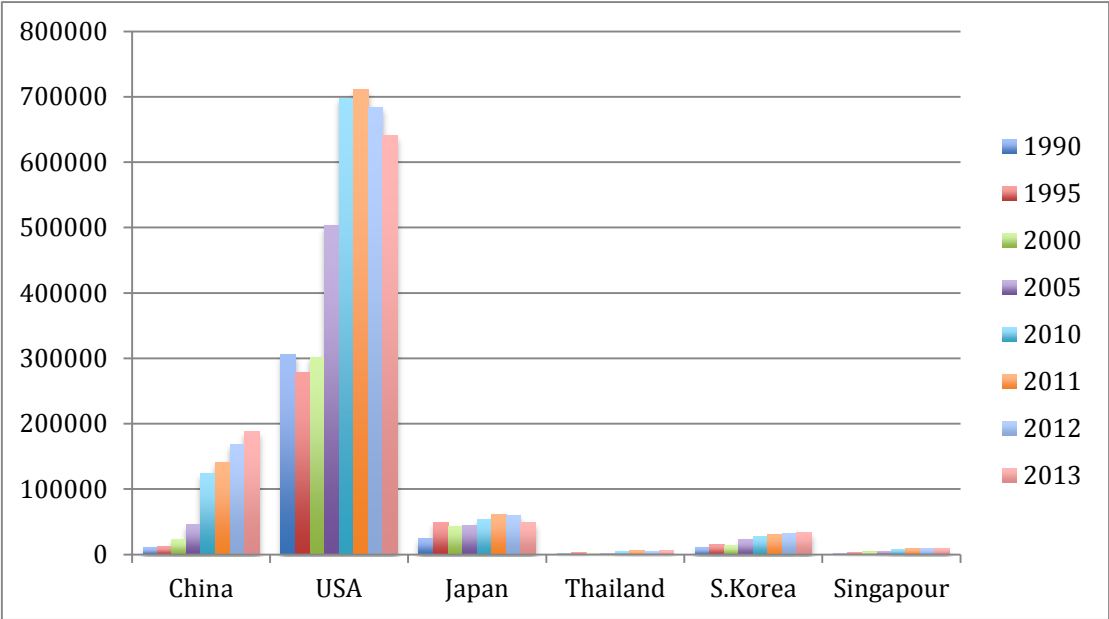
surprising to expect the world's second largest economy and largest importer of natural resources not to build up its military capacity (Kissinger, 2011: 536). Likewise, Kenneth Waltz (2000) posits that given the anarchic international structure characterized by the possibility of conflict and self-help, if a state with economic capability of great power chooses to refrain from arming itself, at best would be categorized as a structural anomaly. In this context, it would also be surprising to expect a rising military power not to attract worldwide attention.

Amongst range of issues related to China's rise, frequent mention is made to the growing military power of China for about two decades. Although China's growing presence has been interpreted largely from its rapid economic growth, the pace of its military power poses concerns among China's neighbors especially for Taiwan, Japan, India, and US (Sutter, 2003: 76). Since 2000, the United States Department of Defense has been issuing reports on China's security and military developments, which to large extent reflects the extraordinary attention and concerns over China's military rise. Considering that the US previously practiced submitting reports on Soviet Union's military power during the Cold War, it might be argued that the US seems to position China in a similar categorization (Liang, 2012: 1).<sup>50</sup> What is more, it seems that these concerns would likely grow proportionally as China increases its military and power-projection capabilities (Shambaugh, 2010: 272). Conceiving a link between the speed of Chinese military modernization and China's emergence as a global economic player has raised concerns to an important degree. To illustrate these points in more concrete terms, Figure 1 demonstrates China's defense spending in comparison with the largest military spending country, the US, and some Asian countries. As the results reveal, Chinese defense spending illustrates an accelerating feature over the past two decades. Indeed, Chinese defense budget has increased by double digits every year since 1989. In 1990, Chinese defensive spending amounted approximately to \$10,244. However, as of 2013 this summed up to \$188,460, albeit still lagging behind the meticulous US defense spending (\$640,221).

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<sup>50</sup> As Kenneth Waltz (2010) puts, despite the difficulties of measuring and comparing the capabilities of states—such as to put all the capabilities of states in context; the variability of the weight given to each of the determinants of power—economic, political or military—, states spend considerable time estimating one another's capabilities. On the evidence of existing concerns on China's military, economic, and political rise; the neorealist explanation for the importance of relative capabilities of states demonstrates high level of relevance.

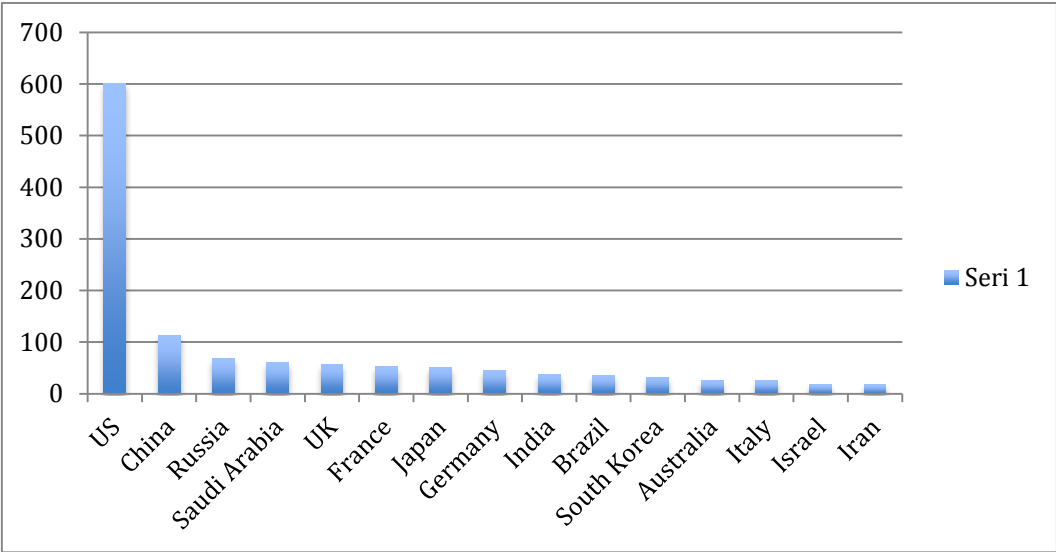
**Figure 1.** China’s military expenditure in US dollars between 1990- 2013 in comparison with the US, and selected Asian countries



Source: Compiled from SIPRI data

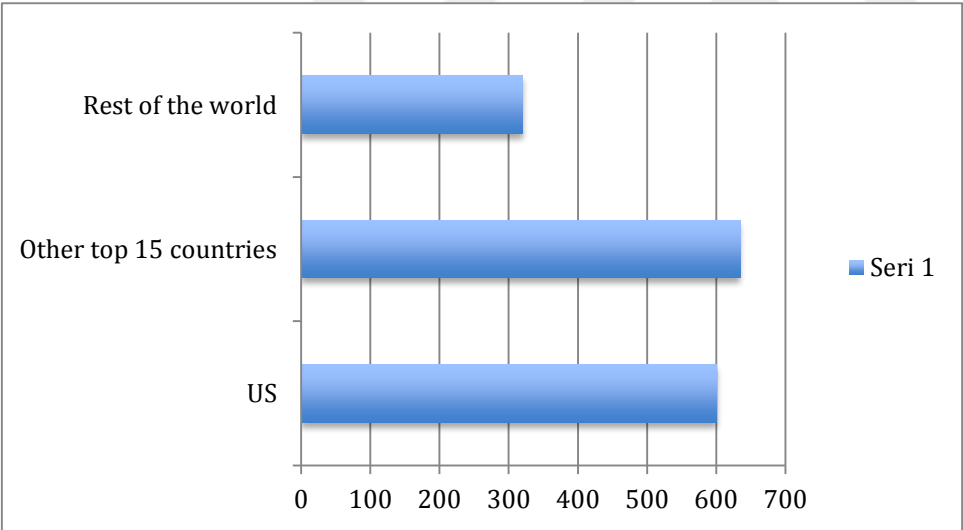
What is more, according to a recent study on global military capabilities conducted by IISS, it is pointed out that there occurs a shift in the global distribution of military power towards Asia. Relatedly, the growth of defense budgets is accelerating and military procurements are rising (IISS, 2014: 1). Particularly on China, the report states that tensions between China and Japan have risen substantially which is in the form of territorial disputes and maritime incidents. Accordingly, conflicts have become more acute fed by increase in nationalist sentiment. Another important aspect revealed in the report is Chinese emphasis for blue-water naval capabilities in its White Paper, which according to the report reflects China’s drive to become a major maritime power (IISS, 2014: 2). On the other hand, the report reveals comparative defense statistics for 2013 (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

**Figure 2: Top 15 Defense Budgets 2013 (US (million) Dollars)**



Source: IISS

**Figure 3: Top 15 Defense Budgets 2013 (US Dollars)**



Source: IISS

Certain conclusions can be drawn from Figure 2 and Figure 3. The results reveal that while China’s military capabilities grows faster than any nation in Asia; it is still far behind the US defense budget, which is \$600,4 billion in 2013. Indeed, as demonstrated in Figure 3 the US budget nearly constitutes the rest of fifteen most defense spending countries which sum up to \$634,5 billion.

Speaking of quantitative data, it should be noted that Chinese military spending as a percentage of its GDP is another crucial measure to be point out in this respect (Liu, 2010: 80). Compared to top five defense spending countries, the proportion of Chinese defense spending to its annual budget remains low. A research conducted by World Bank highlights the ratios as the US with defense spending to its GDP ratio 3,8%, China 2,1%, Saudi Arabia 9,0%, UK 2,3%, and Russia 4,2%.<sup>51</sup> It is far from clear that Chinese military spending grows with massive speed. On the other hand, considering the link between military spending and its reflection on GDP, it should be kept in mind that Chinese military expenditure compared to the largest military spending countries exhibits a rather moderate feature. However, read along with the meticulous increase in Chinese defense spending over the last two decades, it is possible to conclude that the US' global primacy on defense might be subject to be challenged although it will be hard to catch up with the US (Rubinovitz, 2012: 21)

Whilst assessing China's military advance, the question 'whether China is a threat or not' is critical in neorealist agenda since the perception of threat prompts proper balancing behavior. In this respect, rather than solely analyzing growing military capabilities, Jason Kelly (2007: 29) argues that how funding is allocated to military resources is also critical to comprehend the issue. Accordingly, whether the funding directly translates into greater power projection capabilities and increased threat relates the situation to the direction of the Chinese military build up.

It is important to note that, from the early 1990s China adopted a different military outlook from its previous emphasis as an inward looking and self-reliant military approach (Sutter, 2003: 80). By improving missile capabilities and importing critical advanced weaponry notably from Russia<sup>52</sup>, China expanded its power projection capabilities particularly in the maritime environment to a large degree. Kelly (2007: 30) argues that the power symbolized in China's advanced weaponry systems coupled with the historical backdrop support the contention that China is rising to a great power status. However, Shambaugh (2013) contends that in terms of China's capacity to influence global patterns, the security realm is more limited than other areas. According to Shambaugh, there are equally important factors accounting for this. To start with, despite the steady military advancement, in terms of military power China qualifies a partial power; not a global one. Unlike a traditional manner,

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<sup>51</sup> <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS>

<sup>52</sup> China is under the arms embargo from US, EU, Australia, Canada, Japan and South Korea since 1989 (Shambaugh, 2013: 283).

China has limited its deployments to its own sovereign territory, its Asian maritime littoral (Shambaugh, 2013: 269-272). On the other hand, if China is expected to contribute more to international security, it needs to enhance its military capabilities. Yet, as China increases its military build up, it will generate concerns throughout the world. Additionally as China develops its military capacity without participating in alliances of main status quo states, then a classical security dilemma will exist (Shambaugh, 2013: 272-273).

On the other hand, Mearsheimer pays serious attention to the pattern of China's military modernization. In other words, he suggests observing the path China takes on the way to its military modernization. Given the current power projection capabilities, which are still far from rivaling the US, Mearsheimer argues that China is no position to challenge the status quo. Since China has limited capacity to act aggressively for the time being, it is thus difficult to judge China's commitment to the status quo and at the same time to predict future behavior precisely (Mearsheimer, 2001: 385). However, should China continue its rise along with economic growth and consequently transform its wealth into sophisticated weaponry, it will present serious threat to the US and China's neighbors. According to Mearsheimer, the demographic and geopolitical advantage that China holds will likely enable it to have more offensive military power in 2030 than current time being particularly in relation to the US (Mearsheimer, 2001: 394). What is more, to his account it is difficult to distinguish between defensive and offensive military capabilities. Indeed, capabilities that states develop to defend themselves often have significant offensive potential. He concludes that anyone looking to determine China's future intentions by observing its military is likely to conclude that Beijing is bent on aggression (Mearsheimer, 2001: 384).

It might be argued that China's military advance both in terms of increase in defense spending and military modernization cause concerns over the existing power equilibrium. It follows that even though China's military is second rate with limited capacity to deploy forces abroad—for the time being concerned, China can still be perceived as highly important military actor<sup>53</sup>. It should be noted that for the preeminent global military power, in its 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report China was given place as the country, which has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the US.<sup>54</sup> Questioning the military posture of China, put simply the investment choices in defense sector, Donald Rumsfeld, the US

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<sup>53</sup> [http://www.atlantic-community.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/Does%20China%20Matter\\_.pdf](http://www.atlantic-community.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/Does%20China%20Matter_.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.cfr.org/china/modernizing-peoples-liberation-army-china/p12174>



Secretary of Defense, asserted that Chinese military expenditure was far higher than the officially declared reports.<sup>55</sup> A China investing on advanced arms systems and expanding its missile forces led him to spell out ‘since no nation threatens China, one must wonder: Why this growing investment?’ (Bustelo, 2005: 3). The reasons account for this mainly rest on Chinese attempts to catch up with the advanced nations in terms of defense spending in parallel with its economic rise over the last two decades. Nonetheless, the arms trade between China and Russia due to arms embargo imposed on China by Western states need to be elaborated. It is pointed out that since 1989, the arms trade between China and Russia has evolved to an extent that a new security nexus seems to emerge between the two. Yet, China could be a valuable ally for Russia to balance the power of the West.<sup>56</sup>

Overall, it seems obvious that increased military spending and military modernization are clear indicators of Chinese traditional internal balancing attempts. However, ‘how much power it will acquire’ is an important question in order to read the pattern of its military power. From the point of defensive realism, China’s military expansion can be read along with its territorial integrity with respect to long standing territorial disputes with its neighbors. (Weiqing, 2013: 3). This reflects defensive realisms’ security maximizing approach to power in which one would expect China to acquire ‘appropriate amount of power’ in defense of its security and survival (ibid). However, offensive realism tends to view China’s military rise conditioned by the circumstances of power maximizing behavior. Thus, China will seek to maximize the power gap between itself and neighbors to make sure that no state in its neighborhood threatens it. Seeking to be a regional hegemon in Asia, therefore militarily powerful China is expected to push the US military forces out of Asia (Dunne & Kurki & Smith, 2013: 86) China’s economic rise combined with equivalent military build up create incentives for the US. In turn, by keeping roughly 100,000 troops in East Asia and by providing security guarantees to Japan and South Korea the US pursues a containment policy against China to prevent a new balance of power to form (Waltz, 2000: 36).

Summing up the debate, it might be said that it is the central claim of the neorealist argument that as China grows richer, it likely builds stronger military which is a classical pattern of a rising power (Shirk, 2007: 9). To paraphrase Paul Kennedy (1989): ‘Wealth is

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<sup>55</sup> For example, in 2006 the US Department of Defense estimated that Chinese defense budget would be two or three times greater than the officially declared \$35 billion. <http://www.cfr.org/china/modernizing-peoples-liberation-army-china/p12174>

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.atlantic-community.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/Does%20China%20Matter\\_.pdf](http://www.atlantic-community.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/Does%20China%20Matter_.pdf)

usually needed to underpin military power, and military power is usually needed to acquire and protect wealth'

### 3.4.2. ECONOMIC RISE

'China should play the economic card well. Unlike the military or political card, everyone likes to take the economic card'<sup>57</sup>

After decades of international isolation, the year 1978 was a turning point in China's history as Deng Xiaoping initiated economic foundations of China's global influence. For almost thirty years after the launch of economic modernization, China grew with the fastest rate for a major economy in recorded history. Within this period, the average Chinese income has increased twentyfold and around 400 million Chinese were moved out of poverty (Zakaria, 2009: 102). From an inward-looking, planned economy to a global market economy with two digit growth rates in a considerable rapid span of time, China's economic transformation was indeed unimaginable, let alone unexpected three decades ago.<sup>58</sup> What is more, in 2001 China joined the World Trade organization (WTO)<sup>59</sup> as the 143<sup>rd</sup> member that enabled it to become fully integrated into the global market (Xiao, 2012: 27). The numerical data regarding China's economic performance thus was considerable. As can be observed from Figure 4 China's share of world GDP<sup>60</sup> has raised from 2% in 1978 to 15,4% in 2013<sup>61</sup>. Indeed, in terms of world trade ranking, in 2013 China became the second largest economy with USD 9,240.270 billion compared to that of the US with USD 16,800,000 billion.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> (Shrink, 2007: 132).

<sup>58</sup> In 1983, The World Bank predicted the annual growth rate of China to revolve around 4% or %5. Consequently, in 1985, World Bank estimated that China's economic growth would be 5.4% annually between 1981-2000. Contrary, China's annual growth equaled to %9.7 during this period ( Hu: 2).

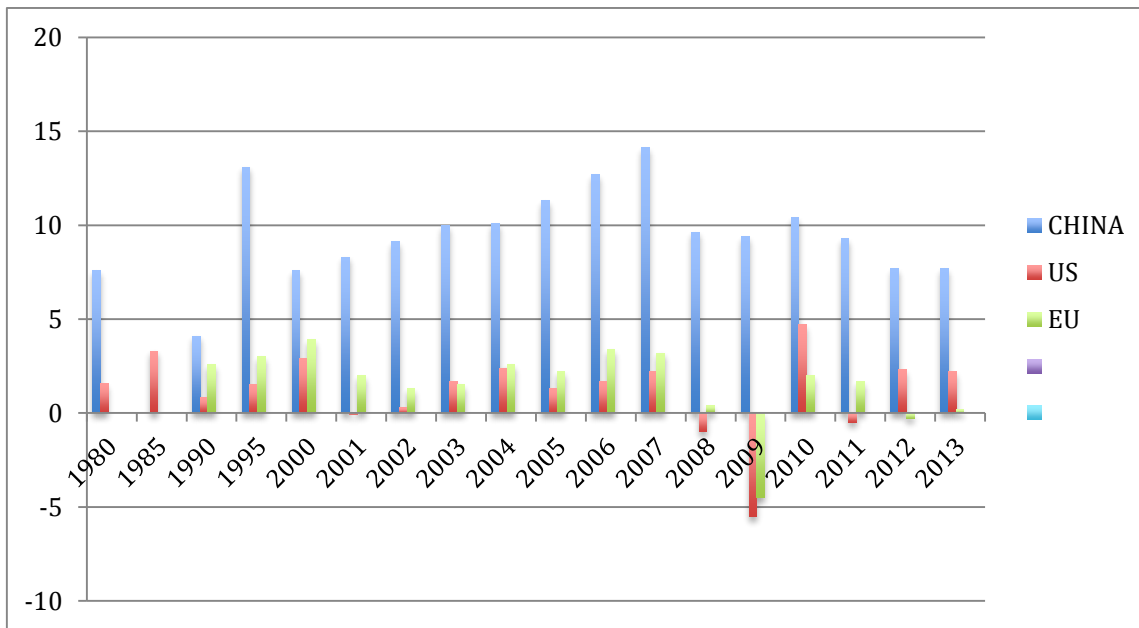
<sup>59</sup> WTO governs over 90 percent of global trade (Li, 2012: 27).

<sup>60</sup> Real Gross Domestic Growth (GDP) is the most common used method that reflects a country's overall economic activity. It represents the total value of constant prices of final goods and services produced within a specified period, such as one year. <http://www.principalglobalindicators.org/Pages/Default.aspx>.

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.statista.com/statistics/270439/chinas-share-of-global-gross-domestic-product-gdp/>

<sup>62</sup> <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf>

**Figure 4:** Comparative GDP growth rate in %



**Source:** Compiled from the data of IMF, Eurostat, and World Bank

By many measures, it might be concluded that China's GDP has quadrupled in the first decade of the new millennium, which accounts roughly about 40% of global economic growth (Shambaugh, 2012: 156). When assessed in terms of global trade position, it might be argued that China is a unique trading super state. Indeed, its share of world exports has risen from 1% in 1978 to 10% in 2010 implying that China has to take into account other states such as US and EU and this makes them closer partners in world economy.<sup>63</sup> Considering the composition of its foreign trade, China is regarded as 'workshop of the world' that accounts for the production of remarkable amount of world's manufactured goods (Shambaugh, 2012: 161).

As mentioned earlier, the core argument of neorealism portrays an international system comprising competing states that quest for survival within an anarchic order. In this international setting, self-help is the primary behavior pattern of states. However, it is imperative to emphasize that under anarchy structural realism reserves a room for different methods of the expected self-help behavior. As Waltz argues, 'In self-help systems, how one has to help oneself varies as circumstances change...Now, without a considerable economic

<sup>63</sup> [http://www.iiea.com/event/archive\\_view?urlKey=what-china-has-to-offer-europe](http://www.iiea.com/event/archive_view?urlKey=what-china-has-to-offer-europe)

capability no state can hope to sustain a world role, as the fate of the Soviet Union has shown'. He goes on to argue that in the current juncture, any challenge to a leading state has to rely on political and economic means (Waltz, 1993: 61-63). Therefore, the primacy of economic power is relevant in neorealist lexicon to the degree that it allows a country to step forward to acquire one of the determinants of being a great power.<sup>64</sup>

Aside from pure economic concerns<sup>65</sup>, it might be said that neorealism tends to link the economic rise of China to three lines of arguments. First one is related to the relationship between economic rise and consequent military build up. As discussed in the previous part of this chapter, the bone of contention refers to China's rapid economic rise and its direct association with building military capabilities. In essence, China's military modernization and consequent military build up, in parallel to its material progress would be accepted as a natural response to its enhanced economic standing (Waltz, 1993: 65). However, in the light of structural realism's premises, the implications of China's material rise for the current international system—particularly for the US and Asia—heighten concerns to a large degree. In part, this may be tied to previous historical episodes of China. Given the historical baggage of past humiliations that China suffered throughout 'years of humiliation'<sup>66</sup>, the economic success story of the country within relatively short span of time increases concerns worldwide (Ahrari, 2011: 34). Yet, even if China's rise is regarded as a contemporary issue dating back at most 1978, China's rise can also be read as a revival of its long-term position of power and prestige considering the long powerful history of China until 19<sup>th</sup> century (Beeson & Bisley, 2013: 4). Supporting the argument, Benstein and Munro provide a controversial explanation for China's economic rise (Lai, 2011: 54). In that, they depict a domino effect portrayal in which they link the unstoppable economic development of China to a hegemonic China. To their view, unlike the Soviet Union, China is militarily and economically strong and has higher nationalistic tone --which makes the country unsatisfied with the status quo. For that reason, China would upset balance of power in Asia and move toward Asian hegemony. In the same way, Cox argues that one of the consequences of China's economic rise specifically

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<sup>64</sup> Waltz (1993) argues that given the historical record, countries with great power economies have become great powers whether or not reluctantly.

<sup>65</sup> Neorealism does not disregard the competitive nature of economics rather it has been accepted as one of the determinants of power.

<sup>66</sup> It is accepted by the historians that the century of humiliation for China starts with Opium War I and ends with the proclamation of PRC in 1949. During this period, the events lead to this subjugation are; Taiping Rebellion, Sino-Japanese Wars, British invasion of Tibet, and Russian and US designs in the region during 20<sup>th</sup> century (Lai, 2011: 33).

on Asia has been to raise new fears in the region about the meaning of the ascendancy of China. Accordingly, as long as China remains the kind of state that it is with historical heir, Cox notes that the Asian countries, largely suspicious of China's rise, would prefer containment of China with much involvement of the US (Cox, 2011: 419).

Writing from offensive realist perspective, Mearsheimer (2005) puts it 'since power is fungible any increase in China's economic strength means a diminution of American power'. So to say, 'the larger China's economy, the bigger its military threat'. This zero-sum depiction of state relation pattern leads Mearsheimer to comment: 'as China rises, the US- as a regional hegemon in the Western hemisphere- will strive to contain it in order to prevent from becoming its near peer'. According to offensive realism, 'a regional hegemon would not tolerate a peer competitor in its near '(Mearsheimer, 2001: 162). In retrospect, aware of this very reality, China will cultivate its economic and military power until it becomes powerful enough to dictate acceptable behavior in its near abroad (Brezinski& Mearsheimer, 2005: 2). Ultimately, as expected, as its power increases, China's ultimate goal will likely try to push US out of Asia just as the US pushed the European powers out of the Western Hemisphere in 1823 by Monroe Doctrine (Mearsheimer, 2001: 162).

The second line of argument is related to the transforming of increase in economic wealth to confidence build up. In this view, the central argument is related to whether China's growing economic power will demonstrate an inclination to play the role of a great power. The departure point of this view starts with stressing that the increase of a country's economic capabilities to the great power situates it at the center of regional and global affairs mostly because of the high volume of the country's external business (Waltz, 1993: 60). To a large extent, for great powers, it is argued that geopolitical and military capabilities are the consequences of a process beginning with economic expansion (Layne, 1993: 11). Accordingly, confidence in economic ability and technical skills is expected to lead a country to aspire to a larger political role (Waltz, 1993: 61). Put simply, the increase in relative material power of a rising state may likely go hand-in-hand with its attempts to advance its international standing due to the fact that the costs of altering the international system changes as its relative power increases (Layne, 1993: 11).

On the basis of these arguments, the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 would be a proper case study to evaluate China's response to the crisis as a rising country being confident economically. The global financial crisis that began in 2007 has been regarded as the most

destructive and traumatic economic event for the last eighty years (Beeson& Bisley, 2013: 85). To many respects, the global crisis highlighted a number of issues related to the modus operandi of the international system. Of all the consequences of the Great recession, as Beeson and Bisley (2013) argue, it was the eroding of the appeal of Western economic template while China emerging as an appealing alternative to Western orthodoxy despite the recession that attracted sharp concerns globally.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, short after the recession in 2009, China surpassed Germany as the world's largest exporter, and in 2010, it overtook Japan as the world's second-largest economy (Nadkarni& Noonan, 2013: 101). Furthermore, it is highly ironic, as Bisley (2013) puts it; during the financial meltdown, Europe as a birthplace to modern capitalism was hoping the world's largest communist state- China- to help to survive economically. Ahrari (2011) advocates that the global financial crisis revealed a clear indication of China becoming increasingly vocal about its own role in the management of global economy.

Indeed, it is notable that China has discovered opportunities during and aftermath the global financial crisis to assert its power and influence. As Daniel Drezner argues, in the post 2008 era, China has challenged the US on a multiple of fronts such as on security realm by engaging aggressively with US surveillance vessels in order to hinder American intelligence attempts. Yet, on the economic realm Chinese activism was much more evident. Since 2009, China has repeatedly called for a stronger voice in IMF and World Bank driven by primarily a need to match its growing economic size and international standing (Drezner, 2009: 7). What is more, in 2009 China has advocated the creation of a new international reserve currency which to be managed by the IMF (Ahrari, 2011: 48). It should be noted that despite Chinese activism aimed at pushing to reform the international institutions in its favor, China's voting share in World Bank or IMF is still below 5 percent which is around quarter of that of the US (Xie, 2014). Yet, to expand its economic and political influence and to affect great power politics by multilateral coordination, China puts forth a parallel line to rival the existing financial system. A major piece of evidence can be found in Chinese recent efforts in

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<sup>67</sup> Having export-oriented economy, China was also affected by sudden shrink in global demand at the beginning of 2009. Indeed, the year 2009 was politically sensitive for China due to the fact that it was the 20th anniversary of 1989 Tiananmen Student Movement, 50th anniversary of Dalai Lama's exile, and 90th anniversary of May Five Movement. Despite these sensitivities and global economic meltdown, China succeeded to boost its economy and maintain a stable domestic environment. <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cpi/documents/briefings/briefing-57-political-review-2009.pdf>

establishing a New Development Bank, Contingent Reserve Arrangement, and Asian Infrastructure Bank (Biswas, 2015: 7).

As in 2008, China displaced Japan as the largest foreign holder of US debt, Drezner points to the importance of the security implications of creditor status. Brad Setter puts the security implications of creditor status as: ‘Political might is often linked to financial might, and a debtor’s capacity to project military power hinges on the support of its creditors’

Presenting evidence from the historical record<sup>68</sup>, Drezner argues that dependence on foreign creditors alters the distribution of power in two ways: deterrence or compellence. In fact, in the 2008 Financial Crisis as US dependence on Chinese capital inflows became clear, China became increasingly vocal about its desire to reform international financial system. Drezner points out that while Chinese compellence measures against the US fell short<sup>69</sup>, the country was successful in using its capital surplus to deter pressure from others. He presents several exemplifiers of Chinese flexing financial muscle during the period of recession. As a response to US pressure to China’s depreciation of renminbi, Prime Minister Wen ignored US pressure by stating: ‘No country can pressure us to appreciate or depreciate the renminbi’ (cited *in* Drezner, 2009: 42). China vetoed any discussion within the IMF to investigate whether China’s currency was misaligned. Moreover, by contributing to IMF reserves with BRIC countries, China at the same time generated alternatives to the dollar as a reserve currency. It is interesting to note that at the first China-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue in 2009, China reiterated its core interests that comprised state sovereignty, regime survival, territorial integration to the US (Nadkarni& Nookan, 2013: 102) and warned that the violation and destruction of these interests would not be tolerated.<sup>70</sup> China’s increasing assertive tone was also evident in Copenhagen Climate Change Summit in 2009. The Summit was a striking exemplifier in the sense that the stance that China articulated during the summit was utterly contrary to China’s previous ‘taoguangyanghai’ policy.<sup>71</sup> After keeping its head low towards

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<sup>68</sup> For example, the US solved the 1956 Suez Crisis by forcing British to withdraw forces otherwise denying its Access to IMF. A recent example is in 2006 China used its hard currency reserves as a carrot to encourage developing countries to recognizing Taiwan (Drezner, 2009: 17).

<sup>69</sup> Drezner argues that there are limitations over compellence measures. To Drezner, low expectations of future conflict between creditor and debtor state, low costs of retaliation, and the possibility of alternative sources of credit limits the tactic of compellence (Drezner, 2009: 18-19).

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=2544>

<sup>71</sup> This ‘keep head low profile’ doctrine was developed by China with a pragmatic aim to accommodate to the US and other major Powers as it had limited strength and geostrategic position after 1989 Tiananmen protests. (Nadkarni& Nookan, 2013:103).

West many years, during the summit China confronted the West by avoiding international inspections of its carbon emission targets and strongly supporting exemptions for developing nations (Nadkarni& Nookan, 2013: 104). On the other hand, Zhao (cited *in* Nadkarni& Nookan, 2013: 105) contends that by abruptly cancelling the scheduled EU summit in December 2008 due to the meeting of French President Sarkozy with Dalai Lama, China willingly wanted to show that it was ready to confront the leaders of its biggest trading partners even in the midst of global economic crisis.

However, there exist grounds for skepticism on the direct relationship between economic power and political leverage.<sup>72</sup> Notwithstanding, regarding the specific case of China, the idea that China as a creditor imposes political leverage can be challenged when the bilateral economic relations of China and Japan are considered. In essence, China and Japan constitute the largest trade flow on a global scale, but they are increasingly locked in security competition. Indeed, it should be noted that associating economic interdependence with peace is an old phenomenon. In 1933, Norman Angell concluded that wars no longer be fought because they did not pay due to close interdependence of states (Waltz, 1999: 693). Yet, soon World War Second out broke. Hence, the basic approach of neorealism to economic interdependence can be summed up by the way it emphasizes the significance of governments in explaining the international- political events rather than economics per se.

The third line of argument explores the possibility of a shift in the distribution of power in the international system due to China's economic rise. Indeed, given the scope and pace of this unprecedented economic transformation, the possibility of a major change in the distribution of power introduces a debate over the system wide impacts of China's economic rise. On one side, there exists a tendency to evaluate China's economic rise as significant, but this view also holds the proposition that the debate concerning the direct relationship between China's economic rise and power shift towards East has been overestimated. Michael Cox (2011) identifies three separate but interrelated themes dominating the course of international relations over the last decades. Namely, the economic rise of China, the decline of the US, and the tilting of the world economic axis from West to Asia. Cox is on the opinion that although China is an increasingly important economic player in the world economy, the West retains significant structural economic advantages. Particularly the US, he argues, has globally floating dominant reserve, its long-term stability is assured, and has an impressive

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<sup>72</sup> [http://web.mit.edu/ssp/publications/conf\\_reports/china\\_rising\\_workshop\\_report.pdf](http://web.mit.edu/ssp/publications/conf_reports/china_rising_workshop_report.pdf)



innovative capacity. Taken together the US and the EU still account for over 40% of the global economy. In terms of average income, the US is still far more away (\$45,000 per annum in 2010) from China (\$4000 in 2010) which implies that China has long way to go through. On this point, despite the significant economic success story of China realized over the previous three decades, Shambaugh describes China as a partial economic power as the country faces many domestic challenges (Shambaugh, 2013: 206). In the same vein, Cox argues that the Chinese economic development model<sup>73</sup> confronts serious domestic problems. He posits that China would encounter deep tensions and conflict due to the growing gap between rich and poor, inflation, corruption, and the tension between its dynamic open economy and its highly restrictive polity. Furthermore, Cox (2013) argues that even though the economic leadership of the US has been eroded due to global financial crisis and the rise of the rest, the fact that it was the China that has chosen to join a world economic order that is mostly governed by the US tells much about the positioning of the global economic order. Notwithstanding, Mahbubani (2013: 119) suggests that the after leading the world in the second half of the twentieth century by the imperatives of free trade<sup>74</sup>, the West is faltering in its economic leadership yet China seems not ready to take over the West's mantle. By the same token, Simon Serfaty (2012: 36) puts it for all the discussion and aggregate data on the irreversible rise of the rest, which he contends utterly rising, the power audit of the rest indicates that the unsurpassed economic, social, and political tools, institutions of the West still prevails.

On the other side of the debate, the argument put forward attaches salient role to China's material rise on the structural dynamics of the international system. More specifically, for the proponents of this view, it might be said that China's rise symbolizes the unipolar system's end (Layne, 2012: 204). It should be remarked that neorealism presumes that under unipolarity states balance against hegemon whether or not the hegemon has benign intentions or acts and regardless of the intentions and motivations of the other states in the international system. This rationale is tied to the systemic constraints such as anarchy, uneven growth rates, and the sameness effect of anarchy (Layne, 1993: 7). Among others, the uneven economic growth rate has a decisive feature since it has an underpinning role in the process of great power emergence. Great power emergence is of particular relevance to the durability of unipolarity since the positioning of the US as a sole great power will be largely contingent

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<sup>73</sup> Combining Communist political rule with dynamic state capitalism (Cox, 2013: 422).

<sup>74</sup> Low trade barriers, and increased trade interdependence (Mahubani, 2012: 118).

upon the emergence of a potential great power (Layne, 1993: 8). In this sense, the emergence of a second great power will mostly have a transformative effect on the unipolar system to turn it into a bipolar one (Jonston& Ross, 2005: 6). Therefore, the rules and strategies pertinent to unipolarity will be replaced by the requisites of a bipolar system. In the analysis of the rise of China, insofar as China enjoys an uneven growth rate, the gap between the US and itself will likely to narrow. Christopher Layne (2012) associates structural realist's symbiotic relationship between the economic power and military power with the current material rise of China. As such, he posits that the emergence of new powers- particularly China- in the post- Cold War era and the Great Recession of 2007 have eroded the economic foundation of Pax Americana. Indeed, the significance of Great Recession largely lies in the damage it did to the reputation and standing to the American model of capitalism, which was mostly confined to north America and Europe (Beeson& Li, 2015). Seen in this context, China might be assessed as a threat since its politico-economic system challenges the US's need for a world compatible with its liberal ideology (Layne, 2008: 15). Layne (2012) goes on to argue that the decline of the US was an undergoing process which was a broader trend in international politics, and the abovementioned facts only accelerated that process. To his account, China's rise along with the shift in economic power away from the Euro-Atlantic core to emerging market nations symbolize the signs of a multipolar global order emerging and consequently they constitute strong evidence of unipolarity's end.

By many measures, considering the current pace of China's power projection data, China is expected to undertake the US economically at some point in the near future.<sup>75</sup> Layne argues that being world's largest economy has more conceptual weight than mere economic significance. Relying on the core premises of structural realism, he contents that China will likely convert its economic power to military power which is evident in its current military modernization; it will likely dominate Asian region as expected by offensive realism. Indeed, China's prospects of becoming a potential hegemon in Northeast Asia depend largely on whether its economy continues modernizing at a rapid pace. To his account, China follows an economic pre-balancing strategy by concentrating on closing the economic and technological gap between the US and itself in order to avoid the risks of engaging a premature arms build up (Layne, 2006: 9). Indeed, it would not be fruitful to seek a direct leadership in an area where would heighten concerns of the prevailing power (Cox, 2013: 423). This

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<sup>75</sup> According to IMF, China will overtake the US in 2016 in terms of purchasing power parity. The Economist Intelligence Unit predicts that China will overtake the US in 2028 (Layne, 2012: 206).

transformation would lead China to convert its wealth to build a mighty military machine. By building powerful military forces, China might attempt to dominate Japan and Korea- as well as other regional actors- just as United States did in the Western Hemisphere during the nineteenth century (Mearsheimer, 2001: 401). Overall, Layne's basic argument conveys the idea that as the historical record demonstrates, the emergence of a new power has a highly destabilizing effect on the international system. (Layne, 2012: 206).

To Brezinski (1997: 19) also, the rise of China signals both the end of West's singular preeminence and the concomitant shift eastward of the global center of gravity. In that, he explains the shift in the distribution of power because of the emergence of new powers such as China, India, and Japan. Likewise, Brezinski likens the alliance formation pattern of Asian countries to that of European Atlantic powers' competition for geopolitical supremacy that resulted in two world wars. Brezinski notes that the only difference between European and Asian alliance system is over the source of conflict in which European powers rivaled for geopolitical supremacy but Asian states compete for regionally confined collision (such as over islands, maritime routes).

Along similar lines, Stephen Walt argues that the 2008 financial meltdown and the rise of China are among the elements, which ended the unipolar moment. In his formulation, the Financial Crisis not only diminished America's latent power potential but also undermined America's aura of economic competence although it has recovered quite quickly. Walt posits that China's rise is another driving force behind this erosion. Given evidence from China's enduring commitment to its territorial objectives and its long term desire to for a dominant role in Asia, Walt concludes that as China became wealthier it has not accepted every element of the existing geopolitical order. Indeed, as China becomes wealthier, he argues, China will likely challenge an order with a self-entitled 'indispensible nation' label and a self-empowered notion of 'global leadership'<sup>76</sup>

To put it all in context, neorealism perceives international relations in accordance with material capacity. The economic power is significant in structural realist lexicon that it might have a transformative effect on the polarity configuration of the international system. Nonetheless, although the primacy of the US remains an indisputable fact to a degree, the gap has narrowed (Tote, 2010: 159). As China continues its impressive economic rise and

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<sup>76</sup> <http://www.newsday.com/opinion/oped/bill-clinton-s-1992-prediction-was-dead-wrong-stephen-walt-1.7923396>

maintain its political stability (Waltz, 2000: 33), there would be two billiard balls in the system.<sup>77</sup> Thus, to restate the neorealist argument on the stability of the unipolar structure, China's rise presents a challenge to the durability of the unipolarity. Given the principal contention that the international status of a country rises in step with its material resources, China is likely to be a candidate to become a great power (Waltz, 2000: 34). Put simply, China's economic rise couches alarmist rhetoric upon the status quo of the international system. However, it seems highly that China concentrates on bridging the gap between itself and the unipole in order to preclude from the consequences of a possible security dilemma. Despite the meticulous economic success story of China for the last 4 decades, China has not completed its internal transformation process. Therefore, a peaceful international environment is a necessity for the country even if it would have intentions to transform its economic power into political or military forms.

### **3.4.3. THE PEACEFUL RISE**

'Many countries hope China will pursue a 'peaceful rise', but none will bet their future on it'<sup>78</sup>

To explain China's rise in the contours of power, one is entitled to ask what would be the pattern followed when the material power increases in a country with population of 1.3 billion that accounts for the fifth of the world's total population; with 10 million square kilometers as the world's third largest country; and with worldwide largest armed force around 2,25 million troops (Dellios, 2005: 1). In the case of China, the culmination of rising economic and military power combines two separate but related arguments. First, as China likely becomes powerful will it rise in a peaceful manner? The second one is whether it will act as a 'responsible stakeholder' and become integrated with the existing international order put simply be a status quo power satisfied with the current international order?

This section divides into three separate but interrelated parts. First part provides the historical context of Peaceful Rise rhetoric. The second part evaluates the discourse within the perspective of structural realism. The third part questions whether China's material rise constitutes a destabilizing effect on the international system by tracing the intentions of China and by the power typologies of two subgroupings within the theory.

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<sup>77</sup> <http://www.theory-talks.org/2012/06/theory-talk-49.html>

<sup>78</sup> US Deputy Secretary of State Robert B.Zoellick (cited in Bustelo, 2005).

### 3.4.3.1. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF 'PEACEFUL RISE' DISCOURSE

By and large, it might be argued that the debate over 'peaceful rise' of China dates back to 1990s. On the other hand, China has responded to 'China threat' rhetoric by characterizing its foreign policy and national security goals under a series of principles and slogans<sup>79</sup> such as 'Peaceful development'. Susan Shirk (2007) states that China has been engaging to respond to the China threat thesis since 1994 as featured in an important regional security conference held by China for the first time in its history. Shirk notes that the importance of the conference lied in the fact that -aside from being hosted by China for the first time- Chinese leaders' rejection of 'power' status coupled with China's repeated stress on assuring the world that it does not have –and will not have- aggressive intentions as its power grows economically and militarily were prominent. As invoked by Foreign Minister of the time: 'Even when China becomes a strong and developed country, it will continue to refrain from aggression and expansion'.<sup>80</sup>

Nonetheless, in 1997 China released its 'New Security Concept (NSC)' as a reflection of its post-Cold War international security order and surprisingly presented it in 1997 ASEAN meeting (Kumar, 2012). It is remarkable to note that although China widened the definition of security including military, political, economic, social, and environmental security in its NSC, the military security remained in traditional sense: '...the military force shoulders the important mission of defending the state's territorial sovereignty and integrity, resisting foreign aggression and safeguarding state unification. Therefore it is necessary to strengthen army building, develop armament...'<sup>81</sup> In NSC of 1997, China proclaimed that it adhered to 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence'<sup>82</sup>, which was incorporated into the official security guidelines in 2002 (Weiqing, 2013: 12). The principles emphasized mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference; equality and mutual benefit; peaceful coexistence'.

To a considerable extent, it can be said that by presenting a benign posture, China might have aimed to counter China threat rhetoric and at the same time 'the peaceful environment'

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<sup>79</sup> [http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/080916\\_cbs\\_1\\_foreignpolicyf.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/080916_cbs_1_foreignpolicyf.pdf)

<sup>80</sup> (Cited in Shirk, 2007: 106)

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Indeed, Holslag and Geearts (2014) argue that China has upheld its peaceful doctrine recently. In 1957, Premier Zhou Enlai promulgated Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence which aimed at stimulating cooperation against aggression and on the long-term create multipolar world.

proclaimed in its NSC would allow China to focus its domestic challenges such as poverty<sup>83</sup>, income gap, and environmental side effects of economic development. Indeed, Oğuzlu (2012) argues that since China has not completed its internal transformation process, a stable international environment is of significant necessity for the country. Moreover, Weiqin interprets the rhetoric of the concept as a part of Chinese soft balancing strategy in which it aims to mean to the Asian countries it would seek cooperation based on mutual trust and mutual benefit towards the US unilateralism (Weiqin, 2013: 12).

Since 2002, China's opposition of referring itself as 'power' has given its place to acknowledging of 'rising power' status (Shirk, 2007: 107). Chinese government has designed a significant campaign to reassure the world and particularly its neighboring states that it will be cooperative and its rise will not be zero-sum game.<sup>84</sup> Another significant discourse on peaceful development came in 2002, which referred to 'period of strategic opportunity' implying that for the next twenty years China's relations with its periphery and with major powers such as the United States are expected to remain essentially stable to enable China to focus its attention on "building a well-off society" at home.<sup>85</sup>

In 2003, the theory of peaceful rise (heping jueqi)<sup>86</sup> was developed precisely to offer a response to the threat hypothesis. Zheng Bijian promoted this initiative to the international stage (Lai, 2009: 59). In general, Bijian argued that with several major domestic challenges such as economic imbalances, environmental degradation, China needed to coexist with the other countries in harmony. In that regard, he added that China respects and will continue to respect the current international order furthermore will continue to contribute to its development (Bustelo, 2005: 4). Finally in 2006, China launched its idea of 'peaceful development', which contained; 'promoting world peace through its own development; achieving development by relying on itself while persisting in the policy of opening-up and striving to achieve mutually beneficial common development with other countries (Holslag & Geearts, 2014: 2)

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<sup>83</sup> Chinese people under poverty is still more than the combined population of many developed countries. Indeed, per capita income is still under \$5000 (Oğuzlu, 2013: 2).

<sup>84</sup> [http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/080916\\_cbs\\_1\\_foreignpolicyf.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/080916_cbs_1_foreignpolicyf.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> The term peaceful rise was then modified to 'peaceful development' due to the epistemological concerns on the the term 'rise' which created threatening connotations. It is significant to quote the State Council Information Office head's statement on the subject: 'The peaceful is for the foreigners, and the rise is for us' (cited *in* shrink, 2007: 109).

In further evaluating China's rise, Cabestan (cited in Christiansen & Kirchner & Murray, 2013) posits that the concepts developed by China such as 'peaceful development', 'win-win solutions', and 'harmonious world' can be seen as extensions of Chinese 'hide your capabilities' foreign policy doctrine that it pursued when it embarked on its open-up and reform program. The underlying objective to change the perception of China for the better was incorporated into a conflict-avoiding approach which not only assists Chinese economic modernization but also helps China with elevating its status to a great power comparable of the US.

### **3.4.3.2. THE PEACEFUL RISE RHETORIC FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM**

On assessing the rise of China, the question whether it will rise peacefully or considering the historical record related to the power shifts 'will history repeat itself' are the core precepts of neorealist agenda. In this respect, two arguments dominate the debate over the peaceful rise rhetoric of China. In the first view, the proponents of 'peaceful China rhetoric' mainly argue that as China has risen over the three decades, it has resolved a number of territorial disputes with its neighbors; joined a number of international and regional institutions; and it has moderated its rhetoric (Kang, 2005: 6). In consistent with its Peaceful Development discourse, China has embarked on strategic partnerships with the countries such as Russia, India, and the EU. Moreover, China increased its trade with the Asia-Pacific region in conformity with its 'good neighbor policy'.

In the second view, largely from the school of structural realism, the 'Peaceful Rise/Development' is acknowledged as a tactical rhetoric to challenge the existing international order. In this respect, with twenty-two thousand kilometers of land boundaries via fourteen different countries (Shrink, 2007: 112), Chinese history in relation to its neighbor states depicts a portrayal involving 'occasional use of force' (Etzioni, 2011: 545). According to a survey of Chinese Military Task Group, from 2200 BC to 1911, China has experienced 3,766 wars, almost one war per year (Lai, 2011: 59). As Etzioni (2011) provides evidence; in 1962, China attacked India over a border dispute, in 1974, China captured Paracel Islands from Vietnam. Instead of seeking resolution through mediation, China used force to reinforce its claims to rights over South China Sea. Furthermore, China claimed ownership of Taiwan, and the Senkaku Islands (Mearsheimer, 2001: 375). Indeed, in 2011, it declared South China Sea as 'core interest' meaning that it would resort to military force to defend its interests in the sea

(Kumar, 2012: 10). To Ahsari (2011), this reflects Chinese strategy aiming at shaping its neighbors accepting its superiority. Susan Shirk (2007) notes that it was the start of its economic reform- indeed the necessity to focus on economic build up- that prompted Chinese efforts to stabilize relations with its neighbors in 1979. Likewise, Buzan and Cox argue that the general logic behind was instrumental since China discovered that it could only recover if state control over the economy would be abolished (Buzan& Cox, 2013: 114). That inevitably necessitated China to be engaged with its neighbors and world economically.

It might be argued that within the borders of neorealism, the upshot of this view leads to identify Chinese ‘peaceful development’ as a strategy that is purely in line with defensive realpolitik approach (Oğuzlu, 2013: 2) whereby in order to buy more time to bid for global leadership. Furthermore, Stephen Walt (2013) assesses China’s peaceful rise as a gradual, low-intensity effort to challenge current arrangements and to pressure other states to accept revisions that are more prone to China’s liking. To Walt, the basic rationale lying under the assertive efforts of China –be it declaration of sovereignty over contested waters or unilateral announcement of air defense identification zone- is to reinforce Chinese claims to that territorial arrangements. However, equally importantly China aims at establishing a position in that region as a country whose demands must be respected. Put differently, he argues this is a pattern pertinent to a great power especially in its immediate neighborhood. Surveying the history, Walt goes on to argue that the US did not launch a war to the UK to expel it from the Pacific Northwest. Instead, by calmly probing and using carrots and sticks, the US enabled the UK to conclude that the US friendship was more valuable given the balance of threats closer to its neighborhood. Obviously, that is what China attempts to do by peaceful rise mantra, slow, steady accretions of power with less possibility of triggering balance response at the same time bending on revising the status quo to wear the opponents down.

However, Robert Art (2010) evaluates ‘peaceful rise’ policy as a strategy of a rising power not of a fully arrived great power. To Art, China considers peaceful environment to continue to grow, and avoids encirclement as it grows more powerful. The reasoning of the strategy according to Avery Goldstein stems from two considerations: to reassure China’s neighbors that China is a responsible stakeholder not in words but in deeds as well<sup>87</sup> and to improve relations with the leading states to show the advantages of dealing with China (Goldstein,

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<sup>87</sup> Mostly by pursuing a multilateralist policy rather than a unilateralism in striving for China’s interests (Art, 2010: 361).



cited in Art, 2010: 361). Art goes on to argue that given China's increasingly considerable economic clout, military prowess and growing nationalism, it will be less willingly to pursue a 'lying low' policy and accommodation. Instead, its ambitions will grow as its capabilities increase. Thus, more power creates more opportunities to influence. In this interpretation, under the guidance of the historical record, China will likely have more expansive goals just like the other great powers when they acquired more power. However, Art points out that this does not mean that China will be aggressive or warlike nor simply a status quo power. A premise behind this assumption is as China continues to grow further; it will likely seek to shape its external environment in ways conducive to its interests rather than simply reacting to its external environment. Assessing China's rise for the last three decades along with its 'peaceful rise' rhetoric, Buzan and Cox (2013) conclude that there has been no warlike rise so far<sup>88</sup>. So, recalling the argument on the underlying logic of 'peaceful rise' rhetoric, Stephen Walt writes: 'A clash of arms is not the goal here, though accidents may happen'<sup>89</sup>. On the other hand, China has failed to make great power friends (Buzan & Cox, 2013: 114). It has not reached a sustainable accommodation with its neighbors and key global actors (Oğuzlu, 2013: 2). Relations with the US -prevailing hegemon- mainly demonstrated a cold peace feature whilst its relations with Europe fall in between warm or cold character. Moreover, since 2008 China has taken a more aggressive line towards South East Asia. In 2013, with rising nationalism domestically, the possibility of war with Japan over the disputed islands was one of the striking concerns manifesting that China would exit its peaceful rhetoric.

Considering the relative economic and military position of China in relation to the US-prevailing dominant power- which is still far from by many measures, Buzan and Cox raise an important question: 'What actually happens once China has risen peacefully?' The viability of peaceful rise is contested from realist reading on the grounds for skepticism over strategic deceit and seen more as a matter of temporary strategic self-restraint (Buzan & Cox, 2013: 114-115).

#### **3.4.3.3. IS CHINA A STATUS QUO POWER?**

Within an anarchic setting of international system where states are motivated basically by the survival motive and organize their own security via self-help principle, any tilt in the

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<sup>88</sup> Buzan and Cox regard this option as being not plausible for China at the time being since the US is allied with most of Chinese neighbors including Japan.

<sup>89</sup> <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/12/02/how-long-will-china-tolerate-americas-role-in-asia/>

relative distribution of power among states causes concerns. In this context of neorealist structural frame, as China increases its power, the question ‘What does China want?’ looms large. In particular, the question ‘In what ways China will choose to exercise this newly acquire power?’ heightens concerns on the intentions and strategies of a globally rising China. As such, this part attempts to observe whether or not China’s material rise constitutes a destabilizing effect on the international system by tracing the intentions of China and by the power typologies of two subgroupings within the theory.

#### **3.4.3.3.1. THE INTENTIONS DEBATE**

‘How often have statesmen been motivated by the desire to improve the world, and ended up by making it worse? And how often they have sought one goal, and ended up by achieving something they neither expected nor desired?’<sup>90</sup>

Throughout history, the rise of a new power has been attended by uncertainty and anxieties (Nye, 2006: 73). Indeed, in an anarchical system of international politics uncertainty becomes greatest than any place (Waltz, 2010: 60). In that sense, the uncertainty regarding the consequences of China’s rise can be effectively assessed within this context. Above all, the conventional wisdom confirms the indisputable material rise of China. On the other hand, the direction of the rise is highly uncertain. Thus, it might be argued that the debate over China’s rise has shifted from means to intention, orientation, and motivation (Hagt, 2008: 2). To highlight the issue, Joseph Nye recalls Thucydides’ analysis of Peloponnesian war. Nye draws parallels between the rise of one power alongside with fear it endangered to account for Peloponnesian war<sup>91</sup> and the uncertainty on China’s contemporary rise. Further, he underlines the necessity to avoid exaggerated fears on China’s rise- particularly for a safer America - which he believes that it creates a self-fulfilling prophecy (Nye, 2006: 77).

It can be said that uncertainty and intentions have overlapping realms largely because the latter might involve considerable amount of uncertainty. In the case of China, the issue is much more puzzling. On one side, there is the issue of China’s associated tendency to ‘tao guang yang hui (hide your capabilities)’ doctrine. Famously known as advised by Deng Xiaoping, it is argued that ‘tao guang yang hui’ doctrine was a continuation of Chinese overall foreign policy strategy since 1978 that was designed to endure its ongoing

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<sup>90</sup> (Morgenthau, cited in Hyde-Price, 2012: 33).

<sup>91</sup> Thucydides described the cause of Peloponnesian War as ‘What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused Sparta’ (Kennedy, 1989: 198).

modernization. However, this overall perspective also comprised Chinese underlying aim to elevate its status to a recognized great power (Breslin, 2010: 2). The doctrine reads:

‘Leng ling guan cha (Watch and analyze developments)

Wen zhu zhen jiao (Secure our positions)

Chen zhe ying fu (Deal with changes with confidence)

Tao guang yang hui (Conceal our capacities)

Shan yu Be (Good at keeping low profile)

Jue bu dong tou (Never become the leader)

You sou zuo wei (Make some contributions)’

Cabestan (cited *in* Breslin, 2010: 1) argues that, to an extent, the 28-character strategy<sup>92</sup> that Deng Xiaoping<sup>93</sup> formulated aftermath of Tiananmen Square events has relevance even today in many respects. Aside from being one of the longest running debate related to China’s international posture, the phrases are recognized as the ‘guiding terminology’ within Chinese foreign policy discourse (Shambaugh, 2013: 18).

An example to this argument might be seen at the 2010 annual meeting of China’s Association of International Relations wherein the participants from all over China concluded that ‘taoguang yanghui’ paradigm still prevailed in Chinese discourse (Shambaugh, 2013: 20). Indeed, with additional principles added:

‘Do not confront the US

Do not challenge the international system general

Do not use ideology to guide foreign policy

Do not be the chief of the ‘anti-Western’ camp

Do not compromise China’s core interests concerning unification of the country’

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<sup>92</sup> Written in classical Chinese style, the strategy was comprised of a 24-character instruction and a 12-character explanation (Kissinger, 2011: 438).

<sup>93</sup> In his ‘Southern Sojourn’ in 1992 Deng Xiaoping stated: ‘We will only become a big political power if we keep low profile and work hard for some years, and then we will have more weight in international affairs.’ (cited *in* Shambaugh, 2013: 19).

On the other hand, even if the full potential were accessed, it would not reflect the exact intentions as such the intentions are highly volatile.<sup>94</sup> Mearsheimer (2001) contends that states can never be sure that whether other states do or do not have offensive intentions to go along with their offensive capabilities. Moreover, the uncertainty of intentions cover all states, be it democracy or dictatorship, making the issue more encompassing. Unlike military capabilities, which can be seen and counted, intentions are difficult to gauge and to discern (Mearsheimer, 2010: 384).

On the basis of these arguments, it is apparent that to arrive a straightforward conclusion over the intentions of China is more puzzling, considering the neorealist assumption that states with revisionist intentions do not necessarily exhibit revisionist intentions. Yet, instead states would weigh the costs and benefits before proceeding to change the balance of power in their favor (Wang, 2004: 174). What is more, from the perspective of structural realism the statesmen are not necessarily expected to couch their actions in the balancing language. Indeed, the competitive quality of international politics might enable them to conceal their motives in some situations (Posen, 2006: 165). This very fact seems to constitute a source of friction and suspicion notably over the issue of Chinese military modernization (Ahrari, 2011: 31).

In the final analysis, one could infer from the neorealist theory that state intentions are not viable indicators to comment on the behavior pattern of states due to the above-mentioned reasons. Thus, one may argue that material power is rather more reliable indicator on which to build solid strategies with respect to relative power position of states.

#### **3.4.3.3.2. WILL CHINA CHALLENGE THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM?**

‘China is definitely a pole in multi-polarization’<sup>95</sup>

Noting the fact that structural realism tends not to take into account the intentions of a state as starting point to arrive a conclusion on whether the state reveals revisionist or status quo tendencies, the remaining part of the quest is attempted to be answered by two divergent views within the neorealist camp. Given offensive realism’s specific emphasis on power maximization, the increasing capabilities are expected to transform preferences of states in a

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<sup>94</sup> A state’s intentions can be benign one day and hostile the next (Mearsheimer, 2001: 31).

<sup>95</sup> (Deng Xiaoping, cited in Tang Shiping, 2008)

revisionist direction (Kahler, 2013: 713). Furthermore, Mearsheimer advocates that the structure of the system compels every great power to think and act when appropriate like a revisionist state. (Dunne& Kurki& Smith, 2006: 74). Under an anarchic system wherein states are fearful of each other and uncertain about one another's intentions, obviously the guarantee for survival is to be more powerful relative to others. Consequently, this logic leads states to look for opportunities to shift the balance of power in their favor. Under the rubric of offensive realism, a rising China would seek to maximize the power gap between itself and its neighbors, especially Japan and Russia (Dunne& Kurki& Smith, 2006: 74, 83). Indeed, it would be strategically sound to have a militarily weak Japan and Russia as its neighbors. It should be remarked that offensive realism leaves little or no room for cooperation other than temporary alliances since it presumes states to seek security by intentionally decrease the security of others (Shiping, 2008: 12).

Essentially defensive realists share with offensive realists the assumption that China will look for opportunities to shift the balance of power in its favor. However, they argue that structure dictates that China will have limited aims since as China pursues hegemony; its rivals will form a balancing coalition. Hence, for defensive realists with specific emphasis on security maximization, it would be much smarter for China to act like Bismarck who did not try to dominate Europe but still made Germany great (Dunne& Kurki& Smith, 2006: 84).

Historically, the debate over whether a rising China will challenge the existing international order and pursue a revisionist course can be traced back to the early 1990s (Jerden, 2014). However, it might be said that the expected hard line posture of revisionism has not been met—at least for the time being<sup>96</sup>. Particularly, with minor exceptions, China seems not following the way offensive realism expects it to pursue so. This may stem partly from the recognition that due to its geographical location as China adopts an offensive realist approach; the other countries may easily form a counter- availing alliance (Shiping, 2008: 21) and partly the recognition that territorial expansion and conquest is no longer a legitimate option regarding the current juncture. Indeed, China seems benefiting from the status quo. What is more, China's status as the world's second largest economy can be tied to China's adaptation of itself to the international order (Xiao, 2012: 5). Regarding the participation rates in international institutions, China has a solid record in an increasing direction. Indeed, Johnston

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<sup>96</sup> Surveying China's outlook on the international order, one may conclude that China pursued a revisionist posture during Mao Era (1949- 1976). Since 1978 China followed an integrationist pattern in which it has been joining and working within the rules of the existing system (Legro, 2007: 517).

(2003) points out that during the 1990s China became overinvolved in international organizations compared to its previous under involved stance. The extent and degree of China's integration with the existing international institutions and the international system is obviously extensive. Yet, Johnston puts additional variables to the debate by observing the degree of compliance of China with the international norms as he argues that even increased participation may not necessarily be a strong indication of a status quo behavior. Johnston concludes that China appears to be conforming more with international system than its past. However, the substance of the integration is subject to skepticism by the neorealist agenda.

Yet, it is possible to read the visible outcomes from a different angle. Stuart Harris notes that although China remains a dissatisfied power in the international institutional context and has concerns over the dominance of the US on the international institutions and the need for reforms; in general it does not propose revisionist forms of international and security regimes (Harris, 2001: 19). Arguably, Barry Buzan points out that since China is a rising power, by definition it is not satisfied with its status and rank within the existing system and will likely increase its status in proportion to its increasing wealth and power (Buzan, 2010: 18).

Given neorealist perspective on international institutions as the tools of major powers to project their choices, norms and preferences further; one may correspond current international institutional architecture to the values, norms, and preferences of the West (Goswami, 2013: 21). On this point, Barry Buzan doubts the extent of China being accepted as a status quo power. Yet, he argues that particularly for the international economical system, China instrumentally accepts the market and he asks: 'Can a Communist government ever support the market ideationally, or must its support necessarily be not more than calculated?' (Buzan, 2010: 17). It is highly probable that China would not want to be integrated into a political system that it had no part in shaping it. What is more, the issue is arguable when that international system fits neither to its ambitions nor to its own autocratic and hierarchic principles of rule (Kagan, 2005: 2). Therefore, to arrive a conclusion on China's satisfaction or dissatisfaction within the existing international order just inferring from China's participation in the international institutions is a highly simplified account. As Patrick and Thaler (2010) point out that the grounds for multilateral cooperation reflect each participant's distinct national interests and international visions. In this context, they compare the attitudes of the US and China toward the United Nations respectively. To their account, whereas the US adopts a pragmatic approach to the UN, China acknowledges the UN as a primary framework for legitimating collective action. They further argue that the US uses the UN if it

works, but is aware of the alternative instruments, on the other hand, China seems to value the UN as a framework for limiting US unilateralism and constraining the uncontrolled exercise of US power.

Assessed within the context of a relationship between the existing great power and the emerging great power, it is therefore difficult to conclude a clear-cut answer with respect to the satisfaction and compliance of the rising power. At this point, Ren Xiao (2012) describes China as a reform minded status quo power since he argues that China demonstrates both rigid and anti-status quo power patterns. On the one side of the spectrum, China benefits from the existing international system and it would not be logical to overthrow it radically. On the other side, given China's positions in the course of recent cases such as attempts to reform IMF and revalue Renminbi, Xiao notes that China approaches in a reformist way rather than revolutionary. In particular, he argues that China opts for a more modest rhetoric to push the international order to change in the direction of becoming more just and reasonable to its favor. In this formulation, Buzan (2010) assesses the way China follows best described as 'reformist revisionist'. To his judgment, China does not seem to assert its own claims by a leadership role -albeit it gives strong support to the pluralist institutions of coexistence- rather tends to emphasize democratizing of the international system. On the other hand, as a rising power China inherently is revisionist with particular aim of enhancing its status globally. In a similar vein, Shiping (2010: 20) argues that in the current juncture, China has a defensive realist agenda regarding the modus operandi of the international system. He notes that after the period starting from Deng Xiaopong China clearly attempts to avoid a direct security dilemma; has toned down its revolutionary rhetoric of Mao period; has showed its willingness to be self-restraint actor by participating international institutions whose rules were placed already before China's entry. To Shiping, China aims at reducing the security dilemma by adopting a strategy to its neighbors through reassurance and cooperation. To a certain degree, this rather limited response of China might be interpreted as a secret balancing against the US given the tremendous power asymmetries between each other. Indeed, a structural realist account would review this move by arguing that as China realizes that it is simply not capable of challenging the status quo, it is merely biding its time.

It should be noted that the emphasis on continuity of great power politics leads neorealists to contend that 'the real world remains a realist world'. Given considerable evidence from Europe and North Asia throughout 1990s, Mearsheimer advocates the primacy of state in the international system and argues that the anarchic structure of that system remain unchanged to

a large extent (Mearsheimer, 2001: 361). Likewise, Tote argues that the reoccurrence of great-power politics implies a strong reaffirmation of balance of power as the ‘iron law’ of history (Tote, 2010: 163). Arguably, it would be claimed that the history repeats itself due to the anarchic structure of international system. The world still comprises states that operate in an anarchic setting. Within this framework of continuity in great-power politics, Mearsheimer concludes that there is no reason to expect the great powers to behave much differently in the new century than before (Mearsheimer, 2001: 361-363). At this point, Waltz (2010) posits that countries have always competed for wealth and security and asks ‘why should the future be different from the past?’ In the case of China, Mearsheimer (2001) argues that a rising China will not be a status quo power rather an aggressive state determined to achieve regional hegemony.

All in all, as it is clear from the recorded history that like all rising powers in the past such as the US, China might want to reshape the international system to suit its own purposes (Kagan, 2005: 2). In the current juncture, China’s apparent accommodation posture might help it to avoid clashes with other countries, which may jeopardize its already processing economic growth. On the other hand, Jin Canrong remarks that the pattern China follows bears resemblance to that of the US, which was isolationist between the Civil war and World War I but it pursued more expansionist policy after World War II (Shirk, 2007: 139). Notwithstanding, Zachary Keck (2014) contends that China will strive to be like previous hegemon—thus recall the rise of the US and failure to achieve that status will say more about its lack of capabilities than lack of intentions. Indeed, Keck argues that with a long historical experience of regional hegemony in Eastern Asia, it was not China to prefer to retreat from its hegemonic status rather mainly because its humiliating encounter with West accounted for that move (Lai, 2012: 32).

To sum up, as for the question whether China will challenge the status quo or not, it should be marked that the answer remains puzzling. Indeed, the issue is much more puzzling when one attempts to explore consistency between China’s discourse and actions in this regard.<sup>97</sup> Considering the fact that different international structures have often been the result of unintended consequences such as in the case of Nazi Germany’s quest for unipolarity ended up with a bipolar world. Likewise, Soviet Union attempts to prolong bipolarity finalized as a

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<sup>97</sup> As Johnston (2003) argues talk is cheap. States may claim they are satisfied in order to minimize the chance of conflict.



unipolar order (Shiping, 2010). It is thus much more difficult to draw a straightforward conclusion on China's revisionist or status quo oriented behavior.

On the other hand, China's recent dynamism be it through multilateral channels or enhanced activism in international affairs demonstrate a different dimension. It is obvious that by engaging with the international system China has benefited from the status quo in line with its economic modernization process. From this angle, it would not be plausible to reject the system entirely. Therefore, apart from intentions of China and the uncertainty of the international system, it might be argued that China will strive for 'modest' modifications within the system to the advantage of its core interests.



## 4. APPLICATION OF NEOREALIST THEORY TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

### 4.1. CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE EU WITHIN NEOREALIST THEORY

Despite its centrality to the development of the discipline of International Relations, realism has been rarely attempted to apply to the case of the EU (Kissack, 2013:1)<sup>98</sup>. Obviously, the EU proves to be a complicated political organization encountered in international relations. The complication in answering the question ‘What is European Union?’ may be best caricatured by Donald Puchala’s portrayal of several blind men touching an elephant in order to identify it. In his depiction, Puchala points out the difficulty of positioning different departure points:

‘Each blind man, however, touched a different part of the large animal, and each concluded that the elephant had the appearance of the part he had touched. Hence, the blind man who felt the animal’s trunk concluded that an elephant must be tall and slender, while the fellow who touched the beast’s ear concluded that an elephant must be oblong and flat. Others of course reached different conclusions. The total result was that no man arrived at a very accurate description of the elephant.’ (Puchala, 1972: 267)

Puchala’s depiction clearly demonstrates the dilemma to conceptualize the EU. In that, different departure points reflect different methods of categorization of European integration. As the EU is conceived of many things simultaneously- or the opposite-, the theoretical and conceptual toolkit slightly differs in that matter. What is more, these separate definitions make it more difficult to achieve a collective knowledge on the European integration (Eilstrup, Sangiovanni, 2006: 9)

Against this backdrop, the starting point to study the EU is the tendency to portray the EU as ‘*sui generis*’. Meaning ‘own of its kind’, it derives from the fact that as Gingsberg (1999) contends ‘the EU is neither a state nor a non-state actor, and neither a conventional organization nor an international regime’. That being said, the proponents of this view mainly argue that since ‘the EU is the product of different set of events’ (Milward cited *in* Eilstrup, Sangiovanni, 2006: 10), then the EU should to be analyzed in its own dynamics as a unique actor in the international system. However, treating the EU as ‘unidentified political object’ (Delors cited *in* Eilstrup, Sangiovanni, 2006: 450) poses challenges in terms of methodology.

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<sup>98</sup> To Sten Rynning, realism is ‘genetically biased against an understanding of European politics’ (Krossciak, 2003:2).

Due to its uniqueness, it would not be possible to test or compare the EU context with any other political form, so to say n=1 trap<sup>99</sup>. Consequently, this restrictive approach might lead to discuss the EU's unique features instead of understanding it in a comparative context (Selden, 2010: 14). On the comparison of the EU with international organizations, it is possible to argue that regarding the complexity of its institutions, policy actors and decision-making orientation, the EU is structurally more complex than an international organization (Nugent, 2010: 446). What is more, the EU departs from the ranks of international organizations notably it is in its ability to coerce (Tote, 2010: 1)<sup>100</sup>. Furthermore, the issue is much more puzzling when neorealism- as a theoretical framework- is attempted to apply to the EU. Based on essentially a state-centric perspective, neorealism considers nation-states to pursue their own survival under an anarchic system. Following this pretext, at the first glance it seems that the EU per se inherently presents an anomaly for neorealism. The reason partly lies in the fact that the EU possesses an indeterminate ontological status that does not fit easily to neorealist research agenda (Morgan, 2005: 203). On the other side, although the EU involves many state-like features defined in Weberian sense (Nugent, 2010: 422)<sup>101</sup> -, the Union departs from a nation-state in various ways. As Jan Zielonka (2008) puts, the EU is a geopolitical entity without defined territorial limits<sup>102</sup>. It has no effective monopoly over the legitimate means of coercion<sup>103</sup> and no clearly defined center of authority<sup>104</sup>. After all, it should be noted that the EU has not described or defined its political character in any clear manner, yet at most employed the vague phrase 'ever closing union' (Nugell, 2010: 420).

Nonetheless, within the neorealist paradigm, there exists a tendency to approach the EU as a conventional kind of power instead of interpreting the EU as unprecedented (Gamble& Layne, 2009: 42). Rather than a new type of actor of its own kind, it might be said that neorealism treats the EU as a vehicle for cooperation on a limited range of secondary order

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 450.

<sup>100</sup> The legal basis of the Union presupposes the supremacy of Community Law over member states' national law (Cuthbert, 2011: 40).

<sup>101</sup> Max Weber provides the definition of modern state as an entity which has a monopoly of the legitimate means of violence within a given territory (Evans& Newnham, 1998: 508).

<sup>102</sup> The EU's territory is the sum total of member states' territory. Yet, enlargements imply that it has a shifting territory (Nugell, 2010: 421).

<sup>103</sup> There are no EU policemen, no EU tax collectors. Therefore, everything has to be undertaken by agreement (Judt, 2006: 733).

<sup>104</sup> The EU commands a weak sovereignty in which the primacy of EU law applies only to some policy areas. Regarding internal legitimacy, the biggest problematic is absence of a true demos. On the other hand, the external legitimacy is contingent mostly upon common commercial policy (Nugent, 2010: 421).

issues, driven by its largest powers and facilitated by the bipolar structure of power (Hyde-Price, 2008: 27). Despite the fact that the EU falls short of being a nation-state when judged against the standards of states, it still displays some of the traditional characteristics of a state (Nugell, 2010: 421). It can be argued that although the EU is not a sovereign actor in its own right, it embraces the collective interest of its member states (Hyde-Price, 2008: 19). On the other hand, aside from creating 'level of analysis' problem (Eilstrup & Sabgiiovanni, 2006: 347), attributing the EU a unique characteristics and disassociating it from state would not be in tune with neorealist positioning regarding states.

As mentioned in the first section, realism-and neorealism- merely requires anarchy; it does not matter what kind of political units make up the system, be it states, city-states, empires, tribes, (Mearsheimer, 2001: 365) or principalities, and regional political unions (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999: 13). Indeed, contemporary nation-state is a new invented phenomenon dating back to not more than hundred years ago (Zakaria, 2012: 41). In the same vein, Waltz (1993) puts it: 'The behaviors of states, the patterns of their interactions, and the outcomes their interactions produced had been repeated again and again through the centuries despite profound changes in the international composition of states'. On the basis of the characteristics of states provided by neorealism, the EU might be seen as a unit in a larger global system though with such complex and uncommon features on its own right (Pilegaard & Kluth, 2010: 3). Given neorealist core assumption that states seek to survive as autonomous units and maximize their autonomy, applying the theory to the EU would not be preclusive since, as Kluth and Pilegar argue (2010), member states maintain a common perspective on global issues as a union even though they have individual interests and perspectives. Assessed from this perspective, it might be claimed that to a certain degree, as a point of reference, the EU seems relevant to get into the trajectory of neorealist research agenda.

#### **4.2. EUROPEAN INTEGRATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM**

It might be argued that in general structural realism is adapted to EU studies by focusing on two dimensions. First line of argument emphasizes the process of European integration, whereas the second perspective questions the international actorness of the EU, and particularly the environment of its external relations (Kisscak, 2013: 3). Furthermore, it might be said that the institutional dynamics of the EU integration has been scrutinized as well -- albeit in a critical manner. Therefore, the ensuing section will provide three bodies of literature concerning the theoretical application of structural realism on the EU.

#### **4.2.1. THE DYNAMICS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM FROM EEC TO THE END OF COLD WAR**

As a systemic theory, neorealism focuses on the origins and development of European integration through a critical and distinctive perspective (Hde-Price, 2008: 12). To neorealists, it was the bipolar structure to account for the success of ECSC or EEC rather than projects with liberal-idealist notions such as League of Nations (Krowska& Breuer, 2011: 26). Put it differently, neorealism tends to regard the origins of European integration in the 1950s as a by-product of Cold War era under the shadows of superpowers (Waltz, 2010: 70). Specifically, Kenneth Waltz attributes European unification to the change in structure from multipolarity to bipolarity.

As mentioned before, neorealists cling to the idea that under bipolarity cooperation is easier than multipolarity. In Waltz's account (2010), in a multipolar system wherein the world's most powerful states-European states-regarded each other under the zero-sum logic, it would be impossible to expect a degree of unity among them. Indeed, historical record demonstrates that the legacies of power struggles and wars have shaped the European continent in such a way that divisions, tensions, and conflicts were the main features rather than common purpose or harmony (Nugell, 2010: 3). Roughly, until after the Second War, these divisions took the form of economic and political rivalry mostly driven by distrust among European states (Nugell, 2010: 4). However, once the system has shifted to bipolarity, European powers moved to cooperation in order to oppose the other powers more strongly (ibid) –in this case, to USSR and US.

Thus, given the effects of structural transformation, the European states followed a path of 'upgrading of the common interest' rather than focusing on exact division of benefits (Waltz, 2010: 70). In other words, it is possible to argue that it was the suspension of Europe between two superpowers that paved the way for European integration (Tote, 2010: 47). Since the East-West conflict laid over Europe as a massive blanket, the attention was primarily focused on the central axis of the conflict (Kluth& Pilegaard, 2010: 2). Due to European states' realization that the security of them came to depend largely on superpowers, unity among them has been achieved with the waning possibility of war (Waltz, 2010: 71). In that regard, bipolarity formed a non-anarchical subsystem where European states focused on absolute rather than relative gains (Kluth& Pilegaard, 2010: 2). As Gingsberg (1999) notes, clearly the impact of Cold War bipolarity affected the EC's ability to conduct an independent foreign

policy. Indeed, within the new international power balance, under unification smaller European states would elevate themselves to a more influential status than previous in terms of security.<sup>105</sup>

Related to Europe's security concerns at the time was the question of how to contain Germany that has occupied Europe three times in seventy years without leaving it marginalized (Nugell, 2006: 11). The German question was accepted as a reminder of European balance-of-power principle, which necessitated collective and strong equilibrium powers to contain the revisionist state (Tote, 2010: 42). To this end, with the ambivalent US pressure, unification seemed as a plausible tool both for utilizing Germany's wealth for European defense and at the same time incorporating Germany to Europe (Nugell, 2006: 11). Hardly surprising, this would only be possible with the reassuring presence of the American pacifier (Joffe, 1984, cited in Krowska& Breuer, 2011: 27). Moreover, with the US security umbrella provided under NATO, European states discovered that it would be more fruitful to devote more resources to 'welfare' than 'warfare'. In this context, as European states became security consumers, the concern over relative gains soared, creating the environment for a cooperation (Krowska& Breuer, 2011: 26).

In a nutshell, according to neorealist theory it could be argued that the willingness of the European states to limit their autonomy and freedom of maneuver by common agreements is largely accorded to the bipolar structure of the international system during Cold War. In that, bipolarity is said to lead to a non-anarchical subsystem in which states focused on absolute rather than relative gains (Kluth& Pilegaard, 2010: 2).

#### **4.2.2. THE DYNAMICS OF UNIFICATION AFTER THE COLD WAR**

If the Cold War bipolarity was responsible for peace in Europe for about 45 years, the end of Cold War with the demise of a pole, Soviet Union, could signify the possibility of instability in the region (Mearsheimer, 2001: 51-52). As a prominent proponent of offensive realism, Mearsheimer (1990) immediate after the end of Cold War predicted that the bipolar structure, which characterized Europe during Cold War, would likely be replaced by a multipolar structure. To his account, the departure of superpowers from Central Europe would transform Europe from bipolarity to multipolarity. This prediction along with Mearsheimer's argument

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<sup>105</sup> In self-help systems, external forces propel the weaker parties toward one another and weaker parties incline to combine to offset the strength of the stronger (Waltz, 2010: 202).

on the waning of the factors that accounted for relative peace in Europe during the Cold War<sup>106</sup> has led him to arrive at such a point related to the instability of the region. Mearsheimer's multipolarity scenario comprised Germany, France, Britain, and perhaps Italy as major powers. In consequence, this international setting would be destined to the obvious problems of the multipolarity as experienced in Europe previously. In tune with Mearsheimer, Waltz pointed to more or less the same countries to become prospective major powers after the end of Cold War. These included; Germany or a Western European state, Japan, and China (Waltz, 1993: 50). However, contrary to Mearsheimer's military emphasis, Waltz maintained that these emerging states should bent on political and economic means in the face of the reality of nuclear weapons.

However, the pace of European integration after the end of Cold War followed a different way than as predicted by Mearsheimer. Contrary to a multipolar international system depiction, which included also some of the European states, there were no European states emerging as major poles. Indeed, in contrast to the assumed predictions, Europeans strengthened the institutional framework that had been developed during the Cold War (Kluth& Pilegaard, 2010: 2). It seemed that the structural shift, led by the demise of Soviet Union, from bipolarity to unipolarity added an extra level of complexity to understanding the dynamics of European integration. Adrian Hyde-Price (2011) lists a set of possibilities that would prompt a more integrated Europe after the abrupt end of Cold War. The disintegration of the bipolar system, he discusses, exerted new pressures on state behavior. Indeed, the global structural change was realized within the bedrock of Europe. Even though the formal mechanism for a more integrated Europe was established in 1987 of Single European act (SEA), the process was accelerated by a very structural cause; the end of Cold War (Judt, 2005: 713). As a direct outcome of radically changed external circumstances, a set of financial and institutional arrangements was bound together. Occupying a significant place in European integration, Treaty on European Integration (TEU) - Maastricht Treaty- in 1993 was designed to expand the scope of European integration, to reform the EC's institutions, and bring about European Monetary Union (EMU) (Cini& Borragan, 2010: 35). With reference to Union's roles as a global actor, TEU incorporated a clause stating that the Union should

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<sup>106</sup> Mearsheimer attributed the relative peace of Cold War in Europe to three factors: the bipolar distribution of military power on the continent; the rough military equality between the two states comprising the two poles in Europe, the US and the Soviet Union; and the fact that each superpower was armed with a large nuclear arsenal (Mearsheimer, 1990:7).

‘establish its identity on the global scene’.<sup>107</sup> However, in terms of coherence and uniformity, the innovations proved largely symbolic, largely due to the mix of supranational integration and intergovernmental cooperation (Cini& Borragan, 2010: 35).

On the other hand, the end of Cold War heightened concerns over the political stability and economic crisis in East European states. Under this context, given the hard security guarantees were provided by NATO, it became clear that the EU acquired a significant role as projecting stability into Central and Eastern Europe. By focusing on soft security governance, the EU addressed economic, social, and political aspects of transformation (Krowska& Breuer, 2011: 28). Judt (2005: 716) argues that the priority the EU gave to NATO during Maastricht was self-evident in the way that it was formulated. Since the newly liberated states of Eastern Europe were unable to meet the accession criteria of TEU at the time, they were encouraged to become members of NATO as a sort of compensation. Thus, by utilizing a mix of soft power instruments and hard power- mainly in the form of economic statecraft<sup>108</sup>, the EU served as an instrument of collective hegemony in order to shape its near abroad by its main influential member states. It should be noted that Barry Posen interprets the survival of NATO after the end of Cold War contrary to expectations to weaken as an evidence of European states’ bandwagoning with the US (Posen, 2004: 25). Arguably, Posen notes that after the end of Cold War, NATO became the principal instrument of US hegemon on the Eurasian land mass. Its membership has increased and doctrine has expanded in order to accommodate the interests of the US. What is more, he points out that European forces became interoperable with fast changing US forces. In this sense, he assigns the slowness of European military reformation and the low level of defense spending to the bandwagoning behavior of European states with the US.

On the other hand, Kluth and Pilegaard (2010) interpret the efforts to strengthen the institutional dynamics of the EC after the Cold War period as attempts to counterbalance the incentives of anarchy. As the end of bipolarity was associated with the end of relatively benign security atmosphere provided by the US, Kluth and Pilegaard argue that the intricate European balance of power among the European states necessitated focusing on absolute gains<sup>109</sup>. What is more, since the context of 1990s was far more different than the context of

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<sup>107</sup> (Article 2, TEU, Cited in Bretherton& Vogler, 2006:5).

<sup>108</sup> In the form of political conditionality (Hyde-Price, 2011).

<sup>109</sup> They argue that none of the member states can mobilize anything out of the ordinary without attracting the others.



1930s, the return to anarchy did not enable European powers to mobilize offensive might instead prompted reinforcing the already existing economic and political union.

#### **4.3. THE INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS OF THE EU FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM**

Regardless of the preference of any specific approach to theorize the EU, it is widely acknowledged that any analysis without studying both the operation and the evolution of the central institutions of the EU remains incomplete (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2010: 440). Additional to the focus on the capabilities of the EU, the nature of the EU's actorness could be captured through an approach encompassing the internal processes (Wright, 2011: 10). In this respect, the Union's institutional architecture comprises of fourteen bodies<sup>110</sup> of which four constitute as the main institutions that have their origin in the first Community in 1952<sup>111</sup>. As for institutions, it is important to note that in terms of institutional design, the EU is structurally highly complex and the responsibilities and powers of these institutions varies considerably (Nugell, 2010: 446). Yet, for the purpose of this section, the significant part lies in the relevant decision-making procedures of each institution and their correspondence to the policy realms. In general, within the EU, Treaties divide power between central decision-making institutions and regional institutions though in a flexible manner. At this point, to comprehend the nature and functioning of the EU, two concepts need to be elaborated: intergovernmentalism and supranationalism (Nugell, 2010: 428). The European Commission, and the European Parliament are the major supranational institutions whereas the European Council and the Council of Ministers are intergovernmental institutions. Essentially, decision-making differs according to the policy realm and institutional structure. Accordingly, relevant competences of each policy realm and institutions have been introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, which distinguished them as exclusive competences, shared competences and supportive competences. It is important to emphasize that while the EU holds exclusive competences<sup>112</sup> over the areas such as common commercial policy, customs union, conclusion of international agreements; special reference is made to the CFSP stating that 'the EU may not adopt legislative acts in this field. In addition, the Court of Justice of the EU does not have

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<sup>110</sup> <http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/>

<sup>111</sup>The European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, and the Council of Ministers (Cuthbert, 2011:5).

<sup>112</sup> Meaning that member states are not permitted to make their own laws concerning that area. <http://en.euabc.com/word/476>

competence to give judgment in this area.<sup>113</sup> The interpretation of this clause broadly implies that the member states have their own competences reserved in this area.

In the light of the short overview of the institutions of the EU, the second line of neorealist argument centers on the institutional dynamics of European integration with special reference to the issue of 'sovereignty'. Realism assumes that states will act based on self-interest or *raison d'état* as a guiding principle in their relations with other states. In that regard, it is conceptually challenging for a state-centric theory to categorize the setting in which a number of sovereign states, previously maintained vital enmities towards each other, delegate part of their sovereignty to both supranational and intergovernmental institutions. What is more, contrary to the core realist assumption, individual member states are not competing against each other for power (Swisa, 2011: 126). Given the strict conceptualization of the political ordering either as domestically hierarchic or internationally anarchic, it becomes further complex to fit the EU properly into the context of neorealism. Thus, it is difficult to categorize the relationships between sovereign member states of the EU under the growing competences of the EU (Donnelly, 2000: 86). The member states engage in an anarchic manner to each other, yet at the same time subordinate to regional institutions such as European Commission.

At first glance, neorealist response to this setting would be to argue that the member states of the EC/EU engaged in an economic enterprise that did not alter their national interests in the field of security and defense, which has been guaranteed for the most by the US (Pijpers, cited in Krossicak, 2013). Since the EU had no 'national interest' by definition, high politics of security and defense remained within the decision-making authority of member states (Selden, 2010: 14). Historically, when the evolution of European security cooperation is reviewed from the early processes of European Political Cooperation (EPC) to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), it might be said that the basic commonality among these was their intergovernmental nature.

Another neorealist attempt to analyze the institutional dynamics of European integration in the post-Cold War era is introduced by Joseph Grieco. In that, Grieco provides a setting in which he questions the conditions of the EU integration after Cold War with a view as a particular challenge to neorealism. In this respect, as a source of explanation, Grieco focuses

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<sup>113</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/institutional\\_affairs/treaties/lisbon\\_treaty/ai0020\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0020_en.htm)

on secondary states. The interests of secondary states such as opportunities for effective voice and substantial benefits that they yield are the primary stimuli for cooperation with stronger partners through international institutions. Grieco is on the view that given the first option being more powerful, this strategy-institutionalization- is the second-best solution to the problem of working with, but not being dominated by a stronger nation for secondary states (Kelstrup & Williams, 2006: 45). In the context of the EU, Grieco's main emphasis on voice opportunities of secondary states leads him to read the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)<sup>114</sup> as an eagerness to secure a voice through their representatives on the new European Central Bank not simply by functionalist concerns (Pollack, 2005: 3). The primary logic for Grieco in arriving at this interpretation of institutional cooperation is his emphasis on secondary states: 'When negotiating new institutions, states especially weak ones-but still necessary partners- will seek to ensure that any cooperative arrangement they construct will include effective voice opportunities' (Grieco cited in Pollack, 2005: 3).

Similarly, Waltz (1999) remarks that although states value relative gains over absolute ones, at the very extremes they might value absolute gains. Since very weak states cannot make themselves secure by their own efforts, they might bandwagon with stronger states. Indeed, Michael Mosser argues that under certain conditions small states can bind large states into institutional rules that provide voice opportunities for themselves. Mosser gives Benelux countries as an exemplifier to his argument. He argues that the resistance of Benelux countries to any change in the institutional structure which allows them overrepresentation since from the establishment of the EEC is a particularly noteworthy to indicate the role of small states in institutional design of the EU (Pollack, 2005: 3). Reinforcing the argument of Grieco, Robert Gilpin (1996) approaches European integration as an inter-state alliance whose primary purpose is to strengthen the position of individual states in an interdependent and competitive global economy. He points out to the institutional setting of the European integration, which allows three core components of state sovereignty to the member states: coinage, taxation<sup>115</sup>, and defense. Indeed, although they have delegated some portion of their sovereignty to the supranational institutions, the member states have reserved to veto any decision that they consider contrary to their national interests. Therefore, Gilpin (1996: 19) argues that the

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<sup>114</sup> The timing of the initiative coincided with reunification of Germany. Moreover, Grieco notes that at the time being there were concerns on potentially economic hegemon Germany among other member states particularly for France and Italy.

<sup>115</sup> Original article was written in 1996. The common currency of the EU was circulated in 2001.

process of integration largely can be seen as subordination of individual states to a larger regional entity with significant economic concerns.

#### 4.4. ASSESSING THE GLOBAL ACTORNESS OF THE EU FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEOREALISM

‘A success in the economic realm but a fiasco in high politics’<sup>116</sup>

In applying a theory with its key focus on states in the international anarchic system to a ‘politically undefined’ process, the difficulty is not just with analyzing the ontological relevance of the EU to the paradigm. The bottom line of the argument also suggests asking: ‘What kind of actor is the EU on the global arena?’. In conventional international relations, it might be said that international actorness is described in terms of statehood (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 15).

In the specific case of the EU, it can be argued that broadly the literature consists of three different strands of arguments. The first view, namely ‘Civilian Power Europe’ notion, attempts to categorize the EU/EC via focusing on non-military, primarily economic means. This perspective argues that the EEC should continue to remain as a ‘civilian group long on economic power and relatively short on armed forces’ (Duchene cited in Trot, 2010: 4) and as a ‘force for the international diffusion of civilian and democratic standards’ (Duchene cited in Fayler, 2011: 16). The idea is often associated with Francois Duchene who in 1972 developed the notion of ‘civilian power’ with specific reference to the EC (Smith, 2005: 3). He contended that the EC had successfully transformed military relationships to the civilian economic ties within Europe. Due to the strength of this economic power, there would be little to fear from external aggression. By arguing primarily the civilian aspects of the means<sup>117</sup> and ends<sup>118</sup> at the EC’s disposal, Duchene concluded that the EC was characterized as a distinct form despite the term conveyed a vague meaning rather than a systemically developed one.

However, the debate concerning the characterization of the EU as a civilian power tends to be interpreted by realist/neorealist paradigm as an attempt to redefine the European project wherein the lack of hard power capabilities was concealed yet ones that are more favorable were highlighted (Hyde-Price, 2008: 30). Indeed, most often it was associated with the

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<sup>116</sup> (Stanley Hoffman cited in Eilstrup & Sangiovanni, 2006: 153)

<sup>117</sup> Persuasion and soft power (Hwee, 2011: 2).

<sup>118</sup> International cooperation and solidarity (ibid).

reflection of the constraints of Cold War (Hwee, 2011: 2). It is therefore hardly surprising to associate the EC with civilian approach during the Cold War wherein NATO dominated the landscape of European security.<sup>119</sup> The assigned civilian and economic role to the EC, which disregarded the traditional security concerns was interpreted by Stanley Hoffman as ‘major source of weakness, both for each West European nation, and for the civilian European entity as a whole’.

In the same way, Robert Kagan (2002) argues that viewed from long historical perspective over 300 years, current qualities that make up European strategic culture<sup>120</sup> do not reflect traditional European approach to international relations. In other words, Kagan contends that it is a power problem, particularly Europe’s military weakness that led Europe consciously to reject its previous power politics. He goes on to argue that it is a tactic of the weak; just as in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the great proponent of international law was the US, yet the great opponent was Britain’s navy. In an anarchic world, small powers fear that they will be victims and great powers fear rules that may constrain them. On the other hand, to Kagan this situation involved an irony as well. European integration dynamics necessitated the tools of rapprochement but along with the presence of American security guarantee in Europe. The necessity of a supranational government to provide security was rendered by American military forces in Europe that was exercised according to the rules of power politics. By the same token, Michael Smith contends that the EU/EC became civilian power by default since the will to protect the integrity of NATO was more dominant than a belief in the merits of civilian power among European states (Wright, 2010: 5).

Arguably, the Balkan Wars in 1990s could be accepted as a test case for Civilian Europe project. The European confidence and enthusiasm during the Luxembourg Presidency was invoked by Jacques Poos as: ‘..if one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it is the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country and it is not up to the Americans.’ (Bretherton& Vogler, 2006: 195). However, EU’s lack of unity, vision, and military weakness was revealed in the Yugoslavian crisis in 1992. EU’s failure as a global actor in the crisis clearly demonstrated the inevitable outcome of EU’s rejection of power politics (Wright, 2010: 5). In the face of such a crisis, it became apparent to the EU that the US would not be

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<sup>119</sup> In terms of security, there were institutions to guarantee Europe’s security prospects such as NATO, WEU, CSCE/OSCE.

<sup>120</sup> Negotiation, diplomacy, and commercial ties, international law, multilateralism.

always interested in European problems<sup>121</sup> and for some crises only military power could work (Posen, 2004: 28). Events in the Balkans also played a triggering role in the launch of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) (Hyde-Price, 2008: 30). The inability of the member states to intervene in a conflict within their own borders and attempts to develop defense and security cooperation via CFSP indicated that there could be no escape from the consequences of anarchic system. (Wright, 2010: 6). Indeed, this reality could not be concealed if the Community became a force for the diffusion of civilian and democratic standards as Duchene proclaimed. On the other hand, the argument put forward by Gingsberg that the EU has conversed the notion of balance of power by attracting states towards it by its magnetic force (Wright, 2010: 7) is challenged by Hyde-Price with his reference to the EU's civilian role promoting the stability in the Eastern bloc through trade not through security and military identity. Hyde-Price (2008) criticizes the notion 'EU as a civilian power' since he argues that the EU acts as a civilian power only if the most powerful states were to impose common values and norms on the prospective member states—as in the examples in post-Communist states. The belief that European rising prominence as a civilian power in contrast to traditional military power approach was also criticized by an English school scholar Hedley Bull on the grounds for its ineffectiveness and lack of self-sufficiency in military power (Manners, 2001: 5). Bull argued that the EC did not provide for its security out its own resources, but depended on the US security. He went on to argue that the power exerted by the EC as a civilian power was conditional upon a strategic environment provided by the military power of the states, which it did not control. Moreover, to Bull if the EC were to become a powerful actor in the international affairs, it should attempt to make itself more self-sufficient in defense and security --as independent as possible given the current juncture. The way suggested by Bull for the EC was to hold a military posture through a supranational integration via an appropriate form of political and strategic unity.

The second conceptualization of the EU's global role relates to the normative power approach. On the basis of this definition, the question whether the EU behaves differently than traditional state in the international arena generates a normative role answer in which the EU is accepted to base its external actions on rejection of traditional great power diplomacy and on an emphasis over shared values (Zimmermann& Dür, 2012: 191). In this formulation, Ian Manners (2001) places the EU somewhere beyond the dichotomy of an intergovernmental

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<sup>121</sup> In fact, this is very much related to the structural realist account that argues 'greater power permits wider ranges of action'. The greater power may choose when and where to intervene and can afford to wait on events before to act (Hyde-Price, 2008: 31).

nature civilian power and a supranational nature military power; rather he argues that the EU represents a mix of both intergovernmental and supranational nature, and a ideational one characterized by common principles. On this point, the most important factor shaping the international role of the EU is not what it does but what it is. As argued by Manners, the normative basis of the EU comprised core norms<sup>122</sup>, which culminated through series of declarations, treaties, and policies.

In the language of realism, the purely normative portrayal of the EU tends to be interpreted either as a mask for its hidden material interests or as generating charges of hypocrisy (Zimmermann & Dür, 2012: 201). Structural realism argues that given the anarchic international environment, as the states are expected to prove rational, they do not seek their normative agendas at the expense of their vital national interests (Hyde, 2008: 31). In this regard, states use material capabilities to exert influence over other actors and at the same time with an aim to shape a benign external environment favorable to their first-order interests. At this point, as the incentive for cooperating to address shared problems emerge, the EU serves as an institutional repository of the second order normative concerns of the member states such as human rights. Given the contours of neorealism, thus it might be said that the EU acts as an instrument for the collective economic interests of the member states; as an instrument for collectively shaping a benign environment; as an institutional repository of the second-order concerns of EU member states. Among the listed objectives, the first purpose of the EU is the traditional aim of the EEC/EC; on the other hand, the second and third ones are subject to conceptual debate within the margins of neorealism.

Mark Pollack is on the opinion that the normative power depiction of the EU is a highly idealistic account, however should not be confused with the realistic portrayal of what the EU is (Zimmermann & Dür, 2012: 201). On the contrary, Hyde argues that in terms of shaping the external milieu the EU is far from being normative, rather its transformative power derives from very tangible sources of hard power namely; economic clout, the fear of exclusion and the promise of membership (Hyde-Price, 2008: 31). As spelled out by Jan Zielonka, without a certain degree of security and stability largely provided by the US and without a promise of EU membership, the EU would not be able to transform Central and Eastern Europe after the end of Cold War (Zielonka, 2008: 482). Adrian Hyde (2008) belies the notion that associating

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<sup>122</sup> Peace, democracy, rule of law, human rights, liberty (Manners, 2001: 9).

the EU's international actorness with a civilian or normative discourse is inherently problematic.

Drawn on the premises of structural realism, Hyde's first criticism highlights the possibility of a charge of hypocrisy. In that, he points out a stark contradiction between the particularistic interests and ethical intentions of the EU. For example, he argues that, to China, economic interests prevailed human right concerns and regional security concerns as in the arms sales debates demonstrated. Likewise, Smith notes that the EU has been inconsistent with its normative stance over the human rights issues to economically or strategically important states such as China and Russia. EU's mixed motives are also clearly manifested when different policy realms of the EU are elaborated (Zimmermann & Dür, 2012: 202). Kelemen and Vogel argue that the EU conforms to policy realms such as environmental policy, though it is inconsistent with economic policies. To Hyde, the notion of claiming what is good for the EU is good for the world is another hindrance to the effectiveness of the EU's actorness. Hyde argues that this issue was strongly evident in the EU's Common Strategy on Russia, which aimed at creating a coherent European approach towards Russia with strong emphasis on second-order normative concerns. Yet, it was not effective since it promised little in return to Russia and the EU3 (Britain, France and Germany) pursued own policies towards Russia. (Hyde, 2008: 34).

Notwithstanding, by and large, the self-perception of the EU according to the official documentations holds the following propositions regarding the international role of the EU: 'We must aim to become a global civil power at the service of sustainable global development. After all, only by ensuing sustainable global development can Europe guarantee its own strategy security' (Romano Prodi, 2000: 3, cited in Manners, 2001: 4). However, this official self-image, as Jorgensen and Laet argue 'curious blindness to own interests', seems poorly correlating with the EU's citizens' conception of European security. According to Euro barometer survey conducted before launching ESDP, the question on the possible role of a future European army received contrary answers to the normative dimension of the EU. The most common answer was 'defending the territory of the EU'. Indeed, 'guaranteeing peace in Europe' and 'intervening in case of a disaster in Europe' were the second and third most common answers, which did not carry normative connotations (Wagnsson, 2012: 14-15).

The third line addresses the actorness of the EU in the global balance of power where this quest largely falls into the domain of neorealism. Applied to the EU, neorealism seeks to



highlight the systemic pressures that shape and shove the EU member states' international behavior. Therefore, the actorness of the EU with respect to foreign security and defense policy is a highly relevant realm to be questioned (Hyde-Price, 2008: 25). Of all the policy realms within the EU, foreign and security policy has been considered as the most contradictory one. This can be explained partly by the structural mechanism of the EU's foreign and security policy that grants member states to be predominant actors in their national security decisions under the intergovernmental framework. Indeed, it would not be surprising to encounter controversies in terms of policy coordination in a policy field where concepts of national security and national interest necessitate a strong state authority (Wallace, 2010: 432). Nonetheless, the EU has no mechanisms for determining or enforcing its own security interests due to the very fact that it is not a state in the conventional sense.<sup>123</sup> Likewise, heavy institutional structure and lack of obligations to implement agreements and unwillingness of member states to devote national sovereignty to the EU contribute to the ineffectiveness of the process.

It might be said that neorealism approaches the EU with a tendency to focus on the lack of will and capability to military power and the absence of security and defense cooperation. The EU's limited or qualified autonomous action at the behest of particularly the most powerful states (Wright, 2010: 3) is one of the grounds of neorealist criticism towards EU's international actorness. Indeed, much criticism is also centered on the likelihood of the EU becoming a coherent foreign policy actor (Kisscakk, 2013: 3). To comment on the major criticisms, Charlotte Wagnossen stresses the role of the leading member states- France, Great Britain and Germany- on the incoherence particularly in the sphere of security. To Wagnossen, the different basic outlooks of the leading states are major impediments for the EU to act efficiently in the event of a serious international crisis. This diversity is reflected in the sphere of security by abstaining from highlighting the differences. So to say, they tend to conceal the differences in the sphere of security by focusing on the implementation of institutional reform and on new tasks such as new military missions.

All in all, in the analysis of the EU, neorealist assumption that states are rational actors in search for their own security largely through military capabilities seems to echo in two ways. Simply put, it can be said that the EU is regarded as an international actor with limited

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<sup>123</sup> Because member states' primary loyalties remain to the country in whose laws they obey, taxes they pay and language they speak (Judt, 2005: 734).

autonomous action and at the behest of notably the most powerful member states (Wright, 2010: 3). On one hand, this is explained by the military weakness of the EU, which lacks independence, or autonomy of action to a large extent. On the other hand, the EU's inability to do so due to the above mentioned structural mechanisms of the Union itself. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the central realist emphasis on military capabilities has little relevance in the context of the EU. To this extent, this 'lack of military muscle' of the EU has led to a conventional wisdom that without greater military power projection capability, Europe will not be taken seriously in the contemporary world (Moravcsik, 2009: 407). A part of this critique lies with the neorealist expectation that if the EU aims to influence the management of global security affairs, it needs to be able to show up globally with capabilities, including military capabilities that matter to outcomes (Posen, 2006: 159).

#### **4.5. THE EU AND UNIPOLARITY**

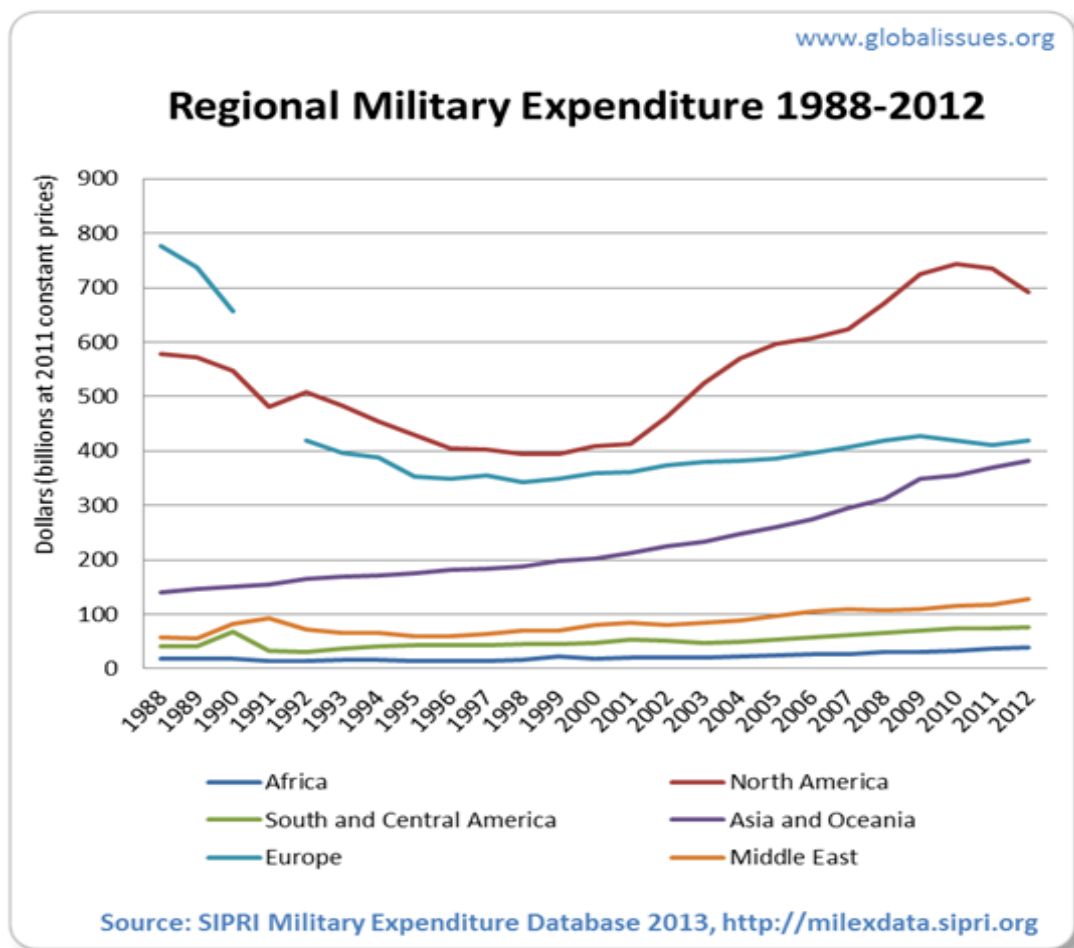
In the context of neorealism, unipolarity is inherently connected with the accompanying strategy that is expected to conduct by the states in the system. The most obvious standard one is a traditional balance of power that suggests internal and external instruments of balancing. Given neorealist expectation of a necessary balance of power, when the EU is accepted as a pole, the European states are assumed to balance against the unipole. Accordingly, in the current structure, one should expect the EU to develop its military capability that can either be used to defend itself or deter the US from using its coercive power.

At this point, Kluth and Pilegarrd (2010: 9) argue that the EU would aspire to become a regional hegemon through enlargement and military integration. On their view, the accession of the Baltic States and the former Warsaw Pact countries to the EU indicates Russia's eroding candidacy for a regional hegemony in Europe. Under this assumption, the US would be inclined to block European aspirations. In turn, the EU is presumed to increase its capabilities to offset the US's blocking capacity.

However, the pattern followed by Europe manifests itself as if Europeans are not preparing for a direct military confrontation with the US (Posen, 2006: 164). Figure 5 illustrates defense spending of the different regions in the world between 1998 and 2012. As can be seen from the figure, Europe has decreased its defense spending for the last three decades. It should be also noted that the concentration of defense spending reveals that 75% of spending concentrates over four European countries – Britain, France, Germany, Italy- and active

civilian military personnel of Germany, France and Britain sum up to roughly equal to that of the US (Posen, 2006: 152). In the language of neorealism, these may correspond to the assumption that with regard to the relative capabilities in terms of defense, the E3 is preeminent over the rest of the EU to the degree that it matches the world's largest military.

**Figure 5:** Regional Military Expenditure 1988- 2012



**Source:** <http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending>

In the light of unipolarity, Waltz frames the EU as one of the potential poles<sup>124</sup> to restore a balance. On one spectrum, Waltz describes the European economic integration without a corresponding political unity as historically unprecedented. However, on the other end of the spectrum, he goes on to argue that even though the EU has all the tools in its disposal, such as population, resources, technology and military capabilities, the EU lacks the organizational ability and the collective will to use them (Waltz, 2000: 31). Yet, Waltz posits that European discontent with its secondary status demonstrates a desire to direct its own destiny. It builds

<sup>124</sup> Among which China, Japan and Russia are listed.

on neorealist assumption that overwhelming power leads others to balance against it. By the same token, European attempts to forge a common defense specifically since 1998 as realized in the form of CSDP and ESDP can be linked to Waltz's discussion. Likewise, Tote (2010) argues that one of the architects behind CFSP was to figure out a solution to the inherent security of anarchic international system.

On the other hand, as far as the timing of ESDP is concerned, Posen (2004: 29) largely explains it as a response to unipolarity.<sup>125</sup> Although the EU has had attempts to take steps towards a common foreign and security policy since its inception, the substantive progress has been achieved after 1999. Interestingly, the efforts coincided with a period that 'Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free'<sup>126</sup> as proclaimed in the European Security Strategy in 2003. It is thus paradoxical that the EU has produced a multi-state organization parallel to NATO for the generation of military power even though there seemed no direct threat. (Posen, 2006: 183).

Structural realism responds this puzzle by arguing that whether or not there exists an ideological affinity with the greatest power or regardless of any strong threat perception; states do respond to concentrated military power by trying to build their own power (Posen, 2006: 184). The limits of ESDP indicate that it is not a purely balancing project rather an effort by Europeans to develop an alternative security supplier instead a weak balancing act (Posen, 2004: 26). The deriving forces behind were Europeans' quest for an option of addressing regional crisis in their own backyard with their own terms and by their own resources (Hyde-Price, 2008: 32). It was largely the consequences of unipolarity that made the European countries worried about the long-term implications for transatlantic relations. As witnessed in 2003 Iraq invasion and experiences in the Balkans during 1990s<sup>127</sup>, the US could afford less attention to the concerns of its European allies and use power for its narrowly defined national interests (Hyde-Price, 2008: 32).

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<sup>125</sup> The same argument might be made for TEU. Arguably, contrary to immediate post-Cold War period's envision for an international system less dependent on military power, Maastricht Treaty added a defense dimension to the EU (Smith, 2000: 11).

<sup>126</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>

<sup>127</sup> ESDP aims to provide the EU with the capability to deal with Petersberg Tasks such as crisis management, peacekeeping and peacemaking. These were the tasks that the US did not want NATO to take up at the outset of Balkan wars. Yet, the EU could not address them due to the lack of its institutional capacity (Posen, 2006: 173).

At this point, T.V. Paul argues that the tacit opposing of Germany, France, and Russia to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the coordination of diplomatic positions at the UN and summit diplomacy that involved national leaders is a remarkable exemplifier of soft-balancing by the EU against the US. Indeed, a coalition that comprised Germany -despite its great dependency on the US for security and trade -, France and Russia threatened to veto any resolution that would authorize the use of force in Iraq (Paul, 2005: 64). It might be contended that although the opposition did not prevent the US from undertaking action unilaterally, it helped to reduce the legitimacy of the US military action. In fact, this mind set is in tune with the neorealist inference that the liking of the powerful may conflict with the preferences and interests of others (Waltz, 2000: 28) which literally means that it is on the eye of the most powerful. It is also interesting to note that contrary to most EU official documents, in the European Security Strategy (ESS) 2003 Document, the term EU interests was emphasized more frequently compared to others within a single document.<sup>128</sup> On its vital interests, the document mentions:

‘To safeguard the fundamental interests of the Union..

..To strengthen the security of the Union in all ways’<sup>129</sup>

These two interests that relate to the well-being and security of the EU along with the stated threats as regional conflicts and state failure might imply that ESS comprises elements associated with realism (Gyllensporre, 2010). Thus, it is highly possible to read the subtext of the document as a response to the unipolar structure of the international system.

Christopher Layne (2006) frames the discussion by arguing that a pattern specific to unipolarity has emerged that employs nonmilitary instruments of power. These ‘soft balancing’ strategies which aim at delegitimizing and constraining the actions of the US involve many different kinds of forms. With respect to the EU, Layne specifically applies a refined terminology ‘leash-slipping’. Given the extent of hard-power capabilities of the US, it is thus more difficult to counterbalance the US with traditional balance of power strategies. Indeed, in terms of material capabilities, ESDP remains quite modest to balance even to check the military power of the US. What is more, even if all the goals of ESDP were fulfilled, the deployable military power of the EU would be equal to the smallest armed forces of the US (Zielonka, 2008: 3). To Layne, the EU implements an alternative method of counterbalancing

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<sup>128</sup> The term passed eight times in the text.

<sup>129</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>

by building up its military capabilities to maximize its ability to execute an independent foreign policy (Layne, 2006: 29). In that, the EU's attempts to create a common security and defense policy after the end of Cold War are largely interpreted as a response to unipolarity.

Given the global unipolar international structure in the post-Cold War period as a primary stimulus to European common defense attempts, Adrian Hyde also relates the possibility of security and defense cooperation of Europe to the regional structure of Europe after the Cold War. Notwithstanding, to his account the regional structural architecture of Europe is 'balanced multipolarity' in the post-Cold War era (Hyde-Price, 2008: 33) where this polarity configuration allows managing common security problems (Kissinger cited *in* Hyde, 2008). As noted earlier, balanced multipolar power configuration comprises of 'three or more great powers, none of which is an aspiring hegemon, and there is not a significant gap between the leading two states' (Mearsheimer, 2001: 338). In the case of Europe, it might be asserted that the Franco-German axis, often described as the 'engine' of the integration project, is essentially a balance-of-power understanding. Furthermore, alongside Britain, France and Germany make up a trilateral informal great power concert mechanism that is at the core of the EU policy-making processes (Tote, 2010: 49). This is mostly evident in British and French initiatives to start a process that end up as ESDP. In addition, it is evident when the voting weights of the Big Threes are considered in the Council. Out of 321 votes, Germany, Britain, and France have the highest votes allocated which sum up to 29 votes per each<sup>130</sup>. To Hyde, as the distribution of power within the European continent was balanced multipolarity after the end of Cold War, European former great powers could not bid for hegemony. Yet, this was mirrored in a security maximization behavior rather than a power maximization behavior. Building on this notion, Hyde concludes his assessment by arguing that the demise of a Soviet threat coupled with a rather symmetrical distribution of power within the EU enabled European countries to shift their focus from high-intensity wars to military crisis management and humanitarian intervention (Hyde-Price, 2008: 33,34)

As suggested by Brezinski (1997: 22), the EU's position in the global architecture can be empowered by a more robust political union, with a common foreign policy, and a shared defense capability. However, he argues, in terms of being a political union, the post-Cold War integration pattern of Europe did not produce a real union. Indeed, Brezinski holds that the earlier 'community' form of the EU was more politically united than the consequent

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<sup>130</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/institutional\\_affairs/treaties/nice\\_treaty/nice\\_treaty\\_council\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/nice_treaty/nice_treaty_council_en.htm)

‘union’.<sup>131</sup> He criticizes the association of being ‘union’ with ‘a partially common currency’ even without having a genuinely decisive central political authority or a common fiscal policy. Along similar lines, Waltz (2000) maintains that unless a sort of realignment of European foreign and military affairs towards a unity occurs, Europe will count little in international politics. Along similar lines, Mearsheimer is on the opinion that although the members of the European Union have certainly achieved substantial economic integration, there is little evidence that this path will lead to the creation of super state. In fact, both nationalism and the existing states in Western Europe appear to be alive and well. What is more, if the EU transforms into a super state, it will nonetheless still be a state operating in a system of states. (Mearsheimer, 2001: 366).

From a parallel perspective, the argument being offered by Glyn Morgan (2005) meets the premises of neorealism with the European integration project. In terms of security, the reliance of Europe to the US brought significant benefits to the EU. However, recalling the neorealist proposition that ‘unbalanced power whoever wields it is a potential danger to others’<sup>132</sup>, Timothy Gorton Ash writes: ‘America has too much power for anyone’s good, including its own’ (cited *in* Kagan, 2002). Morgan points to the possible problems in case the US pursues a unilateralist foreign policy. The US may overestimate third party threats to its own and its allies’ security such as in 2001 bombings; it has decided militarily to intervene Afghanistan regardless of European complaints that may in turn endanger European security. In contrast to this, the US may underestimate its allies’ security. Given the NATO alliance, EU is bound to the agreement of the US before its military action. Morgan discusses that the extent of the action may vary when the US pursues unilateralist interventionist policy or unilateralist isolationist (Morgan, 2005: 204). He concludes by arguing that had the EU achieve a non-dependent security, it should be willing to form itself into a relatively unitary sovereign state. The alternative is to remain dependent for its security to the US.

Briefly, the developments that relate to the international actorness of the EU after the Cold War era appear to be examined largely by the product of global and regional distribution of relative power capabilities. To Hyde-Price, these are namely global unipolarity and regional multipolarity. Given structural realism’s approach to unipolarity as a frame of reference, it

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<sup>131</sup> On the other hand, Waltz argues that Western Europe was unable to make its foreign and military policies when its was comprised of six members. Yet, he goes on to argue that with more members and less pressure, it has even less hope of doing so (Waltz, 2000: 31).

<sup>132</sup> (Kenneth Waltz, 2000: 28)

does seem clear that the transatlantic relations between the EU and the US play key role shaping the EU's security architecture.

It should be noted that the default standing of neorealism is the primacy of conventional security issues and great power politics within the international system. As echoed by Tote, the world has changed little since the days of Thucydides where the strong exerted power and the weak suffered to that point (Tote, 2010: 24). In that sense, one may ascribe the peace in Europe aftermath the Cold War to the military presence of the US within the region. As such, the principal instrument for providing security in Europe is still NATO (Mearsheimer, 2010: 394). Moreover, the fact that the US still keeps remarkable amount of troops in Western Europe where no military threat is sight, and extends NATO eastward (Waltz, 2000: 36) vindicates that security competition and the threat of great power war still remains alive in Europe (Merasheimer, 2003: 378). It might be argued that, as a result of structural pressures, the EU delegates providing security to the unipole. However, the end of conflicts of interest between European states did not mean to end after the establishment of EEC/ECSC but as Waltz contends 'only that these conflicts were resolved peacefully'.



## 5. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE EU<sup>133</sup>-CHINA RELATIONS

This chapter aims at providing the historical context of European-Chinese relations for the period starting with the Cold War. However, the chapter emphasizes particularly the post-Cold War era. The main objective is to introduce a basic understanding of each period and to grasp continuities between past and present with respect to Sino-European relations.

### 5.1. EUROPEAN- CHINESE RELATIONS DURING THE COLD WAR

In the historiography of Sino-European relations, the Cold War era until the demise of Soviet Union in 1991 can be characterized as a period ‘between superpowers’ where in the context of the Cold War the sharp divide between communism and liberal capitalist order determined the priorities of the international system. Indeed, the Cold War, Michael Cox argues, was by-product of Second World War leaving the international order divided between two great superpowers; United States and Russia (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 68). From a neorealist point of view, it might be said that the differences between their political and economic systems created bipolarity in the international system.<sup>134</sup>

As a result of this clear divide, the relations of Western and Eastern European states with respect to China remained as ‘derivatives of superpowers’. Under this framework, European powers were divided into two camps; Western Europe fell under the United States’ protection primarily in terms of economic recovery, military security, and political stability<sup>135</sup>, whereas Eastern Europe laid under Soviet Control (Dinan, 2004: 13). Despite being born in Europe, Cold War assumed a global character and shifted to Asia<sup>136</sup> (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 68).

On the other hand, the Cold War era witnessed both unification of China and Europe alike almost simultaneously. On October 1, 1949 under the leadership of Mao Zedong, People’s

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<sup>133</sup> Treaty of Rome officially formed European Economic Community in 1958. European Union was formally established in 1992 by Maastricht Treaty. Prior to these dates, ‘Europe’ is used to cover the contemporary continent Europe and Britain.

<sup>134</sup> Cold War international order was divided into two rival social systems. US represented capitalist social system whereas USSR represented socialist system (Baylis& Smith& Owens, 2011: 68).

<sup>135</sup> The integration of Western Europe, which devastated from two world wars, to the international system was rehabilitated by the United States. Economic recovery tools were mainly Marshall Plan and European Payments Union. Additionally, The North Atlantic Treaty in 1949 provided a security umbrella for Western Europe in the form of NATO (Dinan, 2004: 13).

<sup>136</sup> Michale Cox argues that China’s revolutionary communism brought the Cold War to Asia, more importantly brought United States’ presence in the region as well (Cox& Stokes, 2008: 276).

Republic of China (PRC) was proclaimed with the motto ‘The Chinese people have begun to stand up’ (Kissinger, 2011: 98). Between the two superpowers under a bipolar distribution of power, China was to choose Soviet Union as an ideological ally<sup>137</sup> and as a strategic partner in order to balance the United States (US) (Kissinger, 2011: 98). European integration, on the other hand, constituted an order of gradual consolidation in relation to Chinese case.<sup>138</sup> Nonetheless, the US was a key feature in European integration. The US’s commitment to an integrated Europe could be partly attributed to increased European concerns of insecurity during the Cold War period<sup>139</sup> and partly to strategic East-West calculations of the US within Cold War context (White, 2001: 3).

The first step towards integration was taken in 1952 via the Treaty of Paris that established European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Six European states (Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg) signed the Treaty of Paris in order to pool coal and steel production-i.e. main war-making resources<sup>140</sup> under a supranational authority. Thus, the political landscape of Europe after the Second World War was structured by a gradual and sector-by-sector process of economic integration (Bretherton& Vogler, 2006: 3). Alongside ECSC, in 1952 Pleven Plan envisaged European Defense Community (EDC) where it was aimed at bringing a fully integrated European army under a supranational control into existence (Wallace& Pollack& Young, 2010: 432, Bretherton& Vogler, 2006: 3). Subsequently, in 1952 European Defense Treaty was signed. However, French National Assembly rejected the treaty in 1954. Nonetheless, by the initiative of the United Kingdom, an intergovernmental compromise was achieved in 1954. To monitor German rearmament Western European Union (WEU) was established in the banner of NATO framework (Wallace& Pollack& Young, 2010: 433). Being a strict intergovernmental organization, it might be argued that, WEU entrenched NATO’s position on the European defense

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<sup>137</sup> With the entry into First World War , China was influenced by communism. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was founded in 1921 and supported by Soviet Union at the time. CCP is still the ruling party of PRC (Visual World History, 2005: 494, 495).

<sup>138</sup> China’s national unification was different in character than Europe’s integration. In its history, China as an empire had been divided and united many times within rival kingdoms. The end of Chinese Empire in 1912 led to a political chaos and until 1928 China experienced continuous civil wars. In 1928, Beijing was taken from Japan and China was united last time (Visual History of the World, 2005: 496).

<sup>139</sup> NATO provided a security umbrella for Europe which delegated the burden of defence to US to a great extent, at the same time it provided an integrated structure against Soviet-led Warshaw Pact (Wallace& Pollack& Young, 2010: 432).

<sup>140</sup> Western European integration was strongly related to Germany’s post war positioning. Thus, the main rationale behind pooling coal and steel resources was primarily focused on Germany and France, which were former adversaries (Bretherton& Vogler, 2006: 193).

(Bretherton& Vogler, 2006: 192). In 1958, one step further was taken in terms of integration by the Treaty of Rome, which stipulated a gradual process from customs union to common market. Despite outlining economic integration principles and non-enclosing foreign and security policy provisions, it might be argued that if the preamble of the treaty is observed, Treaty of Rome had a political nuance as well.<sup>141</sup>

At first glimpse, the Cold War period had a profound feature regarding Sino-European relations. In that, the final analysis of European and Chinese policies was primarily derivative of their relations with the two superpowers (Shambaugh& Sandschneider& Hong, 2008: 22). On the European side, the role of the US in the European integration and the stance that it adopted towards China<sup>142</sup> mirrored in the relations between Europe and China as well. Of Western European states, Holland and Sweden were the first to recognize PRC after its establishment. Denmark, Switzerland, and Norway followed suit (Stumbaum, 2007: 23). On the other hand, having vested interests in China due to concerns on economic interests and Hong Kong issue, Britain established diplomatic relations with China in 1950 (Shambaugh& Sandschneider& Hong, 2008: 22, 71). It may be argued that, essentially Western European states sided with the United States on most of the strategic issues regarding China. Nevertheless, the containment policy of United States towards China was mitigated by Western European states via trade with PRC (Stumbaum, 2007: 23, 73). On the other hand, due to their preference on the socialist camp under the bipolar international system, East European states except Yugoslavia, Albania and Romania pursued Soviet guidance and consequently recognized China immediately after its establishment. Further, PRC engaged in barter and trade relations with East European states (Stumbaum, 2007: 72). Additional to the exchange of goods, China benefited from industrial technology transferred from those countries (Shambaugh& Sandschneider& Hong, 2008: 23). However, the posture of China towards Soviet Union altered the nature of relations with East European states. The definition of communist ideology and Sinocentric view of Mao Zedong (Kissinger, 2011: 163) drifted China apart from Soviet Union.<sup>143</sup> Additional to these essential differences, the role assigned to Europe by China was not in line with Soviet approach.

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<sup>141</sup> In the preamble, it maintains: 'to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe'. [http://ec.europa.eu/archives/emu\\_history/documents/treaties/rometreaty2.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/archives/emu_history/documents/treaties/rometreaty2.pdf)

<sup>142</sup> The United States pursued 'containment policy' towards China that was an ally of Soviet Union during the Cold War (Stumbaum, 2007: 71).

<sup>143</sup> At this point, Chinese strong commitment to its national interests and the country's superiority can be noticed when Mao refused to join Warsaw Pact of Communist countries which was designed as a counterweight to NATO in 1955 (Kissinger, 2011: 163).

In terms of security, China accorded a ‘secondary role’ to Europe; yet, Soviet Union regarded Europe as a focal point for its security considerations and political efforts (Kissinger, 2011: 163). Like a domino effect, Sino-Soviet split in 1960 deteriorated the relations of East European states with China. In a similar manner, East European states immediately distanced themselves from China resulting in dropping trade and halting technological aid (Stumbaum, 2007: 73).

For much of the 1970s, China attached a strategic role to Europe in line with Mao Zedong’s ‘Three World Theory’. According to this theory, the US and Soviet Union constituted the ‘First World’, and developing countries like China with the rest of Asia fell into the ‘Third World’. Developed economies like Europe and Japan belonged to the ‘Second World’. In this respect, not only trade with Europe was seen a necessary input for China’s economic modernization, but also an integrated Europe was seen as an ideal partner in China’s search for multipolar world<sup>144</sup> against the Cold War hegemonies as well (Beneyto& Song& Ding, 2013: 101). However, mutual strategies pursued by both Europe and China were not without obstacles in the making, the biggest one being ‘tyranny of distance’. The geographical distance prevented each side to exert strategic influence effectively at the time.<sup>145</sup>

Of all the transformative events related to Sino-European relations, the Sino-American rapprochement of 1972 could be considered as reflecting the most profound outcomes. In further assessing the US's rapprochement with Beijing, it might be argued that this strategic shift in the Cold War code marked a new period in European relations with China<sup>146</sup>. In that, three years after the visit of US President Richard Nixon’s to Beijing, European Community (EC) established official diplomatic relations with PRC. Apart from denoting the policy preference of EC towards China, it may be accepted as the ‘acknowledgement of each other’s potential’.<sup>147</sup> As the EC was in widening and deepening process at the time, its position in the international system was interpreted by China as an opportunity to contain Soviet Union whilst developing trade with EC (Casarini, 2008: 25). On the other hand, China seemed as a

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<sup>144</sup> Nicola Casarini evaluates the ‘Three World Order’ strategy of Mao Zedong as being in line with China’s traditional attitude ‘yuan jiao gong’ which means ‘making friends with distant countries in order to facilitate attacking the neighbouring foe’ (Casarini, 2008: 26).

<sup>145</sup> Tyranny of distance, as Michael Yahuda points out, would be partially overcome after one decade by the developments in technology and transportation. (Shambaugh& Sandschneider& Hong, 2008: 13).

<sup>146</sup> From irreconcilable conflict to a visit to Beijing (Kissinger, 2011: 234).

<sup>147</sup> (Casarini *cited* in Shambaugh& Sandschneider& Hong, 2013: 25).

new commercial potential to the EC after China has launched the ‘four modernizations’<sup>148</sup> by Prime Minister Zhou Enlai (Stumbaum, 2007: 76). Consequently, in 1978 the EC and China signed the first trade agreement and established first Joint Committee<sup>149</sup>. Aside from opening up relations with the West, the rapprochement had also transformative impact on the international system by making economic reforms in China possible. To this end, one can establish that, the roots of the China’s contemporary global rise can be traced backed to United States’ strategic shift in 1972. As Michael Cox (2011: 280) illustrates the point: ‘China is coming from the Cold’. Moreover, the rapprochement also played a decisive role for the balances of the Cold War international system. As a consequence of Chinese anti-Soviet settlement via detente with US, European integration was also supported by China due to the fact that Europe was seen as an another emerging pole against Soviet line (Stumbaum, 2007: 77). In this context, in 1982 China proclaimed its ‘independent foreign policy’<sup>150</sup> where it could pursue its preferences globally.

During the 1980s, the relations between both sides intensified as institutional ties have been established. In such a configuration, from Chinese part, the expectation of Europe’s growing international actorness because of its widening and deepening processes<sup>151</sup> was a motivating factor for developing institutional-base relations (Casarini, 2008: 28). It might be advocated that the international background around the late 1970s and 1980s provided necessary motivation for a more united Europe in international affairs.<sup>152</sup> To this end, European survival and competitiveness seemed to be achieved notably through cooperation (Cini, 2012: 29). In terms of widening of the integration process, two series of enlargements occurred during the 1970s and 1980s. The first enlargement round, which incorporated Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom to the EEC broadened integration out from its founding base. On the other hand, the second round, also named as ‘Mediterranean Round’, started with the accession of

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<sup>148</sup> ‘Four modernizations’ covered agriculture, industry, science and technology, national defense (Stumbaum, 2007: 76). However, it should be noted that it did not contained socio-political modernization (Lai, 2011: 47).

<sup>149</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/china/docs/chronology\\_\\_2014\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/china/docs/chronology__2014_en.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> In September 1982, Hu Yaobang, CCP Party Secretary, outlined Chinese prevailing foreign policy concept as: ‘China never attaches itself to any big power or group of powers, and never yields to pressure from any big power.’ (Kissinger, 2011: 390).

<sup>151</sup> Deepening and widening processes are the tools for comprehending the nature of European integration. Deepening refers to the development of vertical integration between member states whereas widening refers to the development of horizontal integration—growing geographical spread by accession of new member states (Nugent, 2013: 27).

<sup>152</sup> The most noticable events were; the negative consequences of the first oil crisis in 1973, the second oil crisis in 1979 on the EC; rising East-West tension worldwide (Dinan, 2004: 126).

Greece in 1981. Subsequently, in 1986 Portugal and Spain entered to the EEC (Nugent, 2013: 35). Regarding the deepening process, significant developments gained traction throughout 1980s, the most remarkable one being Single European Act (SEA) signed in 1986. Aside from bringing about remarkable institutional reforms to Treaty of Rome<sup>153</sup>, the SEA provided a treaty basis for European Political Cooperation (EPC), which was established in 1970 as a pure intergovernmental foreign policy consultation and cooperation mechanism<sup>154</sup> (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006:164).

Meanwhile, Chinese economic transformation in 1978 triggered important changes in the relationship between the EC and China. In that, as the vice-chairman of CCP, Deng Xiaoping decreed 'Open Door Policy' in 1978, which reflected a major shift in China's foreign policy. Under the new policy, the primacy of economic development over all other policies was acknowledged. Concisely, 'Reform and Opening Up' policy comprised economic reforms that were based on market economics, decentralized decision-making, privatization, and opening to the outside World (Casarini, 2008: 27). These premises were significant in the sense that they were incorporated into a socialist economic system as the capitalist features. Equally significant, they were unprecedented in Chinese history<sup>155</sup> as Open Door Policy emphasized that all other nations should have equal commercial and industrial trade rights in China (Stumbaum, 2007: 77).<sup>156</sup>

Drawing on these developments, it might be assumed that China has generated a posture towards the EC not only as a Cold War ally, but also as a trade partner in line with its economic development policy for which it sought to diversify its growing dependence on Japan and the US by increasing commercial ties with EC (Casarini, 2008: 29).

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<sup>153</sup> For example, extended the competences of the EC, and established a deadline for the completion of internal market (Cini & Borrigan, 2009: 240).

<sup>154</sup> It should be noted that NATO, WEU and EPC are all strict intergovernmental organizations which shoulder the security and defense related issues of the EC. Despite a progress has been achieved through more autonomous European security and defense policy, for most of the Cold war period the EC constructed a civilian power role (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 194).

<sup>155</sup> Particularly when compared with 19th century closed society mentality, Open Up Policy was not only an economic renaissance, but also it was a spritual endeavour (Kissinger, 2011: 396, 397).

<sup>156</sup> For China, the strongest tool for facilitating the 'reform and open up' policy was foreign investment which was atypical to Chinese foreign policy pattern. Consequently, PRC joined IMF and World Bank in 1986 allowing foreign loans to flow to the country ( Kissinger, Jacques).

From the EC's point of view, China constituted a place to adopt the EC's external action to export its model and values<sup>157</sup> (Stumbaum, 2007: 77). In the year 1980, inter-parliamentary meetings between the European Parliament and China's National People's Congress were initiated. From the EC side, the first political consultations started in 1984 within the framework of EPC (Stumbaum, 2007: 77). Ultimately, as a result of all the incentives followed by both sides during 1980s, in 1985 the EEC and China signed their first trade agreement – Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) - which also currently holds the backbone of the legal relations. Additional to this development, in 1988 European Commission opened a delegation in Beijing, which could be seen as sign for the maturation of the relations between the two entities (Beneyto& Song& Ding, 2013: 2).

Throughout 1980s, the strong belief of a united Europe added new dimensions to Chinese international relations rhetoric. Indeed, Western European potential as a new pole in a future multipolar world prevailed strategic calculations that focused solely on counterbalancing Soviet Union<sup>158</sup>. Apart from the consequences of Chinese commitment to its economic development, once drifting apart, 'the tyranny of distance' served as a facilitator for improving the trade relations between the EC and China without strategic complications involved in (Casarini, 2008: 29). From this standpoint, during 1980s China regarded Europe as group of countries without fundamental conflicting interests with itself mainly because the EC did not have any significant military forces in East Asia unlike the US (Beneyto& Song& Ding, 2013: 101).

On June 4, 1989, harsh suppression of Chinese students' demonstrations by People Liberation's Army (PLA) of China suddenly turned Sino-Western relations upside down. At the onset, the United States government led by George S. Bush suspended high-level government exchanges; halted military cooperation and sales of police, military and dual-use equipment. The sanctions also included opposition to new loans to China in World Bank and other international financial institutions (Kissinger, 2011: 410). For the same reason, the EC responded in a parallel manner with those of the US. In the 1989 EC summit in Madrid, 'the European Council expressed its deep concern over the situation in China'.<sup>159</sup> Accordingly, the

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<sup>157</sup> Indeed, as Yahuda (2008: 25) and Stumbaum (2007: 76, 77) put it, as the EC's security and defense policy evolved, EC tended to practice many of the relevant policies. These comprise mainly good governance through the rule of law, poverty alleviation, promoting democracy.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, 122.

<sup>159</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/050228\\_China-initial.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/050228_China-initial.pdf)

European Council adopted measures which covered mainly suspension of bilateral ministerial and high-level contacts; reduction of cultural, scientific and technical cooperation programs to only those whose activities that might maintain meaning in the present circumstances; interruption by the member states of the Community of military cooperation and an embargo on trade in arms with China<sup>160</sup>. Within one year after Tiananmen, except the arms sales embargo, the EC gradually resumed economic cooperation and re-established high-level contracts. In its broadest sense, since strategic and economic value was accorded to China, China's minor modifications to its human rights legislation was accepted sufficient by the EC for de-freezing the relations (Casarini, 2008: 31).

## **5.2. EUROPEAN-CHINESE RELATIONS AFTER THE END OF COLD WAR**

The Cold War ended abruptly with the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 and subsequently with the demise of Soviet Union in 1991. It is widely acknowledged as a remarkable turning point in the international system since the bipolar structure of international system transformed into a US-led unipolar system. At first stance, the end of Cold War brought about both opportunities and challenges to the EC. Primarily, the East-West divide that shaped the European politics for about forty years ended (Eralp, 1997: 64). To Michael Cox (2011:70), the main issue for Europe after the end of Cold War was how to manage the newly enlarged space that had been created due to events in 1989.

Consequently, the EC formulated post-Cold War options through widening -i.e. enlargement- process in a parallel manner with NATO enlargement. Indeed, any political instability in Eastern and Central European states- old Soviet satellite countries- would affect the EC in many respects (Eralp, 1997: 64). In that respect, the Treaty of Maastricht realized the institutionalization towards a political union in 1992. At this point, it is important to reflect the significance of Treaty of Maastricht<sup>161</sup> concerning European presence and its actorness in the international affairs. First, the Treaty introduced the elements of a political union—i.e. citizenship, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).<sup>162</sup> Additional to these, the Treaty established the European Union (EU) grounded on three pillars: the European

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<sup>160</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/050228\\_China-initial.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/050228_China-initial.pdf)

<sup>161</sup> Maastricht Treaty is officially named as 'Treaty on European Union'. See, [http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/decision-making/treaties/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/decision-making/treaties/index_en.htm)

<sup>162</sup> Article J of TEU states that 'a common foreign and security policy is hereby established'. Moreover, the Treaty maintains that in time, CFSP would lead to a common defence policy and common defence. [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/institutional\\_affairs/treaties/treaties\\_maastricht\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/treaties_maastricht_en.htm)



Communities; a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP); and Cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA). These attempts might be interpreted as endeavors to develop the EU's role as a global actor since the inadequacies in terms of member state unity and policy instruments were realized in the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1991 and in the outbreak of armed conflict in Yugoslavia in 1992 (Bretherton, Vogler, 2006: 166).

It might be argued that China adapted rapidly to the post-Cold War realities. In that sense, immediate re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the post-communist states was mirrored in the improvement of the relations with the EC (Shambaugh& Sandschneider &Hong, 2008: 26). In line with the previous decade, China adopted its multipolarity approach to its relations with the EU, which asserted that the relationship should aim at rebalancing international power relations. Indeed, largely this multipolarity approach was reinforced by the consolidation of European integration in 1992 because of perception of the EU as an influential actor in global arena (Casarini, 2008: 143).<sup>163</sup>

For its part, the EU tended to concentrate more on commercial potentials of the relationship than relating it with the structure of the international system (Casarini, 2008: 33). The motivation for the EU was the realization of the fast-growing Chinese economy and the emergence of East Asia as a new center of the international economy (Shambaugh& Sandschneider &Hong, 2008: 27). During this period, the bilateral ties between some of the large EU member states such as Germany, France, Britain, and China characterized the relationship (Casarini, 2008: 34). Nonetheless, Germany was the first EU member state to elaborate on a strategy towards Asia (Casarini, 2008: 37). In the German Asia Concept of 1993, a pragmatic economic approach was pursued towards China. The document laid its foundations on silent diplomacy; change through trade; and One China policy (Stumbaum, 2007: 85). Further, the policy paper pointed out the need for the EU and particularly Germany to engage Asian countries in a more constructive way, and accordingly step up high-level visits to the region (Casarini, 2008: 37). At the EU level, the individual initiatives – particularly Germany's Asia Concept- coupled with the ultimate collective goal to deepen China's participation in the international system and to promote its emergence as a potential responsible great power (Shambaugh& Sandschneider &Hong, 2008: 27). Because of all these initiatives, in 1994 the European Commission released a communication namely 'Towards a

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<sup>163</sup> Meanwhile, in 1995, the EU underwent its third enlargement round by accession of three EFTA member states: Austria, Sweden, and Finland (Nugent, 2013: 35).

New Asia Strategy' (COM (94)). Referring to the document, the rise of Asia was highlighted in terms of changing the world's balance of power. Consequently, it followed that the EU should strengthen its economic presence in order to maintain its leading role in the global economy. On the other hand, the communication was new in the sense that it covered political issues such as arms control as well as economic and cooperative aspects. The EU was accorded a role to integrate the mentioned Asian countries into the global open market trading system. Moreover, in the overall objectives, the civilian power of EU was underscored with the accompanying practices such as 'contributing to the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Asia'<sup>164</sup>.

In the framework of 'New Asian Strategy', the European Commission issued another communication 'A Long term Policy for China-Europe Relations' in 1995 (COM (95)). The foci of the document were to update the EU's policy towards China and to better coordinate the Union's relations with China. As China was a rapid emerging global power, Europe ought to develop a comprehensive policy that reflected China's worldwide as well as regional, economic, and political influence. In that regard, the document issued in 1995 was significant in the sense that it ushered a new era in Sino-European relations (Casarini, 2008: 38). The document echoed the EU member states' firm engagement policy towards China during the course of 1990s.<sup>165</sup> Indeed, the communication pointed out a new policy of 'constructive engagement' by bilateral dialogs with China in order to promote China's responsible and constructive role in Asia. This new policy formulation of the EU was in tune with the rising China debates at the time<sup>166</sup>. However, the response of the EU to a rising power encapsulated both normative, civilian and Realpolitik elements in the making. The normative side was delegated to the European Commission, which aimed at engaging China in the international arena at societal level by funds and dialogs. Whereas individual member states handled state level processes such as establishing good political dialogs in order to obtain commercial benefits (Casarini, 2008: 43).

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Nicholas Casarini (2008: 42) argues that the underlying motive of the EU member states in adopting a firm engagement policy was partly related to economic considerations since the EU was less beneficiary from the two way trade with China than US and Japan between 1990 and 1995.

<sup>166</sup> The document acknowledged 'The rise of China is unmatched amongst national experiences since the Second World War'.

China, on the other hand, responded positively to this new approach and began to prioritize the development of relations with the EU (Casarini, 2008: 41). As well as constituting a new pole in international system in order to check US-led unipolarity, the EU also meant an alternative route for accessing the technology and foreign direct investments for China (Stumbaum, 2007: 82). Since then, the relationship developed rapidly as the first EU-China annual summit meeting took place in 1998. Meanwhile, in 1997 the smooth handover of former British colony Hong Kong via ‘one nation-two system principle’ to China softened British relations with China that has been stretched in Tiananmen Square events (Stumbaum, 2007: 88). Ultimately, the return of Macau by Portugal in 1999 ended the remaining European imperial presence in China. Thus, the substance of the relationship between the two entities emerged as free of cold war constraints and relatively independent (Shambaugh & Sandschneider & Hong, 2008: 28).

Within this context, in 1998 the EU issued another China policy paper, which called for building of a ‘Comprehensive Partnership with China’ (Beneyto & Song & Ding, 2013: 102). The document acknowledged 1995 strategic document as the EU’s China policy platform and further stressed the need for upgrading and intensifying EU’s policy towards China (COM (98)). The reasons that account for these were stipulated as China’s enduring commitment to market reform and global integration in post-Deng period; China’s role in promoting peace in Korea and Cambodia; EU’s attempts to strengthen its global profile. Accordingly, the new EU-China partnership was expected to engage China through an upgraded political dialog (Beneyto & Song & Ding, 2013: 144).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the EU was preoccupied with three major issues that had direct effect on its external relations and its international presence. The first one was to develop an autonomous defense capability; the second was the issue of eastern enlargement; and the completion of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) (White, 2001: 3). To this end, the EU had undergone a process of institutional transformation. In that regard, the first attempt was European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) that became operational in 2003 (Wallace & Pollack & Young, 2010: 448). The ESDP might be accepted as the result of the initiatives of Anglo-French cooperation on defense issues within the EU framework emanating from Saint Malo Declaration in 1998.<sup>167</sup> Occupying a highly intergovernmental

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<sup>167</sup> The Saint Malo Declaration stated that: ‘The EU must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond international crisis..’ It might be argued that the failure of the EU’s civilian approach to Yugoslavian conflict in

place in the EU policy processes, ESDP was embedded within CFSP framework (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 213). Furthermore, ESDP aimed at adding important building blocks to CFSP as military crisis management, civilian crisis, and conflict prevention (Wallace & Pollack & Young, 2010: 448).<sup>168</sup> The second issue was related to the fifth enlargement of the EU. Also named as 10+2 enlargement of the EU, it involved ten Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs)<sup>169</sup> plus the two Mediterranean islands of Cyprus and Malta (Nugent, 2013: 48). From the EU side, the motivation came partly from the historical duty to help ten CEECs to return to Europe in economic and political terms after the end of Cold War and partly from the belief that enlargement would contribute to the international actorness of the EU (Wallace & Pollack & Young, 2010: 430). Integrating the previously communist countries would mean increase in the potential strength of the Union in terms of population, geographical size, and commercial power (Nugent, 2013: 50). In consequence, eight CEECs plus Malta and Cyprus were incorporated to the Union in May 2004. Bulgaria and Romania became members in January 2007. The third one was a lengthy and gradual process. In fact, EMU was a community goal since the inception of EEC, yet it was put into specific form in Maastricht Treaty. The single currency system that was offered in 1992 became operational in 1999 when the Euro came into existence. In early 2002, fifteen member states replaced their national currencies by Euro notes and coins (Nugent, 2013: 31). As well as being emerged with an economic rationale, single currency had symbolic importance in terms of strengthening European integration. Thus, it might be argued that the existence of a single currency contributed to the global actorness of the EU.<sup>170</sup>

In relation to China, the EU showed great interest in deepening the partnership during this period. Two factors came to play in highlighting the underlying motive of the EU: the China's

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1992 triggered the Saint Malo process in terms of realizing the inadequacy of WEU and demonstrating that the US military back up might not be always possible (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 198).

<sup>168</sup> It is important to note that NATO responded to St Malo via 1999 Washington Summit Communiqué. Secretary Albright's three D's summed up the concerns of US regarding the autonomous European defence as there should be no discrimination between allies; no decoupling from the alliance; and no duplication of military effort. (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 203).

<sup>169</sup> Ten CEECs comprised of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania (Nugent, 2010: 35).

<sup>170</sup> EMU consists of a single monetary policy, a single monetary authority, and coordinated macroeconomic policies among 17 EU member states. The Euro is the second largest reserve currency and the second most traded currency in the world. In that sense, the Euro is a currency in competition with US Dollar (Nugent, 2013: 31).

entry into the WTO in 2001 and the introduction of Euro in 2002. Indeed, the year 2001<sup>171</sup> was a moot point in the relationship between two sides since both parts formally declared their intention to forge a ‘strategic partnership’ (Casarini, 2008: 144). In 2002, the Sino-European political dialogue<sup>172</sup> expanded into regular, structured series of meetings at political and technological levels (Casarini, 2008: 81).

Against this background, on September 2003, the European Commission issued its policy paper on China named: ‘A maturing partnership: Shared Interests and Challenges in EU-China Relations’.<sup>173</sup> The document stressed that due to the increasing importance of both actors on the world stage, their converging positions, and the existence of closer cooperation on wide range of issues, the maturity phase of the relation has been reached. Besides calling for a strategic partnership between both sides, the document stipulated five priority areas concerning China:

- i. Shared responsibility in promoting global governance.
- ii. Supporting China's transition to an open society based upon the rule of law and the respect for human rights.
- iii. Supporting China’s economic open up at home and abroad.
- iv. EU-China Cooperation program- a mutually beneficial partnership underpinning EU objectives.
- v. Increased EU visibility in China.

The overall aim of the document was to revise previous policy papers related to China and to stimulate the relations by closer cooperation. From the standpoint of China, the 2003 Communication of the EU was welcomed. Indeed, on October 2003, China issued its first ever policy paper regarding a country or a region named: ‘China’s EU Policy Paper<sup>174</sup>’. The document assessed the relationship and emphasized that ‘there is no fundamental conflict of interests between China and the EU’. Moreover, China’s EU objectives were listed as:

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<sup>171</sup> The year 2001 has another significance due to China’s entrance to WTO which would allow China to become an important player in global economic system.

<sup>172</sup> The EU’s and Chinese political dialog was first established in 1994. It was upgraded in 1998 with the agreement to hold regular EU-China Summits. In 2002, China and the EU decided to formally update the framework of their political dialog through an exchange of letters, which constitutes the legal basis for the current dialog. [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/eu\\_china/political\\_relations/pol\\_dialogue/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/eu_china/political_relations/pol_dialogue/index_en.htm)

<sup>173</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/external\\_relations/relations\\_with\\_third\\_countries/asia/r14207\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/external_relations/relations_with_third_countries/asia/r14207_en.htm)

<sup>174</sup> <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjbj/zjg/xos/dqzzywt/t27708.htm>

- i) Under the principles of mutual respect, mutual trust to promote and enhance China-EU relations;
- ii) To deepen China-EU economic cooperation and trade under the principle of mutual benefit;
- iii) To expand China-EU cultural and people-to-people exchanges under the principle of mutual emulation, common prosperity.

The document further pointed out that ‘China-EU relations now are better at any time in history’. It is quite clear that China expressed a strong commitment to enhance its relations with the EU, as Casarini (2008: 82) contends this commitment can be seen as a part of China’s attempt to cope with the new geopolitical realities of post-Cold War era that is largely shaped by American primacy. However, unlike the corresponding policy paper of the EU, the ‘strategic partnership’ concept had not been invoked in the Chinese document.

Subsequently, on October 2003, the EU and China agreed to form a ‘Comprehensive Strategic Partnership’ (Kerr& Fei, 2007: 13). It is possible to argue that the underlying motives of the ‘strategic partnership’ for the EU can be employed as response of the Union to two distinctive events at the beginning of the twentieth century. Obviously, the 9/11 events and the invasion of Iraq had formidable impacts on the relationship between EU and Asia, particularly China (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 130). Whilst the former triggered strengthening bilateral relations of the EU with key East Asian countries such as Pakistan and India, it might be argued that the invasion of Iraq, and more specifically the divide among the member states over the issue of Iraq revealed the need for a strategic thinking over international security issues (Cebeci, 2012: 565).<sup>175</sup> To this end, the European Security Strategy (ESS), adopted at the December 2003 European Council by the heads of governments, became the first document to envisage a strategic use for the strategic partnerships. On the other hand, the document identified key security challenges and policy implications for the EU.<sup>176</sup> Consequently, ESS mentioned six strategic partners for the EU: US, Russia and additionally as a group Japan, China, Canada and India. Since then, regarding the strategic partnerships the EU followed the path drawn by ESS by establishing strategic

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<sup>175</sup> It is instructive to point out that like many European countries, China opposed the war in Iraq at the United Nations Security Council (Zaborowski, 2006: 1). Further, Sorozzo and Corti (2011: 145) argue that the international context dominated by US unilateralism particularly in Iraq war led to a rapprochement between some of the EU member states and China.

<sup>176</sup> According to European Security Strategy, the EU has three strategic objectives: addressing threats; building a secure neighbourhood; and contributing to an international order based on effective multilateralism.

partnerships with the emerging powers such as China, India, South Africa, Brazil and Mexico. It should be noted that the declaration of strategic partnership also included a political agreement that allowed China to join EU-led global navigation satellite system, named Galileo. Its significance lied in the fact that it was a potential alternative to the dominant American Global Positioning (GPS) System. To a large extent, as Casarini argues this attempt was read by US as a challenge to its key high-tech and defense related industrial sectors<sup>177</sup> (Casarini, 2008: 120). These attempts were particular in the sense that the EU-China relations would be obviously entering a new phase by techno-political linkage via space-cooperation. On the other hand, the second initiative that was related to the strategic partnership corresponded to the arms embargo<sup>178</sup> that was imposed by the EC member states in 1989 due to Tiananmen Square crackdown. In Autumn 2003, the political leaderships of France and Germany aired promises to start discussions on lifting the arms embargo. However, the issue of lifting the arms embargo once again divided Europe. The advocates for lifting the embargo constituted Germany, France at the forefront and Spain, Italy lately. By the end of 2003, Britain, Finland, and Netherlands joined the camp. On the contrary, the Nordic countries led by Denmark and Sweden voiced their concerns on China's poor human rights records (Casarini, 2008: 123,124, 126).

For China, with the words of the then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, 'the embargo was a product of Cold War and outdated' (cited *in* Casarini, 2008: 125). Since the planned enlargement of the EU was forthcoming, China strongly lobbied for a decision to be taken before the enlargement took place in May 2004 (Staumbaum, 2007: 178). At the end of the day, after tough debates within Europe, the European Council decided to lift the arms embargo in December 2004. However, many factors came to play in order the EU to take a non-decision on the lifting of the arms embargo issue afterwards. At the European Council in June 2005, EU member states officially postponed the issue (Casarini, 2008: 138). The strong opposition of the US to the lifting the embargo on the grounds that the issue would have serious implications regarding the status quo of East Asia coincided with the timing of the decision. The 2004 EU enlargement incorporated ten 'Atlanticist' states that directly found meaning on the Council decision of June 2005. Above all, the second initiative coupled with

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<sup>177</sup> Moreover, Casarini (2008) argues that US accorded a zero-sum approach towards this issue. So to say, by accessing Western space technology PLA could be in a better position to acquire the most advanced early-warning systems. On the other side, for the EU, it was part of its engagement based on the idea of change through trade.

<sup>178</sup> It is important to note that the EU's embargo which was parallel to the US's in 1989 was different in substance than the US' embargo. While the US inserted the embargo in US law, the EC (at the time) presented a political declaration. It was only politically binding (Stumbaum, 2007: 173).

the first initiative and created a highly symbolic political message notably to the dominant global power—US on the restructuring of the international system to a more multipolar world (Casarini, 2012: 2).

The third initiative regarding the EU-China Strategic partnership was related to the increase in two-way trade between two sides. The People’s Bank of China made an informal commitment to diversify its holdings away from the dollar and towards the Euro. As a result, it is possible to read all the initiatives with political symbolism embedded on each. Particularly, the support for European common currency and space cooperation alternative to those of the US might be seen as China’s strategy of backing European integration to counterbalance the US hegemony (Casarini, 2012: 1). To a large extent, the initiatives of both sides realized in terms of concrete steps. The fruits for the both sides were collected notably in terms of trade. By March 2004, the EU became China’s largest trading partner while China became the EU’s second biggest trading partner as Table 3 demonstrates. Due to the fact that the relationship blossomed in many areas- exchange of goods, values, personnel, and technology- some scholars and pundits named the period as ‘honeymoon’ between EU and China.

**Table 3.** EU Trade with China (in millions of Euro)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average growth 2000-2004 %
Imports	74.4	81.6	89.6	105.4	126.7	+14.3
Exports	25.8	30.6	34.9	41.2	48.0	+16.9
Balance	-48.6	-51.0	-54.7	-64.2	-78.7	

**Source:** Data compiled from Eurostat

The 2006 Commission Communication was released within this context of the emerging realities though frictions were dismissed (Noguera, 2009: 24). In the document, China was acknowledged as a ‘re-emerging power’, which was in line with the increasing international weight of China at the time. Equally important, the communication signaled the realignment of EU’s China policy on the position of US after the arms embargo impasse (Casarini, 2008: 187). Correspondingly, in the document, the arms embargo issue was made conditional on



China's human rights progress; transparency of its military expenditure; cross-strait relations.<sup>179</sup>

As Shambaugh (2010: 7) contends from the year 2006, the 'honeymoon' phase of the relationship has turned into a serious 'marriage'. The most important reason for the major policy shift of the EU towards China was the mutual reflections of the consequences of arms embargo imbroglio by the EU and US. As a result, the EU aligned with the strategic priorities of the US in East Asia. Further, the EU and the US institutionalized a semi-annual official dialogue over the security issues in East Asia. Furthermore, the EU's growing trade deficit with China aggravated the relations in a slightly tough manner. The contentious trade disputes composed of protectionist measures, lack of transparency from the EU side (Noguera, 2009: 24). To China, the most important problematic was on granting Market Economy Status (MES) within the WTO framework<sup>180</sup> (Casarini, 2012: 2) -a distinction given long ago to the far less capitalist Russian economy<sup>181</sup>- which would relieve China from several categories of dumping charges (Shaumbaugh, 2004: 245). Obviously, the human rights issue was another major concern in the relationship between the EU and China dating back to the Tiananmen Square events in 1989. As mentioned in 2006 Commission Communication, the EU aimed at observing concrete steps over China's human rights progress and linked this issue to the lifting of the arms embargo. However, non-ratification of the UN Covenant on Social and Political Rights and imprisonment of political and religious dissidents by PRC were serious issues at the top of the agenda of the EU in human rights terms. On the other side, the relationship had even more exacerbated in 2007 when German Chancellor Angela Merkel met with exiled Tibetan leader Dalai Lama in Berlin. This move was resulted in suspension of high-level Sino-German contacts by PRC. Even worse when French President Nicholas Sarkozy met with Dalai Lama in 2008, China cancelled regular summit meetings with the EU (Beneyto& Song& Ding, 2013: 121). Another setback came into play when the European Commission decided to exclude Chinese contractors from the second phase of Galileo in July 2008. With the attempt, the Sino-EU cooperation in satellite navigation was put halt temporarily (Casarini, 2008: 142).

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<sup>179</sup> [http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006\\_0631en01.pdf](http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0631en01.pdf)

<sup>180</sup> Shambaugh (2008: 245) contends that at the time the EU alleged that China failed to fully implement its WTO entry commitments.

<sup>181</sup> <http://thediplomat.com/2014/04/great-civilizations-chinas-vision-for-relations-with-the-eu/>

This negative scene remained unchanged until the Euro crisis in 2008. The euro crisis provided new impetus for the bilateral relationship. Indeed, for a number of sound reasons behind<sup>182</sup>, China supported the Euro and bought Eurozone bonds though selective—from secure core members. At the end of the day, China’s economic activism towards Eurozone contributed highly to the Sino-European strategic partnership in a positive manner (Casarini, 2012: 2,3). Noguera (2010: 25) marks the year 2010 as a representative of revival of the relationship since the EU established High-Level Strategic Dialogue and High-Level People-to-People Dialogue in the preceding years as a manifestation of strengthened institutional ties. On the other hand, the Treaty of Lisbon<sup>183</sup> contributed to enhancing the political dialogue to some degree by strengthening Union’s international actorness towards more coherent and consistent manner.<sup>184</sup> Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, a security dialogue with China had been set. Meanwhile, in April 2014, China issued its second policy paper on the EU named ‘Deepening the China-EU Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Mutual Benefit and Win Win Cooperation’<sup>185</sup>. The document consisted of ten parts and touched upon issues like peace, growth, reform, and civilization. IU<sup>186</sup>. It should also be noted that, the second EU policy paper of China stated many ‘shoulds’ for the EU.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Casarini (2012: 2) argues this intervention to Euro crisis derived from China’s quest for new and safe investments, the need to diversifying the risk from Dollar, and strongly from the reflection of multipolarity approach of China. In this case, to challenge the dominance of Dollar.

<sup>183</sup> The Treaty of Lisbon entered into force on 1 December 2009. It brought an international legal personality for the EU. Moreover, the Treaty incorporated changes to the institutional framework such as creating a post of High Representative of the Union’s CFSP; establishing European External Action Service; and European Defence Agency. (Nugent 2010: 74).

<sup>184</sup> Though the Treaty was not revolutionary in terms of amendments as foreign policy and security realms were still dependent upon the member states.

<sup>185</sup> [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1143406.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1143406.shtml)

<sup>186</sup> Note that Xi Jinping was the first Chinese head of state to visit European Commission. See, Brown,

<sup>187</sup> ‘China asks the EU and its member states not to support Taiwan’s accession to any international organization whose membership requires statehood; not to sell to Taiwan any weapons...’, ‘China calls on the EU to properly handle Tibet-related issues, not to allow leaders of the Dalai group to visit the EU or its member states under any capacity or pretext to engage in separatist activities, not to arrange any form of contact with officials of the EU or its member states...’ [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjdt\\_665385/wjzcs/t1143406.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/wjzcs/t1143406.shtml)

## 6. THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHINA'S GLOBAL RISE FOR THE EU

‘There is an enormous amount of kinetic energy in international politics right now, some of it produced by the rise of China’<sup>188</sup>

Regarding the context within which neorealism stresses as the dimensions of power China is obviously on the rise. Yet, if the patterns regarding China's rise continue, it seems likely that China will maintain its central role in international affairs. In this broad neorealist interpretation of the international system on China's rise, an important question arises: ‘How does the EU fit in this setting?’ It is the potential of the EU-China relationship to develop into a strategic axis that bears significance in the neorealist lexicon (Holstag, 2010: 1). In that regard, as a theory privileging the centrality of distribution of power in the international system, neorealism employs a linkage between the extent of the EU-China relationship and the possibility of posing a challenge to the post-Cold War international system.

This chapter aims at analyzing the implications of the global rise of China for the EU with reference to the unipolar dynamics of the current international system, and in parallel to the dimensions analyzed in the previous chapter. To that aim, the argument is structured into four major parts. Part 1 examines the response of the EU to the rise of China within two dimensions. First, it reviews the European reaction as a *sui generis* actor in the international system, and then it outlines the official response of the EU with respect to the evolving weight of China in the international affairs.

Second part addresses the dimensions of China's rising power in relation to the EU, namely, economic, military, normative dimensions. To begin with, the economic dimension is observed particularly with particular reference to the underlying structural dynamics behind the motive of ‘primacy of trade’ between two sides. As outlined in the historical account of European-Chinese relations in the previous chapter, particularly after the end of Cold War the relationship between the two has evolved into an increasingly regularized, institutionalized, and at its core, an intensified character (Gill & Murphy, 2008: vii)<sup>189</sup> mostly driven by the motive to tap into one another's economic markets (Holstag, 2010: 331). Indeed, it might be argued that the ‘primacy of trade’ has formed the backbone of the relation with slight

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<sup>188</sup> <http://krlx.org/index.php/22-news-events/108-krlx-s-exclusive-interview-with-professor-stephen-walt>

<sup>189</sup> Considering the chronological official terminology, The EU defined the relationship between China and itself as ‘long term relationship’ in 1995; ‘comprehensive partnership’ in 1998; ‘maturing partnership’ in 2003; and ‘strategic and enduring relationship’ in 2003 (Belligoli, 2011: 12).

exceptions. From the perspective of neorealism, this is largely linked to the changing structural forces on the verge of a polarity transition following the end of Cold War. On the other hand, it would occur as a result of European strength and interests in the economic realm and conversely limitations in 'high politics' thanks to the economics as a driving dynamic in the European integration (Stumbaum, 2007: 29).

In focusing on the structural dynamics to account for the evolution of economic forces between the EU and China, this part further relates the analysis to the neorealist assumption, which argues that in an anarchic environment relative gain concerns prevail over absolute gain. On the other hand, to display the implications of China's economic rise, the argument is also examined with respect to the relation between increase in economic weight and increase in assertiveness.

Yet, the pattern manifested in the deepening of the relations in the economic realm does not seem to correspond in the same lineage to the military sphere. Proceeding with the power-based analysis, this part posits that the divergences between the approaches of the EU and the US respectively to the rise of China loom relevant. Given the EU is not directly involved in Asian-Pacific security architecture, and has limited military presence in the region, a rising China likely signifies less alarming to the Union in contrast to the US. As such, the US is the backbone of the security of the region with its 'hubs and spokes' alliance system<sup>190</sup>, and the predominant power in the post-Cold War international system. Thereby, the methodologies differ on how to deal with a rising China where the EU chooses a non-confrontational approach accompanied by engagement; on the other hand, the US musters a mix of containment, hedging, and engagement. This brings out the normative dimension wherein the peaceful rise rhetoric of China's rise is closely related to the normative power Europe discourse.

The last section of this part attempts to critically examine the normative role of the EU in transforming China through engagement. The last part outlines the implications of China's rise for the EU in the context of transatlantic relations. The first section applies the notion of soft balancing to the triangular relationship between the EU, the US, and China, and argues

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<sup>190</sup> It should be noted that the post war security order of East Asia can largely be defined by 'hub-and-spoke' system led by the US. This system comprises a complex security and economic arrangements between the US and Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the countries to the South which is bilateral in nature. Put differently, the countries get security protection, geopolitical stability and access to the American market while the US gets geopolitical stability in the region, capital to finance its deficits and strategic partners (Ikenberry, 2011: 353).

that the EU and China have attempted to involve in the soft-balancing process against the US particularly during the early 2000s. In the specific case of the EU and China, soft balancing takes the form of strategic partnership, multipolarity and multilateralism discourses.

The rest of the section assesses the impact of China's economic and military rise specifically in Asia on the overall route of the transatlantic relation following 2005. To that aim, a noticeable shift in the European approach-albeit with mixed responses- towards Asia is related to the recent developments in the frame of power struggle between the US and China in Asia.

### **6.1. THE RESPONSE OF AN ATYPICAL ACTOR TO THE GLOBAL RISE OF CHINA**

Given the difficulties encountered in the EU's own institutional dynamics with respect to its international actorness, without analyzing the coherence and consistency between the EU and its member states, the actual political impact of the EU on the international system falls short of assessment (Balducci, 2008: 3). In order to comprehend EU's China policy, the unique nature of the EU should be considered. The complex and interwoven process of formulating common interest among member states along with supranational and intergovernmental features also applies to EU's China policy formulation (Jokela& Linnell, 119). It can be said that confronted with a unitary actor such as China, the foreign and security policy of the EU faces its biggest challenges. As well as challenging the EU economically, politically, and ideologically; in the context of the Union's conventional policies China poses additional challenges to the EU. As such, it is neither a candidate country waiting to join in the EU to be processed in the context of Union's accession criteria, a neighboring country to be situated in the EU's Neighborhood Policy, nor a destination country for international crisis missions to be framed within the EU's External Services (Stumbaum, 2009: 21).

On the other hand, Vogt (2008) points out that the lack of coherent set of European policies towards China is one of the recurring patterns since the foundation of PRC in 1949. As such, the generic handicaps to EU unity and coherence in its external action largely stemming in part from the divergent interests among member states, and partly due to the institutional complexities of the EU are acknowledged as biggest obstacles to a developed EU- China policy (Fox& Godement, 2009: 28).

At this point, another related line of argument to note in the contours of the EU's actorness debate is the difficulty in conceptualizing the EU's role in the international system. As argued

in previous chapters, neorealism considers the states as the primary units of analysis in the international system. Yet, contentious debate about the statehood of the EU keeps its momentum since the EU lacks some of the classical attributes that are associated with the sovereign nation states such as being bounded by fixed territory, and having monopoly over the legitimate use of violence. However, almost simultaneously, the EU and the member states operate in and respond to the rules of a state-centered international politics, thereby creating pressure for the EU to be state-like (Cini, 2012: 119).

Against this backdrop, in the case of China, this paradox is mostly evident when the EU attempts to respond to the rise of China by engaging it at the EU level while pursuing competing national strategies at the member state levels. As such, China might mean different things to different member states and the degree of China's impact differs respectively, therefore causing a lack of specific policy towards China (Yee, 2011: 89). Furthermore, these divergences of interests among member states lead them to undermine each other and prevent to reach a common EU approach towards China (Fox & Godement, 2009: 21, 28). Indeed, it is affirmed that there is not one single European China policy but a European lowest common denominator approach among the 28 member states (Stepan & Ostermann, 6).

Moreover, given the institutional decision making design of the Union operating in a two-track way<sup>191</sup>, it might be argued that national perspectives of the member states- particularly the major powers' - within the Union influence the agenda to a large extent. In the same way, the EU has not generated a coherent approach to China mostly due to the two-layered institutional structure of the EU. At the Union level, member states implement a common EFSP, yet member states have still control over own foreign policies. In that, the varying agendas, and capabilities of member states offer few common denominators for a shared approach (Tote, 2010: 136). This inevitably leads to different conceptions and positioning towards China's rise particularly from the Big Three (Germany, France, and the UK). This overall perspective on the general attitudes of the EU and the member states over the issue of China's rise raises questions about the necessity of a more unified European approach to an ever-growing country (Stumbaum, 2009: 22).

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<sup>191</sup> In low politics supranational and in high politics intergovernmental decision making procedures are employed.

### **6.1.1. CASE STUDY- THE ARMS EMBARGO DEBACLE: THE WEIGHT OF ‘BIG THREE’**

The arms embargo imposed on China after Tiananmen incident in 1989 is a case in point to be analyzed in detail. As such, it constitutes one of the most important tests of the EU’s ability to formulate a coherent policy towards China. It should be remarked that the EU’s arms embargo on China was a political decision, which was left to the interpretations of member states (Jokela & Linnell, 110). In 2003, China explicitly called for the EU to lift the arms embargo of 1989 citing that it would be a last step in normalizing their relations (Casarini, 2009: 47).

The issue of arms embargo reveals two key points affecting the international actorness of the EU. The first point to note in this context is the mirroring of the aforementioned predicaments related to the EU’s unity and coherence in its external action. In the specific case with China, the diversity of interests of the member states leads them to not to speak with one voice to other countries. In the case of arms embargo issue, the attitudes of Germany and France reflect this assumption. In particular, Stumbaum (2009: 171) contends that France was the most vocal European state in favor of lifting the embargo due to strategic and economic considerations. On the other hand, Germany with specifically commercial reasons and the UK with an emphasis on improving relations with China advocated the lifting of the arms embargo. On this angle, the debate illustrates the impact of bilateral relations on the formation of a European policy towards China (Stumbaum, 2009: 22). On the other side, apart from demonstrating the decisive role of the US on the EU’s international relations, Stumbaum (2009: 173) contends that the arms embargo debacle reveals at best a lack of common European strategic outlook. As a result of inner-EU conflict, the discussion resulted in a final non-decision over the lifting.

### **6.2. THE OFFICIAL RESPONSE OF THE EU TO THE RISE OF CHINA: ENGAGEMENT POLICY WITH CHINA**

‘Engaging China’s emerging economic and political power, as well as integrating China into the international community may prove one of the most important external policy challenges facing Europe’<sup>192</sup>

In its first policy document on China, the EU tied the issue of drawing China into international processes to the argument that free flow of trade would be the single hope for

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<sup>192</sup> (European Commission Communication, cited in Casarini, 2009: 54)

democratization of the country. Indeed, in the framework of official documents, since the first Commission policy paper on China, it might be concluded that the broad strategic objective of the EU has been to assist China in its transition to becoming increasingly integrated into the global economic and political system (Jokela& Limmel, 102). As captured in the European Commission's communication in 1995: 'The EU is eager to see China sharing in the opportunities and responsibilities at the heart of the international community as China opens up to a freer flow of ideas and cooperation, both in the key Asian region and globally'.

The strategic transformative agenda of the EU rests on mainly two assumptions. First, it is expected that Chinese economic reform will likely create a spillover effect and automatically result in democratization process. Secondly, in tune with the US's 'responsible stakeholder' approach, the EU stresses that there should be 'shared responsibilities' at the global level (Bellogiri, 2009: 15). To that aim, China is expected to act as a status quo power within the existing governance institutions. This engagement would serve China to adopt Western principles of governance (Bellogi, 2009: 16).

In this way, the EU demonstrated that it entered the debate whether to engage or to contain rising China through a non-confrontational approach (Casarini, 2008: 44). Embodied in the 1995 and 1996 Communications respectively, EU's commitment to engagement was significant for China at a time when China faced diplomatic difficulties due to Tiananmen Events particularly with the US (Li, 2009: 230). By engaging China, the long-term sustainable development of the country was linked to the EU's socio-economic position. Indeed, it was expected that economic cooperation would foster convergence on other issues (Holslag, 2006: 6). However, in the case of the US the economic issues were linked to the politico-military ones (Casarini, 2009: 45). Nonetheless, using this understanding it might be argued that the divergences between the EU and the US stem from the differences in their methodology with regard to their respective responses to rising China (Gates& Murphy, 2008: ix).

Yet, for each of the countries concerned the perception of threats emanating from China differs. On one hand, the EU concerns about issues such as economic competition, environmental issues, and human rights (Gates& Murphy, 2008: vii). On the other hand, the agenda of the US comprises hard security issues in relation to China largely because it has strategic and political interests as mentioned in the previous chapter. Yet, as Gates and Murphy (2008) argue the overall objective to maintain a stable East Asia and to integrate a stable and peaceful China into the global order smoothly are fundamental convergent interests



for both of the EU and the US alike. In a similar manner, Stumbaum is on the opinion that the approaches of the ‘West’ can be regarded as complementary against China since for its part the US adopts a hard power approach while the EU addresses non-traditional security issues. In this way, via such cooperation with the US, the EU is regarded to increase its leverage by enlarging its tools and bargaining sets (Stumbaum, 2012: 3).

In terms of power basis analysis, the EU’s approach, which focuses on the internal dimensions of China’s rise rather than geopolitical consequences can be regarded as a product of two factors. The first is the fact that EU’s hard power capabilities are practically inexistent (Belligoli, 2009: 15). Thus, compared to the US, this relatively tolerant stance towards China stems from the fact that the EU is militarily weak (Holslag, 2010: 335). As such, the realist perspective establishes a link between the incapacity to respond to the threats and the tolerance for threats (Kagan, 13, 2002).<sup>193</sup> Therefore, the EU’s focus on the challenges correlates with the strengths at its disposal. To Kagan, the EU emphasizes an approach that stresses political engagement and foreign aid largely because it is a militarily weak but economically strong international actor. In the case of China, it is even more a product of necessity with a bottom line acknowledging that non-cooperation with China cannot be afforded (Pan, 2012: 49). Secondly, hard security issues only have an indirect impact on Europe. Given Europe’s retreat from Asia as an imperial power coupled with its lack of military muscle has enabled the EU to pass geo-strategically questions related to the rise of China to the US yet still under the banner of the ‘EU’ (Holslag, 2010: 332).

It might be said that the EU adopts a normatively convergent approach in dealing with China in line with its premises as declared in 2003 Security Strategy by utilizing ‘trade and development policies as powerful tools for promoting reform’.<sup>194</sup> This conditional cooperation comprises a trade off where the EU proposes to invest in the development of China in turn for a number of demands and standards. More specifically, the EU has launched various aid programs, lifted remaining restrictions on imports from China, and set standards for Chinese banking system in order China to open up its economy and improve its human rights situation

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<sup>193</sup> Assessed by the historical context, Kagan (2002) argues that it was Europe who invented power politics. Therefore, more recent European emphasis on diplomatic and commercial ties, on the preference of international law over the use of force, and on multilateralism over unilateralism as tools for its international relations reflect the shift in the global power equation that is in the detriment of Europe. In this context, it is relevant to note the comment of Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright over the transatlantic argument on the use of force in Iraq in 1998: ‘If we have to use force, it is because we are America; we are the indispensable nation. <http://www.hoover.org/research/comment-context>

<sup>194</sup> (European Security Strategy cited in Holslag, 2010: 333)

(Holslag, 2010: 333). To Belligoni (2009) this donor-recipient dynamic implies that the EU is willing to help and teach China how to become a better international actor. In this sense, Geeraerts (2013: 1) criticizes the leverage of the EU's actorness in normative terms whilst dealing with an emerging power such as China. To Geeraerts, it remains unclear to be seen whether the EU's attempts to strengthen its influence through ever-increasing economic interdependence and shared values will transform China into a democratic country. Moreover, Stephen Walt argues that it would be optimistic to expect a constructive partnership led by a careful diplomacy combined with growing economic interdependence in an anarchic world, which is probably ripe for rivalry.<sup>195</sup>

In addition to these, China is not a prospective candidate to join the EU or a rather weak country depending on the EU's support. As outlined in the previous chapter considering the increasing assertive tone it adopts, China is no longer the developing country it was (Geeraerts, 2013: 1). Instead, Mikael Mattlin argues (2010: 17) that the EU did not yield substantial results in terms of gaining leverage throughout 1990s when China extremely needed capital and technology that was plentiful in Europe. For instance, in the negotiations for China's WTO membership, the issues of concerns could not go beyond market access and intellectual property rights. Now, as a member of many key organizations and with increasing economic, political and military power it is questionable how the EU would maintain and enhance its leverage to China (Mattlin, 2010: 19). Geeraerts contends (2011: 63) that China is by no means at a point to meet the demands of Europe. On the contrary, as seen in Africa, as China's relative power increases, the EU, and the individual member states prove to be reluctant in pursuing China's acceptance of EU's preferred political values (Mattlin, 2010: 19).

On the other hand, Geeraerts argues that China's rise engenders a change in the distribution of identities as well as change in the distribution of power. Nonetheless, China's ascent poses challenges to the era of Western hegemony at the level of system values and rules of the game (Geeraerts, 2011: 59). Previous chapters have made clear that neorealism has a skeptical stance over the issue of China's growing activism on multilateral grounds. Combined with the secondary status given to the international institutions by neorealism in influencing world politics, one may deduct that they would serve instrumental to China's strategic calculations in shaping the distribution of power in its favor (Nadrani & Noonan, 2013:115). From this standpoint, given the fact that Western principles have enforced a template for the

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<sup>195</sup> <http://ips.cap.anu.edu.au/cap-events/2014-04-29/rise-china-and-americas-asian-allies>

international system via international institutions in the post Cold War era, China's rise has far reaching implications for the West in general, for the EU in particular (Gamble & Layne, 2009: 80). On this point, Martin Jacques (2009: 86) argues that contrary to the expectations, China will not likely conform to Western norms since it has an entirely different set of coordinates to the West. Further, he asserts that as China acquires more power and self-confidence, it will behave according to what it is rather than how it should and more likely would pose a challenge to Western universalism. Thus, in line with China's overriding priority of its economic development for the last thirty years, current phase of adaptation to the international norms is a necessity for its ongoing modernization process.

In an overall assessment, it might be concluded that China follows rather pragmatic approach in its dealings with the EU. Despite persistent EU lobbying, China has not ratified UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Moreover, China did not take the EU's side in climate change negotiations in 2009. All in all, China's opening up its economy and relatedly growing economic interdependence has not fundamentally transformed its political system to a democratic one (Vogt, 2008: 1). Similarly, it might be argued that aside from the fact that the economic and military rise of China has not been accompanied by a political liberalization of the country, the ruling party, CCP has monopolized political power and the pace of democracy is rather slow (Yee, 2011: 2). The overall course of developments in the domestic politics of China suggests that the European engaging posture has not produced any notable progress in human rights protection in China. Indeed, several adverse consequences ensue from the fact that China is neither a prospective candidate to join in the EU, nor it appears to share the values and norms that are in accordance with the EU, which at the end of the day weakens the 'normative' leverage of the EU towards China (Mattlin, 2010: 7-8).

### **6.3. THE (IN) EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTITUTIONS IN SHAPING POLITICS**

It is a truism for the neorealist logic that states re-define and re-interpret the leading ideas, binding effects, and interests in the international institutions (Mearsheimer cited in Siedschlag, 2006: 3). With this trait in mind, on a wider scale East Asian institutional framework displays considerable amount of partially overlapping regional forums whereby some of them comprise a broad agenda like East Asian Summit (EAS) and some precisely focus on security issues such as ASEAN Regional Forum (AFR). Largely characterized by weak institutionalism, the existing regional organizations in East Asia draw on principles of

consensus and non-interference which cause to wield little authority in the decision-making (Wacker, 2015: 28, 9).

On the other hand, it is argued that it is the lack of an effective institutional architecture capable of diffusing tensions or setting disputes constitutes as one of the shortcomings of East Asian institutional structure. An example of this can be seen in the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), the leading security forum of Asia. Notwithstanding becoming an arena for accusations and counterclaims, severe possibilities of territorial conflicts – e.g. between China and Taiwan or between India and Pakistan – have been largely swayed from the agenda of the forum (Feigenbaum& Manning, 2012).

In terms of region-to-region basis, the basic framework for the EU that provided the economic and political grounds with Asia was established in 1967 via ASEAN (Association of South-East Nations). Despite the efforts to enhance the dynamism between the EU-ASEAN relationship, the strategic significance of ASEAN diminished and paved the way for a parallel process, namely ASEM (Asia-Europe meeting) in 1996 (Vogler, 2006: 129). Composing of the EU member states and ten Asian states including China, for the part of the EU, by ASEM it was aimed at bridging the missing link between the EU and a strategically significant East Asia (Casarini, 2009: 46). With the emergence of the new forms of regional organizations after the end of Cold War, the EU would pursue its interests in a more efficient manner than its existing bilateral mechanisms.

Indeed, the EU was unable to acquire observer status in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) that was a parallel institution within which the US strengthened its ties with East Asian countries. From a neorealist perspective, it might be argued that the ASEM initiative could be seen as a move to counterbalance the US influence in Asia. However, the aim would be to engage the US in multilateralism and to match its diplomatic investment in East Asia rather than to replace the US for it is the dominant security provider in Asia (Demiri: 4,5).

Yet, this institutional ground was unable to handle politically sensitive issues such as China's human rights record (Vogler, 2006: 130). An example of this ineffectiveness was also seen in 2012 when the disputes between China and Japan regarding South China Sea prevented ASEM Ministerial meeting from adopting even a Joint Communiqué (ISS, 2013: 57). Most importantly, given the lack of strategic logic in high-politics issues and insufficient capacity to build concrete solutions, ASEM led the relations of Europe and Asian countries to

proceed mainly through extended bilateral efforts than region-to-region basis (Youngs, 2015: 15). Moreover, the EU tended to attend these main regional forums with second-order delegations and its emphasis was on trade (Fride, 2012: 3). It should be remarked that one of most the supranational organs of the EU, the Commission, acts as an observer and assistant in interregional summits such as ASEM and the mechanism is intergovernmental in the EU terms (Stumbaum, 2007: 104).

Above all, a strategic premise behind this institutional design lied in the instrumental understanding of the institutions. For the part of the EU, ASEM would contribute to its engagement policy with China. At the same time, the forum would preclude the EU from being isolated by a close collaboration of Asia-Pacific countries. Observed with the prism of neorealism, ASEM- a forum excluding the US- first would serve China as an additional counterweight to US primacy in the post Cold-War era (Casarini, 2009: 47). As a fertile environment to soft balance the US power, thus ASEM would likely advance Chinese emphasis on multilateralism and multipolarity. As far as the departure point of the organization is considered -enhancing economic relations- it is in the interest of China to raise its profile within ASEM in order to challenge US presence by opening up the EU's economic interests (Casarini, 2009: 46).

The approach towards international institutions taken by structural realism provides arguments for China's shifting intercourse with multilateral diplomacy. As such, particularly from the post-Cold War period, China increasingly started to attend multilateral institutional designs. For neorealism, these attempts would echo in cost-benefit calculations. In that, China seemed calculating the costs and benefits of working in multilateral fora. As a part of China's regional diplomacy, with multilateral engagement it is aimed at winning the confidence of China's neighbors and promoting trade, but also expanding China's influence across the region (CSS, 2007:2). Yet, it concluded that it was more preferable to engage in international institutions than becoming aloof in terms of national interests.

On one side, this attitude served China's national interests in cooling down 'China threat' perceptions as its relative power rises and in promoting the image of responsible participant of the international community. On the other side, 'multilateralism' would be a vehicle for countering American dominance (Hanami, 2003: 139). In accordance with this strategy, China sought to recast its relations with each of the major powers in order to trigger the

attempts to pave the way for a multipolar international system and to decrease the possibility for any major power to collaborate to oppose China (Hanami, 2003: 140).

In this respect, it is to be noted that the EU has responded to China's institutional dynamism by promoting interregional cooperation and engaging with regional powers (Holslag, 2010: 333). As such, in conjunction with its external policies, the EU tries to generate a web of institutional network with its various key partnerships with a related aim of stabilizing the partners and making them manageable (Smith and Xie, 2010: 440). However, as Smith and Xie (2010: 334) point out the degree of institutionalization may not run in parallel with the effectiveness of the institutions. Over the course of two decades, the proliferation of sectorial dialogues between the EU and China, which amounts to almost over 50 different chapters, has not led to the creation of a proper forum nor to signing a comprehensive agreement focusing on providing a long term solutions to the existing issues (Belligoli, 2011: 13).

On the other hand, Holslag (2010: 339) draws attention to the institutional struggle that the EU faces in terms of competing values concerning Asia. Particularly China, he argues, attaches political values as well as economic ones to the regional initiatives such as non-interference to domestic affairs, sovereignty that China draws as a red line. Of particular importance is China's persistent opposition to any multilateralization or internationalization of its existing territorial disputes (Wacker, 2015: 10). For example, although China has signed international treaties regarding the South China disputes, it firmly rejects any regional framework solution within the context of ASEAN or ARF (Wacker, 2015: 29). Thus, it proves difficult for the EU to convert the institutional enmesh in a multilateral framework into a form of cooperation or normative convergence whereby there exists clash of values and norms. Put differently, China's stance in multilateral organizations manifests that it prefers far different political objectives and norms from that of the EU that emphasizes such values as promotion of human rights, respect for the rule of law (Holslag, 2010: 344).

## **6.4. THE REFLECTIONS OF CHINA'S RISE ON THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE EU**

### **6.4.1. CHINA'S ECONOMIC RISE AND THE IMPACTS UPON THE EU**

'Politics, as usual, prevails over economics'<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> (Kenneth Waltz, Globalization, 1999: 700)

Given its integration into the global financial system for the last three decades, the combination of its growth policies, and the relatively peaceful international environment accompanying its economic transformation, China's economic rise has been culminated into solid results like the world's largest exporter and importer and as the world's second biggest economy (Brown, 2012: 13). This remarkable success has echoed in the relationship between the EU and China in a comprehensive manner as such the relationship has evolved from cautious commercial dealings into one of the most dynamic bilateral relations (Batch, 2011: 32). Nonetheless, of all the dialogues initiated between the EU and China, more than two thirds serve to facilitate bilateral economic and trade ties (Men, 2014: 6). On the other hand, as a single market containing more than 500 million people with its own currency, the EU as the biggest economic bloc accounting for about 30% of global trade is best suited to play its cards in the economical sphere. Indeed, it is this policy area that the EU can act on behalf of all its member states with exclusive competence (Hwee, 2014).

In other words, within the EU external policy in the field of 'low politics' -such as external trade, development, and humanitarian policies- is pursued through supranational decision making procedures in which the Commission and the Council are principal actors (Stumbaum, 2009: 104). As a matter of fact, economic dimension of European-Chinese interaction is by far one of the most important dimension of this relationship.

#### **6.4.1.1. ASSESSMENT OF EU-CHINA ECONOMIC ENCOUNTER IN THE POST- COLD WAR ERA THROUGH THE LENS OF NEOREALISM**

The above-mentioned blossomed cooperation presents a controversy in the neorealist lexicon since the international system is accepted to be anarchic and cooperation is seen as rare and difficult to maintain. The answer to this challenge, 'cooperation under anarchy', is therefore resolved by neorealists via linking the structural dynamics of the international system to the EU-China relationship. Hence, once largely shaped by the bipolar structural dynamics of the Cold War era, the EU-China relationship has been influenced by the unipolar dynamics after the end of the Cold War. By and large, this broad interpretation accounts for the transforming of the relationship from 'distant neighbors' to a developed bilateral form that is independent of the geopolitical considerations of Cold War bipolarity (Vogt: 2009: 19).

From the perspective of neorealism, the evolution of EU-China economic relations thus has been shaped by structural factors. As constraints and incentives shift on the verge of systemic shifts, then the shift from Cold War bipolar structure to the US-centered international system

inevitably has inclination to effect the behaviors of states and the character of the international governance (Ikenberry, Mastaduno and Wohlforht, 2009: 26). As such, after the end of Cold War the changes in the international distribution of power favored the US in terms of economic, military, and political dimensions. Considering the key assumptions of neorealism that the balance of power is the operating principle under an anarchic international order, one would inevitably expect that overwhelming power to be counterbalanced.

However, accumulation of such sort of preponderant power in one state makes it extremely difficult for the rest of the states to counterbalance the US's power on their own. Moreover, it is even too costly and too risky to orchestrate a directly constraining coalition (Wang, 2006: 13). Faced with the constraints pertinent to unipolar distribution of power, it is argued that the EU and China tend to respond to the unbalanced power of the US by adopting soft balancing strategies. To this capacity, great power diplomacy and strategic partnerships are fertile venues for both parties to express their concerns about US preponderance without adopting a confrontational approach. Viewed from this stance, it might be said that the deepening of the relations between the EU and China has considerable potential to limit American power (Wang, 2006: 26). Equally important, the absence of security considerations and strategic interests as stated in the Chinese European Paper: 'There is no conflict of interest between China and the EU and neither side poses a threat to each other' has contributed much to evolve the pace of the relation primarily in economic terms (Narramore, 2008: 96).

From the perspective of neorealism, in an anarchic international order economic relations are viewed as instruments of state power. In that sense, the priority given by both sides to the substance of the relationship in terms of economics can be read along with neorealist reference to self-help behavior of states in the international system which goes in tune with exercise of power. Provided this is so, bolstering economic relations with the EU would serve for China's principal emphasis on economic growth that was followed as national core interest since 1978. Furthermore, economic cooperation with Western Europe was seen as a matter of strategic importance that would accelerate the process of its economic modernization (Casarini, 2009: 10). Indeed, for China a sustainable economic growth was a must in order to integrate into the global regulatory system. Yet, in any case, pursuing China's core interests in the post-Cold War era necessitated upgrading its foreign policy approach. Therefore, from a realist point of view, it might be argued that China's economic rise and global integration hinged upon its low profile approach on defense and security issues and



alteration of its ideology based alliance preference. Overall, this depiction largely served to its definition of self-interest (SWF, 2008: 123).

Changes in global realpolitik, namely consequential shift to unipolarity, urged China to revise its Cold War vision of Europe as ‘bulwark against Soviet Union’, and shifted to supporting European integration within China’s ‘multipolarity’ lexicon (Shambaugh&Sandschneider&Hong, 2008: 190). Therefore, by linking its commitment to enhance its economic ties and technological transfer with Europe to its national core interests, for the Chinese part, a strategic perspective provided the initial context of EU-China economic relations with particular material concerns over its modernization process—primarily for accessing advanced Western technology which would be much more difficult to obtain from the US and Japan (Casarini, 2009: 9).

On the other side, economic and monetary relations between the EU and China open up a range of possibilities that might challenge the US-led international order created in the post-Second World War period. Take, for example, Chinese steady support for Euro remained relatively stable despite the political relations drew a mixed picture of ups and downs. By many accounts, Euro-denominated assets constitute roughly two-thirds of China’s total foreign currency reserves (Casarini, 2015: 1). Indeed, with its significant emphasis of the Euro as a landmark step towards multipolarity, China was one of the first buyers of the currency in 2002. In this way, Euro was regarded as an important element to diversify financial risk, as a potential challenger to the US dollar, and to help to provide the setting for a new monetary order in which Renminbi will also have a role (Casarini, 2011: 1).

Therefore, as Casarini contends Chinese enthusiasm for keeping the Euro afloat might be read from a perspective which links Chinese playing the ‘European card’ to its competition with the US over currency valuation. In this sense, it might be asserted that the Euro is seen as a counterbalance to the Dollar and has an instrumental value for China to be able to create a multipolar currency order (Casarini, 2015). At another related level, this strategic move is accompanied by China’s broader financial strategy to export capital and political influence. As a result of this policy China has become a global net exporter of capital for the first time in 2014. In this setting, Eastern and Southern European countries comprise as important routes for Chinese capital outflow. Notwithstanding being coined as ‘Second Marshall Plan’, China’s financial rebalancing towards Europe, particularly in terms of investment, constitutes a source of concern for the Big Three (E3) with the possibility to preclude the EU from

employing critical stances against China in the future. As Casarini suggests China's financial and economic involvement in Europe has likely to become imbued with political reality as well.

On the other hand, the EU also attached material significance to the relationship as such the engagement policy of the EU towards China was grounded partly in the long-term economic interests of the EU. Given this outlook, it might be argued that the EU pursued to enhance its weight over China on the back of economic interdependence with strong emphasis on gaining advantage of China's economic growth (Holslag, 2010: 334). With a less confrontational manner, in the 1990s the EU sought to enhance its commercial relations with an important emerging market owing to material concerns regarding China's rising national power (Casarini, 2009: 10). In such a configuration, unlike the US, the possibility to alter the dynamics of the international structure of a newly rising economic power resonated less alarming to the EU (SWP, 2005: 30).

The neorealist understanding of international relations points out the structural factors to allow for cooperation particularly in economic realm to a considerable extent. However, it should be remarked that neorealism envisages the structure as a key determinant of state behavior. In a sense, the role of economics in determining the state behavior is subordinated to the politics. In a system characterized by self-help and anarchy, the role of economy is rather marginal due to the assumption that as survival is the pre-eminent motive of states; under a threat, states prefer security maximization behavior regardless of the costs and foregoing benefits (Elridge, 2014: 53). In addition, it is affirmed that since the end of bipolarity increased economic interdependency of states has led growing inequality as well (Waltz, 1999: 700). In an anarchical system wherein states operate with the principle of self-help, this economic interdependence has a vast potential of exploitation of economic vulnerabilities and of heightening the risk of conflict (Elridge, 2014: 53). Therefore, Waltz (1999: 700) contends that precisely because of this lopsided distribution of capabilities in the post Cold War era, states enhance the role of politics rather than elevating economic forces. From this theoretical standpoint, one may establish that to infer that the EU's relatively tolerant stance towards China stems from China's significance to the EU as a huge trade and investment partner, and as buyer and holder of European bonds appears simplistic.

Assessed in the context of economic interdependence, a statistical comparison of the US-China trade volume and the volume of bilateral trade between the EU and China reveals that

the US is the second trade partner of China and a bigger contributor of FDI than the EU. Likewise, China's high trade volume with Japan and South Korea has not been translated into security dimension with parallel momentum (Vogt, 2009: 34). Thus, the general neorealist view tends to suggest that the economic ties solely do not make Europeans 'soft' on China. Instead, as far as the structural change -from bipolarity to a unipolar system with the US as preeminent power- is concerned, the perception of and response to the threats are duly related to the global redistribution of power after the end of Cold War (Jokela&Limnel: 184). As such, the shift in the polarity has enabled the US to become a preponderant power particularly militarily, yet the EU has inclined to emphasize its growing soft power while its hard power capacity hardly featured. Citing Kagan (2002: 15), the power gap between the US and the EU shapes the respective strategic cultures, and relatedly threat perceptions of the two.

In terms of power-based analysis, this explains why after the end of the Cold War the US takes a rather different approach than the EU to come to terms with China's economic and political strength despite growing economic ties with the country. Therefore, free of any serious contentions with China and its security mostly guaranteed by the US, the economic engagement with China is the only realistic strategic alternative for Europe to emphasize its strengths in the realm of economics rather than considering it as the key determinant of state behavior.

In this context, a second aspect of economic interdependence is about the possibility of the growing economic ties leading to an increasing inequality between states. In a more specific manner, citing Kenneth Waltz (2010: 106): 'The larger a state's imports and exports, the more it depends on others...The high interdependence of states means that the states in question experience, or subject to, the common vulnerability that high interdependence entails.' As one evaluates the overall aspects of the relationship between the EU and China, then is entitled to explore that the trade imbalance constitutes the most contentious issue in the EU- China relations.

With respect to growing trade volume between the EU and China, as the statistical data suggests, it is evident that currently the EU is China's largest trade partner and China is the EU's second trade partner after the US. However, since 1980s the trade with China remains sharply unbalanced to the detriment of the EU. This bilateral trade imbalance- the biggest since 2006- is because European import from China has been growing with a larger proportion than exports to China (Mezo&Udvari, 2012). Given the weight of the economics

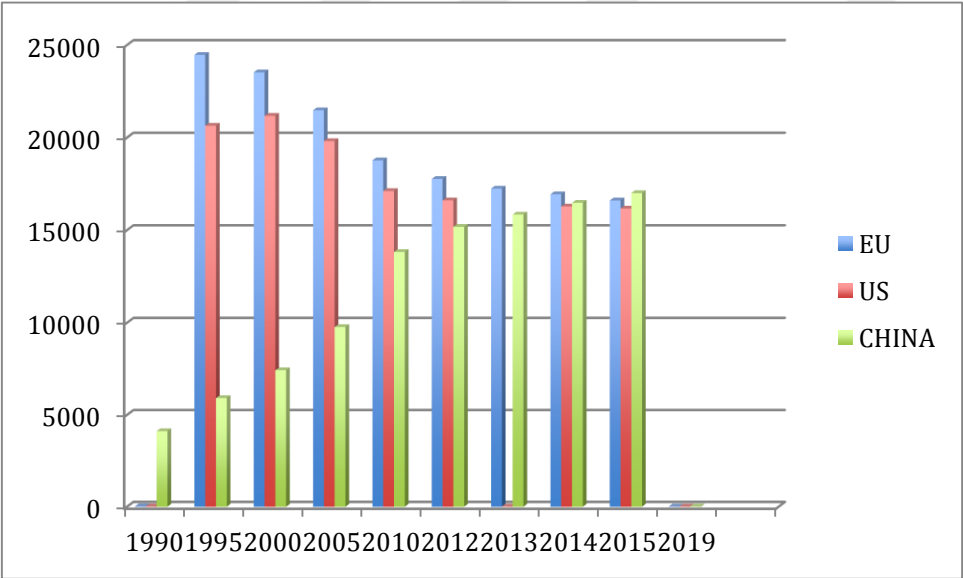
within the relationship between the EU and China, commercial disputes between the parties, such as trade imbalances and market economy status (MES) issue are pointed to constitute obstacles to a closer partnership (Grant & Barysch: 2008: 10).

**6.4.1.2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INCREASE IN WEALTH AND INCREASE IN CONFIDENCE AND ASSERTIVENESS**

‘As economic power shifts, intellectual influence follows’<sup>197</sup>

As suggested in the previous chapters, there exists a neorealist tendency to address the rise of China as an accelerating factor to shift the global economic gravity from the West to the East. In tandem with the argument, Figure 7 demonstrates that there is an anticipated trend towards a possible transformation of economic wealth from the West to the East. The countries concerned in the figure denote the advanced economies of the West plus China as the economic locomotive of Asia since it plays a pivotal role in the process of economic integration of East Asia (O’Callaghan & Nicholas, 2007: 29).

**Figure 7.** GDP Share of World Total (PPP) for EU, US and CHINA in percentage the years between 1990- 2019 (estimate)



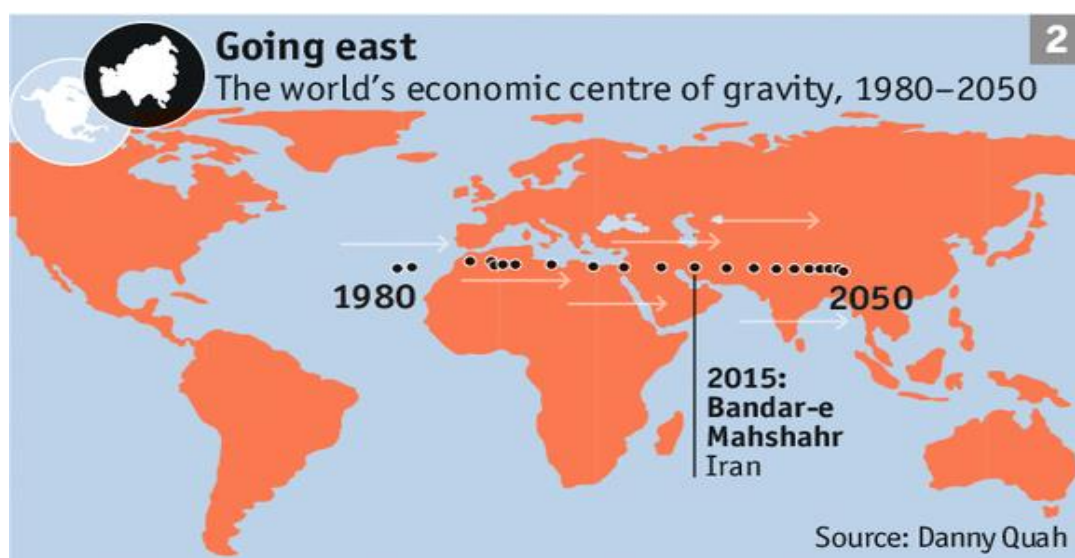
Source: Data adopted from IMF

Although the world share of GDP is only one facet to draw attention to the possible economic tilt, it should be noted that PPP-based GDP is a widely referred tool to compare the

<sup>197</sup> (David Rothkopf cited in Nadkarni and Noonan, 2013: 11).

living conditions or use of resources across countries. It is the measurement of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period with reference to prevailing prices in the US.<sup>198</sup> As Figure 8 suggests, and relevant studies indicate<sup>199</sup>, the balance of the global economy is expected to move from advanced economies in the West to emerging economies in the East. Indeed, it is projected that the world economic center of gravity over the years from 1980s to 2050 appears to provide that there exists an eastward shift from the mid-Atlantic<sup>200</sup>.

Figure 8: The world's economic center of gravity from 1980 to 2050



**Source:** Danny Quah cited in <http://www.economist.com/news/21632193-whistlestop-tour-year-eye-catching-statistical-landmarks-world-transition>

As such, this trend is argued to be largely drawn from the continuing rise of China and the rest of East Asia (Quah, 2011: 3). Of particular importance is the shift in global economic power has the potential to reshape the economic global landscape, which would likely continue to define geo-political contours of the international system (Binnendijk, 2014: 336). In that regard, it is somehow a controversy in terms of conventions regarding the existing international system that a non-democratic, under-developed country like China but at the same time economically well-integrated into the global financial system sits at the table with

<sup>198</sup> <http://www.indexmundi.com/g/r.aspx?t=10&v=65>

<sup>199</sup> An example can be seen in: <http://www.pwc.co.uk/the-economy/issues/country-risk-premia-quarterly-update.jhtml>

<sup>200</sup> <http://www.economist.com/news/21632193-whistlestop-tour-year-eye-catching-statistical-landmarks-world-transition>

the world's most powerful nations (Brown, 2012: 14). As far as the consequences of the global economic shift from the West to the East are concerned from this perspective, one may argue that the implications for the EU and the US remain salient. In that, the international agenda created following the Second World War with certain fundamental elements shared by the EU and the US would probably change in ways, which they are no longer so influential and hard to control (Brown, 2012: 18). Furthermore, the global financial crisis of 2008 has been pointed as another source for the global tilt of economic power. Francois Nicholas (2012) argues that there are also two interrelated side effects of the 2008 global crisis that feed of each other specifically for the West. Several Asian countries particularly China weathered the crisis in a more successful manner compared to that of the West and within a short span of time. On one spectrum, this relative success, Nicholas argues, induced the rise of self-confidence in Asian countries that corresponds highly to the increase in relative power.

On the other spectrum, it was perceived as a challenge to the credibility and capability of the existing world order in which the US and the EU played dominant roles. At this point, it should be remarked that aside from the fact that the EU did not have any strategic flashpoints with China, the global economic governance established in the post-Second World War era was largely co-supported by the EU. So, by accommodating an economically newcomer the EU could play a complementary role in coping with the consequences of rising China along with the US (Wong, 2010: 8). However, to a considerable extent, the crisis made it clear that the *modus operandi* of the world economy now depended as much as decisions taken in China as any decision taken in Europe (Fox & Godement, 2009: 19).

For the part of the EU, the handling of the Eurozone crisis added more to the European image as internally divided and incoherent (Brown, 2012: 13). On top of that, it might be argued that the saga of the Eurozone crisis led to a perception of European structural weakness. In its broadest sense, the crisis revealed the failure of political decision-making in the EU to stand in line with the global financial transactions (Nadkarni & Noonan, 2013: 54). Yet, key among these consequences was the fact that the crisis called into question the superiority of Europe's political and economic liberalism (Dempsey, 2010). On the other hand, as indicated statistically in the previous chapters, on the swing of the Global Crisis China's economic weight even boosted and its remarkable financial reserves made it a key lender to the world's financial system. Indeed, not only China precluded itself from the financial consequences of its global integration, but also it managed to be the world's first

currency reserve holder, second economic power, second military spender, and the EU's second largest trade partner after the crisis (Fox & Godement, 2009: 19).

On these grounds, it is argued that the rapid increase in Chinese economic power has been accompanied by a reorientation of China's low-profile diplomacy associated with Deng Xiaoping. The more so, the relative success of China during the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 has even led to invoke a possibility of a 'Beijing Consensus' based on state capitalism as an alternative to 'Washington Consensus' that shaped the global financial system (Nadkarni & Noonan, 2013: 11). Mario Looz (2014: 3) points out that the strengthened Chinese posture after 2008 Crisis towards the international affairs has led to an increasing self-confidence in China. In that, Looz argues that there exists plentiful empirical evidence supporting the claim of China's shift from a low-profile approach to a high-profile posture in international affairs. It should be noted that the confidence attached to China denotes China's increasingly confident posture in its ability to deal with the West and recent dynamism to shape the external environment with respect to its core interests (Nadkarni & Noonan, 2013: 106).

To examine within the contours of neorealist mindset, one may posit that it is a logical extension of China's rapid economic growth, which created a huge increase in its demand for raw materials to sustain its growth and led the country to pursue a more expansionist and assertive foreign policy. This is vividly evident in China's Africa policy where China attempted to challenge the EU by creating the appealing alternative of 'Beijing Consensus' to the African resource-rich countries rather than a trade-political linked Western development model (Kitchen, 48). Indeed, as Looz puts it China increasingly manifests a pattern that is incompatible with its previous low-profile stance. For instance, directly criticizing the West for being responsible of the Global Crisis of 2008 is an unusual manner in Chinese foreign policy diplomacy before the year 2008. Analyzing the pattern of China's voting behavior in the UNSC, Looz concludes that between the years 1971 and 1990 China placed one veto, and between 1991 and 2007 it used three vetoes. On the other hand, between the years 2008 and 2014, it placed five vetoes signifying its increasing dynamism in the international affairs.

China's growing assertiveness particularly towards Europe was evident when occasionally European states met with Dalai Lama in an official setting in 2009. As mentioned earlier, the stance of China against Germany, Denmark, and France in their meeting with Dalai Lama suggests that China has switched to a more proactive posture in dealing with the West when its core interests are in question. The same positioning was displayed in 2009 Copenhagen

Climate Change Summit when China blocked a comprehensive deal and challenged the Western countries contrasting the previous ‘taoguangyanghui’ approach (Nadkarni& Noonan, 2013: 104).

Yet, Judy Dempsey (2010) is on the opinion that the rise of China’s influence as an economic power, global donor, and global lender coupled with the Global Crisis of 2008 has impeded European influence to a considerable extent. According to a selected study on the comparable voting patterns in the United Nations General Assembly over the issue of human rights<sup>201</sup>, it is revealed that the amount of support for the EU’s position has fallen from seventy percent in the 1990s to forty-two percent in 2010. Interestingly, the study suggests that China scored sixty nine percent at the time of the research. In addition to this, Dempsey argues that China has become more assertive in its leadership in the United Nations General Assembly to hamper European positions. As such, democratic countries like Brazil, and India tend to abstain or vote against resolutions once they shared with the European position and increasingly present ‘non-interference’ concerns similar to that of Chinese (Nadkarni & Noonan, 2013: 58).

#### **6.4.1.3. RELATIVE GAINS AND THE INTRA-EUROPEAN ECONOMIC INTERESTS**

One of the basic tenets of neorealism is the assumption that states are largely concentrated with relative gains rather than absolute gains (Powell, 1998: 1303). Kenneth Waltz (2010: 105) summarizes the neorealist understanding of relative versus absolute gains as:

‘When faced with the possibility of cooperating for mutual gain, states that feel insecure must ask how the gain will be divided. They are compelled to ask not ‘Will both of us gain?’ but ‘Who will gain more?’ If an expected gain is to be divided, say, in the ratio of two to one, one state may use its disproportionate gain to implement a policy intended to damage or destroy the other.’

Following this logic, the possibility of cooperation is linked to relative and absolute gains concern, which in the former case cooperation is assumed to be rather harder (Halas, 2009: 29). In this regard, it is possible to evaluate the diverging and most often conflicting commercial preferences of the EU members towards China from this template. With its significant economic boom and remarkable potential for economic market, China’s economic

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<sup>201</sup> Where the Union declares it as one of the core values of Europe and aims at exporting to non-European, non-democratic countries by engaging with them.



rise for over the last three decades appeals to the policy realm of the EU where it has supranational competences and vested interests. Yet, at the same time it corresponds to the area where the member states are in fierce competition. Indeed, China has the potential to pose challenge for the EU economically even as a very distant country (Stumbaum, 2009: 21, 22).

It is clear from the wording of the official European documents since 1990s that China's rapid economic growth translates into European jargon as a matter of fact that the EU demonstrates tendency to take any advantage of China's economic growth (Holslag, 2010: 333). However, it might be argued that member states have not developed a fully-fledged collective approach on how to respond to growing economic competition with China. At the heart of the problem is the differing internal balance of interests *visa-vis* China renders it difficult to arrive a consensus (Holslag, 2010: 342). Thus, even though the European Commission has been responsible for the overall direction of the trade with China, to an important extent, member states with their different policy outlooks and commercial interests pursue their own commercial policy with China (Zaborowski, 2006: 24).

Yet, it is argued that Europe's internal divisions even in a policy realm where the EU's international punch at its highest might at times enable China to bypass the EU and proceed with the individual member state (Jonquières, 2012). A study focused on a power audit between the EU and China, Fox and Godement (2009: 2) trace the question of the growing diversities among member states over how to engage China. The findings suggest that on the economic front, there are broadly at least four types of categories within the Union with respect to attitudes towards China. The 'assertive industrialists' comprising Czech Republic, Germany, and Poland that are at the core of advocating more coherent and realist EU policy towards China. The 'ideological free traders' involve Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK and are ready to pressure China on politics yet their opposition to any form of trade restriction weakens the EU's leverage towards China. The 'accommodating mercantilists' are Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain and they assume that good political relations with China would lead to commercial benefit. On the other side of the scale comes the 'European followers', which rely mostly on European position. These are Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Luxembourg. Therefore, it is rather difficult to adopt a coherent European approach towards China wherein the member states have divergent interests and differing postures.

Equally important is the fact that the EU encounters an internal economic dilemma since individual states resort to the belief that they have more to gain from a national perspective than an integrated European approach (Fox & Godement, 2009: 21). On the whole, this posture weakens the EU's leverage over China as such conflicting national approaches towards China might lead the member states to undermine each other, and prevent a common European approach to be taken. For instance, it is argued that the leading three states of the EU, namely France, Germany, and the UK compete to become China's partner of choice in Europe and this might openly challenge the EU's trade position on China (Fox & Godment, 2009: 28). In this vein, recent 'solar panel dispute' is just one example of this kind. In a nutshell, the solar panel dispute in 2012 was regarded to be an intra-European economic dilemma since the decision of the European Commission to investigate an anti-dumping case on Chinese solar panels divided the Union into two. On one side, France, Italy, and Spain supported the Commission's decision. On the other side, however, at least 15 countries opposed to the decision. Above all, Germany's official criticism due to its growing economic interests led the Commission to mitigate its stance and compromise a deal with China<sup>202</sup>. To be sure, from Chinese side this would imply encouraging the belief that China can deal with the EU member states one by one instead of a collective approach (Jonquieres, 2012).

Observed with the prism of neorealism these issues point to the fact that to the extent the EU lacks coherence by the standards of a state, the diverging economic interests of the member states that lead to the intra-European disagreements on China continue to constitute a primary challenge posed by the economic rise of China (O'Callaghan & Nicholas, 2011: 36).

#### **6.4.2. CHINA'S MILITARY RISE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON THE EU**

'The road to peace still depends on balance of power in Asia'<sup>203</sup>

Focusing on the impressive economic success of a communist country, the issue of military modernization and increasing global power projection capacities of China over the last fifteen years has not been a matter of particular concern for the EU (Zaborowski, 2006: 39). In general, it might be argued that the EU has no discernible impact on the strategic and institutional balance of the Asia-Pacific. Referring to hard power, the EU member states have no permanent military forces in East Asia. Unlike the US, the EU did not maintain alliance

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<sup>202</sup> <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2014/china/4>

<sup>203</sup> (Kissinger cited in Niquet, 2006:2)

commitments with Taiwan and Japan (Casarini, 2009: 4). What is more, since the handover of Hong Kong in 1997 and Macau in 1999 the European powers have enjoyed no real influence in the region, largely leaving it to the US (Jacques, 2011: 90) except for peacekeeping roles in some Asian flashpoints such as Cambodia, East Timor, and Aceh (Deighton&Bossuat: 88).

The primary security focus of the EU towards China gains traction through non-traditional security threats like maritime security, humanitarian relief, and conflict prevention (Stumbaum, 2012: 2). Parallel to this, the military ties between the EU and China have been intensified mostly in the form of soft activities such as strategic dialogues, military-to-military diplomacy, port visits, and peacekeeping training (Gates & Murphy, 2008: 15). However, this does not mean that the EU is totally irrelevant in East Asia. Furthermore, Casarini (2009: 4) examines whether and to what extent there could be a role in Asia for outside actors such as the EU. Indeed, notably as East Asia accounts for more than a quarter of EU global trade, Casarini argues that power relations of the region have potential implications for the EU. Thus, maintaining a peaceful setting in the region is of significant importance to all of the actors concerned.

In the same vein, Gudrun Wacker (2015) points out that compared to the central security role of the US in Asia, even though the EU is not an active player in Asia's hard security issues, it has obviously an indirect stake in Asia's security and stability. In particular, any conflict over maritime territories in the potential flashpoints such as South China Sea would have destabilizing effects on European economic interests. Therefore, even in terms of trade, the EU has a stake in regional stability and securing sea lanes (Nye, 2014). Rem Korteweg (2014) supports this observation by pointing out that as the EU is the second largest trading partner and the main development donor of ASEAN, it has the same strategic interests with South East Asian nations.

Thus, any potential tension in the region, which might result in trade disrupts underline the strategic role of the EU particularly in the region's maritime security. Moreover, as far as the structural dynamics of Asian region is considered, one may argue that the region is characterized by the principles of *realpolitik*, namely purposeful pursuit of state interests despite recent rhetoric on economic interdependence (Niquet, 2006: 2). It might be said that largely state-centric structure and traditional norms of state sovereignty are jealously guarded across the region. On the other hand, accounting for one-third of all militarized disputes over territory in the world in the last half-century, Asia has more territorial disputes compared to

the other parts of the world. What is more, the enhancement of military capabilities of Asian states and the fact that top four global arms importers are Asian countries- China, Pakistan, South Korea and Singapore- provide strong arguments for the possibility of a security dilemma throughout the region (Ikenberry& Mastanduno, 2008: 30-32).

Assessed by the premises of neorealism, the rise of China adds further complexity to the picture in the sense that it triggers uncertainty to a greater extent. Since interests are evaluated as a function of relative power in the structural realist approach, it is not possible to be sure about the intentions of China confidently. From this standpoint, given the growing clout of China is acknowledged as one of the most important geopolitical developments of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, there exist remarkable challenges posed by this development for the West, not solely for the US (CSS, 2007: 1). In this regard, at the global level, existing strategic equilibrium would be altered owing to the changes in the relative power of China. At a more specific level, the discrepancy between interests of China and Western countries as well as realpolitik approach of China form the basis of a possible Chinese challenge for the EU.

It might be argued that as the security in the region among Asian states is still viewed in terms of territorial integrity and the security architecture is largely contingent upon the US and its alliance system, dealing with China's military modernization seems largely left to be a matter of transatlantic concern for the part of the EU (Shambaugh& Sandschneider& Hong, 2009: 41). In response to the growing military capacities of China, the EU seems less concerned compared to the US. Yet, at the epicenter of European concerns regarding this issue lays China's lack of transparency in its defense budgets and, in relation to this, the opacity of its intentions (Yee, 2011: 98). To this end, the EU has taken measures to access China's actual defense policy documentation (Zaborowski, 2006: 4).

However, given structural realism's concerns related to the anarchic international environment, this sort of 'unusual' limited response would be associated with a 'power problem'. As noted previously, from the prism of neorealism the stability of Europe in the post-Cold War era has been largely accorded to the military presence of the US in the continent. As Mearsheimer (2010) puts the NATO presence in Europe implies that it would be nearly impossible to ponder any two NATO countries fighting each other in Europe or a threat would come outside Europe. As such, Mearshiemer ascribes the stability of Europe to the military presence of the US via NATO since it is still the principal instrument for providing security in Europe.

Furthermore, additional to the constraints of the EU in building a collective defense capacity since the inception of the Union from 1950s, the security dilemmas of Asia-Pacific region has been largely left to the commitments of the US. Indeed, the EU or the individual member states have no direct role in maintaining the US's hub-and-spokes security system in Asia-Pacific or in the military expansion of the US in Asia-Pacific that is partly in response to Chinese military modernization (Naramore, 2008: 95). Therefore, it might be argued that the European sphere of influence on the Asian security architecture remains limited and largely is explained by the fact that the EU has limited military presence with limited strategic interests in the region. In other words, the EU has no strategic assets to back up those interests (SWP, 2008: 138).

In that regard, it is hardly surprising that China's military expansion would not constitute a threat to the EU compared to that of the US (Holslag, 2010: 335). Ironically, it was only after the internal European debate on arms embargo issue in 2003 that led the EU to adopt a set of Asian security policy guidelines for the first time. Yet, the first EU-China security dialogue convened in October 2014 (Wacker, 2015: 25). Furthermore, as far as the security patterns of Asia-Pacific are considered, one may establish that it is a region where great powers converge. It is highly acknowledged that the evolution of Sino-American relations will determine the security dynamics in East Asia (Casarini, 2011, 4). The strategic relationships take place in two fronts –bilateral and triangular- in which China features as an important security actor in each front (Kerr& Fei, 2007: 202). In recognition of the neorealist assumption that world orders are formed by the interactions of major powers and the incentives provided by the international system, it is thus crucial for the EU to examine the structural dynamics of Asian region. Moreover, although the relationship between the EU and China is termed as 'having lack of fundamental conflict of interests', Naramore argues that precisely because China is located in the Asia-Pacific region this relationship cannot ignore the strategic and security issues (Naramore, 2008: 94).

Considering the rising prominence and the central role of China in the international political juncture, it is thus a clear necessity for Europe to develop a coherent security policy towards China. As Sandschneider (2006: 46) asks 'how would the solid declarations of the EU be useful were the tensions between the US and China to escalate?'. The argument is bolstered by the skepticism towards the EU's normative soft power approach in an area dominated by hard power struggles. Thus, in such a configuration the sphere of European influence narrows, as the Union is unable to offer any immediate security guarantee (Niquet, 2006:6) such as the

US's promise to Taipei to intervene in the Formosa Strait in the face of a possible Chinese attack (Holslag, 2006: 7).

In addition to this argument, Hauswedell (2008) contends that the EU's constructive engagement of China would highly shift to the US's containment strategy were China to turn aggressive and employ military means. On the other hand, as illustrated by China's growing bilateral ties with the EU, China appears to be willing to develop an independent relationship with the EU (Jacques, 2009: 92). However, the arms embargo experience displayed the extent of limitations of EU's actorness independent of the US. Hence, any evaluation of the EU's response to the growing military prowess of China has to include the role of the US that features as a substantive issue area for the EU. As vividly revealed in the arms embargo, American interpretation of strategic stability in Asia and the necessities for maintaining the status of the region and more importantly the preponderance of the US in Asia were reflected to the EU (Shambaugh & Wacker, 2008: 138). Hauswedell (2008) argues that after the arms embargo discussions more or less an independent European assessment of China was subordinated to the priorities of transatlantic solidarity.

#### **6.4.3. HOW NORMATIVE IS THE EU'S NORMATIVE APPROACH TOWARDS CHINA? THE LIMITS OF NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE**

Given the dichotomy of China as a 'status quo power' or 'revisionist power' debate, the implications for the EU inevitably touches upon the 'normative power' Europe approach. As such, the Union adheres to and describes itself to be grounded on its core principles including democracy, rule of law, equality.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, the EU has expressed its stance on the peace and security of the international system that is affiliated with democracy in its 2003 Security Strategy.<sup>205</sup> In accordance with its overall approach, the EU has prioritized 'supporting

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<sup>204</sup> Article 2 of TEU: 'The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail'. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:en:PDF>

<sup>205</sup> 'The quality of international society depends on the quality of the governments that are its foundation. The best protection for our security is a world of well-governed democratic states. Spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order... As the world's largest provider of official assistance and its largest trading entity, the European Union and its Member States are well placed to pursue these goals' (ESS, 2003: 10).

China's successful transition to a stable, prosperous and open country that fully embraces democracy, free market principles and the rule of law<sup>206</sup> in its policy towards China.

However, related to the above-mentioned debate a question remains: as China's relative power increases, will it overturn the existing principles that govern the international system or align with them? As the implications for the international system in general has been discussed in previous chapters, for the part of the EU the key question would be highly related to the challenge for the EU's core values by a rise of a non-democratic country. On this issue, the argument being offered by Carothers and Youngs (2011: 3) point to the discussion that the likely multipolar world order would tend to be 'less democratic' as the new rising countries such as China enters into the great power game. To the argument, as the rising powers attempt to reduce the relative power of the US and the other Western democracies, and at the same time if they popularize alternative, non-democratic models of governance, the operating system of the order will likely to shift from a Western models of governance to an alternative one.

In a similar stance, John Ikenberry (2008: 24) defines a rising China as facing a challenge from not only the US but also from a Western-centered system in terms of norms and interests. This depiction of international order tends to sketch the positions of the EU and the US within a good cop/bad cop dichotomy where the EU exerts soft power and the US employs hard power in order to tackle certain global tasks. As it was evident in the Great Recession of 2008, 'Beijing Consensus' came to challenge the legitimacy of the liberal model, which was inserted as 'universal' after the end of Second World War by the West (Layne, 2012: 211).

In tandem with the theoretical stance of neorealism with regards to the rules and institutions, Christopher Layne notes rules and institutions reflect the distribution of power in international politics. Put simply, 'who rules makes the rules' (Layne, 2012: 211). Provided this is so, the governance style of the prevailing powers 'democracy' might be corresponded to represent the interests of the West rather than a domestic feature. As Layne (2012) argues there exists a critical linkage between the hard power, soft power, and the prestige of the predominant power. Indeed, given examples of Chinese attitude towards the international institutions, it might be said that China has a rather different way of interpretation of the rules in the

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<sup>206</sup> COM (2003) 533: 3

international institutions in areas such as sovereignty and non-interference in states' domestic issues (Layne, 2012: 211). Thus, accepting the rules, institutions and norms might imply rather a broader meaning than merely obeying the rules per se. In the same vein, Pan (2012: 53) draws attention to the extent of the disproportion between the norms and the interests. He argues that it remains to be seen to what extent China will behave according to European norms had it internalizes them. Indeed, the evidence suggests that China benefits from Western norms such as 'Westphalian sovereignty' in a way to constrain and resist European interference.

On the other hand, for the specific case of the relationship between the EU and China, one may establish that the EU encounters difficulties not only with respect to clashing norms and interests but also due to the institutional complexity of the Union. As a consequence of the bilateral basis of China and member state relations, and at the same time the multilateral characteristics of the relation between the EU and China, it is rather difficult to pursue a delicate balance in promoting the core values of the Union. In such a context, while promoting democracy, rule of law, the EU has to take stock of the necessities and sensitivities of member state vs. China relations and strive for developing the Union's relations as well. It might be argued that the EU's norm promotion to China often appears hypocritical as it is often downplayed by the member states. An example of this can be seen in the issue of human rights between the EU and China. Given the EU's occasional practice of demanding the incorporation of human rights and democracy clauses in its bilateral trade agreements with the third countries, it is ironic that the EU has not demanded China any regulation in conformity with this pattern, whereby the relationship is still grounded on a formal trade agreement since 1985 (Mattlin, 2010: 12). Instead, the issue of human rights towards China divides the Union into two blocs; one contains the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and the UK with more 'normative' approach and the other consists of South East countries plus Germany with a 'pragmatic' emphasis on human rights. The results appear to affect the level of overall leverage of the Union towards China carrying a potential outlook; incoherent and uncoordinated. In this respect, the UNCHR debacle and the arms embargo debates are significant exemplifiers that reflect not only the EU's lack of unity and coherence in normative issues, but also denote the fact that the source of divergences largely stem from the competing commercial interests (Mattlin, 2010: 18).

Indeed, in parallel to China's relative growing power, the EU pursued a delicate balance between criticizing China's human rights records and economic issues (Callahan, 2007: 782).



Take for example, the EU's regular tabling of resolutions critical of China's human rights on the platform of UN Commission for Human Rights was manipulated in 1996 by Germany and France on the grounds that constructive engagement would be a more effective policy towards China. Largely motivated at the time by deepening their economic ties with China, two countries pointed to the readiness of China to sign international covenants on human rights. On the other hand, Nordic countries with marginal economic interests with China were firmly opposed to this stance (Balducci, 2008: 12-14). At the end of the day, after a fierce debate the member states reached a consensus that was a clear indication that the EU-China relations had considerable room for relative power considerations and material interests (Mattlin, 2010: 12).

On the issue of arms embargo debate, one may argue that it was largely the pressure of the US over the EU rather than the normative concerns to arrive a decision to postpone the lifting the embargo. Indeed, during the negotiations to lift the embargo, the EU has not asked for any concessions from China over human rights as such the embargo was put as a response to human rights violations in 1989 (Barshy, 2005: 15). Yet, it is noteworthy to point out that in the full swing of the discussions, the then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice warned the EU that in the face of continued serious human rights violations, to lift the relevant arms embargo would send wrong signal to China (Kerr& Fei, 2007: 272).

All in all, as Jean-Pierre Cabestan (2011) notes a more assertive and more demanding but at the same time highly authoritarian rise of a country is itself a challenging fact for the EU rather than the 'rise of China' concept. Simply put, the survival of authoritarianism directly hampers the EU's values, which moves the discussion beyond the contours of moral considerations. Thus, as in the neorealist terminology, the tendency to shape existing norms and institutions is directly related to the increase in relative power; the strategic implications of China's increasing power would directly hit the normative power Europe approach.

Following this suggestion, one would expect China to make further adjustments to the international institutions and norms that regulate international order in ways that benefit its interests instead of passively accepting the institutional arrangements created by others. For that matter, Stephen Walt (2015) contends that it would be naive to believe that one can avoid all trouble related to the rise of China by persuading China to embrace the international institutions and norms which were made not by itself at the beginning. Given the EU's relative absence as a strategic actor in Asia, it is pointed out that playing its cards in the sphere of soft power arsenal compensates this lack of hard power capacity. Viewed from this

perspective, Casarini contends that the fact that the EU is the largest provider of development aid and human assistance in Asia, and major contributor to the civilian capacity building initiatives in the region clearly reflect European soft power focus on Asia (Casarini, 2014).

#### **6.4.3.1. THE CASE WITH AFRICA: COLLIDING INTERESTS**

One of the main arguments within neorealism related to the interaction between the proportion of power and state interest is the assumption that as the emerging powers grow in strength, the area they define as their national interest will expand causing friction with other powers (Kagan cited in Tote, 2010: 169). Because envisions of their spheres of influence will overlap, the likelihood of contention and conflict rises (Geearts, 2011: 58). Specifically for China, it might be argued that as its economic interests expand rapidly, it will attempt to safeguard them more proactively. In this context, apart from attaching security with only sovereignty and domestic development, China will also be able to back up its growing interests overseas with a more robust diplomacy and security policy (Geearts, 2011: 58). In this sense, Chinese African policy is a good example to be observed which demonstrates not only the discrepancy between Chinese interests and those of the European but also the way China approaches to undermine Euro-Atlantic governance efforts and the influence of the West (CSS, 2007: 2).

It is widely held that Africa has been a region where Europe could practice hard power in relatively independent of calculating great power interests (Tote, 2010: 145). Compared to the Middle East, largely the US has traditionally ignored the continent. Interestingly, according to the National Security Council Document of the US during Eisenhower government (1957-61), it was stated that Africa was under the responsibility of Europeans. On the other hand, first driven largely by ideology during 1950s and after the end of Cold War in commensurate with its energy need driving from its economic rise, China's involvement in Africa has become an important aspect of Sino-European relations (Ahrari, 2011: 56). Despite the fact that to promote the stability and sustainable development in Africa is an important common interest for both parties (Gaeerts, 2011: 65), it seems that two parties diverge on the ways to reach that aim. As Ahrari (2011) contends aside from economic interests, China quests for enhancing its sphere of influence by making its presence long lasting in the continent. In that capacity, China adopted a policy towards Africa that comprised a financial and technical support without being conditional upon any political demands such as good governance (CSS, 2007: 3).

Nonetheless, this ‘value-free’ approach presented an attractive alternative to the Western style of cooperation<sup>207</sup> for a number of African countries which regard the preconditions related to human rights and democracy for cooperation as interference in domestic affairs (Ahrari, 2007: 60). For it, European trade interests were distorted as the African countries started to refuse to sign up the EU’s offers such as Free Trade Areas with increased bargaining power mostly deriving from Chinese resource-backed infrastructure loans. Yet, this conflict over norms and interests between the EU and China has led to upgrade EU’s overall policy towards Africa. Consequently, the EU responded to China’s increasing presence in Africa by mitigating its rhetoric of positive conditionality to a ‘less conditionality’ approach towards Africa (Stahl, 2014).

In such a context, as China offered alternative modes of governance, which is appealing to African countries for various reasons, the efficiency of the EU’s normative power has been weakened. On the other side, in the light of previous critique of Adrian Hyde-Price (2008) to the normative foreign policy behavior of the EU in an anarchic international order, then it is possible to argue that the EU’s normative power approach towards Africa has been conditional upon the economic interests of the EU. The main argument of Hyde-Price is that structural realism does not deny the possibility that liberal ideas such as democracy promotion and multilateralism might shape foreign policy. Instead, he argues that they become second-order when they conflict with national or common interests. In what follows, in the case of the EU, pursuing a normative agenda might also lead to a sort of hypocrisy as the Union proclaims ethical intentions but then adopts policies favoring European economic or political interests (Hyde- Price, 2008: 43).

Thus, it may be discerned that to a large extent the EU’s leverage as a normative actor towards China rests on the recognition of common interests. In other words, it is the degree of China’s perceived interests, which match those of the EU mainly, characterizes the overall direction of the relationship (Geeraerts, 2011: 63).

## **6.5. THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHINA’S GLOBAL RISE FOR THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS**

The last part outlines the implications of China’s rise for the EU in the context of transatlantic relations. The first section applies the notion of soft balancing to the triangular

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<sup>207</sup> Generally in the form of using aid as an economic incentive to uphold common norms and values.

relationship between the EU, the US, and China, and argues that the EU and China have attempted to involve in the soft-balancing process against the US particularly during the early 2000s. In the specific case of the EU and China, soft balancing takes the form of strategic partnership, multipolarity and multilateralism discourses.

#### **6.5.1. SOFT BALANCING UNDER UNIPOLARITY**

As discussed earlier, under neorealist sketch of the anarchic international system, balance of power is acknowledged as the modus operandi practice of states within the system. However, due to the specific nature of unipolarity, it is argued that traditional balancing methods pose risks such as being too costly for an individual state and too risky for multiple states to counterbalance the unipole (Pape, 2005: 15). Therefore, states might adopt soft-balancing strategies to bypass these difficulties emanating largely from highly concentrated power of the unipole and leading to a high power disparity in between (He& Feng, 2006: 14).

This section argues that the EU particularly after 2000s attempts to soft balance against the US. Nonetheless, the underlying concern for this strategy would be to curb the unilateralist and interventionist tendencies of the US as much as possible, which were increasingly evident during 2000s. On the other hand, China's global growing clout contributes to the EU's soft balancing attempts as demonstrated in the discussions to lift the arms embargo imposed on China in 1989. The motivation for the EU to soft balance against the US mainly derives from the unilateral attitudes of the US as in 2003 Iraq intervention. It should be noted that soft balancing against the US does not imply a withdrawal by the EU from alliance with the US (Lachmann: 4). The EU aims at undermining the US influence largely by forming diplomatic coalitions with other soft balancers such as China (Lachmann: 2012: 5).

As a rising power, China also enters the game in the form of 'strategic partnership' with the EU. In this triangular equilibrium, the lure of the Chinese market and the EU's discontent with the unilateralist tendencies of the US constituted key reasons to soft balance the US. Indeed, the attempts to soft balance the US in key high-tech and security related realms would be expected to lay the ground for the emergence of a multipolar international system in the long term (Casarini, 2009: 14).

## **6.5.1.1. SOFT BALANCING ATTEMPTS OF THE EU AND ITS TOOLS TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES**

### **6.5.1.1.1. MULTILATERALISM VS. MULTIPOLARITY**

‘The EU, as a global player on the international stage, shares China’s concerns for a more balanced international order based on effective multilateralism, and wants to engage China as a responsible power in the management of international global issues.’<sup>208</sup>

It should be noted that despite the terms ‘multipolarity’ and ‘multilateralism’ are both used in the analysis of the EU and China with respect to their view of the international system, and seem to be used interchangeably essentially each point to different contents. Whereas multipolarity is a structural measurement of the distribution of power with several poles, multilateralism refers to a way of operating in the international system that involves not only great powers but also other regional organizations and second-rank powers as well (Scott, 2013: 31-32). In that regard, it might be concluded that multipolarity denotes power politics yet multilateralism is more akin to cooperative idealism.

On the other hand, from the perspective of neorealism as the structure is the key determinant of the state behavior; the EU’s reference to multilateralism can be linked to its response to the American unilateralism (Pollack, cited in Scot, 2013: 33). As Lachman contends, ‘effective multilateralism’ involves traits in denying the legitimacy of the US. Noting the fact that the EU is devoid of strategic and military concerns related to the rise of China, it might be presumed that China’s rise suggests the EU an opportunity to join to the forces, which pursue multipolarity. Not only the EU would have a more say more in world affairs, but also it is argued that this setting would fit better to its limited capacity to project power (Holslag, 2010). However, the EU official rhetoric deploys the term ‘multilateralism’ rather than ‘multipolarity’ with other major states and potential great powers (Scot, 2013: 34).

In this regard, it is possible to read the EU’s preference to multilateralism instead of multipolarity in its dealings with China as in the EU’s interests since to offer an alternative non-military approach is in tune with its capacity (Scot, 2013: 33). As such, a vision of multilateral world order matches with the EU’s strengths in diplomacy, developmental

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<sup>208</sup> **Commission Policy Paper, A maturing partnership - shared interests and challenges in EU-China relations**, 12 September 2003, Retrieved: 17 June 2014, from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52003DC0533>

assistance, and multilateral institutions. In the case of China, the reflections of this envision echo in multilateral cooperation as much as possible (Wang, 2004: 176).

#### **6.5.1.1.2. BUILDING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH A TECHNO-POLITICAL LINKAGE**

On the occurrence of the balancing attempts against the US and the underlying motivation for the EU, David Norris (2002: 139) contends that the EU tends to check the power of the US on a rather specific issue basis with a limited time manner. For the EU, Norris argues, the main objective is to pursue a degree of independence particularly in the security realm not conflict. This ‘balance without challenge’ pattern recognizes the dominant role of the US in international issues, but at the same time aims at rebalancing the EU-US relations in the EU’s favor.

In a similar line, Casarini (2008) argues that the motivations for soft balancing may vary, yet key among them are economic interests, security concerns, domestic motives and the desire to counterbalance the dominant power. On the basis of this perspective, the strategic partnership between the EU and China established in 2003 was accompanied by two significant moves; to invite China to the EU-led global navigational satellite system and the promise by some European member states to embark on discussion of lifting the arms embargo imposed on China. This reflects the determination of the EU to assume more autonomous role in its international security role (Casarini, 2008: 88).

To Fallon (2012: 1), for the part of the EU, declaring China strategic partner implied an attempt to align and balance against the US. To be more precise, as far as the developments in the year 2003 is concerned<sup>209</sup>, it would be plausible to conclude that on the verge of increasing American unilateralism, these likely constitute soft balancing attempts. Indeed, a powerful China would be of some utility to Europe in qualifying any risk of US hegemony. In this vein, the timing of the usage of partnership in ESS Document in 2003 and consequent first ever Chinese document on Europe can be interpreted as deliberate acts to respond to US unilateralism during the period (Kerr & Fei, 2007: 159).

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<sup>209</sup> The US invasion of Iraq, establishment of European Security Strategy, releasing of first ever Chinese European paper, and EU’s opening up discussions over the idea of lifting arms embargo on China.

#### **6.5.1.1.3. GALILEO SPACE COOPERATION**

Galileo is a EU-led global navigational satellite system, which has been deemed alternative to the dominant American global satellite system (GPS) in 2002. That being said, it would break the monopoly of the US in global satellite system (Lind, 2005, 1). In 2003, the EU signed a political agreement with China, which allowed China to participate in the joint development of Galileo.<sup>210</sup> Casarini (2008: 81) argues that by allying with China, the EU aimed at challenging the US primacy in key high-tech and defense related sectors. In that, for the Galileo issue the EU did not aim at challenging the US military or space capabilities rather it concentrated on the US' space intentions. The emphasis of the US on creating an asymmetrical military advantage with regard to the use of space would distort the competitiveness and autonomy of the EU. To Casarini, the transatlantic divergence on the use of space mainly enabled the EU to react by jointly developing the Galileo space system with China. The chosen time reflects dissatisfaction for the part of the EU.

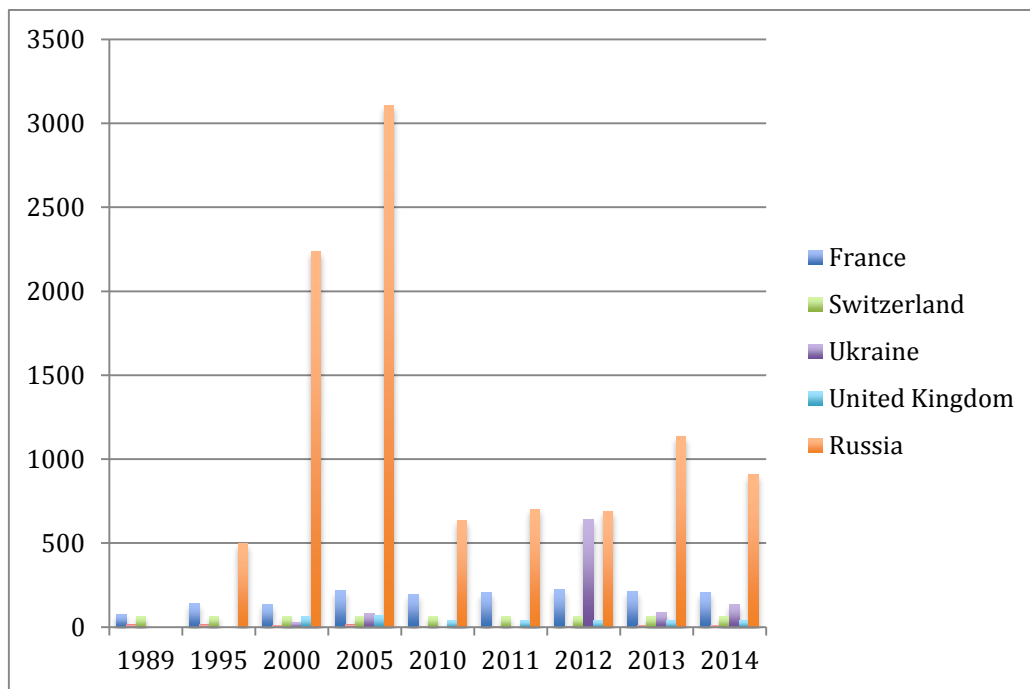
#### **6.5.1.1.4. THE PROPOSAL TO LIFT THE ARMS EMBARGO**

The arms embargo issue is also the case in point in which profound differences between the approaches of the EU and the US towards China became highly visible (Sandschneider, 2006: 44). Paradoxically, as far as the arms trade pattern of China is considered in statistical terms, it is clearly seen that European countries France, Switzerland, and United Kingdom along with Russia comprise an important percentage of imported weapons in China's defense industry. As Figure 6 demonstrates, despite the arms embargo placed in 1989 upon China, and unlike the US that has not exported any weapons (with few exceptions) to China within the mentioned period, European states continued to export weapons to a military rising China. It is reasonable to conclude within the margins of structural realism that due to the US's concerns and commitment on preserving its preeminent status after the Cold War era, it does not tolerate a peer competitor with any dimension of power. Yet, the stance adopted by European states reveals a mix account.

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<sup>210</sup> It should be noted that the EU is not the only state that China collaborates to in challenging the dominance of the US to control space. Brazil is also partner with China to launch satellites. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-02/07/content\\_415840.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-02/07/content_415840.htm)

**Figure 6:** Arms Exports to China between 1989-2014 in US Dollars million



**Source:** SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

Then, there exists a powerful inclination for the part of China to assess the issue in terms of a political signal that the EU is acknowledging China on a par with itself in the international system (Zaborowski, 2006). As such, export regulations of the member states and the EU Code of Conduct of 1998 would still apply even if the embargo were lifted. What is more, as it is not a legally binding act within the judicial system of the EU, the member states could have prefer to lift the embargo individually without the unanimity of the others (Balducci, 2008: 16). For the part of China, the lifting of the embargo would indeed imply more a symbolic action, which paves the way for the ‘normalizing’ the relationship than a reward to China (Li, 2009: 240). Thus, the political recognition of China as a normal power would contribute to the attempts of the EU to decrease its dependency on the US in the realm of security (Casarini, 2009: 13). Casarini points out that the aim would be neither to challenge the US’s military capabilities nor to affect the strategic balance in East Asia. Instead, the EU attempted to soft balance against the US’s stance over China.

The reaction of the US was a united and relatively homogeneous response that stressed the possibility of a direct threat to the security of the US and its Asian allies. Moreover, Steinberg and Gordon (2005) argue that rather than a gesture of engagement; the US also saw the decision as an irresponsible pursuit of economic interests as China’s economic power grew.



As a result, the US enabled various initiatives to discourage member states to remove the embargo such as restrictions on technological transfers to the EU (Balducci, 2008:16).

It should also be noted that the US has established dialogue platforms with the EU in 2004 and with Japan in 2005 to discuss East Asian security issues. This pattern is not specific to the US since it tended not to discuss Asian security issues with the EU prior to the discussion of the arms embargo issue in 2003, which reflects largely its concerns on the implications of the arms embargo issue for itself. From the European side of the equation, to exercise its leverage to increase China's space and defense capabilities would inevitably tilt the balance of power in East Asia. However, of particular importance would be the possible shift in the EU's image from being an economic bloc with a civilian power approach to a potentially realpolitik actor in East Asia's strategic balance (Casarini, 2008: 142).

#### **6.5.1.2. SOFT BALANCING ATTEMPTS OF CHINA AND ITS TOOLS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES**

##### **6.5.1.2.1. A COMMON GROUND: MULTIPOLARITY AND MULTILATERALISM**

‘Multi-polarization on the whole helps weaken and curb hegemonism’<sup>211</sup>

As can be noticed in the previous chapter regarding the historical context of European-Chinese relations, the breadth and the depth of the interactions have risen to an impressive extent. Furthermore, this applies not only to the EU level engagement but also the member states have also intensified their relations' vis-à-vis China as well. In the neorealist lexicon, against the backdrop of the unipolar division of current power configurations, these attempts would translate into questioning the quality of the relationship whether or not it ranks as an emerging axis (Shambaugh, 2004: 243). Indeed, several factors account for the development of the relationship between two sides that might comprise traits of transforming the structure from bipolarity to unipolarity plays a central role (Shambaugh, 2004: 245).

Examining the strategic potential of the relationship whether or not it constitutes a strategic axis, ‘multipolarity’ rhetoric in Chinese lexicon gives added point to the argument. Constituting an important base for Chinese foreign policy (Scott, 2013: 37), multipolarity (duojihua) discourse has been promoting by China since the proclamation of People's Republic of China in 1949 (Holslag& Gaeerts, 2010). Essentially, accompanied by its

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<sup>211</sup> (Minister of Cited in Scott, 2013: 37)

doctrine of peaceful coexistence, China's pledge for multipolar world order has been sustained by its constant pattern of realist foreign policies. In that, based on Chinese international system sketch; the countries that belong to the third world is supported while it is aimed at fostering pragmatic relations with the second world countries. As expected the hegemony of the first world is avoided (Holslag& Gaeerts, 2010). Indeed, to Chinese official rhetoric multipolarity is regarded as the requirement of history that is independent of human will (Scott, 2013: 37).

Following that logic, despite the eroding pillars of Pax-Americana, continuing asymmetrical distribution of power between China and the US could be compensated by the plurality of power centers as long as they do not balance against China. On a larger scale, David Scott (2013) contends that China upholds a strategic consistency predominantly is contained in its drive to improve its position within the international system. Thus, in line with this overall objective the main incentive has been to look for other partners to help it constrain potential hegemons.

On a lesser scale, in the case of Europe, this is reflected as a policy to the extent that the EC/EU would constitute a pole as economic and strategic partner with China. These points were vividly illustrated in placing the EEC in second intermediate zone as a structural ally against the US in 1964, and in 1980s as a power center in confrontation with Soviet Union. This continuity was preserved throughout 1990s, yet with a different rhetoric: 'multipolarity'. Within the collapse of Soviet Union, 'multipolarity' became the frame of reference for Chinese foreign policy towards the EU. Nonetheless, the EU was regarded as multipolar partner for China (Kerr& Fei, 2008: 26-29). As such, China recognized the EU's relevance as a soft balancer against the US (Holslag, 2010: 331).

Yet, China's emphasis on 'multipolarity' during the course of 1990s started to change into 'multilateralism' discourse particularly afterwards 2003 (Huang& Song, 2011: 8). Unlike the abundance of rhetoric about multipolarity, multilateralism can be regarded as a recent discourse in Chinese foreign policy towards its relations with major powers. According to Huang and Song (2011: 9), the timing confirms that the shift in the discourse can be corresponded to China's accession to global multilateral regimes such as WTO in 2001 and respectively the necessity to practice multilateralism in global platforms like the UN and WTO.

Equally significant is the fact that the transatlantic debate on unilateralism vs. multilateralism after Iraq War in 2003 has been a divisive issue between the EU and the US. Additional to this, the EU emphasized 'effective multilateralism' in its first security strategy wherein China was regarded as 'strategic partner'. At this point, it is argued that the EU's opposition to the US Iraqi policy has displayed the EU's strategic importance for China in balancing against the US. For that matter, this has led China to upgrade its relations with the EU to a more strategic level.

Indeed, the formation of a multipolar world necessitated China's cooperation with other powers as well (Men, 2014: 4). Referred as a common ground between the EU and China, thus, 'multilateralism' has become a new choice for China's foreign policy in the context of unipolar distribution of power. However, there are noticeable differences between the EU and China over the connotations attached to the term 'multilateralism'. On one side, China employs the term as a diplomatic tool where every state is sovereign with particular emphasis on non-intervention in internal affairs (Gearrts& Holslag, 2011: 8), the EU supplemented by advocacy of a multilateralist language.

#### **6.5.1.3.2. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP DIPLOMACY**

Emerged after the end of Cold War-starting with Brazil in 1993, strategic partnerships featured as a significant policy instrument for China. Along with China's ongoing modernization process, Zhongping and Jing (2014: 17) argue that strategic partnerships are designed to protect China's core interests, to defend China's distinctive political system and to guarantee a benign environment for its rise. In what follows, the strategic partnership diplomacy also reflects an important paradigm shift in Chinese foreign policy since the end of Cold War. China has switched from focusing solely on great powers to broadening the scope of its relations with other states.

Indeed, China sought to recast its bilateral relations with each of the major powers in ways to foster the emergence of multipolarity and to avoid being marginalized from possible collaborations under unipolarity to oppose China (Hanami, 2003: 140). To the structural realist account, this policy turn of China under the absence of a structural change stems from the fact that as China came to realize the inadequacies of its previous balancing efforts, it proceeded to cope with the US's unchecked power in a more subtle strategy. As such,

structural realism allots space for the states to modify their policies if negative consequences apply (Hanami, 2003: 141).

As Chen Zhimin (1999: 141) puts it China uses partnership diplomacy while complementing it with balance of power and multilateralism; generating such partnerships would serve to China's interests in promoting the multipolar international system, which can be accepted as an alternative strategy to a direct counter balancing to the dominance of the US. In this interpretation, European capital, technology, and Europe's above mentioned role in Chinese multipolar world configuration would properly match with the necessities of Chinese growing power (Feng & Huang, 2014: 11). Beside the point, it should be noted as a mitigating factor in the EU-China relations that the limited strategic interests of the EU in East Asia, and the absence of military presence in the region unlike the US might have facilitated the ambivalence of China to the agreement of a strategic partnership with that of the EU. Likewise, the security issues have hardly featured in the EU-China bilateral dialogues (Zaborowski, 2006: 109).

## **6.5.2.. QUO VADIS EUROPE? THE EU'S STANCE AFTER 2005**

### **6.5.2.1.. ALIGNMENT WITH THE US ON SECURITY ISSUES**

'Europe has several major partners, but our partnership with the US is the one we take more seriously'<sup>212</sup>

Of all the implications of China's growing impact evolved under its phenomenal material rise, the change in the dimension of its rise is particularly noteworthy. Over the course of the last three decades, China's rising posture has shifted from solely affecting a region into transforming to a global character whereby as Crossick and Reuter (2007: 3 ) put 'it is very difficult to think of a big issue in international agenda that can be solved without China's active participation.' As indicated in the previous chapters, China's rise has been heavily felt on global markets, trade and investment flows, global governance, and global security architecture which implies that China's growing clout seems to touch on the major points in international system. In this context, the EU as an integral part of the post- Cold War international order has stakes not simply in the frame of regional dynamics but also in the governance of the post-Cold War global architecture led by the US (Twining, 2015).

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<sup>212</sup> (The EU Commissioner for Trade, De Gucht, 2012: 2 cited in Lachmnan).

Elaborating on the profound consequences of the rise of China, one may highlight the high water mark of China's influence particularly on the EU in terms of transforming the dynamics of the EU-US relationship. More specifically, it might be argued that China has become in a position to affect the dynamics of the transatlantic relationship (Scott, 2013: 33). Viewed in the context of an international system with a unipolar concentration of power, thus, the implications for the US side of the equation within the relationship between the EU and China loom large. In more particular terms, the reflections of China's rise specifically in Asia and the counter attempts of the US raise questions on how to position the EU itself with respect to the role of the US as a key player influencing both of the actors.

Seen in this light, at one side it is argued that since the EU has proceeded with the security umbrella of the US in Asia, alignment with the US is the most viable alternative. Subscribers to this line of thought advocate that Europe must rely on the US to manage the regional geopolitics of China's rise on the grounds that in case of a likelihood of a conflict between China and its neighbors neither the EU collectively nor the member states individually can act as security and stability providers (Speck, 2011). Yet, it is contended that as China becomes more powerful and assertive, the EU would also benefit from the US's commitment to Asia in general and engagement with China in particular (Kaizer& Muniz, 2013).

On the other side, just precisely due to lack of European military presence to protect its alliances there, the EU is seen free to develop an independent trajectory in the region (Casarini, 2014). In the same vein, EU's former High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana (2013) suggests a 'smart pivot' to Asia drawn on the EU's potential strengths. To Solana, because the EU is not a Pacific power and lacks security presence in Asia, the Union can achieve a degree of diplomatic agility by institutionalized cooperation that the US heavyweight cannot provide.

As outlined earlier, the US's policy toward China in the post-Cold War era has comprised a blend of engagement<sup>213</sup>, containment, and hedging<sup>214</sup> strategies; on the other hand, the EU has adopted largely a policy of engagement. Yet, as argued previously, as a security contributor to

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<sup>213</sup> The US engages via multiple channels. For instance, it has established strategic economic dialogue with China (Grant& Barsckhy, 2008).

<sup>214</sup> Hedging is a softer form of containment. In the case of US and China, it involves moves such as building alliances with other Asian countries to balance against China; restricting transfers of sensitive technologies. However, the aim is not restricting commerce or trying to overthrow government (ibid, ).

Asia, the possibility of China to destabilize security system is much more acute to the US than the EU which has relatively marginal security interests in the region.

The elements and order of each other's 'rebalance to Asia' strategy, specifically to China, differ as exemplified clearly in the arms embargo debate (Casarini, 2011). It might be argued that however, since 2005 the EU has gradually reoriented itself on the position of the US particularly in the realm of security (Casarini, 2009: 192). Indeed, there existed a widespread convergence in the European acceptance of the American interpretation of security necessities of Asian status quo reflected as the predominance of the priorities of transatlantic solidarity (SWP, 2008: 138). Nonetheless, as a security maker in East Asia, it might be argued that the US expects the EU to align itself with US priorities when dealing with security-related issues in the region (Stumbaum, 176).

At this point, using neorealism's criteria as benchmark, it would be possible to conceive that the acceptance of the US's strategic primacy by the EU is a price paid for security services provided by the US. Yet, particularly on the matters of importance, it becomes difficult for the EU to maintain a divergent position from that of its leading ally (Tote, 2008: 134). Moreover, this acknowledgement attitude is largely because the EU has not collectively engaged the superpower on an equal footing. Drawing from this assessment, in the global architecture one may consider the EU as a transatlantic pillar of the US-led international order, yet as Tote contends with slightly limited hard power capabilities.

#### **6.5.2.2. COMPETING WITH THE US OVER CHINA ON ECONOMIC ISSUES**

The rise of China has become one of the primary strategic issues in between the EU and the US to the extent that as a global force China has started to create pressure on the alliances that govern the current international order (Grant & Barysch, 2008: 60). Yet, it might be argued that this pattern is highly recognizable in the global economic and financial sphere, which corresponds quite well to the previously mentioned basic arguments of neorealism. In that, the argument being offered by neorealism points to the direct relationship between the increase in wealth of a state and expanding of its interests. It is relevant to note that one may establish a subtle connection between economic means and strategic purposes in the framework of economic interdependence (Kundnani, 2015). A premise behind this argument portrays the initiation of alternative multilateral institutions by the emerging powers such as BRICS; AIIB to those of the existing ones (IMF, World Bank) of Bretton Woods system as a clear signal of

their enhanced commitment to the global governance as a response of the shift in economic power (Cohen & Gabel, 2015: 97, 99).

Elaborating on this argument, then it is possible to interpret Chinese approach to multilateral regional economic forums as strategic economic tools to increase its influence in Asia at the expense of the US. Largely conditioned by the use of economic power within the logic of competition, according to Hans Kundnani (2015), China aims at creating an asymmetric interdependence in its favor not reducing or interrupting interdependence. Against this backdrop, it is possible to assess two important financial initiatives of China, namely Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) and One Belt one Road (OBOR), in this regard as the EU plays part in both of the organizations that carry implications for the EU-US relations.

To begin with, on October 2013, China proclaimed founding of a multilateral development bank initiative namely, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank that aims at solely financing infrastructure projects, which is open to all countries to join without any precondition. It is argued that China's 'attractive partner' approach in the face of a rising US economic diplomacy partly strives for a direction to global financial and currency multipolarity and a considerable degree of independence from the US-led global financial institutions. Indeed, had the Transatlantic-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) come into existence, China would find it isolated from the new major trading blocs.

The US responded to the initiative by refusing to join, yet at the same time exerted diplomatic leverage on its allies over not to participate in including the EU (Hilpert & Wacker, 2015: 1-6). However, despite the US's concentrated opposition and China's untested role concerning the situation, China convinced the closest allies of the US to join in the AIIB. Thirteen European states accepted China's invitation to the AIIB following the UK (Wacker & Hilpert, 2015: 3). Given the US and Japan are notable absentees in the initiative, it can be inferred that China attempts to challenge the US's privileged position in Europe and to demonstrate its ability to checkmate American power in allies (Twinning, 2015). In this respect, beyond commercial benefits<sup>215</sup> the new AIIB strongly signifies China as an alternative financial superpower to that of the chief financial position of the US in the World

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<sup>215</sup> Though it should be noted that the economic benefits are one of the powerful stimulations prompting European response to the initiative. It is reported that Germany will have the largest non-Asian stake which is around 4 percent. <http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/why-us-allies-are-happy-to-join-chinas-aiib/>

Bank. Yet, in this context, joining in the AIIB implies a rather symbolic meaning, which denotes acknowledging China as new financial power with a possible diminution of the US global financial leverage (Aiyar, 2015). In effect, these aspects demonstrate Chinese ability to divide Western nations among themselves coupled with the fact that the US's interests increasingly diverge from the EU (Le Corre, 2015).

On the other hand, China set out another substantial establishment with broader global implications in which it sought to 'redraw Asia's geopolitical map' (Brahma Chanelly cited in Kundnani, 2014). In 2013, China established a new initiative namely, 'One Belt One Road' that aimed at connecting it economically and politically to Eurasia—comprising a link through West Asia, Africa and Europe (Wacker & Hilpert, 2015: 1). For the part of China, there is powerful inclination to read this initiative as an attempt to enhance China's role in global economy. From a broader perspective, OBOR initiative might be regarded as a part of China's economic and investment offensive response towards US led financial order. Yet, regarding Europe, Jonathan Pollack (2015) notes that the driving force behind this move largely is rooted in China's desire to increase its stake in the EU as such it has particularly established a link between European infrastructural development to that of the initiative. Designing its own 'pivot', it is argued; China places Southeast Europe as the western anchor of the New Silk Road. Furthermore, this initiative was considered as a clear indication of Chinese foreign policy shift from 'strategic military' to 'strategic economy' wherein China endured its ongoing 'power maximizing' focus with slightly new financial instruments (Kundnani, 2015).

All in all, assessed within the previously provided tenets of neorealism, these initiatives can suggest reading the big picture where one may employ a linkage between the systemic level and the underlying messages economic moves might carry. As neorealism descends from the rule of thumbs of the realist theory tradition, then it should be remarked that neorealism considers the recurring patterns in the international system despite changes of the units that make up the system as the major domain for its inquiry<sup>216</sup>. In that sense, within the boundaries of the theory these exemplifiers point out to focus on the relevant system wide explanations, rather than assessing as depictions of strategic snapshots that are based upon instant designations taken at certain intervals (Davutoğlu, 2010: 4).

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<sup>216</sup> It might be argued that one of the fundamental common threads of the realists from Thucydides in the 5th century A.D. to Mearsheimer in the 21th century is the convergence over the questions raised related to the international relations (Gözen, 2014: 160).



In its broadest sense, the big picture suggests that China attempts to increase its global economic and financial presence by establishing economic alliances, providing alternative venues in which the EU also incorporates. On a lesser scale, given the impact of the trade and investment between the EU and Chinese relations, one may establish that China's ongoing economic presence in Europe that accelerated markedly following the 2008 Crisis carries connotations of Chinese commitment to Europe as an alternative financial stop to its dependency on the US. It is also a reminder to the rest of the world that along with security dimension that China has more ways to advance its interests in the realm of economics as well (Pollack& Le Corre, 2015).

Yet, for the part of the EU, the economic initiatives led by China seem to appear as lucrative as the individual member states with differing interests compete to have a relatively bigger slice than others. Hungary's offer to serve as the final European destination for 'Silk Road', and as the largest recipient of Chinese investment in Europe since 2014, UK Primer Minister David Cameron's statement 'No country in the world is more open to Chinese investment than the UK' and the competing attempts of France and Germany to attract Chinese investors are just few exemplifiers to be given that reflect European concerns on relative gains in trade and investment with China (Le Corre, 2015).

Indeed, from this angle, it is rather obvious why the US's strong lobby over not to join in the economic incentives led by China rendered obsolete for European states. Nonetheless, these findings bring out the question of thesis of speaking with one voice among European states once again on the table. In that, the uniqueness of the EU deriving from the absence of some of the elements that make up a conventional state in the international system mirror in its dealings with a rising China on the background of a unipolar international system. To a considerable extent, this allows space for China to benefit from the uncoordinated manner of the member states, on the other side, as seen in the AIIB case where the degree and ability of China to undermine transatlantic economic order is displayed, has potential to deteriorate the relationship between the EU and the US. In addition to these, the pattern China manifests with regard to economic initiatives in Asia is likely to touch on the issue of 'responsible stakeholder' debate that was previously discussed. Such a characterization focuses largely on the heightened expectations of the West from China due to the increase in China's relative power as a major stakeholder in the international system. In fact, with a diverse group of 60 countries signed up the AIIB, and a more comprehensive OBOR Incentive, China would seem to shoulder the burden of global responsibility in line with the US's demand from it to be sort

of a 'responsible stakeholder' in international affairs. However, as Wacker (2015) points out, and evident in the efforts to construct an alternative global financial system rooted in Asia, China demonstrates its willingness to take a greater global role, but on its own terms, and in selected areas attached with its own interests.

Finally yet importantly, these two initiatives seem to be in direct lineage with the neorealist understanding of institutions as instruments of state interests. Obviously, the common thread of overall multilateral financial institutions seek to sustain global stability and foster economic development, yet as far as the neorealist perception of institutions are applied to the dynamics of global institutional architecture, it is illustrated that they also actively promote the national interests of their most powerful members. Indeed, this concern is echoed by the US whilst questioning the substance of the AIIB. As President Barack Obama notes: 'China may steer AIIB loans to meet political or strategic considerations rather than economic' (Liao, 2015).

### **6.5.3. WHERE IS THE EU IN THE US'S 'PIVOT TO ASIA'?**

'... We should together pivot to Asia, the US and the EU. It's our joint interest, and it would be a strategically powerful move... It's also an area that's challenging for us in terms of security threats—major security expenditures, territorial disputes, historical animosities, and lack of a regional security architecture'<sup>217</sup>

Driven by a set of strategic, economic, and political considerations, the US's 'Pivot to Asia' policy launched in 2012 has largely been interpreted as a move to contain the rise of China<sup>218</sup>. Furthermore, it has dubbed to be as one of the most important shifts in American strategy following the end of Cold War (Kaizer& Muniz, 2013). As such, identified as a shift from traditional North East Asia focus to South East Asia, the pivot to Asia policy largely aimed at reassuring the US's allies that it has not weakened or exhausted after a decade of war and it will not disengage from Asia-Pacific as well (Elliot School& Simug School, 2013: 1). Indeed,

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<sup>217</sup> EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, cited in <http://www.theasanforum.org/europes-incomplete-pivot-to-asia/>

<sup>218</sup> For example, Casarini contends that 'Pivot to Asia' has been particularly designed to ensure that China's rise does not upset the US-led order in Asia (<http://tr.scribd.com/doc/249976995/How-Europe-and-US-Can-Boost-Cooperation-in-Asia>). Likewise, Twining is on the opinion that the US has recommitted its leadership in Asia by 'rebalancing' to the region (<http://www.theasanforum.org/europes-incomplete-pivot-to-asia/>). In the same way, Rifkind argues that reengagement with Asia reveals two intertwining dynamics of current Asian state of art. One is the firm commitment of the US to engage with the region and the other is the willingness of Asian region particularly of Japan, South Korea and some South Asian countries' to regard the US as a potential counterweight to China. (<http://thediplomat.com/2011/12/europe-grapples-with-u-s-pivot/?allpages=yes>)

the policy covered strengthening the US's presence in Asia through military bases in South Korea, Japan and Philippines; and reinforcing its partnerships with South East Asia countries. Proceeding from the assumptions of neorealism, the shift of the US's focus to Asia and deepening of its security ties with Asian partners are hardly surprising, as such, the only potential regional hegemon acknowledged to challenge the primacy of the US is China (Walt, 2011).

On the other hand, the economic pillar includes some economic initiatives as a demonstration of the US's recognition of the economic primacy of the region. In that regard, Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is worth mentioning which constitutes a set of multilateral negotiations involving the US and 11 other Asia-Pacific countries yet excluding China.<sup>219</sup> If finalized, it would bind the economies of the US and Japan into a bloc covering 40 percent of global output<sup>220</sup>.

Regarded as trade pivot to Asia to demonstrate the US's economic engagement with the region, in a way TPP narrows the opportunities for China's relative 'free ride' in economics by urging it to reform its economy in line with current economic governance. Indeed, 'China model' -i.e. state-run capitalism- represents an alternative mode of economic global governance to 'Washington consensus' that relies on trade openness. In this respect, it is possible to portray the picture as clashing values for the world economy<sup>221</sup>.

It is important to highlight that contrary to the expectations China supports alternative trade initiatives such as China led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and Regional Comprehensive Economic Cooperation (RCEC) that has been negotiated with ASEAN plus six (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea), which excludes the US (Pilling, 2015). Pointedly, it is suggested that the initiative aims at harmonizing of existing bilateral free trade agreements between ASEAN and plus six (Hilpert& Wacker, 2015: 2) and it would amount to \$17 trillion in trade that would be a counterpoint in the US's preferred pact, TPP (Feigenbaum& Manning, 2013).

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<sup>219</sup> Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.<https://ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/trans-pacific-partnership/tpp-issue-issue-negotiating-objectives>.China has not been invited on the grounds that its economy is too centrally planned. However, another centrally planned economy Vietnam is welcomed. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/fabfd8ac-d6c1-11e4-97c3-00144feab7de.html#axzz3dzoVXZBy>

<sup>220</sup> Ibid

<sup>221</sup> <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2012/1212/Why-a-US-EU-trade-pact-would-be-historic>

Invariably, viewing the two sets of the negotiations of the US and China within the context of an ongoing global contest of economic governance of values and norms, one may contend that they proceed in a Cold-War fashion between the clashing values for the world economic order<sup>222</sup>. Thus, in the language of neorealism, a possible interpretation suggests to sketch an overview of Asian regional forums that are prone to power rivalry between the US and China. Consequently, this setting begs the question for the EU: which setting the EU would have fit into?

Of particular relevance to the part of the EU is that in February 2013, the US announced its intent to launch negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the EU. As far as the economic indicators are concerned, leaving aside the prospect of indirect access to new markets via strengthening American ties (Rifland, 2011, diplomat), the macroeconomic effect of the TTIP on the EU as a whole is argued to be relatively modest than proposed<sup>223</sup>. Indeed, it is also asserted that the likely impact of the agreement on the individual member states changes to varying degrees rather than having a uniform result. On the other hand, the strategic aspect of the pact looms rather larger. Dubbed as an equivalent of an ‘economic NATO’ against Chinese model of state-run capitalism, the free trade pact between the EU and the US suggests not only strengthening their respective economies, but at the same time carries connotations of a reinforced transatlantic unity to be communicated particularly across to many rising non-Western countries such as China.

The essence of the efforts to define the substance of ‘the transatlantic cousin of TPP<sup>224</sup>’ is captured by the European Commissioner for Trade De Gucht as: ‘to ensure that standards used by Europe and the US can be universal in a world challenged by China’s norms of behavior, such as lack of a transparency...to find an equilibrium with China and its brand of authoritarian capitalism...’<sup>225</sup> Given this outlook, it might be contended that TTIP serves an important component of the US-EU global strategies in response to the rise of Asia in general; and to the growing economic footprint of China in particular.

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<sup>222</sup> <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2012/1212/Why-a-US-EU-trade-pact-would-be-historic>

<sup>223</sup> For example, CEPII Institute of France and CEPR Institute from Britain conclude in this manner. [http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR124\\_-\\_TTIP.pdf](http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR124_-_TTIP.pdf)

<sup>224</sup> Christian Lagarde cited in <http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/trans-pacific-partnership-hawaii-talks-end-without-deal/>

<sup>225</sup> <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2013/0304/A-global-contest-of-values-in-EU-US-China-trade>

### **6.5.3.1. THE SECURITY DIMENSION OF THE ‘PIVOT’ AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EU- CHINA RELATIONS**

‘If we don’t write the rules, China will write the rules out in that region. We will be shut out.’<sup>226</sup>

By and large, the European side of the equation shows parallelism with that of the US’s pivot to Asia where the US seeks to strengthen trade relations, diplomatic presence, and heighten security presence in the region. However, the security dimension of the pivot leaves limited room for Europe to exert its hard power capabilities both due to two intertwining fact that the EU lacks military power on its own, and the rise of China implies largely a growing security concern for the US. Nonetheless, one of the reflections of the US’s pivot on the transatlantic relations was the stressed expectation of the US that the EU should play a role in Asia as a producer of security rather than as a security consumer. This expectation however meant that the EU should take more responsibility particularly in the military realm (Wacker, 2012: 7). Yet, considering the obvious limitations on hard power capabilities this request has tendency to imply a more powerful European diplomatic posture in maintaining the regional security than a robust military expectation (Kaizer& Munz, 2013).

Beginning with the year 2011 there exists a clear pattern towards enhanced European presence in terms of economic and security realms in Asia. In part, European economic activism can be tied to the Eurozone crisis (Youngs, 2015: 3). On the other hand, the relative intensification in the security sphere may be assessed as parallel to the US’s pivot to Asia policy (Wacker, 2012: 9). In fact, the noticeable difference in the EU’s response to the particular security tensions in East Asia was reflected in 2012, where the US and the EU released a joint declaration named ‘The Joint EU-US Statement on the Asia-Pacific Region’<sup>227</sup>. Examined in parallel to the US’s ‘Pivot to Asia’ rebalancing strategy announced in 2012, at first glance, the declaration reflects the firmly focus of the US towards Asia-Pacific. The thematic focus of the declaration was on emphasizing that the transatlantic allies have shared interest in Asian security particularly in multilateral ruled- based standards (Casarini, 2014). On the other hand, the declaration indicates a tendency by the EU to align itself more with the US in its involvement in Asia. The EU along with the US urged China and ASEAN countries to establish Code of Conduct with regard to territorial disputes in the

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<sup>226</sup> President Barack Obama in an interview with The Wall Street Journal, cited in <http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/trans-pacific-partnership-hawaii-talks-end-without-deal/>

<sup>227</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131709.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131709.pdf)

South China Sea and clarify basis for own claims, and emphasized the importance of international law (Putten, 2013:2). In accordance with the EU's attempts to intensify its engagement with Asia, in 2013, Catherine Ashton for the first time attended Shangri-Lai Dialogue- annual Asia- Pacific forum- with core messages that the EU approached to Asian security by 'not projecting power but empowering it' (Youngs, 2015: 7). Interestingly, prior to 2012 the EU did not send high-ranking representatives to the Asian regional forums (Wacker, 2015: 32). Nonetheless, it is important to note that the EU updated its previous 2007 Document on East Asia in the year 2012. Unlike previous EU documents on the region, the document stressed some previously absent issues such as South China Sea disputes for the first time which to a large extent signifies the EU's alignment with the US on the Asia-Pacific (Casarini, 2012: 1).

Taken as a whole, this request from the US to cooperate more closely in East Asian security reveals the dilemma the EU faces in terms of its China's strategy although two sides share commonalities over the desire to maintain regional stability and peace of the Asia-Pacific. As Wacker (2015: 33) notes in the realm of security the EU is confronted with the question of whether and to what extent it should align itself with that of the US. From one point, its ongoing approach which focuses on economic relations while keeping low profile in security might not run in the case of a conflict escalation in East Asia. Considering the methodological differences between the EU and the US with respect to tackling the rise of China, then the role of the EU in a possible crisis is likely remain limited since it has limited military capabilities and complex institutional design to allow for a rapid decision-making.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, the security backbone of Asia-Pacific is largely provided by the security alliances of the US, which has become more intensified and more closer in response to the military rise of China (Wacker, 2015: 7). Yet, it appears that for the EU, China's security issues gain relevance even though it does not have direct security interests in the region. As such, though limited the EU has security interests in Asia-Pacific ranging from peace and freedom of navigation, non-proliferation to burden sharing in global governance (Casarini, Godement, 2012: 66). Therefore, coupled with the intensive trade and economic relations between each other, stability and peace in particularly East Asia are of remarkable interest to Europe (Wacker, 2015: 32).

To the credit of the EU, to be seen as an integral part of the US's containment attempts against China is not in the EU's interests as China is still viewed as an attractive trade partner

(SWP, 2015: 35). Furthermore, seeming to take side with the increased security cooperation among the US allies in Asia-Pacific, either implicitly or explicitly addressing the rise of China, would likely aggravate an image of increased sense of encirclement for China. In turn, this might lead China to further enhance its military capabilities as response. Considering this context, Hans Kundnani (2014) underscores the possibility of a ‘security dilemma’, which denotes to the widely referred definition: ‘security measures taken by one actor are perceived by others as threatening; the others take steps to protect themselves’<sup>228</sup>. Kundnani goes on to draw attention to the European balancing act between either remaining neutral or playing a more active role in Asian security.

An alternative view regarding the security role of the EU on Asia-Pacific portrays the EU as a potential strategic partner with China to preclude it from being isolated in Asia (Zhiqin, 2012:5). On the other side of the equation, given the US and China struggle for regional supremacy in Asia, thus, it is argued that ‘more Europe’ expectation particularly by other Asian states is relevant. In that, the EU might serve as a mitigating actor and an alternative voice from the West where it may diversify the emerging the US-China duopoly (Casarini, 2012)

In the light of previous discussions of the US’s ambivalent stance over the issues carrying strategic weight between the EU and China, it is possible to conclude that, the EU has to pursue a delicate balance between its transatlantic security cooperation and preserving European economic interests with that of China (Putten, 2012).

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<sup>228</sup> (Glenn Snyder (1997: 17) cited in Donnelly, 2002: 22).

## 7. CONCLUSION

Applying neorealist international relations theory to the relationship between the EU and China after the post-Cold War era, this thesis makes two principal arguments. First, it is found out that the extent of China's economic, military, and peaceful rise is of huge relevance to the international actorness of the EU. Of particular relevance here is that the reflections of each of the parameters of China's rise directly target questioning the unique, sui generis features of the EU largely stemming from the absence of some of the elements that make up a traditional state. In various respects the EU represents a blend of overlapping characterizations that encompasses the elements of nation-state, international organization, and a sui generis political community. In that regard, the EU proves to be a complicated political organization encountered in international relations.

Indeed, for a theory focusing mainly on nation-states, the viability of the EU for the purpose of the query propels the discussion forward. Given this outlook, this thesis posits that insofar the international system is considered to be anarchic with no over-arching authority above the states, the EU might be seen as a unit in a larger global system though with such complex and uncommon features on its own right. Against this backdrop, one of the starting points to study the conceptualization of the EU's global role in world politics is the tendency to portray the Union as 'normative power'. The proponents of this view mainly argue that with its commitments to universal rights and principles, the EU should be considered as 'what it is' rather than 'what it does or says'. On the other hand, 'civilian power' approach depicts the EU as exempted from hard power capabilities rather as purely concentrated on economic means. Nonetheless, neorealism positions the EU in relation to the other powers in the global balance of power. On this point, this thesis holds the assumption that given the intergovernmental aspect of the security and defense policy of the EU that grants member states to be predominant actors in their national security decisions under the intergovernmental framework, the EU is regarded as an international actor with limited autonomous action and at the behest of notably the most powerful member states (Wright, 2010: 3). With this in mind, the 'lack of military muscle' of the EU largely driving from the fact that it has no mechanisms for determining or enforcing its own security interests due to the very fact that it is not a state in the conventional sense hampers its international actorness.

On the relevance of neorealism to account for the rise of China, this thesis has taken the view that since neorealism as a systemic theory deals with structural incentives and



constraints posed by the anarchic system on states rather than focusing on the domestic features of states such as the regime type or culture; theory's key concepts can be regarded as explanatory for assessing the rise of China. On the grounds of this proposition, China's rise with respect to economic, military, and 'peaceful rise' dimensions has been sought to analyze.

In terms of numerical data regarding China's economic performance over the last four decades, China features as the second largest economy in the global rankings with respect to the world share of GDP, growth rates, and trade patterns. To assess the nature of the recent economic growth of China, neorealism offers a perspective that emphasizes self-help principle under an anarchic international system. In that sense, as China's economic power increases, the transformation of this economic wealth into military build up; its relevant posture displaying as confidence build up; and given the scope and pace of the unprecedented economic transformation, the possibility of a major change in the distribution of power introduces a debate over the system wide impacts of China's economic rise.

The thesis argues that as China's economic wealth has relatively increased the country demonstrated more confident pattern with respect to its relations particularly with the West. Analyzing China's activism throughout the Financial Crisis of 2007 to assert its power and influence and directly criticizing the West for being responsible for the crisis; its increasingly assertive tone in Copenhagen Climate Summit in 2009 when it blocked a comprehensive deal and challenged the Western countries; and China's growing assertiveness particularly towards Europe when occasionally European states met with Dalai Lama can be exemplified as unusual manners contrasting the previous low-profile Chinese foreign policy diplomacy.

The thesis also points out that as far as the power is acknowledged as relative and dynamic, China's material rise poses a challenge for the existing distribution of power in the current international order. In terms of distribution of power, the post-Cold War international system is widely accepted as a unipolar order with the US wielding extraordinary economic, military, and political power. In this context, this thesis holds the assumption that the material rise of China, if sustained, has a potential to alter the dynamics of the existing international system. Citing John Mearsheimer: 'There would be two billiard balls in the system'. Furthermore, the durability and stability of unipolarity is contingent upon the rise of a potential challenger since neorealism is highly sensitive to any increase in economic power with a view establishing a link between economic growth and great power emergence along with balance of power rationale. On the other hand, it is argued that the enduring characteristics of anarchy

dictate states to emulate the prevailing great power behavior. Following this logic, if one state improves its relative power position, others will likely respond due to the imperatives of anarchic international system. As with China, it is postulated that had it continue to rise, China will follow the suit and try to maximize the power gap between itself and preponderant power. Given the unipolar structure after the end of Cold War, it is thus particularly noteworthy to question the consequences of China's increase in its relative power for the unipole and the rest of the states within the international system.

Regarding the nature and the substance of the interaction between Europe and China, it might be discerned that an ongoing theme has been the 'primacy of trade' since the inception of the first interactions in 1500s. Indeed, the economic dimension forms the backbone of the EU-China relationship. Arguably, it is hardly surprising that the recent economic rise of China corresponds well to a global economic actor with around 20% of the world's GDP. Moreover, the pace of the relation has evolved to the extent that China has been the EU's second largest trade partner after the US.

As outlined in the historical account of European-Chinese relations, particularly after the end of Cold War the relationship between the two has evolved into an increasingly regularized, institutionalized, and at its core, an intensified character (Gill & Murphy, 2008: vii)<sup>229</sup> mostly driven by the motive to tap into one another's economic markets (Holslag, 2010: 331). Indeed, it might be argued that the 'primacy of trade' has formed the backbone of the relation with slight exceptions. From the perspective of neorealism, this is largely linked to the changing structural forces on the verge of a polarity transition following the end of Cold War, and as a result of European strength and interests in the economic realm and conversely limitations in 'high politics' thanks to the economics as a driving dynamic in the European integration (Stumbaum, 2009: 29).

More precisely, changes in global realpolitik, namely consequential shift to unipolarity, urged China to revise its Cold War vision of Europe as 'bulwark against Soviet Union', and shifted to supporting European integration within China's 'multipolarity' lexicon (Shambaugh & Sandschneider & Hong, 2008: 190). As the evolution of EU-China economic relations thus has been shaped by structural factors, the thesis concurs that China associates its

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<sup>229</sup> Considering the chronological official terminology, the EU defined the relationship between China and itself as 'long term relationship' in 1995; 'comprehensive partnership' in 1998; 'maturing partnership' in 2003; and 'strategic and enduring relationship' in 2003 (Belligoli, 2011: 12)

national interests with its economic modernization program under the unipolar order. In this respect, China's economic encounter with the EU not only contributes to its core interests but also allocates a considerable room to challenge the US-led international order largely shaped after the end of Cold War. China's steady support for Euro as a counterbalance to the dominance of the US Dollar and to create an alternative global currency, and China's financial rebalancing towards Europe in terms of investment are notable exemplifiers to that aim.

On the other hand, the EU also attached material significance to the relationship as such the engagement policy of the EU towards China was grounded partly in the long-term economic interests of the EU. Given this outlook, it might be argued that the EU pursued to enhance its weight over China on the back of economic interdependence with strong emphasis on gaining advantage of China's economic growth, yet with a less confrontational manner than the US. In such a configuration, unlike the US, the possibility of a newly rising economic power to alter the dynamics of the international structure resonated to the EU not as a direct threat (Gill & Wacker, 2005: 16). Nonetheless, triggered by relative gains concerns of the individual member states, the diverging economic interests and conflicting commercial preferences of the member states preclude the EU from presenting a coherent and unified approach to the economic rise of China. This thesis is on the view that of all the implications of China's economic rise, eroding of the EU's external actorness due to the fact that it lacks coherence by the standards of a conventional state comprises the major bone of contention.

As with the military dimension, the thesis postulates that according to the structural realist view China's military advance both in terms of increase in defense spending and military modernization cause concerns over the existing power equilibrium, particularly for the US and China's neighbors. The statistics regarding Chinese defense spending and patterns since 1980s indicate that China's military capacity has grown faster than its neighbors and it has increased its defense spending by double digits since then. Further, it seems obvious that increased military spending and military modernization are clear indicators of Chinese traditional internal balancing attempts. It follows that even though China's military is second rate with limited capacity to deploy forces abroad—for the time being concerned, China can still be perceived as highly important military actor. Yet, the pattern manifested in the deepening of the relations between the EU and China in the economic realm does not seem to correspond in the same lineage to the military sphere. Proceeding with the power-based analysis, this thesis posits that the divergences between the approaches of the EU and the US

respectively to the rise of China loom relevant. Given the EU is not directly involved in Asian-Pacific security architecture, and has limited military presence in the region, a militarily rising China likely resonates rather less alarming connotations to the Union in contrast to the US as the backbone of the security of the region with its ‘hubs and spokes’ alliance system, and the predominant power in the post-Cold War international system. Thereby, the methodologies differ on how to deal with a rising China where the EU chooses a non-confrontational approach accompanied by engagement; on the other hand, the US musters a mix of containment, hedging, and engagement.

This brings out the normative dimension wherein the peaceful rise rhetoric of China’s rise is closely related to the normative power Europe discourse. Zheng Bijian, advisor to Hu Jintao, has coined the ‘peaceful rise’ concept in 2003 to sooth the ‘China threat’ debates by emphasizing China’s willingness not to repeat the colonial and confrontational behaviors of past great powers. To put it bluntly, China’s material rise brings out to question the route of that accumulation of capabilities and whether or not it will be content with the existing international structure. As neorealism points out the sameness effect of anarchy as matter of principle, this rhetoric may be regarded as a tactical discourse to challenge the existing international order. Indeed, this thesis argues that by pursuing an instrumental peaceful rise, China would be able to signal to build strategic economic relationship with its neighbors; continue to its economic modernization; preclude itself from encirclement by the preponderant power. The peaceful rise of China rhetoric touches upon the normative power Europe approach as such it questions the transformative capability of Europe to turn China into a status quo power content with the existing international system. It should be noted that the EU’s official response has been ‘Engagement with China’ policy, which developed a perspective on the transformation of China’s political system and assisting China’s integration into the international system through ‘supporting China’s successful transition to a stable, prosperous and open country that fully embraces democracy, free market principles and the rule of law’ (COM (2003) 533: 3 ). In this context, this thesis has critically analyzed the effects of the normative power Europe approach on the EU’s relations with China. As such, China displays as a challenging case for the normative leverage of the EU since the country is neither a prospective candidate to join in the Union nor it shares the political norms and values with the EU. Further, the thesis argues that the normative leverage of the EU is limited on the occasions where the EU interacts with states that are out of the rather standard normative template of the Union. On the other hand, the institutional complexities of the EU

such as diverging interests and perceptions of the member states vis-à-vis China serve as another hindrance on the normative role of the EU as a promoter of the core norms beyond its borders. As a consequence of the bilateral basis of China and member state relations, and at the same time the multilateral characteristics of the relation between the EU and China, it is rather difficult to pursue a delicate balance in promoting the core values of the Union. In such a context, while promoting democracy, rule of law, the EU has to take stock of the necessities and sensitivities of member state vs. China relations and strive for developing the Union's relations as well. Based on the above-mentioned arguments supported by relevant case studies such as the EU's normative struggle with China in Africa and the EU's human rights promotion with respect to an economically rising China, the thesis draws conclusion that to a considerable extent the EU's leverage as a normative actor towards China rests on the recognition of common interests rather than a purely normative approach.

The second argument of this thesis makes its claim based on the notion of 'soft balancing'. The term 'soft balancing' refers to tacit balancing that involves the use of international institutions, international law, and diplomacy in order to constrain and delegitimize the actions of the preponderant state within the context of balance of power. The thesis argues that the EU and China have responded to the unipolar power structure in the form of soft balancing as a complementary to the hard balancing methods (where possible) particularly after 2000s in relation to their power capabilities.

As the balance of power is the key operating principle under an anarchic international order, one would inevitably expect overwhelming power to be counterbalanced. On the other hand, polarity configuration organizes the range of choice and provides incentives for typical behavior patterns. Under unipolarity, it is argued that the accumulation of such sort of preponderant power in the US makes it extremely difficult for the rest of the states to counterbalance the US power on their own. Indeed, it is even too costly and too risky to orchestrate a directly constraining coalition (Wang, 2004: 13). Moreover, there is a possibility that these soft balancing strategies can be converted to hard balancing strategies in time.

For the part of the EU, given the extent of hard-power capabilities of the US, it is thus more difficult to counterbalance the US with traditional balance of power strategies. The thesis argues that the EU particularly after 2000s attempts to soft balance against the US. Nonetheless, the underlying concern for this strategy would be to curb the unilateralist and interventionist tendencies of the US as much as possible, which were increasingly evident

during 2000s. By many accounts, the pattern demonstrated by the EU reveals that it has decreased its defense spending yet it has built on European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) in 2003 in parallel to the NATO to enhance its autonomous action of sphere. It is paradoxical that ESDP was initiated in a period that ‘Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free’<sup>230</sup> as proclaimed in the first-ever European Security Strategy in 2003. Indeed, in terms of material capabilities, ESDP remains quite modest to balance even to check the military power of the US. What is more, even if all the goals of ESDP were fulfilled, the deployable military power of the EU would be equal to the smallest armed forces of the US (Zielonka, 2008: 3). Therefore, the thesis argues that ESDP might be regarded as a response to concentrated military power that aims at developing an alternative security supplier instead of weak balancing. On the other hand, coordination of diplomatic positions of France, Germany, and Russia under the banner of United Nations (UN) over the US’s invasion of Iraq in 2003 presents another tacit balancing strategy which resulted in not preventing the invasion but reduced the legitimacy of the US’s action.

In the same manner, China’s global growing clout contributes to the EU’s soft balancing attempts as demonstrated in the discussions to lift the arms embargo imposed on China in 1989. In this triangular equilibrium, the lure of the Chinese market and the EU’s discontent with the unilateralist tendencies of the US constituted key reasons to soft balance the US. Indeed, the attempts to soft balance the US in key high-tech and security related realms would be expected to lay the ground for the emergence of a possible multipolar international system in the long term (Casarini, 2009: 14). In this regard, the arms embargo debate is illustrative. Under the rationale of soft balancing, the EU’s attempts to initiate a debate over lifting a rather symbolic embargo corresponds to the EU’s endeavors to soft balance against the US’s stance over China. Such a characterization focuses on the EU’s subtle message that signals the acknowledgement of China on a par with itself on the global architecture. Indeed, under the current power configuration the EU’s aim would be neither to challenge the US’s military capabilities nor to affect the strategic balance in East Asia. As the security of the EU is still provided by the presence of NATO to a considerable extent, in response to the unwanted unilateral tendencies of the US, the EU aims at undermining the US’s influence largely by forming diplomatic coalitions with other soft balancers such as China (Lachmann, 2011: 5). This pattern can also be observed when the EU signed a political agreement with China, which allowed China to participate in the joint development of a EU-led global navigational

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<sup>230</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>

satellite system in 2003. The logic underpinning such attempt reveals a clear indication of a soft balancing that aims at not challenging the US military or space capabilities rather aims at breaking the monopoly of the US in global satellite system.

For China's part, faced with the constraints pertinent to unipolar distribution of power, and given the relative strength of the country it would not be plausible for it to directly challenge the international order in the current juncture. Indeed, to sustain its economic and military growth China needs stable relationship with the US. On the other hand, with tacit strategies China attempts to contest the legitimacy of US hegemony. Evidence for this comes from China's recent activism on multilateral international grounds by placing 'multilateralism' to the part of its diplomacy. In that, China has expanded its political influence particularly in Asian regional affairs with a view to project power in the detriment of the US.

As a rising power, China enters the game specifically in the form of 'strategic partnership' with the EU. To this capacity, great power diplomacy and strategic partnerships are fertile realms for both parties to express their concerns about US preponderance without adopting a confrontational approach. For that matter, this has led China to upgrade its relations with the EU to a more strategic level. Indeed, the formation of a possible multipolar world necessitated China's cooperation with other powers as well. Therefore, China sought to recast its bilateral relations with each of the major powers in ways to foster the emergence of multipolarity and to avoid being marginalized from possible collaborations under unipolarity to oppose China (Hanami, 2003: 140). After the collapse of Soviet Union, 'multipolarity' became the frame of reference for Chinese foreign policy towards the EU. Nonetheless, the EU was regarded as multipolar partner for China as a soft balancer against the US (Holslag, 2010: 331). Yet, China's emphasis on 'multipolarity' during the course of 1990s started to change into 'multilateralism' discourse particularly afterwards 2003 (Huang& Song, 2011: 8).

In this context, the timing confirms that the shift in the discourse can be corresponded to China's accession to global multilateral regimes such as WTO in 2001 and respectively the necessity to practice multilateralism in global platforms like the UN and WTO. Equally significant is the fact that the transatlantic debate on unilateralism vs. multilateralism after Iraq War in 2003 has been a divisive issue between the EU and the US. Consequently, it should be noted that EU emphasized 'effective multilateralism' in its first security strategy wherein China was regarded as 'strategic partner'. At this point, it is argued that the EU's

opposition to the US's Iraqi policy has displayed the EU's strategic importance for China in balancing against the US.

Referred as a common ground between the EU and China, thus, 'multilateralism' has become a new choice for China's foreign policy in the context of unipolar distribution of power. To the structural realist account, this policy turn of China under the absence of a structural change stems from the fact that as China came to realize the inadequacies of its previous balancing efforts, it proceeded to cope with the US's unchecked power with a more subtle strategy. As such, structural realism allots space for the states to modify their policies if negative consequences apply (Hanami, 2003: 141). As Chen Zhimin puts it China uses partnership diplomacy while complementing it with balance of power and multilateralism. Indeed, generating such partnerships would serve to China's interests in promoting the multipolar international system, which can be accepted as an alternative strategy to a direct counter balancing to the dominance of the US.<sup>231</sup> In this interpretation, European capital and technology and Europe's above mentioned role in Chinese multipolar world configuration would properly match with the necessities of Chinese growing power (Feng& Huang, 2014: 11). Beside the point, it should be noted as a mitigating factor in the EU-China relations that the limited strategic interests of the EU in East Asia, and the absence of military presence in the region unlike the US might have facilitated China to the agreement of a strategic partnership with that of the EU.

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<sup>231</sup> (Cited in Zhongping and Jing, 2014: 141)



Map 1: Map of Asia



Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/aslargez.htm>

**Map 2:** Map of China



<http://www.timemaps.com/history/east-asia-2005ad>

## APPENDIX 1:

### EU-China Relations: Chronology

(This list of events is not exhaustive)

<b>1975 May</b> Diplomatic relations established. Christopher Soames first European Commissioner to visit China.
<b>1978 2 May</b> Trade agreement EEC-China signed. Inter alia, establishes Joint Committee.
<b>1979 February</b> Roy Jenkins visits China. First visit of a Commission President. Meets Deng Xiaoping.
<b>July</b> First meeting of the Joint Committee in Beijing.
<b>18 July</b> (First) agreement on textile trade.
<b>1980 16-19 June</b> First inter-parliamentary meeting between delegations of the EP and of the National People's Congress, Strasbourg.
<b>1983</b> Launch of first science and technology cooperation program.
<b>1984</b> First political consultations at ministerial level, in the context of European Political Cooperation and launch of first cooperation projects in China (Management training and rural development).
<b>1985 21-23 May</b> Agreement on trade and economic cooperation signed.
<b>1988 4 October</b> Opening of the Delegation of the European Commission in Beijing.
<b>1989 June</b> As a reaction to Tiananmen incidents of 4 June, EC freezes relations with China and imposes a number of sanctions, including an arms embargo.
<b>1990 October</b> Council and EP decide to re-establish bilateral relations step by step.
<b>1992</b> EC-China relations largely back to normal; arms embargo remains in place
<b>June</b> Launch of environmental dialogue.

<b>June</b> Establishment of a new bilateral political dialogue.
<b>1993 October</b> Opening of Commission office in Hong Kong.
<b>1995 15 July</b> European Commission publishes first Communication "A long-term policy for China-Europe relations" and launch of a specific dialogue on human rights issues.
<b>1996 1-2 March</b> First Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM); China and EU are active participants.
<b>1998 25 March</b> European Commission publishes Communication "Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China".
<b>2 April</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> EU-China Summit, London.
<b>22 December</b> Agreement on scientific and technological cooperation signed.
<b>1999 21 December</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> EU-China Summit, Beijing.
<b>2000 19 May</b> Bilateral agreement on China's WTO accession signed in Beijing.
<b>11 July</b> Visit of Prime Minister Zhu Rongji in Brussels (first visit of a Chinese Premier to the Commission).
<b>24 October</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> EU-China Summit, Beijing.
<b>2001 15 May</b> European Commission publishes Communication "EU Strategy towards China: Implementation of the 1998 Communication and Future Steps for a more Effective EU Policy".
<b>5 September</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> EU-China Summit, Brussels.
<b>17 September</b> New Information Society Working Group launched.
<b>25 -26 October</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>13 November</b> Ministerial Troika, New York (in the margin of UN General Assembly).
<b>30 November</b> Political Directors Troika, Beijing.
<b>8 December</b> Human Rights Seminar, Brussels.

<b>11 December</b> China becomes the 143rd Member of the World Trade Organization
<b>2002 30-31 January</b> EC-China Joint Committee, Brussels.
<b>1 March</b> Release of China country Strategy paper 2002-2006.
<b>5-6 March</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Madrid.
<b>28 March-4 April</b> Visit of Commissioner Patten to China.
<b>16 May</b> Launch of negotiations on Chinese participation in GALILEO
June Exchange of letters strengthening the EU-China political dialogue.
<b>24 September</b> 5th EU-China Summit, Copenhagen.
<b>13-15 November</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>6 December</b> EU-China maritime transport agreement signed.
<b>2003 14 February</b> EU-China Ministerial Troika held in Beijing.
<b>5-6 March</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Athens.
<b>10 March</b> EC opens European Economic and Trade Office in Taiwan.
<b>3 June</b> China formally requests market economy status under EU's anti-dumping instrument.
<b>30 June</b> Ministerial Troika, Athens.
<b>10 September</b> European Commission adopts policy paper "A maturing partnership: shared interests and challenges in EU-China relations".
<b>13 October</b> EU Council of Ministers endorses Commission policy paper "A maturing partnership".
<b>13 October</b> China releases first ever policy paper on EU.
<b>30 October</b> 6th EU-China Summit, Beijing: Agreements signed on cooperation in the Galileo satellite navigation program and Industrial Policy Dialogue and EU-China

Dialogue on Intellectual Property.
<b>26-27 November</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>2004 10-11 February</b> EU-China Seminar on the two Policy Papers issued in <b>October</b> held in Beijing, leading to "Guidelines for Common Action".
<b>12 February</b> Signing of MOU on Approved Destination Status (the "Tourism Agreement").
<b>26-27 February</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Dublin.
<b>26 February</b> Political Directors Troika, Beijing.
<b>16 April</b> Commission President Romano Prodi visits China.
<b>6 May</b> Chinese PM Wen Jiabao visits Commission Headquarters, new dialogue initiatives signed; customs cooperation agreement initialed; political leaders recommend that the "Guidelines for Common Action" are implemented.
<b>26 May</b> 5th High Level Consultations on Illegal Migration and trafficking of human beings, Brussels.
<b>24 September</b> Human rights dialogue, Beijing.
<b>8 October</b> Ministerial Troika, Hanoi.
<b>12 November</b> Geographical Directors' Troika, Beijing.
<b>8 December</b> 7th EU-China Summit, The Hague: the EU and China signed Joint declaration on Non-proliferations and Arms Control and EU-China Customs Cooperation Agreement and Agreement on R&D cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.
<b>2005 24-25 February</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Luxembourg.
<b>11 May</b> Ministerial Troika, Beijing.
<b>30 June-1 July</b> EU-China Civil Aviation Summit, Beijing.
<b>7 July</b> First ADS Committee ("Tourism Agreement") Meeting, Beijing.
<b>14-18 July</b> Commission President José Manuel Barroso visits China.

<b>5 September</b> 8 <sup>th</sup> EU-China Summit, Beijing: the EU and China signed: MoU on labour, employment and social affairs and Joint Statement on cooperation in space exploitation, science & technology development and Joint declaration on climate change.
<b>25-27 October</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>4 November</b> EC-China Joint Committee, Brussels.
<b>20 December</b> 1st EU-China Strategic Dialogue, London, UK.
<b>2006 January</b> EU-China MoU on food safety is signed in Beijing Ministerial Troika, Vienna.
<b>20 February</b> Commission and Chinese Government sign a MoU on cooperation on near-zero emissions power generation technology.
<b>27 March</b> Political Directors Troika, Beijing.
<b>30 March</b> The first EU-China bilateral consultations under the Climate Change Partnership are held, Vienna.
<b>6 April</b> Geographical Directors Troika, Brussels.
<b>15 May</b> EU-China Dialogue on Regional Cooperation initialed.
<b>25-26 May</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Vienna.
<b>6 June</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> EU-China Strategic Dialogue.
<b>9 September</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> EU-China Summit, Helsinki: the EU and China agree on opening negotiations for a new comprehensive framework agreement.
<b>11 October</b> Official launch of China-EU Science and Technology Year
<b>19 October</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing
<b>24 October</b> Commission adopts Communication "EU-China: Closer Partners, growing responsibilities" and a policy paper on trade and investment.
<b>7 November</b> EC-China Joint Committee, Beijing.

<b>7 December</b> The first Macroeconomic Dialogue is held.
<b>11 December</b> The Council endorses the Commission Communication and adopts related Council Conclusions.
<b>2007 16-18 January</b> Commissioner for External Relations Ferrero-Waldner visits Beijing: launch of negotiations on a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.
<b>5 March</b> Geographical Directors Troika, Beijing.
<b>3 May</b> Commission and ECB discuss economic policy issues with Chinese counterparts, Beijing, China.
<b>8 May</b> Political Directors Troika, Brussels.
<b>15-16 May</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Berlin, Germany.
<b>11-12 June</b> EC-China Joint Committee, Brussels.
<b>22 June</b> 1st Meeting of the EU-China Civil Society Round Table, Beijing, China
<b>17-18 October</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing, China.
<b>25 October</b> 3rd EU-China Strategic Dialogue, Lisbon.
<b>14 November</b> 2nd Meeting of the EU-China Civil Society Round Table, Brussels.
<b>28 November</b> Euro-zone Troika and Chinese counterparts, Beijing, China.
<b>28 November</b> 10th EU-China Summit, Beijing: the EU and China established High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue and agreed to enhance cooperation on climate change.
<b>2008 11 March</b> Geographical Directors' Troika, Brussels.
<b>24-25 April</b> President José Manuel Barroso and nine Commissioners meet with their counterparts in Beijing.
<b>25 April</b> 1st EU-China High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>15 May</b> Political Directors' Troika, Beijing.



<b>15 May</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Brdo, Slovenia.
<b>9 June</b> EU-China Ministerial Troika, Ljubljana.
<b>11 June</b> Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi visits Brussels.
<b>23-26 June</b> 3rd Meeting of the EU-China Civil Society Roundtable, Beijing, China.
<b>24-25 September</b> EC-China Joint Committee, Beijing.
<b>6-7 November</b> 4th Meeting of the EU-China Civil Society Roundtable, Paris, France.
<b>28 November</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>2009 19 January</b> 4th EU-China Strategic Dialogue, Beijing.
<b>30 January</b> Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao visits Brussels.
<b>29-30 March</b> Commissioner B. Ferrero-Waldner's visit to China.
<b>7-8 May</b> 2nd EU-China High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue, Brussels, Belgium.
<b>18-19 May</b> 5th meeting of the EU-China Civil Society Round Table, Tianjin, China.
<b>20 May</b> 11th EU-China Summit, Prague, Czech Republic: the EU and China addressed the issues of the financial crisis and climate change.
<b>14 May</b> Human Rights Dialogue, Prague, Czech Republic.
27 May EU-China Ministerial Troika, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
28 October 6th meeting of the EU-China Civil Society Round Table, Stockholm, Sweden.
<b>18 November</b> Political Directors' Troika, Stockholm, Sweden.
20 November Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing, China.
29 November Euro-zone Troika and Chinese counterparts, Nanjing, China.
<b>29 November</b> EU-China Ministerial Troika, Nanjing, China.
<b>30 November</b> 12 <sup>th</sup> EU-China Summit, Nanjing, China: the EU and China- agreed to speed

up the negotiations on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and agreed to strengthen people-to-people exchanges and cultural cooperation.
17 December 5 <sup>th</sup> EU-China Strategic Dialogue, Stockholm, Sweden.
2010 28 January EU High Representative C. Ashton meeting with FM Yang Jiechi in margins of London Conference on Afghanistan.
5 February China experts Group meeting.
24-27 February PCA negotiations, Beijing.
16 March Regional Directors' Troika, Brussels, Belgium.
12 April Meeting between President Van Rompuy and President Hu (Washington, on the margins of the Nuclear Security Summit).
26 April-2 May College visit (President Barroso, EU High Representative C. Ashton) to Beijing and Shanghai.
6 May Celebration of the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the EU and China.
21 May 24th EU-China Joint Committee.
26-29 June 29th EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, Madrid, Spain.
<b>29 August- 4 September</b> EU High Representative C. Ashton's visit to China (including first round of the High Level Strategic Dialogue and Foreign Ministerial meeting).
<b>14 September</b> PCA negotiations, Brussels.
<b>6 October</b> 13th EU-China Summit, Brussels: the EU and China addressed issues related to global governance (sustainable growth in a post crisis-world economy), trade and investment and how to strengthen our political dialogue
<b>6-7 October</b> High Level Cultural Forum.
<b>29-30 November</b> Chinese State Councilor Ma Kai visits Brussels.
<b>2011 10-14 January</b> EU-China Year of Youth, official opening ceremony in Brussels.

<b>21-28 February</b> EU-China Year of Youth, official opening ceremony in Beijing.
25 March Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs FU Ying visits Brussels.
<b>1 April</b> Visit of Lu Zhongyuan, office of Premier Wen, to Brussels: Presentation of China's 12 <sup>th</sup> Five-Year-Plan.
<b>12 May</b> 2nd EU-China High Level Strategic Dialogue, Gödöllő, Hungary.
<b>15-18 May 2011</b> President Van Rompuy's visit to China.
17-23 May European Youth Week in Brussels and around Europe.
4-11 July EU-China Youth Culture Week and EU-China Forum on Sustainable Development in Beijing and Xi'an.
7 June EU High Representative C. Ashton met FM Yang in the margins of the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Gödöllő, Hungary.
14 July EU-China Joint Committee, Beijing.
9-15 August EU-China Youth Festival for Universiade and EU-China Forum for Participation in Shenzhen.
<b>4-11 September</b> EU-China Volunteer Bridge in Brussels in the framework of the 2011 EU-China year of Youth.
5-9 September Human Rights Dialogue, Beijing.
8 September EU-China Political Directors' Dialogue, Brussels.
21 September EU High Representative C. Ashton met FM Yang at the margins of the UNGA, NY.
19-22 September Visit of COO O'Sullivan to Beijing (Summit preparations; consultations on the PCA negotiations).
20-27 October EU-China Youth Leaders Summit in Beijing.
24-25 October EU High Representative C. Ashton's visit to China.

16 November 6th Round of EU-China Consultations on African Affairs, Brussels.
2012 17 January EU High Representative C. Ashton met State Counselor Dai Bingguo, New Delhi.
1 February Launch of 2012 EU-China Year of Intercultural Dialogue by A. Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, and Cai Wu, Minister of Culture of the People's Republic of China, Brussels.
<b>14 February</b> 14th EU-China Summit, Beijing: the EU and China discussed bilateral issues including Strategic partnership, trade, climate change. They announced new initiatives: partnership on sustainable urbanisation; high-level people-to- people dialogue; reinforced cooperation on energy.
<b>18 April</b> Launching of the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue by Ms A. Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth and Ms Liu Yandong, State Councilors of the People's Republic of China (Brussels).
3 May Visit of vice-prime minister Li Keqiang to Brussels First EU-China High Level Meeting on Energy Launching of the EU-China Partnership for Urbanisation.
28-31 May Third EU-China High Level Political Parties' and Groups' Forum, Brussels.
29-31 May Human Rights Dialogue, Brussels.
30 May EU High Representative C. Ashton met Wang Jiarui, Minister of the International Department of CPC Central Committee, Beijing.
31 May EU-China Joint Committee, Brussels.
8-13 June Visit of D. Ciolos, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development to China.
14-16 June Visit of K. Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response to China; Launch of EU-China Disaster Risk Management Project and inauguration of the China-EU Institute of Emergency Management/Beijing.
6-9 July Crisis management talks between EU (CMPD-Crisis Management and Planning)

and the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Defence, Beijing.
9-10 July The Third EU-China High Level Strategic Dialogue, Beijing.
20 July EU-China Political Director's Dialogue, Beijing.
19-20 September 1st EU-China Mayors Forum, Brussels.
20 September 15th EU-China Summit, Brussels. Leaders discussed economic and financial issues, trade relations including enhanced market access, public procurement and export credits, further cooperation within the EU-China Strategic Partnership and international issues (Syria, Iran, East Asia). It was the 10th and last EU-China Summit attended by PM Wen Jiabao.
<b>20 September</b> 8th EU-China Business Summit, Brussels.
<b>19-21 October</b> Visit to China of Hedegaard, Commissioner for Climate Action. Bilateral meeting with Mr Xie Zhenhua, Vice Chairman of National Development & Reform Commission (NDRC).
<b>29 November- 1 December</b> Visit to China of Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth; bilateral meeting with HPPD counterpart, State Councillor Liu and Mr. Cai Wu, Minister of Culture; closing ceremony of the EU-China Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the adoption of a new Joint Declaration on EU-China Cultural Cooperation.
<b>2013 19-21 March</b> Training Seminar with Chinese military staff in Brussels.
<b>11-12 April</b> 12th Meeting of the EU-China Round Table, European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels.
<b>25 April</b> 1st meeting of the EU-China Higher Education Platform for Cooperation and Exchanges, Brussels.
<b>25-28 April</b> EU High Representative C. Ashton visit to China. Bilateral meetings with Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Yu Zhengsheng, State Councillor Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi, and State Councillor and Defence Minister General Chang Wanquan.
<b>27 May</b> Trade and Investment Policy Dialogue (TIPD), Brussels.

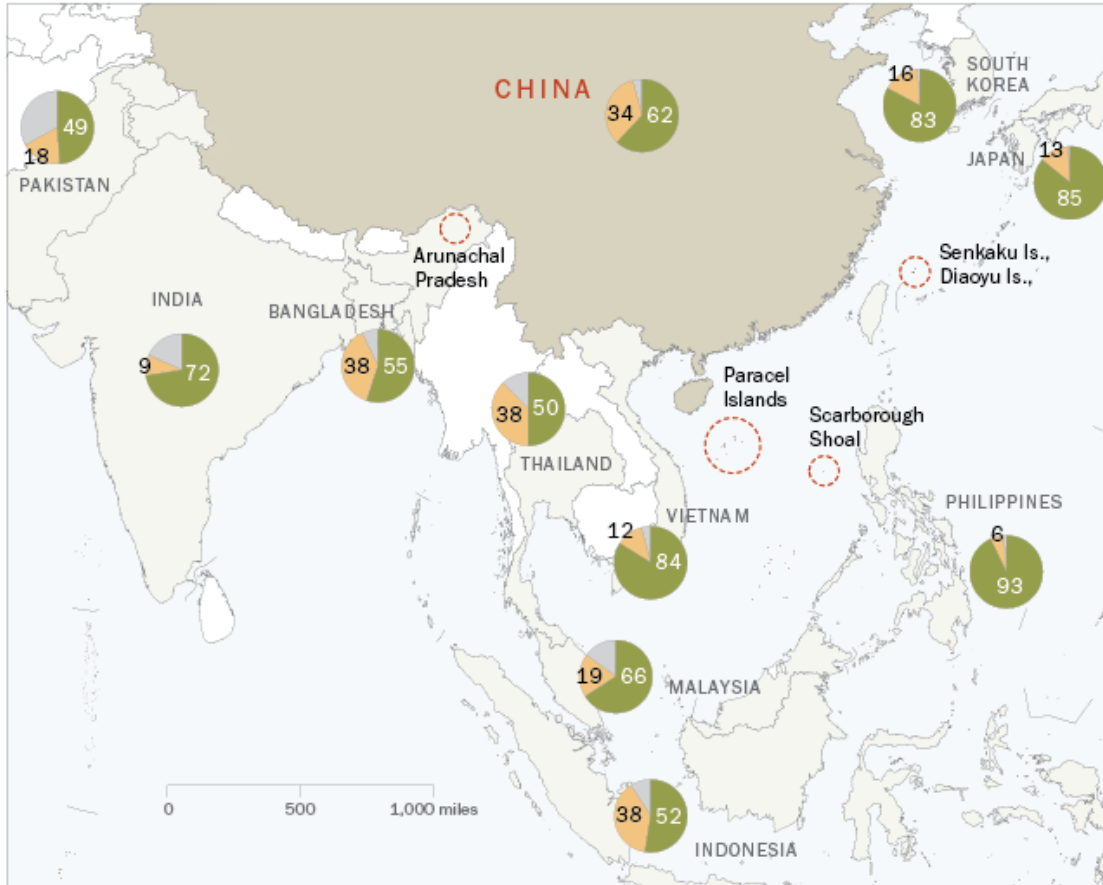
4-7 June Visit of Borg, Commissioner of Health to China.
18-22 June 4 EPP Vice-Presidents visit to China (Mayor Oreja, Weber, Marinescu and Szajer).
21 June EU-China Joint Committee in Beijing (De Gucht, Commissioner for Trade)
24-26 June Human Rights Dialogue in Guiyang (Guizhou), China
(as of May 2013).
<b>15-20 July</b> EP Delegation for relations with the PRC - Interparliamentary meeting (IPM) (Combined with a visit to HK/Macao on 18-19 July).
<b>18-20 July</b> Visit to China of Tajani, Vice- President for Industry and Entrepreneurship, and Potocnik, Commissioner for the Environment (leading a "Mission for Growth" delegation consisting of 80 entrepreneurs).
<b>18-21 July (Mongolia) / 21-24 July (China)</b> Visit to China of Cioclos, Commissioner for agriculture and rural development.
19-21 July Eco Forum Global (EFG) Annual Conference 2013 in Guiyang: participation.
7 August Commissioner Tajani Political Dialogue Meeting of the Global Disarmament and Arms Control and NonProliferation Working Groups with China (Beijing).
30 August Visit of the European Parliament ECR Group, after visiting Mainland China.
9-18 September Visit EUSR for Human Rights to China, including Qinghai and TAR. (Stavros Lambrinidis).
14 October EU-China HL Dialogue on Migration and Mobility , Brussels.
15 October EU-China Dialogue on Public Procurement in Beijing.
24 October High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue in Brussels.
<b>4-8 November</b> Visit to China of L. Andor, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.
<b>13-15 November</b> EU-Hong Kong Structured Dialogue in Hong Kong and EU-Macau Joint

Committee / Asia & Pacific Joint Press & Information Officers & Political Officers Regional Seminar in Macao.
<b>13-15 November</b> Visit to China of Commissioner Georgieva: CCICED (China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development) meeting + EU China Disaster Risk Management activities.
18-19 November 8th EU-China Dialogue on Agriculture in Beijing.
<b>21 November</b> 16th EU-China Summit including Dinner in honour of the two Presidents hosted by President Xi. Adoption of the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation, which covers the following issues: peace and security, prosperity, sustainable development and people-to-people exchanges. The following sides events took place: Urbanisation Forum (21/11), sub-fora and exhibition, High Level Dialogue on Cooperation and Innovation and, 8th EU-China High-Level Dialogue on Regional Policy Cooperation.
<b>22-23 November</b> President Barroso visit to Hong Kong and Macao. 20th anniversary of EU-Macao Trade and Cooperation Agreement.
<b>2014 3 January / 6-7 January</b> Visit of M. Barnier EU Commissioner on Internal Market and Services paid a visit to Hong Kong and Beijing.
<b>15-16 January</b> Visit to China of Rehn, Vice-President for Economic and Monetary Affairs, and the Euro, and President of the Eurogroup Jeroen Dijsselbloem.
<b>20-24 January</b> 1st round of the EU-China Investment Agreement negotiations, held in Beijing.
<b>23-25 January</b> Visit to China of the EUSR for Central Asia.
<b>27 January</b> 4th Annual High-level Strategic Dialogue postponed from 2013, Brussels.

APPENDIX 2:

**China's Border Disputes with Its Neighbors**

*How concerned are you, if at all, that territorial disputes between China and neighboring countries could lead to a military conflict?*



Note: Don't know numbers not shown.

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[http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/14/global-opposition-to-u-s-surveillance-and-drones-but-limited-harm-to-americas-image/pg\\_14-07-14\\_southchinasea\\_640px/](http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/14/global-opposition-to-u-s-surveillance-and-drones-but-limited-harm-to-americas-image/pg_14-07-14_southchinasea_640px/)



**APPENDIX 3: MAIN DISPUTES IN EAST AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**



<http://asianeconomist.blogspot.com.tr/2012/11/philippines-gets-norway-switzerland.html#.Va0svxPtmko>

## APPENDIX 4:

### OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN EAST ASIA

Organisation	Founded	Members	Enlargement	Focus and formats
<b>1. ASEAN-centered</b>				
ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM)	2006	10 ASEAN member states		non-traditional security, meeting of defense ministers
ADMM+	2010	= EAS 2011 (ASEAN+8)		meeting of defense ministers, confidence building and capacity building (areas: counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security, military medicine, peacekeeping; new: humanitarian mine action) <sup>f</sup>
ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF)	2010	10 ASEAN member states		maritime cooperation (environment, illegal fishing, piracy, eco-tourism, freedom of navigation), Track 1.5 <sup>g</sup>
Expanded AMF (EAMF)	2012	= EAS 2011 (ASEAN+8)		maritime cooperation (like AMF) <sup>h</sup>
Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) <sup>i</sup>	1993	ASEAN member states (minus Laos and Myanmar) + 8 + EU, Canada, Mongolia, North Korea, Papua New Guinea (= 21) + associated: Secretariat of the Pacific Island Forum		security topics, Track 2 (informal, experts), working groups on changing topics

a Full text of the treaty: <http://www.asean.org/news/item/treaty-of-amicity-and-cooperation-in-southeast-asia-indonesia-24-february-1976-3> (accessed 12 November 2014).

b Cf. ASEAN, *Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015)*, Jakarta, April 2009, [http://www.mei.go.jp/policy/trade\\_policy/east\\_asia/dl/ASEANblueprint.pdf](http://www.mei.go.jp/policy/trade_policy/east_asia/dl/ASEANblueprint.pdf) (accessed 12 August 2014).

c See ADP website: <http://conventionforum.asean.org/> (accessed 11 December 2014).

(accessed 28 January 2015).

g "Track 1" meetings are official talks between government representatives. "Track 2" meetings are informal exchanges mostly between persons from academic or religious circles or from non-government organizations. In "track 1.5" meetings, both groups come together for informal talks.

Table 2: Overview of Regional Organizations in East Asia

Organisation	Founded	Members	Enlargement	Focus and formats
<b>1. ASEAN-centered</b>				
ASEAN	1967	originally Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand (= 5)	Brunei (1984), Vietnam (1995), Laos, Myanmar (1997), Cambodia (1999) (+ 5 = 10)	comprehensive agenda, Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) 1976, <sup>a</sup> goal: community with the three pillars economy, society/culture, politics/security <sup>b</sup>
ASEAN Post-Ministerial Meeting	1977	10 ASEAN member states + 10 dialogue partners (Australia, China, EU, India, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, US) (= 20)		international economy and politics, transnational topics like organized crime, drug smuggling, human trafficking, environment and health; additional format: ASEAN+1 with every dialogue partner
ASEAN-Regionalforum (ARF) <sup>c</sup>	1994	10 ASEAN member states + 10 dialogue partners + Bangladesh, Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste (= 27)		regional security, non-traditional security (disaster relief, confidence-building, preventive diplomacy), meeting of foreign ministers, meeting of representatives from defense ministries (ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue, DOD), conferences on security policy (ARF Security Policy Conference, ASPC)
ASEAN+3 (APT)	1997	10 ASEAN member states + China, Japan, South Korea		economy/finances, response to Asian financial crisis, Chiang-Mai-Initiative
Plus 3	2004	China, Japan, South Korea		separate summits since 2008, Tri-lateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) 2011, <sup>d</sup> political relations, global economy, disaster relief
East Asia Summit (EAS)	2005	originally ASEAN + 3 + 3 (Australia, India, New Zealand)	2011: + Russia and US	comprehensive agenda, <sup>e</sup> priorities: environment and energy, education, finances, global health and pandemics, managing natural disasters, ASEAN connectivity

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