China: Friend or Foe?

UNDERSTANDING THE U.S PACIFIC PIVOT
TOWARDS CHINA’S CONFUSING CONFUCIANISM

Keywords: China, USA, Harmonious World, Peaceful Rise, Pivot, Mearsheimer, Confucianism, Offensive realism, Defensive realism

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ABSTRACT

The great strategic distrust between the two world largest economic and military powers is one of the most debated topics in contemporary international relations. This thesis question if the current hegemon view its new competitor as an offensive or defensive realist state and which policies should consequently be taken. China’s policy of peaceful coexistence and the U.S attempt of global integration may not be fully compatible and the thesis illuminates the contradicting notions of China Confucius values and how they are visible in its foreign policy rhetoric.

The thesis conclude by stating that the China’s ambitions in not seen as following the guidelines of a defensive realist state in the eye of the United States and that China’s so called unique characteristics and values are mere rhetoric that does not seem to shape its current foreign policy. The U.S response is so far a passive containment by increasing cooperation with other actors in the region as a balancing act while simultaneously cautiously engage and try to influence China to adopt policies fitting a global player and work for peaceful solutions to international problems. Thus China is not seen as either a friend or a foe but is currently viewed as being in a grey area of competitor and cooperator.
“Let China sleep, for when the Dragon awakes, she will shake the world”

- Napoleon Bonaparte
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1. Introduction

The rise of China is one of the most fundamental events of our time, in just a manner of decades China has gone from being a poor rural country to the world’s 2nd largest economy and literally raising hundreds of millions of its citizens from poverty to middle class status. China’s rapid development is unprecedented and occurring at the same time that the Western world is in economic decline and the current focus of international politics is thus shifting its center for gravity from the Atlantic to the Pacific and indicating the end of the unipolar world. For the first time since the Cold War the United States now seems to have a new competitor and many pundits and politicians have been quick to point out similar historical events that have led to war between the dominant power and upcoming rivals.

As the U.S and China now constitute the greatest powers with the largest economies\(^1\) and highest military spending\(^2\) in the world, the relationship between them and how they view one another is of great importance for international stability. In the last two decades countless of scholars have focused on this new world order that is emerging,\(^3\) recent publications with the words “China” and “rise” in the title alone are enough to fill a small library. While researchers from all fields are discussing China and the threat it poses to U.S dominance, this paper will address it from the realist camp using an offensive- and defensive realism approach.

In a dialogue in Foreign Policy Magazine neatly titled the “Clash of the Titans”, John Mearsheimer, the champion of offensive realism goes head-to-head with defensive realist Zbigniew Brzezinski on China-U.S relations and whether the two will likely compete or cooperate in the future.\(^4\) According to Mearsheimer, China and the United States are destined to become rivals, and thus the world is inevitably heading into a new Cold War which could become ‘hot’ with military confrontation between the two superpowers. On the other side, viewing the power relations between the United States and China with a defensive realism lens such as Brzezinski does, the rise of China could become a great and unique opportunity to deepen the relationship and together build a harmonious world based on equality among nations and human rights. Using U.S view on China as a case study, this thesis studies Mearsheimer’s ‘tragic prediction’ of great power politics compared to the less pessimistic view of defensive realists such as Brzezinski.

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\(^1\) United Nations (2012) UN Statistics - List of countries by GDP (nominal)  
\(^2\) SIPRI (2012) The 15 countries with the highest military spending worldwide in 2012  
1.1 Problem Statement and Purpose of Paper
Sharing a land border with fourteen other nations and additional three at sea, China has more neighbors than any other country, and they are increasingly worried over China’s growing assertiveness in the region as it continues to grow both militarily and economically. To ease these foreign concerns, China has labelled its growth as a “peaceful rise”\textsuperscript{5} that does not aspire to threaten or disrupt the current world order. China argues that its Confucian values withhold malign intentions and hegemonic ambitions. Outsiders though remain vary and in recent years tensions have been rising with the more assertive China towards its neighbors, involving military confrontations with the Indian Army along China’s southern border,\textsuperscript{6} clashes with the Japanese Coast Guard in the East China Sea\textsuperscript{7} and even a collision with the U.S Air force over the South China Sea\textsuperscript{8}. So far these incidents have not escalated into deadly use of force, but regional actors are increasingly worried and the U.S has responded by officially shifting its strategic focus to the Asia-Pacific region.\textsuperscript{9} This could either be interpreted as a move by the U.S in order to preserve its dominance in the region by trying to contain China or as an effort by the U.S to take one the role of a regional conciliator and a balancer, accommodating China’s rise by encourage it to become a partner and a responsible global power.

The purpose of this paper is two folded, first to examine offensive- and defensive realist views of the current U.S foreign policy towards China and consequently the whole region. Secondly the paper aims to examine the Confucian values that China often says it adheres to in its foreign policy, if and how these are visible and then might influence the perception of China’s ambitions. The scope of the paper is limited to analyzing U.S policy and statements for the Asia-Pacific between the years 2009 to 2013.

1.2 Research Question
The international system is moving from away from a unipolar to a multipolar system, some even predict a new bipolar world with the U.S at one end and China at the other. Regardless of which, China is a world power but will its development be that of a responsible stakeholder or does it more resemble a revisionist power that seeks to challenge the U.S?

- How does the United States under President Obama view the emerging China?
  Is China seen as an offensive realist state which needs containing or a defensive realist state which the U.S seeks to cooperate with?

\textsuperscript{5} Cui Liru (2012) “Peaceful Rise: China's Modernisation Trajectory”, p. 15
\textsuperscript{6} The Diplomat (2013) ”India Caves to China on Border Dispute”
\textsuperscript{7} People’s Daily English (2012) “Japan mulls bill over sea clashes”
\textsuperscript{8} Bader, Jeffrey A (2012) Obama and China’s Rise, p. 20
\textsuperscript{9} Clinton, Hillary (2011) “America’s Pacific Century”
1.3 Theoretical Framework

While a number of other theories such as liberalism could have been used for this study, this paper focuses solely on realism since the purpose is viewing a states’ view of another in terms of its ambitions and thoughts of power politics. While defensive realism shares many traits with neoliberalism they do differ in their behavior where defensive realist is dictating their actions by interest and neoliberals by ideas and institutional norms.\footnote{Tang, Shiping (2010) A Theory of Security Strategy for our Time – Defensive Realism, p. 126}

The Power transition theory in international relations concerns the cyclic nature of conflict between nations and state that this is of greatest likelihood when a new challenger achieves parity with the previous dominant power in the system. Challengers can either be status quo powers in the sense that they see themselves as benefiting most from the existing system and does not want to change the current order, hence labelled defensive realists, or they can be ‘revisionist states’ whom instead are dissatisfied with their position in the system and tries to change the it and its norm, thus following the guidelines of offensive realist states. China though claims to be aware but not affected by these theories, arguing that it is and always have been uniquely pacific and defensive in nature due to its Confucian values and citing its non-expansionistic behavior with the Great Wall as a prime example.\footnote{Latham, Andrew (2007) “The Confucian Continuities of Chinese Geopolitical Discourse”, p. 247}

As realism is one of the most prominent theories in the field of international relations it is often further divided into several subcategories which all share a common base. One of realisms core assumptions is that states are the primary actors in the international system and that survival is their primary focus, the system is viewed as anarchic because of the lacking of an authority on a level above governments, although anarchic is opposite to hierarchic it does not necessarily mean a constant presence of conflicts.\footnote{Mearsheimer, John J (2001) The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, p. 30} A significant viewpoint, especially in defensive realism is the concept of the security dilemma. The security dilemma implies that the perceived strength and weakness of a state is essential in determining its relation with other states. A powerful state can be seen as provocative for other states, fearing their own security and causing an arms race and/or a balancing act towards the strong state, an action alluding to where several states come together to counter the stronger state. On the opposite side, if a state is viewed by others as weak in its capability or firmness it will attract others to test it on different issues. If the weak or status quo power then retreats it will only encourage even harder pressure from the aggressor and would have a difficult time in reaffirming its assertiveness and capability. The dilemma is therefor to arm oneself just enough so as to not be viewed as neither
threatening nor prey to other states.\textsuperscript{13} Offensive realists tend to either deny the existence of the security dilemma or try to escape it by accumulating more power.\textsuperscript{14}

In this hierarchic system, all nations are constantly trying to influence one another, either by incentives and soft power or coercion and threats using hard power such as military and economic might. Which of these tools that are used depend on the relationship between the states involved as well as their capabilities and sense of security. While defensive realism is mostly normative, describing how reality should ideally functions, offensive realism claims to be purely descriptive and explain how reality actually looks like.

\subsection{1.3.1 Offensive Realism}
John Mearsheimer is the foremost champion of offensive realism and presents this theory in detail in his work \textit{The Tragedy of Great Power Politics}, and as his title hints, the relationship between great powers with this theoretical perspective is destined to lead to rivalry. Offensive realism contains a quite aggressive and pessimistic view and consider security to be best achieved through states use of power-maximizing on the expense of others, offensive realist states does not bother as much on how they are viewed by others and the theory proclaim that states will take every opportunity to achieve a position of hegemon,\textsuperscript{15} hence the theory gives little regards to the use of soft power. States will by their nature take every opportunity possible for increasing its security by expansion and conflict is thus inevitable.\textsuperscript{16} On a global scale hegemony is impossible according to Mearsheimer but it is achievable on a regional level and then would form the best way to survival which is every states’ primary goal. Therefor states adhering to offensive realism do see all others as offensive realists as well. This view of security thus rejects the notion of retaining a status quo relations with others states or of imposing self-restraints upon oneself.\textsuperscript{17,18}

The theory lay much emphasis on military power which it proclames to be of ultimate importance in international politics,\textsuperscript{19} and that all states possess some offensive military capacities to hurt or even destroy each other. Because no state can be absolutely sure of other states intentions or that others will not use force against them it is always better to be as powerful as possible according to offensive realism. Intentions may also change, sometimes

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{footnote13} Jervis, Robert (1978) "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma", p. 169
\bibitem{footnote14} Tang (2010) p. 118
\bibitem{footnote15} Ibid., p. 21
\bibitem{footnote16} Tang, Shiping (2008) “From Offensive to Defensive Realism”, p. 150f
\bibitem{footnote17} Mearsheimer (2001) p. 29
\bibitem{footnote18} Tang (2010) p. 109
\bibitem{footnote19} Mearsheimer (2001) p. 56
\end{thebibliography}
rapidly and hostile intentions in the combination with offensive military capabilities will always be a great danger to other states which they are directed at.\textsuperscript{20} Offensive realism do view great powers as rational actors that pay attention to both short term benefits and the long term consequences of their decisions,\textsuperscript{21} and a rational actor would likely chose to confront an emerging rival before it grows to powerful just as a rising power could chose to confront the hegemon to establish itself. Short term risks for possible long term security is thus a probable option for an offensive realist, as well as the perception that states do not act towards others according to what state ‘A’ believes state ‘B’s intention is today but what state ‘B’s intention could be tomorrow. States are hence wary in forming alliances but may enter into one temporarily when suitable but in these cases the degree of power of the members is the important factor, not their ideology. Offensive realist states can also use strategies containing less or no violence to others, such as to intentionally weaken opposite alliances, engineering political instability in other nations or sabotaging others economic growth.\textsuperscript{22}

The ‘China threat theory’ is a somewhat vague term and alludes to China’s growing military and economic strength, the fear is that as China continues to grow and become more powerful it will destabilize the Asia-Pacific region.\textsuperscript{23} This has been discussed since the early 1990’s and thus precedes Mearsheimer’s offensive realism but it is this author’s viewpoint that these are not only compatible but to a large extent, the one and the same. Mearsheimer often uses China as an example of his theory and argues that its rise will be all but peaceful and eventually China will not accept the status quo relationship with the U.S as the hegemon in its region and will instead seek to challenge it. Mearsheimer’s realism proclaims that states seek power and the only reason we have not seen this earlier for China is because the lack of military and economic capability, but as these change so will China’s intentions. Mearsheimer argues that just as the U.S. saw regional domination and later hegemony in the Western hemisphere as the primary goal for securing its survival during its rise, so will China in East Asia.

Offensive realism use historical analogies in comparing China with other rising powers in history and their subsequent aggressive and expansionists’ policies. Subscribers to the China threat theory does seldom discuss in detail the real threat to the West (although it is always implied) but tend to focus on identify the initial signs of what they see as China confronting the

\textsuperscript{20} Mearsheimer (2001) p. 31
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 30-31
\textsuperscript{22} Tang (2010) p. 109
\textsuperscript{23} Roy, Dennis (1996) “The ‘China Threat’ Issue: Major Arguments”, p. 758f
U.S position as a hegemon. The negative aspects of this are subtlety implied in the language by referring to the authoritarian China and the democratic United States or the liberal West.

While the threat theorist’s focus solely on China, Mearsheimer lays as much focus on the current hegemon and the basic principle in offensive realism in is to dominate your own region and not let others dominate theirs, hence Mearsheimer argues that the U.S. recent focus to Asia is all about containing China.24 Offensive realism predicts that China, as a rising power, will seek to increase its security by power maximizing through “push[ing] the United States out of Asia, much the way the United States pushed the European great powers out of the Western Hemisphere.”25 The United States however, “does not tolerate peer competitors.”26 The clash of these two giants can therefore not be blamed for one or the other, it is merely the consequence of when an emerging power confronts the present hegemon within the international system. Mearsheimer see the security competition as unavoidable and proclaim that soft rhetoric will be used by both and we should instead focus on their actions. Mearsheimer argues that the initial problem is not China’s rise, that is a problem for the next decade, the central problem of today is the U.S imperial impulse and Obama’s Pivot strategy which is all about containing China Mearsheimer concludes.27 Joseph Nye adheres to this position and states that “the best way to make an enemy of China is to treat it like one”.28

1.3.2 Defensive Realism

While Mearsheimer’s work laid the foundation of offensive realism, there is no similar established champion of defensive realism. This paper use the works of Zbigniew Brzezinski and Shiping Tang on defensive realism and how the theory best see security achieved. Contrary to offensive realism which is characterized by states insatiable thirst for power through aggressive expansion when possible, defensive realism is often described as states’ strive for maintaining the status quo power-relationship between one and other. Although the argument is a bit too simplistic as Tang argues in that “a state that is striving to maintain the spoils of past aggression and conquest is no different from a state that is actively expanding or conquering. The former is as much an offensive realist state as the latter”,29 thus a status quo power should not be distinctly associated with only defensive realism, although Tang writes that a revisionist state is much more likely to be an offensive realist state.

24 Mearsheimer, John J (2012) Theory Talk #49: Power as the Currency of International Relations, p. 10f
26 Ibid.
27 Mearsheimer (2012) p. 3
Defensive realism is however not as prone to immediately assume the worst in others intentions as offensive realism does and is more open to cooperation between states,\textsuperscript{30} whereas offensive realism only views cooperation as a temporarily solution when facing a common threat. Offensive realism argues that states are inherently violent and unreliable towards each other which make cooperation a risky business “due to the concern for relative gains, the temptation to cheat, the high cost of being cheated, and the difficulty of detecting cheaters”.\textsuperscript{31} Defensive realist states in contrast see the cost of being fooled as a reason for cooperation and thus actively seek extensive cooperation with other like-minded states but could also with some risk extend an invitation to state’s whose aims are unknown in order to determine their intentions while it also functions as an engagement strategy.\textsuperscript{32}

Offensive realism does not see any downside with maximizing relative power, instead view it as the only efficient way to provide ones’ own security, defensive realism in contrary see cooperation as a better security strategy and a believe a maximizing strategy to be counterproductive. The reasoning is that other states will conjointly try to balance against a maximizing power and that will lead to a security dilemma, hence making the strategy of maximizing relative power a self-defeating purpose.\textsuperscript{33} Thus, a security dilemma arises when leaders fail to recognize that their own military posture may be seen as threatening to others.

Brzezinski believes that the U.S central challenge is to accommodate China’s place as a reemerged global actor. Brzezinski argues that if this fails we would see the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century Europe repeat itself in East Asia, with increasing tensions and nationalistic rivalry that would possibly incite armed conflicts. Brzezinski stresses that the U.S Asia policy must be an all-embracing one and not solely focus on China, he declares that the America “must be the balancer and conciliator between the major powers in the East”.\textsuperscript{34} Meaning that the U.S Asia policy should strive towards reconciliation in Asia and act as a balancer in the region by replicating Great Britain’s role in European politics during the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Defensive realisms aims to changing its adversaries’ mindset so that they become a more like-minded defensive realist state by increased confidence building measures and by acting firm when required.\textsuperscript{35} Defensive realists thus see Obama’s Pivot strategy as a way of engaging China while also acting as a regional balancer.

\textsuperscript{30}Tang (2010) p. 19
\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., p. 20
\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 103
\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 21f
\textsuperscript{34}Brzezinski, Zbigniew (2012) Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global, p. 185
\textsuperscript{35}Tang (2010) p. 122f
1.4 Operationalization

The operationalization of this study is made by identifying variables according to ideal types of the theories, as portrayed in the matrix below. The theoretical presentation states that defensive realists see most conflicts as avoidable and cooperation as an option for resolving disputes, while offensive realists would intentionally threaten each other and conflict is thus genuinely irreconcilable. If we see China as guided by offensive realism, the rational choice for both defensive and offensive realist states would be a containment policy until China diverges from this path. If instead China viewed as following a defensive realism strategy, other defensive realist states would go for an engagement policy and cooperation. Tang eloquently describes this dilemma in “planning a sound China policy depends on figuring out what grand strategy of international policy is guiding and will guide China’s security strategy”. To assess if a state is guided by defensive realism it should have a tolerant policy towards minorities and neighboring states and a rational military and arms control policy. It must also recognize and understand the security dilemma and most importantly, a defensive realist state “exercises self-restraint and is willing to be constrained by other countries”.

To understand if China is a defensive or realist state in the eyes of the U.S three questions are examined in U.S documents and statements. First, does China seek to challenge the status quo and U.S dominance in the Asia-Pacific? Secondly, does China acknowledge the security dilemma that its military buildup could create? Thirdly, do Chinese policies seem to change as it capabilities grow? These questions together with the defensive-offensive matrix below forms the analytical tool in determining if China is a benign state to be accommodated or a malign state which needs to be contained. In case of the latter, containment could be either passive by or active, passive containment reacts to aggressive moves but do not provoke them while an active containment strategy does not only defend and deter but also initiate confrontations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Defensive Realist States</th>
<th>Offensive Realist States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Ambitions</td>
<td>No. Status Quo</td>
<td>Yes. As much as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View on Cooperation / Alliances (motives)</td>
<td>Preferred (Ideology important)</td>
<td>When suitable (Power dominates)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View on War &amp; Conflict</td>
<td>Often Avoidable</td>
<td>Inevitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts of Soft Power</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance to other states and domestic minorities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Achieved by</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Power Maximizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises Self-Restraints</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37 Tang (2010) p. 102
1.5 Earlier Research

Henry Kissinger is a well-known American statesman that has served as top advisor and Secretary of State to both President Nixon and President Ford and was at the helm during U.S diplomatic shift towards China in the 1970’s. He describe how China does not see itself as a rising power but a returning one, which growing influence will not challenge world order but return it to normalcy. Kissinger is often portrayed as a former hawk turn to dove and his account of modern U.S-Sino relations led to the instant classic *On China* (2011) in which he thoroughly presents a view from the inside of the evolving relationship between the two countries. Kissinger states in his book that “China fear that America is trying to contain China, paralleled by the American concern that China is seeking to expel the United States from Asia”. To face this, he proposes a formation of a Pacific Community that should strive for diminish these concerns by increasing cooperation like the Atlantic Community which was formed at the end of World War II and has been a steady strategic pillar ever since.

David Shambaugh is an esteemed China expert, member of the Council of Foreign Relations and often serves as advisor to the U.S government regarding its China policies. In his latest work on China, Shambaugh confronts the prevailing discourse of this newest Asian miracle, following the footsteps of Japan and the Asian tiger economies before it. Shambaugh does not dispute that China today play a bigger role in global politics but he argues that its actual power and influence is partial at best and does not see it replacing U.S dominance anytime soon. China is still too focused inwards and most of its largest companies are unknown outside its borders. China may be the largest trading partner for most countries today but no other nation aspires to resemble its political system or culture. He argues that “China has a broad footprint in the world, but it is not very deep”, lacking both allies and trust with other nations as well as an understanding of the use of soft power. Shambaugh concludes that China is a lonely power, its diplomacy and view of security is divided in two, extremely proud of it history while simultaneously extremely insecure stemming from a feeling of humiliation that it now developing into a retributive nationalism. Shambaugh’s research could be used in arguing that China has little to lose in a conflict, and if it adheres to offensive realism, it would not bother with soft power or its image abroad.

38 Kissinger, Henry (2011) *On China*, p. 528
40 Shambaugh, (2013) p. 58
Jeffrey Bader served as director for East Asian affairs on the National Security Council during President Obama’s first two years and like Kissinger he published an insider’s view of the administration’s policy towards China, albeit with a more contemporary focus. Bader is a defensive realist like Kissinger and advocates an engagement policy with China and was dismayed by the wording of some U.S policies towards the Asia-Pacific. Bader tried to repair and build greater trust and cooperation with China during his time in the administration, however he stresses that the U.S must react in a balanced way towards China and always be ready to assert firmness when China overreaches or when regional allies need to be reassured.\footnote{Bader, Jeffrey A (2012) \textit{Obama and China’s Rise}, p. 142f}

Aaron Friedberg describes how China does not resemble any of the U.S former adversaries or strategic thoughts. It is the first power to rise in the system the America built, but it is not a democracy although it practices capitalism and has a strong trading relationship with the U.S, which it soon will surpass in being the world largest economy. Friedberg preach caution as he argues that China is winning without fighting and will eventually push America out of Asia and sees too many incline to “accentuate the positive” of China’s rise and ignoring deep conflicting interest between U.S and China.\footnote{Friedberg, Aaron L (2011) \textit{A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia}, p. 264f} Friedberg points to China’s growing offensive military capabilities as a threat as well as its large industrial espionage and cyber-penetration. He argues that the U.S with regional allies must balance against China by responding to Beijing’s military buildup in order to reassure allies and that the U.S should ignore China’s rhetoric, regardless of when it is soft or when it is aggressive.\footnote{Ibid., 274f} Friedberg writes that the U.S should focus on strengthening Asian allies by either establishing a NATO equivalent or a community of Asian democracies that together can counter China’s growing influence.\footnote{Ibid., 282f}

Samuel Huntington (1927-2008) was an influential political scientist whose work on the Post-Cold War order and the Clash of Civilization theory is often cited. Huntington saw culture as the primary arena for future conflicts and he describes this new form of power struggle as “the “West versus the rest”.\footnote{Huntington, Samuel P (1993) \textit{“The Clash of Civilizations?”}, p. 39} Huntington divides the world into eight different civilizations in which the West and the Confucian world constitute two of them. He sees these two as the most likely candidates to clash, he elaborates this by pointing to that the size of the Confucian and Islamic civilizations make them powerful enough to resist westernization.\footnote{Ibid., p. 45} His hypothesis is
that the West will then try to contain the Confucian world by maintaining a military dominance in Asia. He concludes by stressing that with this view of increasing civilizational identity, it is of great importance to accommodate and understand different cultural interest and beliefs for maintaining a peaceful coexistence. Huntington’s work has been increasingly popular in the 21st century because of the focus of international terrorism, religious extremists with wars in the Middle East and the economic decline of the West and rise of the rest, especially China.

1.6 Disposition and Definitions
The thesis first section thoroughly presents the theories connected to the research question and purpose, this section also provides the analytical tool for operationalization and illustration of earlier research on the subject. Section two is all about the method and its application while also presenting the empirical material. Section three gives a historical background of China and Confucius philosophy as it relates to stated policies and the purpose of the paper. While the empirical material primarily focuses on current developments a historical and cultural context is necessary for a better understanding on the subject. Section four presents current the policies which are highly debated in contemporary security studies and must therefore be explained before the final analysis in section five. As something both offensive and defensive realists agree with, rhetoric is not always coupled with actions, hence section four focuses on the official wording of foreign policy and section five with the actual deeds. This then provides a clear train of thought and the underlining reasoning when presenting the thesis conclusions.

To simplify to the reader this study will distinctively use the more common names such as China when referring to the People Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan when referring to the Republic of China (ROC). Using the two Chinas’ full official names is considered confusing to the reader. China’s ruling communist party is often only written with its acronym (CCP) and the Chinese military, regardless of branch is simply referred to as the PLA (People’s Liberation Army) throughout the paper. Adhering to the prevalent discourse, the geographical region of interest in simply referred to as the Asia-Pacific, as Secretary Hillary Clinton said "[s]tretching from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas" or as the U.S Pacific Commander refers to it as encompassing the area from “Hollywood to Bollywood and polar bears to penguins.”

47 Huntington (1993), p. 49
48 Clinton, Hillary (2011) “America’s Pacific Century”
2. Methodology

This thesis defines the United States opinion as stated by official government documents as well as public remarks by top political leaders such as the President, Vice-President, the National Security Advisor and the Secretaries of State and Defense. The study uses a deductive approach with a qualitative textual analysis. Deductive reasoning is often referred to as top-down approach, meaning that the study starts with posing a research question and a theory to test, rather than an inductive approach that starts bottom-up and thus trying to identify patterns and draw conclusions along the way which can form a new theory. By focusing on official remarks the study achieves greater validity to then a media analysis would provide.

2.1 Qualitative Textual Analysis

The strength of qualitative textual analysis is in the careful and repeated reading of texts to understand and identify the producer’s agenda. Esaiasson et al. describes qualitative textual analysis as a useful method when trying to ascertain the true intentions of significant actors. This is done by analyze the entirety of a text and identify the key arguments concealed within that material. The aim of this method is not to summarize but to account for, discuss and question these identified arguments.\(^50\) Using this method the author can categorize the material in accordance to ideal types and thereby demonstrating a good intersubjectivity, meaning that other researchers can conduct a similar study and end of with the same result.\(^51\)

Ideal types are an analytical instrument which enable us to simplify by focusing on special characteristics that are in the line of particular theories,\(^52\) a framework that in itself does not explain reality but is helpful when trying to classify and compare. Careful consideration is however needed since this method may tempt the author to force the material to predetermined categories that may be less than ideal.\(^53\)

When using a qualitative textual analysis, Esaiasson et al. accounts for four interpretational factors that depicts how easily, or difficult, a text is to comprehend.\(^54\) The first being the complexity in discussing what is actually being said compared to its subtle meaning, a factor that will always be of some degree of interpretation by the reader. As example when the U.S say that they will keep preserve the freedom of the seas in East Asia, which is currently not threaten but the argument provides provide legitimacy for U.S naval presence close to Chinese

\(^{51}\) Bergström, Göran & Borèus Kristina (2005) *Textens mening och makt*, p. 36
\(^{52}\) Ibid., p. 159
\(^{53}\) Ibid., p. 172
\(^{54}\) Esaiasson, et al. (2012), p. 221-222
waters. The second factor is described as ‘clarity of mind’, meaning the interest of the text producer to be either clear or ambiguous, although vague statements may also be the result of the sender’s inability to define their own objectives for oneself. Such as China’s statement of military response to foreign intervention in China, especially when concerning disputed territories since these may or may not be regarded as Chinese. The third factor when it comes to understanding a text involves the contemporary perspective of the sender, the receiver and the scholar. Since this study deals with modern statements and reports directed to the international community this particular factor will not be of particular concern for a student in international politics. The fourth and last factor is concerning the distance to the interpreter of the material, how familiar he or she is to the environment in which it is produced. This may prove to be the most challenging factor in analyzing states view of foreign policy and the U.S documents themselves describe this difficulty in regard to their own comprehension of China’s white papers. Understanding how strategy is shaped is however mostly based on a national interest and values that generally does not adhere to political views of the political left or the right when it concerns foreign policy.55

A textual analysis scans a text in its entirety and then highlights and questions the key arguments (which are sometimes hidden) as well as connect them to recognizable ideal types which in this study is offensive and defensive realism. This method help shed light on the important thoughts in the material and as Göran Bergström and Kristina Boréus argues, language may not fully describe the reality but it does help shape it, hence its relevance.

The application of the method on the material is done by first understanding what is implicit in the text but also what is portrayed as so explicit that no deeper explanation is given to the reader. Secondly the method identifies the subject’s positions, recognizing their actions and perceived effect. Finally, discover what is not discussed about oneself and others in the language and the material representation of reality. This is presented to the reader by highlighting words and phrases to show how arguments in the material expose the producer’s opinions and follows Bergström/Boréus recommendation of using quotations to increase the transparency of the study.57 The highlighted excerpts is selected by their relevance in connection to the thesis research question and material and also regarding its bearing within the material.

55 Bader, p. 141
56 Bergström & Boréus, p. 305
57 Ibid., p. 354
2.2 Material
Strictly analyzing documents detailing government strategies and stated policies provide some understanding of perceived security concerns, but they are not fully adequate when explaining the reasoning of its producers. Since these documents are open to the public they will not point to other nations’ that the U.S has diplomatic relations with wordings like ‘enemy’ or ‘containment’. For this reason the study will complement the data with statements by high ranking officials as to better understand the American strategy towards China and the region.

The primary source of analysis will consist of U.S view of China’s military and security developments, and in which China’s own white papers are analyzed. This report is annually delivered to congress by the Department of Defense (DOD) and provides an update on China’s behavior, capabilities and U.S understanding of China’s intentions. Other important documents are U.S Defense Strategic Guidelines, U.S Military Strategy and U.S National Security Strategy which lay the basis for the U.S security policy. Some works by prominent experts on China and U.S foreign policy will be used in describing the historical background and current policies, while some additional articles are incorporated when needed for up-to-date events and context.

3. The Reemerged China
Before examining U.S perception of China in detail, a historical account is needed as well as a presentation of Confucianism as it is often cited in portraying China’s ambitions, culture and history by virtually all pundits and practitioners regarding the subject of China’s rise. In order to better comprehend what China wants we must first understand where it is coming from, the following historical context is thus intended to provide a clear point of departure for the reader and better grasp of the policies analyzed in the following sections.

3.1 Chinese Confucianism
Andrew Latham writes that realism is insufficient in explaining China’s interests and recurring patterns since “Chinese officials are constituted through, and embedded in, social and cultural systems that produce the discourses, narratives, and frames through which they first make sense of the world and then act in it.” 58 Subsequently Latham argues that a Confucian narrative and morality must be taken into account which state that “a country’s cultural greatness determined its power in the world” and this is something that have great influence on the Chinese policy establishment today. 59 Later on this study will depict if that is the case from the U.S viewpoint.

58 Latham, p. 243
59 Ibid., p. 250
Since the legendary journeys of Marco Polo, China has been seen as a strange and fascinating civilization for the West which has had a difficult time understanding it. The pragmatic China does not hold a monotheistic religion, and nor does it devote itself to accumulation of individual wealth but claim to live by Confucian values which centers on peaceful coexistence and harmony. Kissinger illustrate the interesting feature that the Chinese civilization does not conform itself with a creation myth like most other cultures, instead the Chinese believe that the universe was simply created and upheld by the Chinese themselves and rested on their values and not some cosmic creator who spoke of life after death. Well illustrated in the tale of the Yellow Emperor which describes how the Emperor restores the empire which has once again fallen into chaos, but he does not create it. Because China have always been there, constantly fallen in and out of unity.

Confucius was a Chinese philosopher that lived in the 5th century BC and he, like the Yellow Emperor did not create something new but merely attempted to restore old values and harmony which had existed before in the golden age of the Chinese civilization. Confucius preaching’s have evolved to what we today call Confucianism and could be simplified to Western audience as a combination of both ethical rules and political beliefs. It has no real equivalent in the Western world and has come to symbolize the Chinese culture and its values both internationally as well as domestically. Long after the death of Confucius his teaching was compiled and later adopted as the state philosophy, Kissinger defines it as evolving “into something akin to China’s Bible and Constitution combined.”

In the Confucian philosophy, individuals are linked to the society and the world through a moral and cultural order which rest on the virtues of a just ruler, who controlled a harmonious society that did not need, nor wished for a large military; soldiers were not even reputable enough to belong to one of the occupational groups according to old Confucian philosophers. Citizens would know their place in the state hierarchy under the Emperor and this “philosophy sought the redemption of the state through righteous individual behavior. Oriented toward this world, [Confucius] thinking affirmed a code of social conduct, not a roadmap to the afterlife.”

The state must strive to achieve harmonious coexistence with different or even conflicting ideas

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60 Kissinger, p 13
61 Ibid., p. 7
62 Kissinger, p. 7
63 Kwok, p. 32
64 Kissinger, p. 14
65 Cao, Qing (2007) Confucian Vision of a New World Order?, p. 437
67 Kissinger, p. 15
that together forms new thoughts,\(^{68}\) and preaches the selection of people to positions on the basis of merit before hereditary and that individuals as well as public administrators should restrain selfish desires and work for the common good, avoid conflicts and sustain good relations with ones neighbors. These rules are clearly visible today in China’s Five Principals of Peaceful Coexistence (see p. 24) and are in essence the guidelines of a defensive realist state.

Unlike Western mentality, the Chinese society never comparing itself to others before, feeling that the collective path was far superior,\(^{69}\) but in this current globalized world with a rising gap between rich and poor in the new capitalistic China, neither capitalism nor the communist ideology can act as the glue that holds China together, Karl Marx famous dictum that “religion is the opium for the people” thus forms an alternative by establish a Communism-Confucianism hybrid for which China today can rally around.\(^{70}\) China now embraces Confucius teaching as if the Cultural Revolution never transpired and closely associates it with its 5000 year old history, Confucianism is considered a big part in China’s identity and in being Chinese.\(^{71}\) Thus as Confucianism has begun to be synonymous with Chinese-ness it incorporated more of China’s other cultural traits such as the often cited Art of War by Sun Tzu which states that a superior victory is one without actual fighting taking place.\(^{72}\) Completely opposite Western notions of total war with a decisive military victory and Clausewitz view of war as a continuation of politics by other means, Sun Tzu instead see politics as war, regardless of means. As Confucianism has begun to incorporate even more Chinese traits it has also been helpful by the government in promoting nationalism.\(^{73}\) This has led to a surge in racism, as the Han Chinese ethnic group comprises 92 % of the total population and a large proportion of these openly believe that they are one superior race.\(^{74}\)

Culture is another new arena that been increasingly securitized between Huntington’s different civilizations. China has pushed hard in this arena by establishing Confucius centers around the world, the idea behind this is more than just a stratagem of gaining soft power, it is a way of promoting China’s peaceful rise abroad and defending its cultural autonomy from foreign influences. David Lynch writes that this new front of a ‘cultural war’ and that China’s strategy also has “racial dimensions with potentially important implications for international security because the CCP tries to use the spirit to appeal to ethnic Chinese citizens of other countries.”

\(^{68}\) Kwok, p. 28  
\(^{69}\) Qin, Yaqing (2010) "Why is there no Chinese international relations theory?", p. 36, 42  
\(^{70}\) Callahan (2011), p. 222  
\(^{71}\) Kwok, p. 33  
\(^{72}\) Ibid., p. 44  
\(^{73}\) Broomfield, p. 268f & DOD (2011), Annual Report to Congress, p. 14  
This is done by referring and reaching out to ethnic Chinese around the world as descendants of the Yellow Emperor and allegiance to the ancient motherland. Lynch writes that defensive realists in China promotes a “national spirit” to protect the Chinese Civilization from ‘Splittism’ (e.g. Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang) by so called promotion of human rights by the U.S and that the Chinese culture is being poisoned by Western values and thoughts of foreign policy. China’s offensive realists instead argues for the spreading of China’s culture in order to influence other nations beliefs and values, developing a “Geocultural Strategy” based on Huntington’s Clash-theory and compete with the West’s current cultural hegemony.

3.2 Historical Overview
China have since ancient times called itself the *Middle Kingdom* for good reason, as its southern border with Indian, Nepal and Bhutan comprises mainly of the massive and impenetrable Himalaya mountain, to China’s west lays the great desert of Central Asia and to its north the Mongolian steppes. Finally to the Middle Kingdoms’ east was the tributary state of Korea and across the sea existed some lesser significant nations in China’s mind. In the Middle Kingdom’s geographic realm there have not been a matching rival and in regards to national wealth, power and innovation China have far longer been at the forefront of development than the Western powers, a position it held right up until the industrialization in Europe.

Although China have long been aware of its periphery neighbors, but since none of these was ever considered an equal China never did gave them much attention. The Chinese Empire already covered a huge territory with a rich culture and scientific achievements and was thus a civilization of its own, which unlike the great powers of Europe did not pursue foreign colonies or seek further territorial expansion. The legendary Chinese naval expedition by Admiral Zheng He in the early 15th century projected Chinese power all over the South China Sea and even reached so far as Eastern Africa, However these expeditions were never aimed for territorial expansion or collecting resources and as soon faded away. China concluded that the outside world was of little relevance and once again focused inwards and kept itself in isolation until the European powers reached its shores with their industrial achievements and gun boat diplomacy. They forced China to open up and trade on unequal terms, an event that the ancient and proud Empire still feels was a great humiliation that continued until the declaration of the PRC in 1949.

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75 Lynch, Daniel C (2013) ”Securitizing Culture in Chinese Foreign Policy Debates”, p 640
76 Ibid., p. 642, p. 646
77 Kissinger, p. 9-10
78 Kissinger, p. 58
The Middle Kingdom had been forced to subject to Western military and technology supremacy and before it could rise up against the foreign powers it was plagued by a civil war between the nationalists (Kuomintang) and communists. The internal hostilities were suspended during 1937-45 when the two sides briefly joined forces to counter the invading Japanese Empire, the common enemy who had during the 1930’s conquered much of eastern China and occupied it until the end of World War II.\(^79\) With Japan’s capitulation in 1945 the civil war erupted again and by 1950 the Communist had managed to get control of the entire Chinese mainland and eventually also captured the Island of Hainan, leaving Taiwan (Formosa) the only remaining hold out of the Kuomintang’s leadership. As mainland China and the island nation of Taiwan started to diverged from each other, the U.S. led international community chose to not acknowledge China and instead supported Taiwanese leadership and let the tiny and newly formed nation keep China’s seat at the United Nations Security Council until 1971.\(^80\)

China under Chairman Mao once again isolated itself from the global arena and focused on renewal of the nation with its Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.\(^81\) Although applying self-isolation, China under Mao was an active supporter of spreading communist revolutions in other developing countries, especially in those countries China viewed as lackeys or proxies of Western imperialists.\(^82\) Thus acted according to the criteria of offensive realism. China also took the role as the “leader the third world”,\(^83\) which it still identifies with today. During the Cold War China kept a shaky partnership with their fellow communist brethren in the Soviet Union but China refused to join the Warsaw pact of communist states that was formed to counter the West.\(^84\) Although clashes and even armed battles did however occur between China and the U.S during the Korean War and tensions were at times high between the two nations in the Taiwan Strait throughout the 1950’s and briefly once again in the 1990’s.

The Taiwan issue made the U.S-China relationship strained and tensions in the strait froze diplomatic relations throughout the 1950’s and 1960’s until President Richard Nixon was sworn into office. Nixon immediately began to improve U.S.-China relations and had two years previously written an article in Foreign Affairs in which he stressed that the United States was a Pacific power who had a great national interest in establish partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region, in the article he clearly stated a will to once again invite China into the international

\(^79\) Kissinger, p. 88f
\(^80\) Fairbank & Goldman, p. 340
\(^81\) Kissinger, p. 181
\(^84\) Kissinger, p. 163
community. Secret meetings between the two powers began and which eventually lead to a formal state visit by President Nixon to Beijing in 1972. The trip thawed relations and produced the Shanghai Communiqué which jointly stated that there was only one China and that Taiwan was a part of China and that neither the U.S nor China would seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region. From there the diplomatic relation steadily grew and the following Carter administration eventually shifted to fully recognize Beijing instead of Taipei in 1979 as the proper China, although simultaneously the U.S signed the Taiwan Relation Act to keep trade and unofficial relations between the United States and Taiwan and prevent Chinese invasion of the independent but no longer recognized nation.

The year before had China’s new leader Deng Xiaoping opened China for business with the Reform and Opening up Policy, leaving the old communist class struggle and instead focused efforts on economic development which spurred China forward. After a foreign tour in the region Deng put an end to China’s support of foreign communist revolutions, realizing how destructive the strategy had been to China’s foreign relations and image abroad. Thus Deng returned China to once again abide by defensive realist guidelines.

For a decade the U.S.-China relationship would flourish and then suddenly be interrupted again with the violent Chinese crackdown on the protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989, ending the honeymoon courtship. After the incident the newly elected George H. Bush administration invoked trade and economic sanctions on China as a protest for the human rights violations. Bush’s successor, President Clinton slowly began to repair the diplomatic ties during the second half of the 1990’s and labeled China a “strategic partner” for whom the U.S. could work with on international issues. But as Russia proved to be a mere shadow of its past and China continued to rise the suspicion and fear steadily grew and the following George W. Bush administration changed course and labeled China as a “strategic competitor” for which the U.S. needed cooperate with while also “containing Chinese power and security ambitions”. Clearly acting according to how an offensive realist state treats another.

With the events on September 11 2001, U.S. policy shifted to primarily focus its security concerns to terrorism and especially to the Middle East and Central Asia. The growing anxiety over the rising China was to be postponed as China instead became an allied in the War on

86 Kissinger, p 270f
87 Kissinger, p. 408-411
88 Bader, p 20
89 Ibid.
Terror. A war China said it fought in its northeastern province of Xinjiang against Uighurs extremists who wanted to secede from China and form the Islamic state of East Turkestan.\textsuperscript{91} The Uighurs are the natives of the province and comprise of roughly half the population in Xinjiang\textsuperscript{92} but are only a small minority compared to the rest of China’s vast population. Chinese authorities are repeatedly being accuses by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International for discrimination and ill treatment of the Uighurs.\textsuperscript{93} 

During the 2008 U.S Presidential election, Barrack Obama and his advisors choose not to repeat the mistakes of previous U.S elections where the candidates had for the domestic audience bashed China in their campaign and consequently always led to stiff relations between the two countries for the first couple of years of each new U.S administration.\textsuperscript{94} Instead of naming China a competitor or a threat, the Obama administration said it welcomed China’s rise and urged it to act as a responsible stakeholder in world affairs. China has not yet fully responded to this, sensing that this rhetoric is a tactic to tame and lure China into exhausting resources it cannot afford.\textsuperscript{95} Whether or not the Obama administration actually perceives China to be a competitor or strategic partner is uncertain, hence this is what the study will examine.

4. U.S. – China Foreign Policy Strategies

As stated in the papers disposition, words and deeds may differ substantially and hence this section starts with the official rhetoric in the foreign policies and litterateur while the next section focuses on the official government material. Both the U.S as well as China’s official strategy is presented as they are frequently mentioned within the U.S documents and in the contemporary discourse on the subject.

4.1 China’s “Peaceful Rise” and Pursuit of a “Harmonious World”

As stated in the beginning of this paper, Chinese officials used the term “peaceful rise” during the beginning of this century to describe China’s growing strength while maintaining a non-confrontational approach in its foreign policies. A slogan that was later transformed to “peaceful development”\textsuperscript{96} in an attempt to try to ease other states since the word ‘rise’ was perceived as to threatening.\textsuperscript{97} The word \textit{rise} had however already caught on with IR scholars.

\textsuperscript{91} Fairbank & Goldman, p. 461
\textsuperscript{92} Its name literally translates as the “New Frontier” and was conquered along with Tibet in 1950
\textsuperscript{93} Amnesty International (2010) “Stop human rights violations against Uighurs in China”
\textsuperscript{94} Bader, p. 20
\textsuperscript{95} Shambaugh, p. 40, 129
\textsuperscript{96} Cui, Liru (2012) \textit{Peaceful Rise: China's Modernisation Trajectory}, p. 15
\textsuperscript{97} Kissinger, p. 500
and China is still constantly being referred to as the rising power.\textsuperscript{98} This initial state rhetoric was not just aimed for the international audience and rebutting the threat theorists but for domestic use as well. In 2006 China’s state television aired a twelve part documentary series depicting the rise and fall of former empires in order to educate its people of the perils of growing too fast and thus learning from former great powers.\textsuperscript{99}

During the United Nations 60\textsuperscript{th} anniversary summit in 2005 Chinese leader Hu Jintao introduced the concept of a “harmonious world”, a notion of peaceful coexistence among all nations. President Hu explained this term by reciting the four different dimensions it contains. First, to embrace multilateralism and abolish the mentality of the Cold War. Second, recognizing that economic cooperation is mutually beneficial to everyone involved. Third, preserving the different civilizational diversities and promoting democracy in international relations. Finally, reforming the UN to further embrace and spread these principles. Two years later at the President Hu added a fifth dimension of jointly protecting the environment and that nations should cooperate on conservation efforts for the planet.\textsuperscript{100}

Blanchard & Gou discuss the rationale behind Hu Jintao’s declaration of China’s strive for a harmonious world. They argue that the term provides a strategic guideline for Chinese foreign policy as well as to “synchronize foreign policy concept with domestic policy concept of ‘harmonious society’” and countering the U.S statement that China need to be a “responsible stakeholder” while simultaneously responding to the China threat theorists. Also, stressing that the concept of “harmony” is deeply rooted in China’s history and Confucianism.\textsuperscript{101} Kwok further emphasizes the significance of these concepts in a Confucian context, explaining that:

\begin{quote}
[D]ifference here is that ‘peace’ merely describes an absence of actual conflict without saying anything about whether tension exists, whereas ‘harmony’ actually describes a cordial relationship which ensures the absence of conflict.
\end{quote}

The concepts can also be linked to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Five PPCs) which again forms the foundation of China’s foreign policy. The Five PPCs comprises of “mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.”\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{98} Cui, p. 15  
\textsuperscript{99} Shambaugh, p. 17  
\textsuperscript{100} Guo, Suijan & Blanchard, Jean-Marc F (2008) “Harmonious World” and China’s New Foreign Policy, p. 2-4  
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., p. 4-5  
\textsuperscript{102} Kwok, p. 26  
\textsuperscript{103} Guo & Blanchard, p. 6
A misquoted phrase by Deng Xiaoping in late 1980s goes that China should “hide one’s capabilities and bide one’s time”, not surprisingly this quote is frequently being used by threat theorists. Dai Bingguo argues that Deng Xiaoping’s actual meaning was that China will never form secret tactic to attain hegemony but refrains from the idea altogether and opposes hegemony, even a Chinese one, something written into the Chinese Constitution. Bingguo states that the current path of peaceful development should be seen in this light, even when fully developed China will not seek hegemony, and Bingguo reiterates another Xiaoping quote that goes “if one day China tries to seek hegemony in the world, people of the world should expose, oppose and overthrow it. The international community can hold us to account.” Kwok see this as proof that China follows the guidelines of defensive realism and states that since 1997 China has “been guided by the principle of ‘four no’s’, namely, no military hegemony, no power politics, no military alliances and no arms racing.”

4.2 The Chinese Dream

China’s current leader Xi Jinping assumed the office of the President in 2013, leading up to this he had been the Vice-President since 2009 and was appointed to leader of the CCP in 2012. Xi is referred to as one of the ‘princelings’ since he is a son of a notable revolutionary and thus always had close ties to the CCP, contrary to Confucian thought of promotion by merit before bloodline. In his first speech as party leader Xi spoke of the *China Dream*, “to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.” Xi’s goal is to build a “‘moderately prosperous society’ by 2021 and a ‘modern socialist society that is strong, democratic, cultured, and harmonious’ by 2049.” These years relates to the 100th anniversaries of the forming of the CCP and the PRC respectively. What is slightly worryingly for other stats is that the new leader Xi Jinping holds such high esteem for former chairman Mao which he praise as an hero which started China’s revival that now finally comes to fruition.

The slogan of a Chinese Dream had been used before by journalist and scholars but during 2012 it was an especially hot topic after an article written by Thomas Friedman in the New York Times in which he had specifically requested it with the title “*China Needs Its Own Dream*”. Xi spoke of flourishing China with a dream similar to the American dream, although

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104 Kissinger, p. 510f
105 Currently China’s highest ranking official regarding Foreign Policy
106 Bingguo, Dai (2010) “Adhere to the Path of Peaceful Development”, Waijiaobu wangzhan
107 Kwok, p. 15
110 Xinhuane (2013) "Xi: Holding high the banner of Mao ‘forever’"
were the later focus on the individual struggle and rise, the former is collectively based and aims of the restoration of the nation. A quintessential exception is also that while the American dream is of individual self fulfilment, the Chinese dream centers on surpassing the U.S and to lesser degree achieve a utopian society\textsuperscript{112}, breaking from the traditional East-West mentality where Western culture is usually the one obsessed with comparing with others while Chinese culture previously had little of that mindset.

The new generation of Chinese leaders have not lived through the same struggle and Cultural Revolution as the one before but instead experienced the Western decline starting with the financial turmoil while Beijing successfully arranged the Olympics and presented China with the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 during which it removed some of its cyber restrictions. The slogan for the Olympics had been \textit{“One World, One Dream”} and served as China’s ‘coming out party’ as a great power in the global context.\textsuperscript{113} Yet despite these slogans of dreams, harmony, respect and openness, China has increasingly put efforts to control and censure its citizens, especially in the cyber sphere. The population in China that regularly uses internet, so called ‘cybercitizens’ or ‘netizens’ is larger than the entire United States but they lack the freedom that the internet provides for most people. Xi’s rejuvenation has so far consisted of seven taboo topics in the cyber sphere, these include the mentioning of universal values, press freedom, civil society, citizens' rights and especially criticism of the communist party and its past.\textsuperscript{114} These add to the growing list of forbidden issues by the CCP in order to harmonize the society, resulting in that netizens now use “harmonizing” as slang for state censorship.\textsuperscript{115} The collective dimensions is linked to the thoughts of a harmonious society and could also be seen as yet another attempt to calm China’s citizens who increasingly speak out and criticize the CCP’s rule and stage thousands of demonstrations every year around the country, protesting corruption and the increasing income gap.

The U.S is alarmed by Xi Jinping close ties to the PLA and the lesson Xi’s said to have drawn from the demise of the Soviet Union. Consequently Xi has stated that the primary function of the PLA is to defend the regime, not China. This could purposely be to demonstrate a direct contrast to the U.S interest of spreading democracy and market liberalization. Whether Xi’s new leadership would abide by Hu’s previously stated path or not is crucial in determining if China has benign or malign intentions. Xi has officially stated that the Chinese dream consists

\textsuperscript{112} Callahan (2013), p. 8f
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p. 125
\textsuperscript{114} Deutsche Welle (2013) “Xi and China’s seven taboos”
\textsuperscript{115} Callahan (2011), \textit{China Orders the World: Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy}, p. 264
of a strong military and the current saber rattling with Japan over inhabitant islands in East China Sea has severely intensified with his ascent to power. Xi’s impulse to establish a strong military contradicts the old Confucian values which did not desire a strong military, almost to the point that the military was despised. Xi has called for increase “combat readiness” through “realistic training” and to improve discipline and vanquish corruption within China’s armed forces. Regardless of describing China’s military, socialism, capitalism or even democracy, Chinese leaders both former and current often add the phrase “with Chinese characteristics” to it. What this actually means is not clear other than that it is not Western.

4.3 The U.S Pivot to Asia

I have directed my national security team to make our presence and mission in the Asia Pacific a top priority. As a result, reductions in U.S. defense spending will not -- I repeat, will not -- come at the expense of the Asia Pacific.

- U.S President Barrack Obama speaking to the Australian Parliament

With the election of President Barrack Obama (2008-) the United States slowly started to shift its focus away from the Middle East to the Far East. Obama wanted a stronger U.S. engagement in the Pacific and reiterated Nixon’s statement of America as a Pacific nation while meanwhile rejecting the notion of a containment policy towards China. Former President Bush had in regards to Asia only spoken of its relevance in the global war on terror and not of its regional concerns or its importance for U.S long term prosperity. Under Obama the U.S started to attend the annual East Asia Summit (EAS) and sent an ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). To further emphasize this shift, Hillary Clinton first visit as new Secretary of State did not as traditionally go to Europe but to East Asia, a symbolic move intended to show the U.S commitment to the region. The Obama administration believes that Asia is of increasing importance both politically and economically and that China must be on board in important international concerns like the cutting of global green gas emissions and dealing with North Korea. Obama argues that “China’s both an adversary but also a potential partner in the international community if it’s following the rules.”

The U.S economic decline in 2008 made other nations doubt U.S capability and the slow economic recovery consequently made China significantly bolder in the region, up to the point that it started to bully other countries and even harassing U.S Navy vessels outside China’s

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116 Garnaut, John (2013) “Xi’s War Drums”
118 Obama, Barrack (2011) Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament
119 Indyk et. al. (2012) Bending History: Barack Obama’s Foreign Policy, p. 25
120 The New York Times (2012) Transcript of the Third Presidential Debate
territorial waters.\textsuperscript{121} This escalated to such a degree that several China experts labelled 2010 as the “year of Chinese assertiveness”.\textsuperscript{122} By aggressively threatening several of its neighbors and disturbing diplomatic relations with the West, China had by the end of that year squabbled away nearly all the good will it gathered the previous years. While China’s aim may have been to coerce neighboring countries into submission, the outcome was the opposite whereas almost all of its neighbors increased their ties with the U.S, even nations that previously been hostile to the U.S such as Vietnam and Burma. Although as Robert Kaplan writes, “[i]t is fear of China – not love of America” that was the primary factor.\textsuperscript{123}

The Obama administration concluded that the U.S footprint in the Asia-Pacific region was to light and that a new strategic vision was needed. The response came in an article titled “America’s Pacific Century” by Secretary Clinton in which she clearly stipulated that the Asia-Pacific region was to be of the highest priority and that China was the most important partner for the United States in this region. The article defines how the U.S “need to accelerate efforts to pivot to new global realities”, which Clinton further explains below.

As the war in Iraq winds down and America begins to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, the United States stands at a pivot point. Over the last 10 years, we have allocated immense resources to those two theaters. In the next 10 years, we need to be smart and systematic about where we invest time and energy, so that we put ourselves in the best position to sustain our leadership, secure our interests, and advance our values. One of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade will therefore be to lock in a substantially increased investment -- diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise -- in the Asia-Pacific region.\textsuperscript{124}

The ‘Pivot’ strategy was then formally launched. Just as China later rephrased its ‘peaceful rise’ the Obama administration tried to rebrand the policy as an American ‘rebalance’ and later to the U.S “Pacific Dream”\textsuperscript{125}, although to no avail since the term ‘pivot’ was already stuck and debated within the IR community. As shown in the quote above, the Pivot strategy takes place in several dimensions but the military refocus to Asia has been the most clearly articulated goal, e.g. with a rotation of 2,500 marines to northern Australia and shifting the U.S Navy organization from a 50-50 structure between the Pacific and Atlantic to a 60-40 configuration.\textsuperscript{126} The bulk of the U.S military efforts however consist of a rebalance of forces within Asia and not from other continents.

\textsuperscript{121} DOD (2011) Annual Report to Congress, p. 56
\textsuperscript{122} Shambaugh, p. 4
\textsuperscript{123} Kaplan, Robert (2012) \textit{The Revenge of Geography}, p. 220
\textsuperscript{124} Clinton, Hillary R (2011) “America’s Pacific Century”
\textsuperscript{125} Kerry, John (2013a) Speech – “Remarks on a 21st Century Pacific Partnership”
The Pivot strategy can be traced back to H.J. Mackinder who describing the importance of the Euro-Asian heartland and the inner and outer pivot area for great powers. The outer area is the defined as the seas surrounding this area and Mackinder ends his historic assessment with surmising that the Chinese could in the end be the conquerors of this ‘world-island’ by having an advantage Russia lacks which is “an oceanic frontage” to the outer pivoting area as well.\textsuperscript{127}

4.4 Examining the Policies
Beijing’s soft rhetoric of not seeking to topple the U.S hegemonic position but to rise peacefully and strive for a harmonious world sounds all good and well, the Confucian values China claim to adhere clearly shows that Beijing sees its image and use of soft power as important abroad ever since Xiaoping stopped supporting communist revolutions abroad. Using the Five PPC’s as guidelines for foreign policy are in line with defensive realist thoughts that do not believe security to be best established by aggressive expansion and former President Hu’s harmonious approach also emphasizes peaceful coexistence between people and ideas and hence show a great tolerance towards others. All this together with Bingguo’s reference to the old Chinese statement that the international community should overthrow a future China seeking hegemony checks all the requirements for a defensive realist state.

Then the financial crises occurred, which made the U.S look weak and China feel triumphalist and perhaps even slightly reconciled after living through a century of humiliation. China was back and arranged two successfully ‘coming out parties’ and transferred the leadership to a new generation with Xi Jinping at the helm. Xi’s dream of China restored all the cyber restrictions that had been removed during the Olympics, and then even added some more. Xi has repeatedly stresses the importance of China’s military forces and the year of assertiveness question Beijing’s current ambitions in the region and how it is perceived by other states. As China’s military and economic capacities have greatly increased the last decades, so have Beijing’s ambitions. The good old days of Hu Jintao are seemingly a thing of the past but that does not mean that China has turned officially hostile, but nor does it seem friendly, as Friedberg notes it is “neither a sworn enemy nor a trusted friend.”\textsuperscript{128}

China continues to preach its Confucius values as guidelines for its foreign policy both in regards to soft and hard power. This is increasingly confusing since they seem contradicting in their application and like Shambaugh argues China is leaning towards a path of retributive nationalism under the new leadership which feels more confident in the international arena.

\textsuperscript{127} Mackinder, H. J. (1904) “The Geographical Pivot of History”, p. 437
\textsuperscript{128} Friedberg, p. 4
Beijing’s increasing flirting with nationalism and the military allegiance to the party indicates that the CCP fears domestic threats and public uprising more than any foreign interventions. The China dream is in its core very un-Confucian in its military and nationalistic dimensions but Xi continue to hail the old philosopher ideas as essential in China, although focusing on the collective and the peoples obedience to their ruler.

Obama seemed determined not to repeat his predecessor’s error’s towards China, instead of adhering to threat theorist’s arguments he did the opposite and officially welcomed China’s rise and adopted a much friendlier and more cooperative tone with China. However Washington’s urging to Beijing to act as a responsible global player fell flat. Obama had reached out but got burned by the assertive China who by its bullying and flexing of military muscles lost much of the soft power it had previously gained. The U.S Pivot to Asia came as a response, a way to reassure and strengthening relations with other nations in the Asia-Pacific region. As Friedberg puts it - If relations were so good then why the “need to spend billions on arms, bases and alliances in the Western Pacific?”129 The reason must be that China no longer seem satisfied with the status quo in the region in the eyes of the U.S and neither does it new leadership seem to show restraint or acknowledge that the military buildup is fueling an arms race leading to a security dilemma. While simultaneously continue to violate human rights issues domestically and act hostile to its neighbors, thus checking the boxes for an offensive realist state.

It is difficult to analyze China from a Western view, as China does not share Western values, or more to the point, the Chinese have another approach to them which does seldom fit with Western understanding. On his return home to Venice in the 13th century, Marco Polo could not explain to his fellow Venetians what he had seen during his journey to China, and today's Western scholars have seemingly the same difficulty in describing China’s ambitions. The Five PPC’s is at first glance the guidelines of a defensive realist state but these seem to be of less importance to China’s new leadership. The danger is if Beijing becomes more militaristic by drinking their own Kool-Aid and unites the nation through a common cause such like in the 1930’s. Although then it was freedom from a foreign occupier, now it could be nationalism and retribution for past atrocities and take back what is perceives to be stolen lands such as Taiwan. In a way the CCP is victims of their own success, China’s rise have increased national wealth and income gap to the degree that nationalism might be the only way to legitimize the CCP’ rule over an increasingly vocal population.130

129 Friedberg, p. 265
5. Strategic Rivalry

After presented historic relations and current policies it is time to analyzing recent official government reports and statements by the Obama administrations regarding China and the U.S strategy for the Asia-Pacific. This thesis follows the approach of viewing “comprehensive national power” as incorporating military, economy and soft power combined and hence divide this section in these categories accordingly.\textsuperscript{131}

5.1 Diplomatic Linguistics

In Secretary Clinton’s article that introduced the pivot strategy, much emphasis is clearly on China and strengthening U.S allies in the region. The language is although not of containment but an outreach to China while simultaneously increasing defense ties with its neighbors.

One of the most prominent of these emerging partners is, of course, China. Like so many other countries before it, China has prospered as part of the open and rules-based system that the United States helped to build and works to sustain. And today, China represents one of the most challenging and consequential bilateral relationships the United States has ever had to manage. This calls for careful, steady, dynamic stewardship, an approach to China on our part that is grounded in reality, focused on results, and true to our principles and interests.\textsuperscript{132}

Clinton highlights that it is by peaceful means that China has developed and the underlining notion is that the United States facilitated China’s membership into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 which have China helped tremendously. She also points to the fact that the relationship is a myriad of potential problems but that the U.S will not waver in its resolvedness to promote its interest (such as human rights and regional defense obligations).\textsuperscript{133}

Officially, the U.S position is to work with China and hope that it will continue to see the rewards of a peaceful rise and cooperation with the United States.

We all know that fears and misperceptions linger on both sides of the Pacific. Some in our country see China’s progress as a threat to the United States; some in China worry that America seeks to constrain China’s growth. We reject both those views. The fact is that a thriving America is good for China and a thriving China is good for America. We both have much more to gain from cooperation than from conflict. But you cannot build a relationship on aspirations alone.\textsuperscript{134}

Following China’s year of assertiveness, this statement should be seen as a reminder of Obama’s engagement policy towards China but also that China must reciprocate this policy if it were to continue. Clinton’s article repeatedly argues for this renewal of American leadership in

\textsuperscript{131} Indyk et. al. (2012) p. 28 \\
\textsuperscript{132} Clinton (2011) \\
\textsuperscript{133} U.S defense obligations include Japan, Taiwan and Philippines which all have territorial disputes with China. \\
\textsuperscript{134} Clinton (2011)
the region, stressing the U.S “long record of providing for the common good” and how the U.S advocate for “universal” values which all “peaceful” nations crave.\textsuperscript{135}

But even more than our military might or the size of our economy, our most potent asset as a nation is the power of our values -- in particular, our steadfast support for democracy and human rights. This speaks to our deepest national character and is at the heart of our foreign policy, including our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific region.\textsuperscript{136}

Thus verifying Samuel Huntington’s statement that “[n]ational interest derives from national identity”\textsuperscript{137} and Washington often underlines that it will continue to “speak candidly to Beijing”\textsuperscript{138} regarding the upholding of human rights while “encourage China to make choices that contribute to peace, security, and prosperity as its influence rises.”\textsuperscript{139} The difficulty for the U.S is to grasp China’s intentions, since China does not openly discuss security strategies like democracies and consequently the Department of Defense (DOD) states that:

As a result, the study of PLA views on grand strategy remains an inexact science. Still, it is possible to make some generalizations about China’s strategy based on tradition, historical pattern, official statements and papers, and emphasis on certain military capabilities and diplomatic initiatives.\textsuperscript{140}

Outside observers therefore have few direct insights into the strategic concepts motivating China’s force buildup, the leadership’s thinking about the use of force, and contingency planning that shapes the PLA’s force structure or doctrine.\textsuperscript{141}

China instead uses “white papers”, statements and articles to communicate its strategy publicly.\textsuperscript{142} These lay particular focuses on what China calls its “core interests”\textsuperscript{143} and regarding the use of force within and outside its borders. However, several border disputes exist in the South and East China and it is uncertain how China would act within these where territorial sovereignty is highly contested. China is also hinting that it may add additional core interests such as these contested islands. China has for a long time had a “no first use” (NFU) policy towards the use of nuclear weapons, meaning that China will only use these as a response to a nuclear strike against China. The DOD states that there is some:

[A]mbiguity over the conditions under which China’s NFU policy would apply, including whether strikes on what China considers its own territory.\textsuperscript{144}

\textsuperscript{135} Clinton (2011)
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Huntington, Samuel (1997) "The Erosion of American National Interests", p. 28
\textsuperscript{138} Obama (2011)
\textsuperscript{139} The White House (2010) National Security Strategy of the United States of America, p. 43
\textsuperscript{140} DOD (2009) Annual Report to Congress, p. 13
\textsuperscript{141} DOD (2009) Annual Report to Congress, p. 10
\textsuperscript{142} DOD (2010) Annual Report to Congress, p. 13
\textsuperscript{143} DOD (2011) Annual Report to Congress, p. 13 – These include the preserving of China’s national sovereignty, unity, the CPP rule and the continuing of economic development and socialism with Chinese characteristics.
\textsuperscript{144} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 30
This issue is a focal point for the United States who wishes to solve these disputes in a peaceful manner, emphasizing that the U.S does not have any own territorial claims and “firmly opposed to coercion or the use of force to advance territorial claims” by other nations. The Pivot strategy aims to meet these challenges by “building a constructive relationship with China” that will “continue to have elements of both cooperation and competition” but in the end, “United States welcomes the rise of a peaceful, prosperous China”, as stated by National Security Advisor Thomas Donilon which further emphasizes that the U.S is “all-in” in its Asia-Pacific strategy that does not mean containing China but that military-military relations is “central to addressing many of the sources of insecurity and potential competition between [U.S and China].”\textsuperscript{145} The DOD report from 2011 elaborates on this notion:

> Strengthening our military-to-military relationship is a critical part of our strategy to shape China’s choices as we seek to capitalize on opportunities for cooperation while mitigating risks. To support this strategy, the United States must continue monitoring PRC force development and strategy. In concert with our friends and Allies, the United States will also continue adapting our forces, posture, and operational concepts to maintain a stable and secure East Asian environment.\textsuperscript{146}

As China’s military capabilities have improved in recent years, so have its assertiveness in the region which frightens other nations while the Chinese public discourse has grown increasingly nationalistic.\textsuperscript{147} The language coming from the U.S could be interpreted as not only an attempt to reach out to but also to urge China to exercise self-restraint and adhere to its harmonious policies launched by Former President Hu, and thus extending an invitation of cooperation in order to determine the other states intentions. The U.S does not believe that Hu’s strategy have fully replaced the previous philosophy of hiding China’s capacities.

Hu’s “Harmonious World” formulation reflects an evolution in the general tone and conduct of China’s foreign and security affairs in recent years, but likely has not completely superseded Deng’s thinking.\textsuperscript{148}

The Obama administration has stated time and time again that the Pivot is not meant to contain China, but if China diverge from the path of a peaceful rise this could very well change in a heartbeat. The military emphasis with the Pivot severely question Americas true intentions, official arguments for the increased military footprint is that is makes the “Asia Pacific more secure with American alliances—and an American force posture—that are being modernized to meet the challenges of our time.”\textsuperscript{149} However this military buildup in places like Singapore and Australia is certainly not directed to face the challenge posed by e.g. North Korea. Former

\textsuperscript{145} Donilon, Thomas (2013) Speech – “The United States and the Asia-Pacific in 2013”  
\textsuperscript{146} DOD (2011) Annual Report to Congress, p. 1  
\textsuperscript{147} Bader, p. 81  
\textsuperscript{149} Rice, Susan (2013) Remarks - “America’s Future in Asia”
Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta perhaps revealed a more honest U.S assessments of China when during a state visit to Japan he said that "[t]he winding down of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan marks a pivot point for the U.S. military, which must now focus on looming threats such as the rising military might of China."\textsuperscript{150} The DOD report of 2013 concludes that so far U.S diplomatic language has not convinced China of Washington’s peaceful intentions:

Many Chinese officials and the public see the U.S. rebalance to Asia as a reflection of “Cold War thinking” and as a way to contain China’s rise.\textsuperscript{151}

To further show a willingness to cooperate as well as understand China’s ambitions President Obama has increased people to people exchange and aims to have 100’000 American students studying in China by 2014 and also counter China’s Confucian Centers by promoting American Culture Centers in university campuses in China so that they may better understand each other.\textsuperscript{152} Washington also lay much energy on military to military contacts in order to “build trust and helps manage friction” between the two powers.\textsuperscript{153}

5.2 Hard & Soft Power

In terms of hard military power and capability, the focus of U.S is on China’s growing Navy. China is dependent on the sea trade and must be able to control vital shipping lanes in a crisis and have subsequently enlarged and modernized its navy. A staggering 90% of China’s trade is transported at sea and most of it goes through the narrow passages in Indonesia between the Pacific and Indian Ocean, something former President Hu describes as China’s “Malacca Dilemma”.\textsuperscript{154} For this reason, as well as the issue over Taiwan and island disputes with neighboring countries, China has expanded its Navy and in 2012 it launched its first ever aircraft carrier and more will follow.\textsuperscript{155} China now also has several ships patrolling and conducting operations in both the Pacific and Indian Ocean which it haven’t had since the legendary voyages of Admiral Zheng He. The DOD report describe how China sees the first two decades of this century as a “strategic window of opportunity”\textsuperscript{156} to expand Chinas national power in both military and diplomatic influence, thus securing its status as a great power. In the section describing the U.S understanding of China’s strategy it concludes that China’s goal is to assert regional influence while avoiding a counterbalance building up from neighboring states.

\textsuperscript{150} Newsday (2011) "U.S. military will focus on Asia, Panetta says"
\textsuperscript{151} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 16
\textsuperscript{152} Clinton, Hillary R (2010b), Remarks on U.S.-China People-to-People Exchange
\textsuperscript{153} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 61
\textsuperscript{154} Shambaugh, p. 291
\textsuperscript{155} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 6
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p. 15
In addition to furthering PLA modernization, the focus of these engagements will likely remain on building China’s political ties, assuaging fears about China’s rise, and building China’s external influence, particularly in Asia.\textsuperscript{157}

Although much larger than any of its neighbor’s, China seem to view other states and Japan especially as a threat to its security and sovereignty, a lesson learned from China’s past and century of humiliation which is still very fresh in China’s own historical record.\textsuperscript{158} Over the last decade China’s military budget has increased by roughly 10% annually to the point that it today has the 2\textsuperscript{nd} largest military budget in the world.\textsuperscript{159} Although the U.S still outspends China by 4 to 1 and China’s forces still have a long way to go before reaching the same level as the Western powers in technology capabilities and modern equipment throughout its force structure. Washington estimates that the Chinese military budget is 20 to 90% higher than publicly announced,\textsuperscript{160} and that Beijing now prioritizes military spending.

Chinese leaders indicate that, in their view, the development of a modern military is necessary for China to achieve greater power status.\textsuperscript{161}

If this military buildup is primarily for defense or offense purpose is debated both in- and outside China.\textsuperscript{162} The U.S reports agrees many social scholars in stating that China’s “[p]arty leaders have relied on economic performance and nationalism as the basis for regime legitimacy”\textsuperscript{163} and Washington thus express concern over that it could influence foreign policy decision in using a more offensive and revisionist posture in the future.\textsuperscript{164}

Concerning the cyber arena, the latest DOD reports have evolved so that they no longer describe cyber espionage as “originating from within China” as it did 2012 to instead plainly attribute these attacks to be orchestrated “directly to the Chinese government and military.”\textsuperscript{165}

The PLA’s rearmament is especially focused on overseas capabilities and improvement of China’s navy to operate in the high seas on long deployments and conducting what called anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) operations against “counter intervention operations”\textsuperscript{166} from a third-party, “particularly by the United States”.\textsuperscript{167} In response, the U.S ability to deter A2/AD operations by the concept of Air-Sea Battle has been categorized as a primary mission of the

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\item \textsuperscript{157} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 24
\item \textsuperscript{158} Kaplan, p. 196
\item \textsuperscript{159} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 45
\item \textsuperscript{160} U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (2013) p. 25
\item \textsuperscript{161} Garnaut, John (2013) “Xi’s War Drums”
\item \textsuperscript{162} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 20f
\item \textsuperscript{163} DOD (2009) Annual Report to Congress, p. 14
\item \textsuperscript{164} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 18
\item \textsuperscript{165} Comparing the DOD annual report of 2013 (p. 36) with the 2012 report (p. 9)
\item \textsuperscript{166} DOD (2012) Annual Report to Congress, p. intro IV
\item \textsuperscript{167} DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 32
\end{thebibliography}
armed forces, even mentioning China directly in this regard. These two military concepts clearly show the rhetoric of a growing security dilemma.

The DOD analysis is that “Taiwan continues to dominate the PLA’s force modernization agenda” but that forthcoming capabilities will “enable the PLA to conduct a range of military operations in Asia well beyond Taiwan.” Like China’s reasoning of its NFU policy this is seen as confusing since it contradict much of Chinese statements regarding its policy and that is will not show any aggressiveness against other nations, as shown in the latest DOD report.

Despite its desire to project an image of a developing country engaged in a peaceful development strategy, China [...] have occasionally manifested in assertive rhetoric and behavior that generate regional concerns about its intentions. [...] 

Additionally the PLA Navy has begun to conduct military activities within the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of other nations, without the permission of those coastal states. [...] While the United States considers the PLA Navy activities in its EEZ to be lawful, the activity undercuts China’s decades-old position that similar foreign military activities in China's EEZ are unlawful.

Clearly there is a divergence between China’s political rhetoric of adhering to the Five PPC’s and its recent military actions. In late 2013 China without notice or discussions with its neighbors expanded its East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone (ECSADIZ), meaning incorporating more space to China which breaks from international practice, as well as China’s statements of not aspiring to gain more territory or provoke regional disputes. U.S Secretary of State, John Kerry called the action “unilateral action constitutes an attempt to change the status quo in the East China Sea” and the U.S reacted swiftly by flying military planes through the contested airspace. During the very same week a Chinese Navy ship conducted a ‘chicken-race’ with a U.S Navy vessel in the South China Sea which caught a stir in U.S media and Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel said it “was not a responsible action.” Keeping in line with previous U.S diplomatic language towards China to urge it to act as a responsible stakeholder, while simultaneous stating that China’s goal seems to be to change the current power relations, something China itself is as of yet unwilling to admit.

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169 DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 29
170 Ibid., p. 29
171 Ibid., p. 39
172 DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 16
173 The National Interest (2013) “Xi’s Air Defense Offense”
174 Kerry, John (2013b) Statement on the East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone
175 Financial Times (2013) “China has thrown down a gauntlet to America”
The U.S DOD reports repeatedly emphasize concern over China’s maritime intentions and how it as acted more as a bully than a peaceful neighbor as its military capability has increased. China’s foreign policy is in these regards directly contradicting it stated policy and the focus on actions instead of rhetoric is something the U.S government reports have taken to heart. The reports conclude that China’s official strategy is confusing if not right out contradicting in that:

The history of modern Chinese warfare provides numerous case studies in which China's leaders have claimed military preemption as a strategically defensive act. [...] This logic suggests the potential for China to engage in military preemption, prevention, or coercion if the use of force protects or advances core interests, including territorial claims (e.g., Taiwan and unresolved border or maritime claims).  

The DOD report further concludes that while China’s white paper maintains that striking an enemy should only be done after the enemy has attacked first, but also emphasizes that a strike in China’s mind could be by other means then conventional weapons, such as actions defined in more political dimensions. The U.S understanding of Beijing’s military thinking is that the PLA “perceives there is an imbalance between offensive and defensive operations due to … [modern] technologies.” Hence the DOD’s report of China’s military is focused on growing offensive capabilities in the conventional arenas as well as in nuclear strike capabilities and warfare in new dimensions such as cyber, space and military information operations. Beijing is described as implementing many new military technologies between the years 2011-2020.

Regarding China’s use of soft power, Shambaugh’s research shows that Beijing lacks an understanding of the concept, both in how it is gained as well as how to use it. A painful example of this is China’s absence in regional catastrophes. Former President Hu articulated in 2004 the “New Historic Missions” for the PLA, including humanitarian assistance such as increasing participation in international peacekeeping and disaster relief operations. But so far China have failed to live up to this, the latest example being the devastating typhoon that hit the Philippines in 2013. China’s hospital ship, the Peace Ark, then remained docked for a long time, and not until heavy international critique arose did it finally deploy to the affected region. Soft power is a currency China currently lacks and that its leadership does not seem too eager to gain. The U.S assesses that Beijing thoughts of soft power are directly linked to its potential use in offensive military capabilities.

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178 DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 66
179 DOD (2011) Annual Report to Congress, p. 1
180 The latest Soft Power Index by the Institute for Government places the USA 2nd and China on 22nd place.
181 DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 29
182 The Interpreter (2013) "China’s Peace Ark: For the record"
China has invested in several civilian port projects throughout Asia and along the Indian Ocean. Although such investments may improve peacetime logistical support options for the PLA Navy, not to mention enhancing PRC soft power in the region, they are not a substitute for military bases. Without overseas military bases, China will be constrained in its ability to project and sustain power beyond the immediate region. A decision in Beijing to abandon its longstanding and self-imposed policy against overseas basing would signal that China seeks a greater blue water combat capability.183

All annual reports lay heavy focus on China’s growing maritime capabilities, these are importance both because China’s many territorial disputes with neighboring countries in the East and South China Sea, not to mention to issue of Taiwan. But also because China is more actively engage in naval operations in distant seas and the continuing launching of new frigates and aircraft carriers. Chinese rhetoric of not wanting to ‘rock the boat’ regarding the current system and norms in international relations will not change until it has the capabilities to actually back up a more offensive policy. The fielding and developing of these tools will however be available in time for President Xi’s first target date of 2021.

5.3 Economic Interdependence

During the Cold War the trade between the U.S and the USSR was almost non-existent, but the trading between the great powers of today is quite the opposite as U.S and China forms the second largest trading partner to one another.184, 185 Throughout the Cold War the U.S was never really challenged by the Soviets economically, although that was not fully apparent at the time. Today it is blatantly clear that China is a major trading partner and holds the largest amount of U.S trade bounds which is a great discomfort to Washington. But these are of no use to China if the U.S economy should collapse, the massive trade between them and particularly China’s export to the U.S causes an economic interdependence, they are glued to each other whether they like it or not. When the financial crises hit China adopted the world’s largest stimulus program to keep exporting its products while also increasing its standing.186 Thus acting responsible but by its critiques following the guidelines of Sun Tzu, by succeeding to dominate its rivals without doing any actual fighting, but with economic instruments, similar to how the U.S outspent the Soviet Union during the Cold War which is another lesson Beijing seemingly has drawn in analyzing the rise and fall of former empires.

To strengthening the U.S economic relations and influence in the region, the U.S has launched the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) which aims do deepen the strategic partnership within the

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183 DOD (2011) Annual Report to Congress, p. 33
184 United States Census Bureau (2012) Top Trading Partners
186 Indyk et. al., p. 31
Asia-Pacific region through liberalizing trade and investment.\textsuperscript{187} The partnership is in negotiations with over a dozen countries and is described by the U.S as a “high-standard, ambitious agreement” which reflects “U.S. economic priorities and values” with other “like-minded countries”.\textsuperscript{188} The focus on liberalizing economies and importance of Intellectual Property Rights and conditions for the workforce automatically excludes China at the moment.

With an increasing number of countries expressing an interest in the agreement it could develop in to both an economic containment tool towards China as well as an attempt to encourage it to ‘play by the same rules’ as other nations, National Advisor Susan Rice remarked that:

\begin{quote}
We welcome any nation that is willing to live up to the high-standards of this agreement to join and share in the benefits of the TPP, and that includes China.\textsuperscript{189}
\end{quote}

The TPP thus provides an economic incentive for nations willing to abide by these liberal values which the U.S wants to promote. This clearly falls in line with the containment policy nation’s aim at others it views as offensive realists, hoping that the strategy will influence and change their ambitions. Another enterprise that is seen as directed at China is the U.S funding of the Lower Mekong Initiative comprising of China’s southern neighbors, whereas the name ‘lower’ purposely excludes China. Officially this initiative is about fish and the construction of dams in the region but it is interestingly the ministers of foreign affairs taking part instead of agriculture and the agenda is very broad and concern many areas of cooperation.\textsuperscript{190}

Several U.S politicians have the recently accused China of being a currency manipulator by undervaluing its currency in order to give Chinese companies an unfair advantage in international trade, thus costing jobs in the U.S.\textsuperscript{191} These accusations have at times run high, such as during the latest U.S Presidential election where the republican party nominee said he would officially label China a currency manipulator, in which China responded to as to be a trigger for trade war. This seems to be empty threats from both sides as their economies are symbiotically connected and neither would at this time risk another economic crisis.

President Obama have not had much progress in promoting human rights in China and has instead put larger focus on environmental responsibilities, something China labelled a fifth dimension in its harmonious world concept. Despite this, China has been weak on this front and was labelled a spoiler at the Copenhagen Climate Summit,\textsuperscript{192} China argued that it acted as a

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\textsuperscript{187} Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (2005)  \\
\textsuperscript{188} Executive Office of the President (2011) The United States in the Trans-Pacific Partnership  \\
\textsuperscript{189} Rice, Susan (2013)  \\
\textsuperscript{190} Luttwak, Edward N. (2012) The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy, p. 227  \\
\textsuperscript{191} Reuters (2013) “Senators renew push against China currency 'manipulation' despite yuan's rise”  \\
\textsuperscript{192} Shambaugh, p. 152
\end{flushright}
champion for other fellow developing nations on this issues but it is becoming less credible as China currently make up the 2nd largest economy and still obsessed with its own continuous growth, neglecting that it has become the world’s largest polluter. 193

“The Beijing Consensus” (TBC) is a new catch phrase within international political economy, coined by Joshua C. Ramo in 2004,194 it is an alternative to the Washington Consensus of economic development through liberal market reforms promoted by the IMF, World Bank and the U.S Treasury. TBC instead focus on economic relationship between states and policies of self-determination. China has successfully established several trade relations with developing countries without the Western values and demands of democratic and market reforms, instead promoted an approach of state capitalism and non-interference. Kaplan tellingly describes a difference in that while “[m]oral progress in international politics is an American Goal, [it is] not a Chinese one.”195 It is also serves as a good example in how the American and Chinese dreams distinguish themselves in foreign policy; the former promotes individuals enrichment and freedom while the latter the collects economic prosperity and power. But this is a discussion beyond this study.

5.4 Destined Rivals?

The policies of such states are inherent in their geography – Napoleon.196

While Washington publicly states that it welcomes “a strong and emerging and responsible China”197 it always simultaneous emphasizes China’s responsibilities as a great power. The IMF forecast that China economy will surpass the U.S in 2016 and thus put an end of the “Age of America”.198 As Friedberg notes, China will be the first power to rise within the system that the U.S have created and is already showing sign of slowly trying to reform current norms with its global economic influence and by TBC. Other than overtaking the role of the U.S, it is unknown what China’s goal is for the future or what it intent to do with its new gained power.

All the DOD’s annual reports provide an update on China’s involvement within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), especially regarding military exercises with Russia and how SCO is used to “build cohesive opposition to Uighur activities.”199 The SCO meet with foreign and defense ministers from all six partnership countries in Central Asia and is another example

193 Indyk el. al., p. 33f
195 Kaplan, p. 199
196 Ibid., p. 200
197 Hagel, Chuck (2013) Hagel Addresses Chinese Concerns During Shangri-La Dialogue
198 The Wall Street Journal (2011) "IMF bombshell: Age of America nears end"
of contradiction in Chinese statements of not building alliances. Offensive realists would call the SCO a primary example of China’s ambition to push the U.S out of its region and the U.S effort to increase ties with ASEAN seems to be the countermove.

China’s recent maritime activities seems to act as a litmus test to test Washington’s commitment but the U.S continue to show firmness in its military posture in the region and in the paragraph related to China in the U.S military strategy the embedded wording states the U.S “oppose any nation's actions that jeopardize access to and use of global commons and cyberspace, or that threaten the security of our allies.”\(^{200}\) In a speech clearly directed to China’s aggressive behavior in the South China Sea, Secretary Clinton urged all parties to adhere to the UN convention regarding the rules of the sea and not use coercion or threats.

> [L]egitimate claims to maritime space in the South China Sea should be derived solely from legitimate claims to land features. [...] We encourage the parties to reach agreement on a full code of conduct. The U.S. is prepared to facilitate initiatives and confidence building measures consistent with the declaration.\(^{201}\)

Embedded in this wording is that Washington states that it does not support China’s territorial claims and that the U.S is prepared to come to regional partners aid in keeping China away and maintaining the sea lanes, echoing Bader’s and many others argument of standing firm and act when China overreaches. The Chinese response came shortly after in a speech delivered by its foreign minister in which China warned the ASEAN members not to collaborate with an ‘outside’ power and purposely spoke in order to intimidate the ‘small’ countries neighboring the ‘big’ and powerful China.\(^{202}\) China has since successfully used a strategy of one-by-one negotiations with the ASEAN members so as to gain as much as possible and weaken potential alliance towards it, thus following the offensive realist playbook. The DOD states that China fear that neighboring states will together with the U.S start to balance against China if it is viewed as a threat.\(^{203}\) China’s newfound assertiveness and the U.S Asia Pivot along with the statements concerning disputed islands by Secretary Clinton and her Chinese counterpart seems to verify this very thought, thus acting as Mearsheimer predicted.

\(^{201}\) Clinton, Hilary R (2010a) Speech at ASEAN minister meeting in Hanoi
\(^{202}\) Bader, p. 105
\(^{203}\) DOD (2013) Annual Report to Congress, p. 15
6. Conclusion

How does the United States under President Obama view the emerging China?
Is China seen as an offensive realist state which needs containing or a defensive realist state which the U.S seeks to cooperate with?

The strategy with the U.S Pivot to Asia was officially intended to improve relations with China but it seems to have done the opposite. This strategic rebalance has been launched, debated and carried out with bells and whistles by the United States like few policies before it. While claiming not to be a containment strategy towards China, everything in its diplomatic, militarily and economic actions point to just that, and if not a containment policy today is does lay the ground for one tomorrow. In short, the U.S is skeptical of China’s ambitions and does not view it as a defensive realist state and the strategic rivalry will continue to escalate as the United States doubts China’s intentions. Beijing’s stated Confucian policies of harmony and peaceful rise seem increasingly remote from reality and especially to China’s new leadership. President Xi’s Chinese Dream endorses a more assertive stance and strong military which have not been seen since the days of Mao and the U.S strategy is so far following Brzezinski’s advice of a regional balancer and conciliator, reaching out and trying to influence China with diplomatic language of responsibility and peaceful solutions, while not retreating from the region militarily. President Obama’s policy have neither been a full blown containment nor an active engagement but so far acting with a passive containment and cautious engagement, reacting to China when it overreaches while keep trying to influence China to adopt a more liberalized market economy, democracy and respect for human rights and international law. China’s growing importance in world affairs and stability makes cooperation with the U.S crucial according to the Obama administration but so far the lack of trust between them prevents a closer partnership since there is currently more focus on threats than opportunities.

The threat China impose to other nations also justifies U.S military presence in the region, although the U.S military dimensions of the Pivot could antagonize China so as to further incite a security dilemma. While conflict with conventional weapons may or may not occur, there is some signs of a conflict in other arenas such as in economics, cyber and increasingly also in cultural imperialism between the two as Huntington predicted. The TTP could potentially form a sort of Pacific Community between democracies, a combination of Kissinger’s and Friedberg’s ideas, although Kissinger thoughts was to work with China, this would be the opposite, integrating as many members as possible towards the awoken dragon.
Going back to the thesis operationalization with the three questions on how U.S views China as well as how it fits into the offensive-defensive realist table we can conclude the following.

1. Does China seek to challenge the status quo and U.S dominance in the Asia-Pacific?
2. Does China acknowledge the security dilemma that its military buildup could create?
3. Do Chinese policies seem to change as it capabilities grow?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Defensive Realist</th>
<th>Offensive Realist</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Ambitions</td>
<td>No. Status Quo</td>
<td>Yes. As much as possible</td>
<td>Yes, adding core interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View on Alliances (motives)</td>
<td>Preferred (Ideology important)</td>
<td>When suitable (Power dominates)</td>
<td>With other great power, (Balancing against the U.S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View on Conflicts</td>
<td>Often Avoidable</td>
<td>Predestined</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts of Soft Power</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>Combined with Hard Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance to neighboring states and domestic minorities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Achieved by</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Power Maximizing</td>
<td>Firmness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises Self-Restraints</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>So far, but acts increasingly aggressive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As President Xi Jinping is expected to remain in power to 2021 and thus China will continue its current path and keep to modernize the military in order to enhance its power in the region as well its capabilities to counter foreign intervention forces. Rhetorically Beijing does not challenge U.S dominance other than vaguely saying that it sees a multipolar future while it increasing its cooperation with Russia. The U.S statements and reports show an increasing assertiveness from Beijing that will have the capability to threaten U.S dominance in the region within a decade. Currently, Beijing’s actions in the South and East China Sea as well as its military buildup is already starting to produce an arms race in the region and show increasingly aggressive behavior as it grow stronger. In conclusion the answer to all three questions then is – Yes, but China will probably not escalate its offensive posture until the CCP’s anniversary in 2021. As time is on China’s side and the leaders in Beijing’s will in all likelihood not take any risk that may threaten its continuously economic development to achieve its dream of greatness. Beijing’s assertive behavior is generating a balancing action towards it by its neighbors and the U.S which subsequently act according to Nye’s concerns of making an enemy out of Beijing by already treating it as one. The U.S seems unsure of how to deal with China and the Pivot and the TPP is so far only half measures of a hegemon not ready to either engage or contain its rival which is increasingly acting as an offensive realist state while mainly still speaking with a voice of a defensive realist.
In 2014 the Obama administration is expected to release a new National Security Strategy, since the last one was released in 2010 China has transferred its leadership and become more assertive and the new strategic document will in all likelihood incorporate a lot from what can be gathered from recent U.S statements. We can expect a greater focus on the rebalance towards the Asia-Pacific and the countering of threats from authoritarian powers by strengthening and building new alliances and increase U.S presence in order to prevent aggressive and coercive methods in e.g. international shipping lanes and territorial disputes. How the dominant world power will respond to the new challenging rival will certainly be a crucial factor for the international stability for the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, the Obama administration seems so far satisfied with a policy of passively containing and waiting to see China’s next move.

6.1 Thought for Further Research
As offensive realism is claiming to build to historic events by the rise of great powers it carries some value to contemporary discourse on the rise of China. However territorial expansion and hegemonic ambitions is no longer as prominent in international politics as it has previously been in history. Aggressive and dominant behavior does not score any favors in the globalized world that put increasingly larger focus on soft power and cooperation. While Mearsheimer theory is focused on power politics with hard instruments, future research on great power politics should more focus on the active strategy of promoting one’s image and soft power abroad, e.g. as Obama’s effort to increase people to people exchanges and China’s offensive campaign of establishing Confucius centers around the world and the increase of Chinese developing projects and aid without democratic strings attached.
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