Abstract

This thesis focuses on Australian foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region. The research target of this thesis is to identify the major factors that influence Australian foreign policy towards Asia-Pacific in the post-Cold War period with a focus on power and identity. Each of these factors is examined with a different theoretical approach. The concept of power is framed by realism. Specifically, while analysing the role of power in Australian foreign policy practice, the concept of defensive realism of Kenneth Waltz is applied. The concept of identity is framed by constructivism. Concretely, while analysing the role of identity in Australian foreign policy practice, the insights from David Campbell's interpretative approach and Alexander Wendt's structural constructivism are applied. The analytical part of the thesis is divided into two parts (chapters). The first part analyses whether Australian foreign policymaking is guided by the intentions of Waltz's defensive realism. In this part the Australian alliance with the U.S. is presented as well as the rise of China. The second part analyses whether Australian ideas, values and norms are the major constitutive elements of its foreign policy behaviour. In this part the middle power diplomacy is presented as a distinctive practice of Australian foreign policy. The conclusion reflects findings of the research and suggests future challenges for Australia.