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Discourse, Practice, and Construction of National Interest: Study of The U.S. Security Policy Continuity

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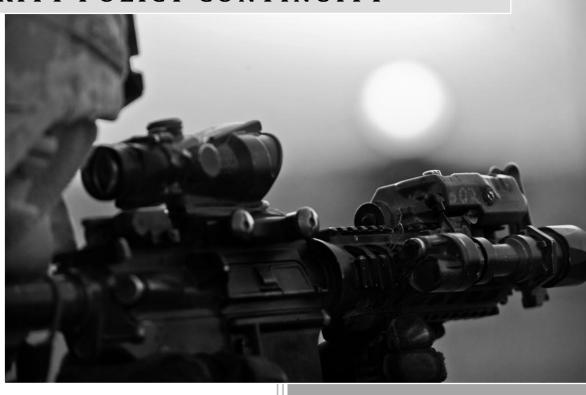Datum obhajoby: 2010

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Jan Ludvik

DISCOURSE, PRACTICE, AND CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL INTEREST: STUDY OF THE U.S. SECURITY POLICY CONTINUITY

CONTENT

SUMMARY

The following study has been deeply inspired by growing bulk of postmodern scholarship. The basic logic behind this study comprises of the assumption that the fundamental structures of international politics are social constructs constituted in the processes and practices of dealing with them. Ultimately the text below offers problematization of several concepts of the American security policy believes that are usually more or less taken for granted. Working within this notion, common knowledge must be understood as the problem itself. Meanings we ascribe to various terms are in fact product of previous experiences, shared believes, and culturally contingent images that has been constituted through various practices in dealing with them. The following study thus further elaborates the concept of the national interests and of the relation between national interests and threats

THE PROBLEM OF A COMMON KNOWLEDGE[1]

The September 11, 2001 revealed to the Americans the grave threat of terrorism. Decisions made in the wake of attacks on New York and Washington would shape the course of world history for decades. President Bush – freshman in the White House – subsequently deployed American forces to fight terrorism in its safe haven in Afghanistan, toppled regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and American security system underwent broad reforms in order to be more ready to challenge new security threats. These threats should not have been primarily connected with other great powers, but more often with violent non-state actors and several foolish rogue states that refused to follow the international rules of the road. On January 2010, after eight years of Republican government, Democratic President has retaken the White House. The world expected Barack Obama to change vastly unpopular foreign policy of his predecessors. Or at least, that is how the conventional explanation goes.

Currently, scholars and students of international politics are involved in a broad discussion about the change President Obama has brought into the realm of the American security policy. Few will question utility of such discussion. At the end of the day, United States is the world most powerful country, and her decisions may influence the life of every human being. However, the better part of this discussion has been limited to the differences between both Presidents, respectively their particular policies. Even though such examination is arguably more than important, it inherently omits several vital issues. Despite the obvious differences between family and cultural background of the last two American Presidents, both Administrations share images and ideas about the world and American role there. These images are neither new, nor stable. They have been created and recreated in the processes of the U.S. security policy making and they are changing even now.

The following study has been deeply inspired and influenced by growing bulk of scholarship that goes by different names. This broad category is referred as "reflective" *(Keohane, 1988),* "critical theory" *(Mearsheimer, 1994-1995),* "postmodernism", "poststructuralism", or "post-positivism". *(see Der Derian, 1992, pp.6-13)* These terms usually include various research approaches that have often little in common. There is no need to

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[1] I am especially grateful to Vit Stritecky and Ludek Moravec. This paper would be far worse without their help and comments. On the contrary it would have been arguably much better, had Charles University library provided students of international politics with appropriate resources. Thus, I am using strikingly unprofessional template suggested by Faculty of Social Sciences library only to the extent considered absolutely necessary in order to limit its impact on the overall effect of this text. Otherwise the text is adjusted to follow the well established professional criteria of scholarly writing suggested by leading Czech and foreign journals.

review the so called third debate, since it should be well known now to the reader *(see Lapid, 1989).* But at least one point should be reminded. Contrary to some misunderstandings, poststructuralism is not inherently anti-empirical. The basic logic behind this study comprises of the assumption that the fundamental structures of international politics are social constructs constituted in the processes and practices of dealing with them. *(Campbell, 1998, pp.1-9)* They do not have stable objective meaning, but to the contrary. This meaning is always reconstituting. The major inspiration of aforementioned approaches can be perhaps ascribed to the scholars such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and several others. Following Foucault and Der Derian this study is "not looking for an alternative", neither is it "simply a negative critique... it clears but does not destroy or deny the existence of the ground for a constructive theory". *(Der Derian, 1992, pp.7-8)*

In fact this study is indebted both to poststructuralists, but also to some extend to their constructivist followers. The works of Jutta Weldes that has conceptualized the idea of national interest from constructivist position and her contribution on threat construction in case of Cuban missile crisis has provided this study with more than valuable inspiration *(Weldes, 1996; 1999).* Her work is particularly useful for this study, since it draws its conclusions from thorough study of the U.S. administrations discourse. Other notable volumes on the phenomena of threat perception and national interests include especially texts by Barbara Farnham *(2001; 2003),* and Friedrich Kratochwil *(1982).* The process of discursive threat construction through the various speech acts have been well elaborated by the authors from the Copenhagen School, particularly by Ole Waever *(1996; also Buzan et. al. 1998)* in their concept of securitization. The Copenhagen School itself arguably suffers from some major inconsistencies and shortcomings *(Smith, 2005, pp.32-37),* securitization as such, nonetheless, offers useful interpretation of the aforementioned processes. Last but not least, the constructivist works of Alexander Wendt must be mentioned. From his various contributions on the social theory of international politics, his critique of neorealist ontology has been particularly important for this study *(see Wendt, 1987, 1992, 1995).*

However this study owes foremost to David Campbell's seminal book "Writing Security" *(1998).* His extensive application of historical discourse analysis shows how "United States foreign policy has interpreted danger and secured the boundaries of the identity in whose name it operates". *(Campbell, 1998, p.5)* Other methodological inspiration for students and practitioners of discourse analysis can be found in more linguistically oriented critical discourse analysis of Ruth Wodak and Norman Fairclough. *(Wodak et. al., 1999; Fairclough 2003; for other notable works see Doty, 1993; Li, 2009; Dunmire, 2009)* Despite obvious differences between various examples of the application of discourse analysis in political science, these examples

share fundamental believes about the character of language and its role in interactions among humans. Language is not perceived just simply as a vehicle that enables transfer of information about otherwise independent structures outside of language. On the contrary, language forms integral part of this social "reality".

This study is intended to address how United States has constructed the meanings of their security policy, particularly how Americans have constituted threats and national interests that created fundamental points of departure for the subsequent policies. Such examination should also contribute to the understanding of some deep sources of continuity in U.S. security policy. Contrary to more conventional *why* questions, this study usually follows its poststructuralist inspiration, thus focusing rather on *how* questions. While the conventional analysis examines why certain decision was made, the possibility that particular decision could happen is generally taken as unproblematic. "How-questions, so posed, go to an important aspect of *power* that why- questions too often neglect. They go to the way in which power works to constitute particular modes of subjectivity and interpretive dispositions... This is not the kind of power that works *through* social agents, a power that social actors posses and use. Rather, it is a kind of power that is productive of meaning, subject identities, their interrelationships, and a range of imaginable conduct". *(Doty, 1993, p.299, original emphasis)* Ultimately the text below offers *problematization* of several concepts of the American security policy believes that are usually more or less taken for granted. Working within this notion, common knowledge must be understood as the problem itself. Meanings that tend to be perceived as given should be questioned in order to highlight that these meanings are in fact context dependent. Meanings we ascribe to them are in fact product of previous experiences, shared believes, and culturally contingent images that has been constituted through various practices in dealing with them. The study hence does not seek to suggest any kind of problem solving, rather to the contrary, the purpose is to challenge orthodox believes.

American security policy since the end of the World War II that provides the framework of this study represents apparently more than extensive topic. However in order to do justice to above-outlined goal, the following text does not need to cover every single event within this period. Arguably, satisfactory outcomes can be achieved in thorough examination of some critical moments that are likely to contain best examples that subsequently allow showing problems that are inherent to the concepts such as threats and national interest in the U.S. security policy. This analysis starts with conventional pilot case study of the current American security policy. Taking threat oriented approach; this part explores American policies toward several most important issues such as terrorism, Afghanistan, Iraq, nuclear nonproliferation, or the rise of China. It should help to somewhat elaborate two important issues. First, inductively

demonstrate commonalities among various policies, which provide guiding principles for the U.S. security policy in general. Second, and even more important, it highlights several fallacies and shortcoming of conventional approach. This part also provides strong explanation for continuity, since it shows that major threats that the Obama administration faces and threat that the Bush administration faced, significantly overlap. Subsequent part explores American grand strategy, and challenge believes about the value oriented U.S. security policy. Particularly the role of support for the spread of democracy is examined in order to show, that sole prevailing guidance of American security policy is a concept of national interest.

Having examined this, the study follows with further elaboration of the concept of the national interests and of the relation between national interests and threats. Since national interest has been central model to the realist paradigm, the realist understanding is briefly reviewed in order to highlight its shortcomings, particularly inability to address change in the various meanings ascribed to the term. It is argued that national interest and threats are not objective terms, but rather subjective products of linguistic strategies that are used to describe them –particularly by leading decision makers – in a political discourse. Furthermore, one can hardly identify any clear boundaries between threats and national interest, since both terms have become rather interwinded.   The subjective and constituted character of threats, contrary to their alleged material nature established in terms of power, is then demonstrated on the case of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and subsequent American military reaction. This case has been chosen, since it seemingly has strong material background such as Saddam's military power, or threat of Iraqi control of mass of world oil reserves, and thus should provide strong case for materialist explanation. These assumptions must be problematized and it is demonstrated that need to challenge Iraqi action in 1991 was produced by employed discursive practices particularly by the Bush government. The case of Iraq also highlights that once threat is established, it is hard for United States to back down. Since alleged source of threat is other entity with inherent ability to make own decision and challenge the U.S. action, the range of available U.S. decision is significantly lower. Insomuch that Washington cannot back down, as soon as the notion of threat has been constituted, its policy will often follow certain patterns regardless of the name or political affiliation of then President.

Since some general assumptions about the concepts of threat and national interest have been established, analysis proceeds to examine some common patterns of the U.S. security policy after the World War II. Drawing on previous conceptualization of security policy within realm of discursive threat construction, study highlights how the Cold War itself was constituted in American discourse. Since the Cold War provides too extensive material to study, empirical evidence is taken particularly from three key moments. First, beginning of the conflict is

examined. Then analysis turns to the two perhaps most severe crises of the American Cold War security policy. These two are the Cuban missile crisis, which tend to be regarded as the moment when world was closest to the nuclear war *(see Schelling, 1966, p.96)*, and the Vietnam War. Arguably the most severe crises are more likely to reveal patterns inherent to the images and beliefs about appropriate security policy. First of them provides example of crisis in the dyadic U.S. – Soviet relations, while the second one should render evidence for American perceptions of their relations to the Third World. Following chapter then explores how patterns and self images constituted during the Cold War have been reflected in American security policy in the 1990s and early 21st century. Particularly, attention is paid to belief about the special leadership role, America must allegedly play in the world affairs, and to problematization of the terrorist threat images.

Before the examination proceeds to the pilot case study, some possible caveats should be addressed. First, since most data are taken from various speeches and other documents produced by decision makers, one may object that such information does not exceed pure rhetoric, which should justify policy to general public, while having little in common with actual motivation of decision makers. There is now considerable bulk of scholarship that has demonstrated invalidity of such argument *(see especially Campbell, 1998; Weldes; 1999)*. Most importantly the same linguistic strategies that are used in a public discourse overlap with the language of documents that were originally stamped as a top secret. Apparently there was no need to include rhetorical cover-ups for public in document that were not intended for such audience. Linguistic strategies, including metaphors and analogies, in public discourse hence provide useful evidence for study of images of the U.S. security policy, since these images are shared by decision making elite, not constituted to intrigue the rest of the nation. Second this study perceives security policy in limited terms. It is understood as the process of dealing with threat external to the state, which most importantly has its own agency. This does not mean that such threats are necessarily outside of the state borders, since it comprise also agents within the state borders, which are supposed to be alien to the state. In other words, not everything that somewhat endangers the state or the life of its citizens is included. Such limitation does not question the importance of dangers like climate change, global diseases, or similar, however as their character is significantly different, they are excluded from this analysis. As Bill McSweeney put it, "it is not useful to include risk of road accidents, debilitating illness, global disease and damage from volcano eruption in a security policy which also includes the threat of military aggression by external force. " *(McSweeney, 1999, p. 89)*

As it is explained earlier, the first part of this text consists of a more or less conventional case study of the current American security policy. This part is intended to provide basic tenets that are cornerstones of this particular policy and hence facilitate or even allow addressing the role of such tenets in a long term frame. Even though one must respect that authors cannot change their ontological and epistemological believes *(see Furlong – Marsh, 2002, pp. 17-41)*, this brief pilot case study is written from rather different perspective from much of the remaining chapters. Such shortcoming must be acknowledged. However, bearing this in mind, it should be possible to elaborate this part in a manner that corresponds with dominant conventional neorealist explanations[2] and simultaneously avoid corrupting coherence of the whole paper by sudden and unexplainable change of author's fundamental datum. It is argued that starting within such framework this paper can more clearly demonstrate several deficiencies of dominant neorealist paradigm and still use it theoretical simplicity as a suitable point of departure for further exploration of the given topic.

Established rules of scholarly publications fairly limit the bulk of literature that is available for this chapter. Since research itself and subsequent peer-review process that is centerpiece of academic publishing usually takes a while and at the time when this study is written current administration of Barack Obama has been forming U.S. security policy for slightly more than one year, there is naturally shortage of scholarly literature concerning given topic. Furthermore, this is particularly valid for the most prestigious journals. Hence, lack of this particular literature should be supplemented by the study that draws its structure from the threat oriented approach. These security threats usually originate from outside of the nation, or are connected with the entities that can be considered parts of the nation, but that refuse this fact or given order. This part of analysis thus examines various areas that are recognized as the most challenging threats for the U.S. national security and addresses American reaction on these threats. Proceeding inductively, commonalities among various areas are identified in order to recognize guiding principles.

Not very surprisingly, threats current administration is facing are hardly different to the ones that must have been dealt with by the late Bush presidency. Among the

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[2] In this case neorealist interpretation is taken in its broadest meaning and it is argued that relevant related approaches must be also included. Therefore this study accepts some level of influence for domestic and non-state actors rather than view problems of international security purely in interactions of nation states. Thus it also accept some of the neoliberal thoughts particularly those that can be labeled by John Mearsheimer's words as "realist by any other name". *(Mearsheimer, 1995, p. 85)*

most important is nuclear proliferation, ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, uncertain consequences of the rise of China, Palestine-Israeli conflict, and continuing danger of terrorism particularly one that is connected with Al Qaeda *(see Brzezinski, 2010)*. Arguably, even though Obama's accession helped to restore global perception of American leadership *(Gallup, 2010)*, the real policy has moved more toward the business as usual in many cases. To put it simply, even the world leading power must adjust its reaction to the character of various threats. Some policies may be preferred by the administration and sound especially attractive during the election's campaign, but later turn to be inappropriate. Iran may be useful example. It seems that President Obama indicated great willingness to open the negotiations with the Islamic Republic *(Obama, 2009a)*. The question of U.S. policy toward Teheran is elaborated later, nonetheless it should be noted that the Obama's offer was met by mixed signals at best. It is not necessary to examine problem extensively at this point. Basically it is sufficient to note, that some changes require more than one player.

The Obama administration clearly identifies the threat of nuclear proliferation as the crucial one. President himself stressed this in his first State of the Union address on January 27, 2010. As he pointed out, "we're also confronting perhaps the greatest danger to the American people – the threat of nuclear weapons". *(Obama, 2010a)* Statement, which is notably similar to the language of the Bush administration gratuitously controversial National Security Strategy. Even though, the Bush presidency associated the threat of proliferation with the combination of WMDs and radicalism, while Obama seems to perceive nuclear weapons themselves as a threat in long term perspective. *(see Bush, 2002a, pp. 13-16)* On the other hand essential character of the threat remains fundamentally unchanged. The famous term "axis of evil" is no longer used. Nonetheless, out of its three members, two remains to be regularly referred as nations hostile to the United States and generally considered among the most serious security challenges. The only country that has left the company of "bad guys" is Iraq. However the story of this change is well known. In order to achieve this, country was first invaded by the U.S. led coalition, and her regime was overthrown by the military might of (mostly) American and British arms. Iran and North Korea, respectively their nuclear programs, are still regarded as the vital threat to the U.S. national security. Less articulated, but still impliedly visible follows questions of Chinese and Russian nuclear weapons. *(see Gates, 2010a)*

In his speech in Prague, President Obama announced his vision of the nuclear weapons free world. One of the first steps toward this goal could be identified in recently concluded negations between the United States and Russia on the new strategic arms reduction treaty. The open sources should be treated carefully, but it seems that regardless of shared mutual desire to achieve an agreement, number of differences must have been resolved before agreement that is

considered rather limited by its critics *(Shear, 2010)* could have been signed in Prague. Furthermore ratification process could be even more complicated, since the role of the Senate should not be underestimated. The negotiations have in fact demonstrated that nuclear weapons are still clearly perceived by both states as an ultimate guarantee of their security. According to this, agreement requires to solve topics such as verification, role of missile defense, third countries nuclear arsenal, tactical nuclear weapons and many others. *(Pifer,2009)* With this respect, recent negotiations did not differ substantially from previous nuclear arms control and disarmament agreements. National interest and to some extend perception of agreement through the lenses of the security dilemma *(for discussion of the concept see Herz, 1950; 1951; Jervis, 1978; Glaser, 1997)* remain as a vital guidance for both sides. This is particularly valid for Russia, since Moscow's power depends more on her nuclear arsenal, while Washington can effectively replace nuclear weapons' roles by unparalleled conventional superiority. Since Russian perception is not variable that could be omitted, it inevitably shapes U.S. position.

Iranian case offers useful example of the limits of American security policy. As mentioned earlier, in case of intentional threats the available policies are limited to the certain set, which must take into account ability of the other side to counter American desires. Barack Obama offered Iranians a new beginning in his speech in Cairo, but he insisted "when it comes to nuclear weapons, we have reached a decisive point. This is not simply about America's interests. It's about preventing a nuclear arms race in the Middle East that could lead this region and the world down a hugely dangerous path." *(Obama, 2009a)* He may have refused this in his statement and appeal to the general values and interests of the world, but facts remain unchanged – Iran without nuclear weapons is in American interest. On the other hand, regardless of the recent political struggles in Iran, almost all relevant players in Islamic Republic agree on country's nuclear program. *(Barzegar, 2009)* Teheran thus continues with its well-proven policy of one step forward two steps back. *(see development of negotiations over Iranian nuclear program in Chubin, 2006)* Currently American government seems to pursue its goals by diplomacy and threat of further sanctions, which leads us back to the policy similar to the Bush administration. Apparently, offer of a new beginning is still pending and contrary to Bush, the threat of military action is not on the table. But difference is limited since real diplomatic negotiations does not seems to take place, while the threat of military action would not be very credible and can be thus hardly used. Security policy is more often outcome of available than preferred.

Since Barack Obama's accession North Korea tested long range ballistic missile Taepodong 2 and successfully detonated fission bomb. This development seems to be rather outcome of North Korean domestic issues particularly the question of succession after Kim

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Chong-Il. *(Hynek, 2009, pp. 132-134; Oh – Hassig, 2010, pp. 95-96)* Drawing on this assumption, one must consider that once again the threat is to great extend independent on American policy. Obama's policy follows realistic carrot and sticks approach. On the one hand President appointed Stephen W. Bosworth special representative for North Korea; on the other hand United States managed to put new tougher sanction through UN Security Council Resolution 1874 after North Korea's nuclear test. Nonetheless comprehensive American strategy toward North Korea is more or less missing and U.S. policy rather reflects development in the region.

Three ongoing conflicts shape design of current American security policy. American armed forces are engaged in Afghanistan since 2001 and in Iraq since 2003. The United States also wage what used to be referred as the Global War on Terror. All these conflict are interconnected and especially problems of terrorism and Afghanistan cannot be analyzed separately. It should be also noted that in case of both wars in Iraq and Afghanistan the U.S. strategy mirrors to great extend situation on the battlefield. Obama's opposition to the American engagement on Iraq was crucial for his raise to power, especially in his contest with Hilary Clinton in Democratic primaries. As a presidential candidate he has promised fairly swift withdrawal of American armed forces from Iraq. But as the success of President Bush and general Petraeus surge managed to stabilize situation in the country and it was becoming clear that the war is hardly as lost as almost everybody thought in 2006, Obama moderated his position. After accession the schedule for withdrawal was modified even more and currently it rather corresponds with American success at the theatre and ability of Iraqi armed forces to retake the mission. True is that Iraq was replaced as the top security priority by Afghanistan as Barack Obama indicated during his elections campaign, but this has been strongly influenced by the rapid improvement of the situation in Iraq and simultaneous deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan.

During his presidential campaign Barack Obama insisted that war in Afghanistan was the right one, while Iraq was unnecessary war of choice that overshadowed more important Afghan theatre, where Al Qaeda had its base before 9/11. *(Hanson, 2009)* President's first steps for Afghan theatre followed this guidance as reinforcements started arriving to the country in early 2009. However these initial troops' increases were prepared by the Bush administration. Obama also soon initiated major review of American strategy in Afghanistan and replaced General David McKiernan with General Stanley McChrystal. The entire problem of the campaign in Afghanistan also received a new framework of the so called AfPak strategy, basically taking problems of Afghanistan and Pakistan closely together. *(Jones, 2009)* Some other changes followed, most importantly when General McChrystal's counterinsurgency plan prevailed as a new way how the war should be won through protection of critical population centers.

Subsequently additional units were promised for the battlefield with overall number around 30 000 soldiers and marines. The major American national interest at stake is to prevent Afghanistan from becoming safe haven for Al Qaeda once again. Apparently there has been change in American military strategy in Afghanistan, or adjustments in perception of an entire problem through AfPak. Nonetheless, certain essential patters remain untouched. American strategy is rather reactive, Washington tries to change U.S. approach, since previous one was not effective enough and insurgents managed to adjust their strategy to American way of fighting them.

In the realm of security policy, nothing has been changed as much as rhetoric after accession of the Obama administration. Global War on Terror dominant term of Bush presidency became almost obsolete as Obama's team argued that it overestimate the power of Al Qaeda and implies military reaction, whereas number of other steps must be taken, and in fact has been taken even long time ago. *(see Ludvik, forthcoming 2010)* Change of the rhetoric as well as the ban of torture and promise to close prison in Guantanamo Bay *(see Roth, 2010)* made Obama appear weak on terrorism. Nonetheless, as it was demonstrated soon, terrorism remained in the center of U.S. security policy, and failed attempt to blow up airliner on Christmas 2009 shows that threat remains. Furthermore, American administration rapidly intensified targeted killing of terrorists by UAVs, particularly in border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan, often regardless of collateral damage.

The conflict in Palestine represents major security threat for the United States since it involves one of the closest American allies and also because it has provided major justification for Al Qaeda's struggle against United States. *(9/11 Commission, 2004, p.51)* Zbigniew Brzezinski the national security advisor for Jimmy Carter and informal advisor of Barack Obama's presidential campaign even listed Israeli-Palestinian conflict as "the first urgent challenge" more prominent than Iran's nuclear program or situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan. *(Brzezinski, 2010, p.19)* Barack Obama stared his policy on this issue with step fairly typical for his presidency – yet again appointed Special Envoy George Mitchell to lead the negotiations with both sides. However not much has changed since and the discussion still revolves around the same well-known set of issues.

American policy toward China represents particularly important and interesting issue. Today it is clear that China is rising power and allegedly new superpower. Analysts disagree on questions if and when will China surpass United States in terms of power. *(see Terril, 2005; Harding, 2007; Mahbubani, 2008, Joffe 2009)* However it is not even necessary, since China does not need to have equal or even bigger resources in order to become equal competitor of the

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United States in the world, to be roughly equal could more than suffice. Current American approach to China contains great deal of ambiguity. In economic terms, both states are interdependent to the extent that Josef Joffe argues that "China and the United States hold each other hostage in a state of M-MAD, or monetary mutual assured destruction." *(Joffe, 2009)* United States thus pursue policy of cooperation and continue to stress need of positive relationship between both nations. *(Gibbs, 2010)* Nonetheless China is also perceived as a major threat for the United States, even though not necessarily immediate one. Both currently available major strategic documents of American Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review and Ballistic Missile Defense Review impliedly recognize China as a threat. Aforementioned documents hence rate China rather among countries such as Iran and North Korea, while for example the view of Russia is notably more positive. The beginning of Obama's presidential term was particularly influenced by the economic crisis and this situation showed up in his policy priorities toward China. As the worst part of crisis in the United States seems to be over, other issues have resurfaced and the absolute primacy of economy in the Sino-American relations in the first month of presidency has been put aside from time to time. Notably China was outraged by approval of American arms sales to Taiwan, which is worth of $ 6 billion. *(Cooper, 2010)* Other clashes followed the Chinese policy toward censorship of Google, while United States find fairly uncooperative partner in Beijing as far as Iranian nuclear issue is concerned.

Examining briefly outlined American policies toward various threats that are discussed above one may readily object several points. First and foremost, the text seemingly lacks analytical consistency. It can be also argued – and such criticism would not lack substance – that pilot study does not provide more than brief description with little depth and almost no examination of the outlined problems. However, sometimes actual content of the text is less important than what is missing from some reason. Thus omissions that seem to impair the quality of previous chapter can in fact provide useful tool for further exploration of the topic. The sort of aforementioned problems in fact pave the way for essential critique of American security policy, one that clearly corresponds with these problems, since it is in fact the reason why they occur in previous pilot study.

Current American security policy bears large amount of continuity *(Hynek, 2009, p. 137)*, and while change has occurred in number of examples, usually main topics have remained the same. The fundamental question to be answered is what is common for various American policies. In order to make goals and means consistent, United States must keep their policy within certain lines. Such framework or guidelines should be provided by the grand strategy. According to Paul Kennedy grand strategy refers to "policy, that is, in the capacity of the nation's leaders to bring together all of the elements, both military and non-military, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation's long-term (that is, in wartime *and* peacetime) best interests." *(Kennedy, 1991, p.5 original emphasis)* Apparently grand strategy can have various forms. On the one hand grand strategy can be publicly declared and clearly articulated providing information not only for nation's decision makers and public, but also for its allies and even adversaries. On the other hand grand strategy may be fairly implicit, consisting of almost nothing more than shared believes among elites. However at least one vital characteristic should be shared by all sorts of grand strategies – they must provide a long term *vision*. Hence grand strategy allows policy to become more than just great number of *ad hoc* solutions for smaller or bigger problems, created and recreated as crises, challenges, and troubles occur. Ultimately it allows the policymaker to be pro-active rather than reactive.

In order to figure out, what can be the grand strategy for current American security policy, one must examine this policy and find least common denominator. In other words, was there some sort of grand strategy, it would be somewhat reflected in the U.S. approaches to various topics that are usually labeled as the security issues. As it is mentioned above, grand

strategy does not necessarily need to be publicly announced. It can be even argued that the guidance can be not just implicit in shared private sphere of decisions making elite but also even unconscious outcome of shared believes. Nonetheless this should not mean that one cannot identify the logic of such grand strategy and its principles. They are to be traced in intertextual expressions of policy that has been designed on their basis. Generally speaking the best way how to identify principles of grand strategy in policy is to explore justification for such policy.

The first paragraph of this chapter argues that previous pilot case study suffers from lack of consistency and depth. It is also argued that there is connection between these problems and security policy. In other words those problems of pilot study may not be just lack of scholarly skills by the author, but they may have been caused by character of examined issue. Just a fairly brief analysis of current American security policy will arguably provide the same about this policy as such – it lacks consistency and depth. Analyzing American foreign policy under the Clinton presidency, Henry Kissinger argued that there was no strategy, but rather number of *ad hoc* decisions usually more crafted in order to satisfy domestic constituencies that anything else. *(Kissinger, 2001, pp. 14)* Such objection can be easily broadened to cover also following presidential terms and as it is showed later, important parts of this critique are somewhat valid even for the period of the Cold War particularly when it is studied in terms of broader "problematiques". *(see Der Derian, 1992, p.6-8)* Nonetheless, since the post-cold war security policy offers clearer evidence for the principles, or rather lack of principles in this policy, this part of analysis draws evidence primarily from the 1990s and first decade of 21st century.

During the Cold War, at least the threats seemed to be clear. After the fall of Soviet empire American decision makers turned confused. However this does not mean that United States has somewhat lost interest in world affairs. Perhaps part of American public did in 1990s just to recover it after the shock of 9/11, but elites – the decision makers in Washington and elsewhere – have not. United States have in fact been very active actor even after USSR was defeated. Nonetheless what was missing was positive achievable view of future mission or political project that transcends the present. In fact such view was replaced by *doctrine of crisis management*, which lacking any historical perspective, becomes a slave of contingency, based on the responding to emergency. *(Chandler, 2006, p. 168, emphasis added)* Even though the fact that at least since the end of the Cold War, security policy has been conducted as crisis management is arguably very correct, one should try to examine, which justification have been given in order to explain such shape of policy. Subsequent analysis should try to figure out if some common ground exists and provides if not guidance that at least some sort of approximate orientation.

Seemingly American foreign and to great extent security policy can identify its goals in promotion of democracy and free markets. Particularly the importance of democracy has been stressed in all national security strategies published during Bill Clinton's and George W. Bush's presidential terms.[3] Promoting democracy would be perhaps logical approach to American grand strategy. At a first glance, democratic values have been perceived by Americans as an essential part of their national heritage. It has also strong underpinnings in democratic peace theory, which states that democracies do not fight each other.[4] But has democracy really been centerpiece of American security policy after the Cold War? Several arguments must make this assumption very problematic. Examining recent history of American engagements on behalf of democracy, one inevitably finds discrepancy between actual shapes of policy in various examples. Furthermore, this is not true for actual policy only, but often for rhetoric as well. Three examples should suffice to demonstrate this point. In case of rogue states democracy provides important justification of policy. Lack of democracy has been criticized not only in states like North Korea, where democracy is far even from being just a dream, but substantially more free ones like Iran. China represents interesting middle ground. While American leaders from time to time criticize Beijing for its political system, in terms of day to day political business other issues are much more important, even though China is hardly anyhow freer than Iran. The last model offers American autocratic allies – Saudi Arabia would be perhaps the most suitable example. Other evidence can be drawn on March 2003 American intervention in Iraq. It was argued that establishment of democracy should have been central goal of military action. However before the outbreak of war, major reasoning followed the logic of elimination of the threat of weapons of mass destruction, that were supposedly in Saddam Hussein's arsenal. Democracy became the goal of the invasion, since weapons of mass destruction had not been found. It does not mean that spread of democracy did not play an important role in the Bush administration decision making. Nonetheless, in order to recognize what is behind American grand strategy, one must proceed a few more steps.

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[3] George H. W. Bush's administration is excluded since it still rather reflected the Cold War realities. Even though it does not anyhow undermine importance of democracy in its policy, for the sake of consistency its policy must be perceived as unsuitable for this part of analysis. On the other hand, Obama's national security strategy would provide more than useful empirical evidence. Since it seems that Obama's team emphasize more realist, and great powers oriented foreign policy than its predecessors, the way how promotion of democracy will be treated in prospective new security strategy may provide important arguments for or against the certain part of this analysis. However the Obama administration has not published its national security strategy yet.

[4] Democratic peace theory can be supported by apparent lack of examples when two true democracies waged a war against each other. Critique thus usually points out that number of democracies was rather low for a better part of human history and during the Cold War, conflict were prevented by block division. It should be also mentioned that democracies do not fight other democracies, but they are not less prone to fight states that are not democratic. For supportive arguments for democratic peace theory see for example Doyle *(2005)*, quantitative analysis was conducted by Chan *(1984)*, while example of criticism can among others provide Rosato *(2003; see also Waltz, 2000, pp.11-13).*

Provided that there is little consistency in American security policy and not even spread of democracy gives rationale and guidance for the U.S. decision makers, it is necessary to move bit further. As aforementioned already suggest, the hidden contours of strategy can be identified in the justification of actual policy. It is argued that should the different policies have same justification, such justification would likely constitute what is behind the grand strategy, however vague or implicit it may be. Apparently there will always be more than one rationale for particular policies, but following examination must clearly focus the one that is available explicitly or implicitly for the whole range of issues.

In fact such concept is not hard to find, it has been central to the discipline of international relations since its very beginning. It can be easily followed in most recent speeches of top U.S. officials, including President Obama, Vice President Biden, Secretary of Defense Gates and Secretary of State Clinton. Speaking at the National Defense University about the future of nuclear weapons, weapons that played very central role in the U.S. security strategy since 1940s *(see for example Freedman, 1981; Rosenberg; 1983; Sokolski 2004)*, Joe Biden claimed: "our agenda is based on clear-eyed assessment of our *national interest.*" *(Biden, 2010, emphasis added)* Similarly President Obama – in his remarks on Security Reviews – justified closure of Guantanamo prison by the fact that it "has damaged our national security interests". *(Obama, 2010b)* President also made references on concept of interest in his Cairo speech, arguing that solution of Israeli-Palestinian conflict is in "Israel's interest, Palestine's interest, America's interest, and the world's interest." In the same speech Obama mentioned "new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest." *(Obama, 2009a)* It may be objected that in this case concept of interest is used broadly, does not serve as a justification, but just as rhetoric only and thus it corrupts the analytical utility of concept for our purpose.

Nonetheless President Obama has not anyhow suggested that there is some sort of incompatibility between American national interests and the interests of other nations. Quite to the contrary Obama assumes that mutual interests exist. Thus national interest remains the centerpiece of justification of the U.S. policy. Furthermore as statement about solution of Israeli-Palestinian conflict shows, it is believed that interests provide framework for other nations as well. Following the lines of national interest Robert Gates argued that NATO must in its new Strategic Concept reflect other threats than those, which threaten territorial integrity of member states. *(Gates, 2010b)* Notably, the concept of interest also provides rationale for budget during

its elaboration in Congress. Secretary of State Clinton defended budget for her department in words: "The budget we are presenting today is designed to protect America and Americans and to advance our interests."

Centrality of the national interest in considerations of the U.S. decision makers should hardly surprise anyone familiar with the topic. A numbers of experts have used national interest in their attempts to suggest best policy for the United States in a great number of works. *(among others see Art 1998-1999; Rice, 2000; Walt, 2001-2002; Brzezinski, 2009; 2010; Joffe, 2010; Ellis, 2010)* It has also been central part of debates among international relations scholars pretty much since the discipline was established. National interest is vital for realist tradition, as the godfather of political realism in study of international affairs Hans Morgenthau argued "the main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power… We assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power, and the evidence of history bears that assumption out." *(Morgenthau, 1993, p.5)* Both realists and neorealist more or less assumes that fundamental interest of nation state is its survival. Particularly for neorealist, states are compelled to follow such policy by anarchic structure of international system. *(see Waltz, 1979; Walt, 1987, Powell, 1994)* This would be elegant explanation of continuity in nation's foreign policy. Governments may change, but interest defined in terms of power remains, since it is an outcome of self-help system. States want to survive in anarchic international environment, thus decision makers cannot change much, since policy is determined by the structure of the system.

FALLACIES OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Apparently since a very beginning, concept of interests has been criticized for several reasons. First and foremost, the definition of the concept is usually anything but clear. In other words, under the name of national interest one may understand the whole set of possible meanings. Thus it is unclear, how can interest serve as an analytical category, since it may simply contain what particular analyst want it to contain. Steve Smith argues that "it can be used to mean whatever the user wishes" and has "commonsensical appeal". *(Smith, 1986, pp. 23-6)* Other problems of the concept – apart from the fact that it is somewhat too general, too vague, and too all-inclusive – arise from the fact that it is also self-justifying. National interest should serve as both motive of nation's actions and their justification. However, one may argue that as such, this does not create any sort of dichotomy. National interest provides policy makers with the concept

through that they can understand the goals to be pursued by state's foreign policy. But it can also serve as a "rhetorical device through which the legitimacy of and political support for state action are generated". *(Weldes, 1996, p. 276)* It is vital and thus good for state to pursue its national interest – so the argument runs – and therefore national interest itself may justify the policy.

This study argues that the fact that concept of national interest is very general does not significantly reduce its utility, right because it is both goal of policy and its justification. Nonetheless both, most critics and supporters share common misperception of the concept. The critique is in fact grounded on empiricist positions. *(see Wendt, 1987, pp. 350-355)* Hence interest is perceived as an independent category, which can be somehow objectively established and observed. Since interests are usually fluid and hardly objective, critiques prefer to replace them with something solid, which would be preferably directly observable. This criticism follows the logic of *epistemic realism*, which assumes that world "comprises objects whose existence is independent of ideas or believes about them". *(Campbell 1998, p.4)* However in this point this article argues, together with evolving bulk of postmodern scholarship that "social and political life comprises a set of practices in which things are constituted in process of dealing with them". *(Campbell, 1998, p.5)*

Neorealists tend to perceive interest as objective independent analytical category. Even though this study shares their persuasion that concept of national interest is useful for study and interpretation of security policy, it establishes the meaning of the concept on different grounds that are outcomes of aforementioned positions inspired by poststructuralist scholarship. In agreement with these positions *national interests should be understood as a set of shared believes that have been constituted in process of interaction between relevant actors*. This should not be taken too far; interest cannot be everything what one may wish. In this case, it is useful to employ the concept of reality constrain. *(Weldes, 1996, p. 286)* Concrete wall has its meanings in human mind, and meaning can be changed, however some physical reality remains – regardless of the meaning – one cannot walk through. In the most simplistic way, national interest is what decision makers believe it is, respectively in democratic countries, what decision makers and a part of public that is interested in and concerned with security policy believe it is, as long as it is not prevented by reality constrain. Nonetheless contrary to most scholarship with similar inspiration, this study does not view neorealist logic as completely flawed one. Or to be more accurate, even though neorealist logic is flawed, it has not prevented it from ability to quite accurately interpret much of the international affairs, particularly in realm of international security.

This may have been achieved by the fact that neorealism fails to understand how are processes, structures, and concepts of international policy constituted through interaction of their actors and images these actors ascribe to them. Therefore it must fail to offer sufficient interpretations as meanings of aforementioned notions of international interactions change. Waltz argues that neorealism would be turned irrelevant by the change *of* the system not by the change *in* the system; hence he assumes that it is valid as long as system comprises self-interested states. *(Waltz, 2000, pp. 5-6, original emphasis)* System is thus again understand as something objective, which exists as a causal effect of existence of independent sovereign states. Thus neorealism creates more or less static theory, since it does not recognize that system is constituted by subjective meaning that is ascribed to it by its members. *(Wendt, 1992, pp. 396-410)* Therefore neorealism can hardly provide sufficient theory of international relations, even if they are limited to the security part of interactions and thus omit economic interactions. On the other hand it quite effectively described international relations in the time when it was created, by simple reflection of ever-changing categories in their then state. To exaggerate this for sake of simplicity, neorealism does not provide theory of international relations, but extremely extensive case study of international relations in a given time.

NATIONAL INTERESTS AND EXTERNAL THREATS

In the realm of security policy, the connection between nation's interests and threats that nation is facing creates absolutely fundamental task to understand. As mentioned earlier this study does view security policy in limited sense, recognizing security policy as processes that react on external – which in no way means foreign in legal terms – intentional threats. It is argued that such threat must be connected to other actor. Therefore phenomenon that has no independent will on its own is for the sake of analytical consistency excluded from this study. Arguably, it is useful to remind aforementioned Bill McSweeney's datum that "it is not useful to include risk of road accidents, debilitating illness, global disease and damage from volcano eruption in a security policy which also includes the threat of military aggression by external force. " *(McSweeney, 1999, p. 89)* This is not to say that such things do not constitute dangers for a state, but they are distinctive categories that should be treated separately. Further analysis shows that in terms of American security policy independent behavior of subjects that are marked as a threat plays critical role in continuity in this policy.

Neorealism holds that nation's interest in terms of security policy is survival. This is deductively established on the anarchic nature of international system. When the state A have means to cause harm to state B and gain relative advantage through that, the state B must threat situation as if this was actually going to happen. In other words states are afraid of other states. Notwithstanding all its fallacies *(see McSweeney, 1999, pp. 104-125)*, Wendt's approach rightly argues that states treat system through the meaning they ascribe to it. A meaning of national interests, threats, and even international system, which constitutes basis of actors' behavior toward them, is founded on a set of practices in which thinks are constituted in process of dealing with them. But two important points helps neorealism to grasp somewhat accurate interpretation of connection between nation's interest and threat. First, international affairs changes in fairly slow motion, hence neorealism may be more useful as a case study of then international politics then general theory, but not much has changed so the case study still fits pretty much same case. Second, as Richard Ashley highlighted realism is self-affirming *(Ashley, 1984)*, and since it has existed and even more realism has been dominant theory for understanding of international relations for a quite a long time, it has also shaped the meaning of the system, interests and threats. In this process realism became to some extend self-fulfilling. Images actors currently give to these terms, hence contains some influence by realist persuasion, and through that the "realism becomes more real". This takes this study back to the connection between interest and threat.

As mentioned earlier, in general terms national interests should be understood as a set of shared believes that have been constituted in process of interaction between relevant actors. Turning this into little bit more specific, *national interest is to challenge the threats that endanger, or can in the future endanger national survival*. In this point, this study rather corresponds with conventional neorealist explanation. The fundamental difference arises from the fact that both *threats and interest are perceived as a discursive constructs*.[5] The constructive character of threats is well demonstrated by Wendt's notorious example of British and North Korean's nuclear weapons. As he put it "500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than 5 North Korean nuclear weapons…" *(Wendt, 1995, p. 73)* Constitutive process of threat construction can be perhaps understood through the process of securitization. This idea, originally developed in general by Ole Waever and the Copenhagen School, has taken important ground in theory of (particularly European) security studies. Regardless of its shortcoming, which arguably has roots in compromise between Buzan's neorealism and

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[5] And as aforementioned clearly suggest, neorealism is to be understood as part of this constituting discourse.

Waever's poststructural realism, *(Smith, 2005, p .38)* concept of securitization provides useful interpretation of the discursive process of threat construction.[6]

In order to understand the process of securitization, from which this study draws its understanding of threat construction, one should see this as a speech act. *(Waever, 1996, p. 107)* Something is label as a security issue fitted with the sense of urgency that requires extraordinary reaction including special measures outside of the usual political process. *(Smith, 2005, p. 34)* This may help us understand continuity of security policy, since issues that have been approved to require measures outside of usual political process must be treated differently. To put it simply, no one wants to be labeled as the one gambling with sacred concept of national security. In theory almost everything can be constituted as a threat, the impenetrable limits are perhaps created only by aforementioned reality constrains. *(Weldes, 1996, p. 286)* Returning to the Wendt's example, North Korea is perceived as a threat and thus its weapons are considered enormously dangerous. Even the fact that North Korea may have nuclear weapons may be perceived as enormous danger, regardless of physical existence of these weapons. It would be possible, perhaps in long time process, to change the view of American nation in order to make British nuclear arsenal threat for them. This would require destruction of previously constructed feeling of friendship and proximity between United States and United Kingdom and further reshaping of other relevant images. Similarly it will be difficult to construct the threat of nuclear danger from Papuan tribe Kombai, since it has just few thousands of people living with little technology and apparently no interest in nuclear weaponry. Nonetheless it would be theoretically possible to construct such threat. On the other hand it would be almost certainly impossible to create a danger of nuclear weapons program conducted by Emperor Penguins of Antarctica.

Sometimes threats may seem self-evident, given by external circumstances. There is in fact good logic in such assumption. Had the Canadians and Mexicans created alliance, mobilized all resources and invaded United States with their military power, it would be impossible for Americans not to perceive this as a threat. However this threat would be then still constructed in (clearly swift) discursive process. Perhaps, President would announce that territory of United States was invaded by foreign military and since most people share an image of foreign military invasion as existential threat, they would understand. In this, example threat is really external to the United States maybe even almost "objective" if one insists on that word. But this threat is also clearly intentional, has its own will. Thus the whole process of threat construction would have had to happen in Canada and Mexico, where United States must have been labeled

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[6] For some essential works on securitization see Waever *(1996)*, and Buzan et al. *(1998)*, see also further elaboration and critique of the concept in Williams *(2003)*; Smith *(2005, pp. 32-37)*, and Ciuta *(2009)*.

successfully as existential threat that could be stopped only by military invasion. In other words this seemingly objective threat was first subjectively constructed, as Canadians and Mexicans would have started to believe that they would have had to invade United States.

Example above is apparently more than unlikely. But it demonstrates further that what may look like objective external threat must in fact contain great deal of subjective component. Take, for instance, the Iraqis invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. From one point this was clear violation of international laws, could have destroy the whole fragile balance in the Middle East, and Saddam Hussein would have been in control of dangerous amount of oil, which would have given him enormous power. Or at least that is the conventional image in our minds. In fact Iraq was little threat to United States before it occupied Kuwait. If one can use *Foreign Affairs* as a relevant example of the American foreign policy elite opinions, which one almost certainly can, it is possible to see that Iraq was not labeled as a major threat right before 1990. Strikingly, most Iraq's later sins, such as ballistic missiles and chemical weapons programs were already clearly acknowledged in the article. However they were rather regarded as something what just exists, not really much more than description of reality. *(Kemp, 1989)* Similarly Collin Powel writing about changes in world affairs in 1989 did not mention any kind of threat from Iraq. *(Powell, 1989)* From strict neorealist perspective, Iraq should have been just a little more threatening to the United States after it occupied Kuwait than it was before. Iraq was just nation of 19 million and Saddam Hussein may have mobilized army of about one million men supported by 700 combat aircrafts, 6000 tanks, and 5000 artillery pieces. *(Stein, 1992, p. 155)* Such power may seem impressive; however at the same time it is to be acknowledged that this was perhaps maximum Iraq could have mobilized. Furthermore, the numbers look impressive just through the lenses of 21st century, fairly different and less impressive image given end-of-cold-war optics. Had the states view threats based solely on material power United States would have perceived Poland with much stronger economy, 400 thousand army, 2850 tanks, 2000 pieces of artillery, and 550 combat aircraft at the peace time at least as a comparable threat. *(for military balance data see appendixes in Walt, 1985; Dean – Forsberg, 1992)* Other materialist argument that Iraq became threat for United States, because it was controlling unacceptable amount of oil is also established on rather shaky ground. As David Campbell pointed out "a decade earlier, Iraqi invasion of Iran (an oil producing state like Kuwait) brought no apocalyptic denunciations or calls to action, let alone a military response, from the United States". *(Campbell, 1998, p. 1)* In 1990 Iraq was less "clear and present danger" for the United States than it may appear today through the prism of more than decade of hostilities and two wars between both countries.

This is not to say that what happened back in 1990 had no material grounds or characteristics external to the American discourse. Quite obviously Saddam Hussein invaded

Kuwait and violated established international norms. Nonetheless occupation of one tiny country by other third world country, which "realistically speaking" had no power to oppose United States' military might, could have become only remote danger for the United States hardly requiring military intervention of half million U.S. service members with some 1900 tanks. *(Freedman – Karsh, 1991, p. 25)* If anything else, United States may have defeated Iraq whenever they wanted. The ambiguity of American policy toward its stakes in Iraq till August 1990 may be well demonstrated on its development before the occupation. Notably this policy was anything but clear, as the U.S. decision makers were unsure what their priorities were. Kuwait did not receive any assurances or promise to come to its assistance, which apparently impaired U.S. ability to deter Iraq from military invasion. *(Stein, 1992, especially pp. 149-170)* First New York Times' article informing about the invasion of Kuwait did not include any sort of suggestion that U.S. might take military response. *(Gordon, 1990)* On the other hand American political elite shared intersubjective images of proper international conduct and the U.S. interest in the Gulf. Through these lenses they started to interpret behavior of Iraqi regime as the threat for the United States. In other words external actions must have been interpreted through discursive practices such as appeasement metaphor *(see Lewis F., 1990; Weldes, 1999)* to become threat for the Unites States. Even though administration insisted that its primary goal was liberation of Kuwait it reinforced the view of Iraq's threat for the United States through the "demonization" of Saddam Hussein. *(Freedman – Karsh, 1991, p. 16)* As the threat of Iraq had been constructed, it became national interest for the United States and it was inevitable to challenge it.

From perspective of security policy continuity, this may be highlighted as the first vital pillar. As Jutta Weldes argues: "Drawing on and constructed by array of cultural and linguistic resources already available within the security imaginary, state officials create representation that serve, to populate the world with a variety of objects including both (that is, the state in question and its authorized officials) and other." *(Weldes, 1999, p. 13)* Once threat and national interest are constructed – primarily by foreign policy decision making elites – any subsequent policy making bodies will find difficult not to deal with them in such manner as they were "objective" threat. Nonetheless, even though the image of examined threat is constructed through discursive practices, the threat keeps some independent status external to, but connected with its interpretation. However difficult it may sound, the background in this case is rather simple. Since this study focuses only on intentional threats, hence those that arise from behavior of other players, ability of other players to influence the process must be taken into account. Arguably this may be perceived by Clausewitzian description of war as a clash of wills. In other words once some behavior or player is labeled as a threat for the United States this player is likely to challenge it. Since threat is constructed, set of policy option for any U.S.

decision makers is limited, as the issue is excluded from normal political process via securitization. Nonetheless the set is limited further by other player's moves, which are likely to be designed to oppose American steps that would be harmful, or inacceptable for other side.

The case of 1990 invasion of Kuwait may offer useful empirical evidence for this concept. Following August 2 regime of Saddam Hussein was becoming the threat to the United States and thus must have been opposed. This position was constructed through discursive practice particularly the appeasement metaphor and Munich analogy (small state occupied by powerful, militarized neighbor). Was this enough to determine future course of American security policy? Arguably to great extend it was, even though it may seem that "recognition" of national interest is not enough to "determine" the actual policy, since more opinion how to deal with the issue remains open. Nonetheless the independent will of other player limits the available solutions of the issue. Right after the invasion Thomas R. Pickering American ambassador to the United Nations expressed preferences of his government "it is a time for peace and diplomacy, not for war and aggression". *(Lewis P., 1990)* Had the American deterrence of invasion before August 2 been poorly orchestrated and ambiguous, the practices of compellence after the August 2 – including sanctions, military buildup and credible threats – were the textbook example of proper application of coercive diplomacy, meeting most requirement that are usually considered necessary. *(Stein, 1992, p. 170; for some essential theory of deterrence, compellence, and practice of coercive diplomacy see for example Schelling 1960; George et.al. 1971)* But regardless of American preference of peaceful solutions, administration soon realized that set of available solutions was limited. Saddam Hussein believed that Iraq can keep all its gains and that his forces would give fierce resistance to any possible intervention. Iraqi dictator may have made several miscalculations, and gravely underestimated the effect of deadly combination of modern weapons and greatly superior training of American and British forces, but he was no fool. His strategy was based on the reasonable assumption that western countries became incredibly causalities aware. *(see Luttwak, 1995)* As he told U.S. ambassador April Glaspie "yours is a society which cannot accept 10,000 dead in one battle". *(Freedman – Karsh, 1991, p. 15)* Perhaps this calculation was right, but he exaggerated ability of his forces to inflict anything even remotely close to such causalities.[7] However since Iraq refused to back down as it leader

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[7] Contrary to common perception that war was decided in air campaign, the better part of victory should be ascribed to coalition ground forces. Superior technology and much better training of British and American mechanized forces, which took most fighting, allowed coalition to achieve overwhelming victory. Iraq's defeat should not be also attributed to poor performance of its leadership, even though coalition military commanders were clearly superior to their counterparts. Iraqis often fought in well prepared defensive positions and managed to use their best units – Republican Guards and army armored divisions in sound manner to challenge famous right hook. Iraqi armed forces were simply no match for Americans and British units. Had the Iraq employed different military strategy it would not have inflicted much heavier causalities upon coalition forces. *(see especially Press, 1997; and 2001)*

believed that he might prevail in the confrontation, the United States were soon facing the situation when choice seem to be given only in dyadic terms; fight a war, or yield to – in great powers terms irrelevant – third world country. Apparently the latter could have hardly been possible for superpower that was convinced that it just won the Cold War.

Once constructed, threats are likely to prevail in the discourse for a considerable amount of time, unless their nature is completely changed. In 1991 Iraq was defeated, its army crushed, sovereignty of Kuwait reestablished, and Iraq subjected to weapons inspections and sanctions. Material grounds to perceive Baghdad as a threat perished. Had the threat been established on material grounds, there would have been little reason to perceive Iraq as a threat during 1990s. However, powerful Iraq of 1980s was viewed as much smaller risk for the U.S. than its dwarfed 1990s version. Iraq as a country does not possess this character only after 2003 U.S. invasion. Once again states do not act toward threats on the objective assessment of threat, but rather on the image of this threat. Having examined this, this study suggests that the concept of the constitutive role played by the image of threat should be thereafter applied on other significant milestones of the U.S. security. Through this process, some major conventional view may be reexamined, in order to show problems inherent in the various narratives of the American security policy.

The origins of the Cold War have been subjected to a great number of scholarly studies. Volumes devoted to the topic fill miles of bookshelves, scores of historians tried to identify when and how the conflict started. In spite of that, one can reasonably argue that so far not even anything close to consensus has been reached. Traditional historiography usually perceives the conflict as the rivalry between U.S. led western block and USSR controlled eastern bloc, subsequently the conflict is primarily viewed as the one grounded in realm of politics. Traditionalist usually refers to the Soviet Union aggressive behavior in Eastern Europe as to the main motive of the conflict. *(e.g. Kennan1951; 1961)* Other major interpretation highlights that the nature of struggle was primarily economic one, following the patterns of communism – capitalism antagonism. *(e.g. Williams, 1961; Hobsbawn, 1994)* Synthesis is claimed to be offered by postrevisionists, represented most profoundly by John L. Gaddis (1982; 2005), though they mostly follow traditionalist interpretation with some adjustments. Despite this impressive bulk of scholarship, students of Cold War history share little in common, usually disagreeing on number of fundamental points. But as Campbell argues both followers of orthodox interpretations and their revisionist critics usually "exhibit a commitment to an epistemic realism that brings them closer that they might care to acknowledge to the position from which they want to be distanced." *(Campbell, 1998, p.20)* Thus, even though they from time to time accept logic of interpretation, in fact they are usually much more faithful to the logic of explanation, trying to figure out reasons for the Cold War outside of discursive realm. This is

arguably problematic, since it omits vital role of aforementioned process of threat constitution through discursive practices.

Taught by bloody lessons of World War II battles, American society learned that United States should preoccupy prominent position in international system, position which must be inevitably established on foreign policy activism. Certainly U.S. – Soviet nexus must have been central to this policy. United States not only survived the war, and could have claimed the prize for victors; it also turned to be the only great power that was better off after the hostilities were over, then before their outbreak. Japan and Italy, other two great powers, were crushed. Germany the most powerful of Axis powers was not only defeated and occupied, but also divided. Great Britain stood firmly during the conflict and seemed entitled to keep its role of one of three world greatest powers. But as it was soon to be proven Britain was also exhausted, not willing if even able to occupy this position, while France was trying to sneak in into the elite club, but could not have been taken too seriously. Chinese concerned primarily with killing of other Chinese in the civil war, were also out of the game. On the other hand, Soviet military that recently undertook impressive mission, which brought Red Army from defense position in front of Moscow up to the point when Soviet soldiers waved the red flag above the Reichstag, hold the image of strength.

IMAGINING THE COLD WAR

Provided that anything such as objective independent threat cannot be cognizable, the students of this topic must turn to exploration of discursive images of subjective threat perception. Through the experience of the World War and subsequently the Korean War, numerous and battle tested Red Army could have been perceived as a grave danger for American national interest. Military protection of European countries provided rationale for establishment of NATO on April 4, 1949. *(Gaddis, 2005, p. 34)* Apparently military protection is particularly useful against threats that are viewed as military in their nature. However was this "the reality" of Soviet threat, its perception, or anything else? Soviet Union lost more than 20 million people in the World War, divisions that conquered Berlin were often at very low numbers, lacking both manpower and equipment, and country was hardly ready to wage another war. Furthermore last two major conflicts were just resolved by economic rather than purely military might, and USSR was no peer to the United States in terms of economic power. However, what is even more important prominent Americans representatives did not imagine Soviet Union as primarily

military threat. Gorge Kennan's are perhaps the most important and influential texts of early Cold War. Soviet threat is represented by Soviet pursuit of its power enlargement wherever possible, which should have been an outcome of "Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs" and "traditional and instinctive sense of insecurity". *(Kennan, 1946)* However Kennan did not regarded Soviet threat to the United States as a military one. Soviet outlook – for Kennan defined in terms of incompatibility between capitalism and socialism – should have taken effect in Soviet internal policy "devoted to increasing in every way strength and prestige of Soviet state", in advancing limits of Soviet power in countries where it was promising, participation in UN limited on tactical and pragmatic grounds, efforts to weaken western influence in colonial areas. The emphasis was rather given to Soviet political power, while military expansion was not expected. *(Kennan, 1946; also Campbell, 1998, pp. 25-27)* Kennan was career diplomat not a politician; however his views were shared by many and influenced number of leading decision makers. Henry L. Stimson Secretary of War under Taft's presidency, Secretary of State for Herbert Hoover, and Roosevelt's and Truman's Secretary of War during WWII introduced in his 1947 Foreign Affairs article "The Challenge to Americans" view closely similar to Kennan's. In his image USSR represented threat, and as he put in "Soviet leaders might in desperation resort to war, and against that possibility we have to guard by maintaining our present military advantages... I do not, however, expect the Russians to make war." *(Stimson, 1947, p. 10)*

Texts of official documents from early parts of the Cold War followed aforementioned patterns and thus constituted nature of perceived threat. Accordingly very first part of conclusion of NSC 20/4 from November 1948 stated that "the gravest threat to the security of the United States within the foreseeable future stems from the hostile designs and formidable power of the USSR, and from the nature of the Soviet system." *(NSC 20/4, 1948)* On the other hand Soviet threat was presented as primarily nonmilitary one, the outbreak of war was not expected in immediate period, even though its possibility was neither completely excluded. Similar view is elaborated further in famous NSC 68, which was drafted by team under the leadership of Kennan's successor as a Director of Policy Planning in the State Department. NSC 68 directly refers to previous NSC 20/4 assuming that objective outlined there "are fully consistent with the objectives stated in this paper, and they remain valid". Soviet Union was against presented as imminent danger. Authors of NSC 68 argued that "the Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world." It was further argued that for leaders in Moscow "the United States, as the principal center of power in the non-Soviet world and the bulwark of opposition to Soviet expansion, is principal enemy whose integrity and vitality must be subverted or destroyed by one means or other", or in other words "the Kremlin design seeks to impose order among nations by means that that which would destroy our free and

[34]

democratic system." *(NSC 68, 1950)* American policy was hence introduced as inevitable outcome of aggressive Soviet behavior which was supposed to be inherent part of Soviet system. Subsequently U.S. policy toward this threat is viewed as a reactive one, following similar pattern that Chandler in different circumstances labels as a doctrine of crisis management, which becomes a slave of contingency, based on the responding to emergency. *(Chandler, 2006, p. 168)* Notably discourse of American policy placed itself into the position, ascribing primary agency to external other.

NSC 68 presented nature of conflict through prism of clash of two ideologies, "between the idea of freedom under a government of laws, and the idea of slavery under the grim oligarchy of the Kremlin". Accordingly military victory was not believed to suffice, since it would have offered only temporary solution. Surprisingly though military victory should not have been a solution it was argued that fundamental steps had to be undertaken on military level. "Consistent with the aggressive threat facing us and in consonance with overall strategic plans, the United States must provide to its allies on a continuing basis as large amount of military assistance as possible without serious detriment to United States operational requirements." Remarkably, linguistic strategy employed in previous excerpt again suggest the self-image that places United States security policy not in the realm of political choice, but rather attributes a notion of necessity to it. Accordingly American security policy does what it must, reacting on external circumstances. It is also notable that USSR is not introduced as simple threat, but emphasis is added through adjectives such as *aggressive threat* or as *gravest threat* in NSC 20/4. Such practice helps to constitute importance of the particular threat and also gives somewhat imminent status to the need to react.

Accession of Republican administration did change little in a way how Soviet threat was articulated. Eisenhower's influential Secretary of State John Foster Dulles expressed this administration's view in Foreign Affairs. "The Eisenhower administration inherited security policies that had much worth. Many of these policies were bipartisan in character." *(Dulles, 1954, p. 354)* Dulles also argued that "the threat is not merely military". *(Dulles, 1954, p. 355)* Arguably it is possible to trace certain reconceptualization of the threat nature toward more military character; however this pattern can be identified in aforementioned documents as well. It would be perhaps more accurate to understand this as a longer time trend that was running under Truman and Eisenhower administration. Since foreign military provides very traditional source of fear for nation state, its decision makers shaped understanding of perceived Soviet threat toward more familiar military danger. However Eisenhower's team followed its predecessors and did not expect Soviet's to initiate major war. According to its major guideline elaborated in NSC 162/2: "the USSR will not deliberately initiate general war during the next several years,

although general war may result from miscalculation". *(NSC 162/2, 1953, p. 18)* Surprisingly Americans viewed Soviet Union as military threat, even though they were not expecting outbreak of war, were such threat could have been utilized. Once again U.S. security policy is presented as matter of necessary action, something what *must* be done by the United States, not what can be done. "The risk of Soviet aggression will be minimized by maintaining a strong security posture, with emphasis on adequate offensive retaliatory strength and defensive strength. This *must* be based on massive atomic capability, including *necessary* bases..." *NSC 162/2, 1953, p.18, emphasis added)* Aggression is thus presented as something external, having its agency in its Soviet part, while American reaction is rather passive outcome of must and necessary.

DISCURSIVE PRACTICE OF THE COLD WAR CRISES

In October 1962 American reconnaissance plane photographed missile sites in western Cuba. President Kennedy and other leading U.S. executives were shortly informed about emerging threat. Soviet missile should have been capable to strike important targets in the United States; USSR established its offensive military posture in Western hemisphere, and under the cover of secrecy hampered strategic balance, or at least so the orthodox narrative goes. What followed tends to be regarded as one of the most serious nuclear crisis in the world history, one which brought United States and Soviet Union to the very brink of the nuclear war. It seemed obvious to American decision makers that Soviet missiles' deployment was unacceptable. Surprisingly– as Secretary Douglas Dillon commented – he could not recall any specific discussion why they were unacceptable. *"It just seemed obvious to all us". (Weldes, 1996, p.289)* Though narrative that threat established by Soviet offensive missile in close neighborhood of the United States sounds convincing, short outline of other possible interpretations and problematization of the issue would probably make it less certain. First, Soviet version alone, does not sound less "objective" than American assessment. United States undertook series of steps against Cuba, which culminated in ill-executed invasion in the Bay of Pigs and which could have been hardly regarded differently than imminent danger by Cubans. Therefore what was viewed as offensive missiles to Americans, was perhaps one of few possible ways, how to defend its Cuban allies to Soviets. *(see Weldes, 1996, especially pp. 291-295; also Weldes 1999)* Assumption about the change of strategic balance sound even less convincing. American decision makers had been aware that USSR had only about 300 strategic nuclear warheads,

while United States were deploying some five thousand. As Robert Mcnamara pointed out at the time "as far as I am concerned, it made no difference". *(Weldes, 1996, p.295)* During National Security Council meeting on October 20, participants discussed that 16 SS 4 missiles were operational in Cuba and that they could be fired approximately 18 hours after decision to fire was taken. *(NSC 505th meeting, 1962)* Even if missiles were left in Cuba, they would have made little difference from strategic perspective given their 18 hours pre-fire preparations, since U.S. strategic doctrine has in fact relied on preemptive strike in case of general war.

On October 22 President Kennedy addressed the nation on TV and informed Americans about recent development with regard to Soviet build up in Cuba. Among other he noted that "*urgent transformation* of Cuba into an important strategic base – by the presence of these large, long range, and *clearly offensive weapons* of sudden mass destruction – constitutes *explicit threat* to the peace and security of the Americas." *(Kennedy, 1962, emphasis added)* This wording suggests that President highlights the imminent character of the threat through reference on urgent transformation. It also corresponds with shared image of Soviet missiles as offensive weapons rather than defensive attempt to protect Cuba as offered by alternative Soviet narrative. Kennedy also recalled appeasement analogy – remarkably similar practice as in the latter case of Iraq. "The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if allowed to go unchecked and unchallenged ultimately leads to war." Kennedy was working with, and simultaneously influenced by, previous American experience, respectively its image and this is reflected in his language. The appeasement analogy was empowered further by the discourse of "red fascism". Characteristics of Nazi Germany were hence associated to the USSR through articulation of totalitarianism of both regimes and aggressive behavior was then expected from Soviets. *(Weldes, 1996, p.296)* Once again U.S. representatives viewed their policy as necessary outcome of Soviet actions. Notably this should not have been only justification for U.S. actions as offered to general public, since it was regularly used by top decision makers during meetings and in documents that had strictly confidential character, usually stamped as top secret. During 506th meeting of NSC on October 21, Secretary Dillon argued that "unless Russians stop their missile build up at once, we will have to invade Cuba…" *(NSC 506th meeting, 1962)* The minutes from next NSC meeting continues in similar way. "The President then summarized the arguments as to why we must act." It was argued that United States "have to carry out commitments", secret deployment completely changed nature of Soviet policy and inaction would create "an impression that we would never act, no matter what they did anywhere", Soviets were likely to squeeze Berlin, and American position in Latin America would be severely damaged. *(NSC 507th meeting, 1962)*

Patterns that have been repeating in texts examined above can be identified on several other occasions of the Cold War crises as well. Tonkin Resolution that preceded massive American involvement in Vietnam states in its first paragraph: "whereas naval units of the Communist regime in Vietnam, in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, have deliberately and repeatedly attacked United States naval vessels lawfully present in international waters, and have thereby created a serious threat to international peace." *(H. J. Res. 1145, 1964)* Agency as the source of all further actions is ascribed to communist regime in Vietnam. This strategy connects image of the action in Vietnam, country that was hardly anything familiar for most Americans, to something that was on the contrary well known. Simultaneously United States were supposed to be reacting on action by external entity. Speaking at John Hopkins University President Johnson argued that "we fight because we must fight." In other words American policy is once again interpreted as something inevitable, not chosen by Washington, but rather imposed on that. President also recalled the analogy of appeasement once again. Actual wording may not seem clear on the issue. However having recognized this analogy in other vital security policy documents, it is reasonable to perceive President's words that "the central lessons of our time is that appetite of aggression is never satisfied" as appeal to the experience of the appeasement. *(Johnson, 1965)* The guiding principal that helps American to understand their involvement in Southeast Asia was outlined in the familiar concept of national interest. *(H. J. Res. 1145, 1964, Sec. 2)* However the traditional pattern of American security policy image follows. American national interest is viewed as compatible with world interest. It may be even difficult to recognize if such concept even anyhow distinguishes between American interest and the interest of the rest of the world.

AFTER THE END OF HISTORY

Suddenly, at least from historical perspective and surprisingly for most observers, what was perceived to be the greatest threat for the United States security disappeared. Under the pressure of various foreign and domestic circumstances Soviet Union first lost its European satellites and then after a short moment disintegrated itself. Some students of international politics called the upcoming situation "the end of history" *(Fukuyama, 1992),* other expected "unipolar moment". *(Krauthammer, 1990/1991)* As in the case of Iraq, threat's perceptions are uneasy to change. Even when original source was solved with liberation of Kuwait, Saddam Hussein remained the threat for American until he was finally toppled by American tanks in the

streets of Bagdad. But similarly, a notion of threat usually does not survive the end of physical existence of its imagined source. When Soviet Union entered the dustbin of history, American decision makers lost one of their most important foreign policy guidelines. The shape of a new age was anything but clear. On the other hand, most Americans were quite clear about the past. In his last State of the Union Address, President George H. W. Bush stated: "I will speak of those things. But let me tell you something I've been thinking these past few months. It's a kind of rollcall of honor. For the Cold War didn't end; it was won. And I think of those who won it, in places like Korea and Vietnam. And some of them didn't come back. Back then they were heroes, but this year they were victors." *(Bush, 1992)* Previous pages suggest that American leaders shaped their security policy according to the belief that they did what they had to. In that view, Soviet Union was initiator of actions, while United States followed the only available course. The experience of past, which was gained through various practices, and shared mostly by language, remained in the minds of Cold War victors.

American power was unparallel when the USSR disintegrated, and equipped with image of Cold War experience United States expected to take the world leadership. Based on this American identity George Bush pointed out that: "we are the United States of America, the leader of the West that has become the leader of the world". *(Bush, 1992)* From material perspective this role seems more than natural. Joseph Ney one of the most respected international relations scholars argues that the world leader needs power of its military, economy, and ideas *(Ney, 2008),* in 1992 United States seemed to have superiority in all of them. President Bush was hardly alone to stress the American status of the world leader. James Leach Representative for Iowa wrote in Foreign Affairs "writing in 1950, Reinhold Niebuhr noted that the price of survival was our ability to give leadership to the free world. Today the price of the prosperity of the free world still depends on our ability and willingness to lead. No other society has the capacity or inclination to light freedom lamp in quite the same way; nor is any other as capable of combining self-interest with a genuine historically rooted concern for others." *(Leach, 1992, pp.19-20)* The need for American leadership cannot be perceived only in the context of the end of the Cold War. Presidential candidate Barack Obama insisted almost two decades later that: "today, we are again called to provide visionary leadership", continuing more specifically: "the mission of the United States is to provide global leadership grounded in the understanding that the world shares a common security and a common humanity". *(Obama, 2007, p.4)*

This vision of compatibility of American interests with interests of the rest of the world plays prominent role in United States' image of their foreign policy, and is naturally reflected in security policy as well. Such notion is hardly new phenomenon created with the end of the Cold War. Quite to the contrary compatibility of interest of United States and world has been vital

image of American self in the better part of examined period. This is not to say, that such compatibility is assumed with interests of all countries of the world, or at least with interest that are pursued by their leadership. American and Soviet interests were necessarily often perceived as irreconcilable. Arguably this may suggest that, while the U.S. and world interest are believed to be the same, this image consist of inherent hierarchy that bears primacy of American over the world. U.S. national interest have been taken for granted within U.S. orthodoxy and encapsulated in the notion of world leadership. The roots are to be located in the American self-image of the World War II victor. Defending the U.S. involvement in Vietnam President Johnson argued that: "there are those who wonder why we have a responsibility there. Well, we have it there for the same reason that we have a responsibility for the defense of Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defense of freedom." *(Johnson, 1965)* Clearly other interpretation of WW II result would suggest that credits for victory could be given rather to the Soviet Union. But it would hardly give USSR right or duty to become the world leader, at least in the view of most Americans. *(Weldes, 1996, p.300)*

The notion of American world leadership, once established, has been essential for American Presidents regardless of their party membership and the time they spend in the White House. It is shared by better part of American elite, not an individual experience with choices of policy as the business as usual, which Presidents acquire through the years in the White House. Republican George Bush argued that "we are the United States of America, the leader of the West that has become the leader of the world" *(Bush, 1992)* just few months before he passed the Presidency to Democrat Bill Clinton on January 20, 1993. In his First Inaugural Address on that day, Bush's successor insisted that "today, as an older order passes, the new world is more free but less stable. Communism's collapse has called forth old animosities and new dangers. *Clearly, America must continue to lead the world* we did so much to make." *(Clinton, 1993a, emphasis added)* As one can see, for the Clinton administration, American leadership was not only what United States must do. The inevitable character of this was exaggerated further by expression, which highlights that such requirement was clear, therefore hardly needs any other justification. Speaking about Operation Restored Hope in Somalia just few month later, President Clinton replied to those who questioned this "clear nature" of American leadership. "Some will ask why we must so often be the one to lead. Well, of course we cannot be the world's policeman, but we are, and we must continue to be, the world's leader. That is the job of the United States of America." *(Clinton, 1993b)* Once again, or one may even say as usual, linguistic strategy used to justify American leadership presents this leadership as something what America must simply do, because it is her job. After two terms in the office President Clinton did not changed his mind as he pointed in his farewell address. "Because the world is more connected every day, in every

way, America's security and prosperity require us to continue to lead in the world." *(Clinton, 2001)* Such notion was shared also with incoming administration of George W. Bush. His crucial and perhaps closest foreign policy adviser *(Rothkopf, 2005, p. 393)* and later National Security Advisor and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice introducing foreign policy program of the Bush campaign wrote in abstract of her Foreign Affairs article, "Above all, the next President must be comfortable with America's special role as the world's leader". *(Rice, 2000, p. II)*

CONSTRUCTING THREATS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

As this study has already argued threats and interest are to be perceived as discursive constructs. In order to establish something as a true security threat, which requires special measures to be taken, various linguistic strategies must be employed. For example in famous 2002 National Security Strategy, the Bush administration argued, "new deadly challenges have emerged from rogue states and terrorists... In the 1990s we witnessed the emergence of a small number of rogue states... *(Bush, 2002a, p.13)* Just few paragraphs later administration suggested that, "we must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends. Our response must take full advantage of strengthened alliances, the establishment of new partnerships with former adversaries, innovation in the use of military forces, modern technologies, including the development of an effective missile defense system, and increased emphasis on intelligence collection and analysis." *(Bush, 2002a, p.14)* Even though the main source of threat was replaced as the USSR disappeared, remarkable similarities can be found in the way how new threats are introduced through the language of American administration. First new threats are presented in active, suggesting their agency and primary responsibility for any further development. On the contrary American "*we*" is perceived as a witness of this development, in this case of the emergence of new threats. Accordingly American reaction established in terms of we and other *(see Weldes, 1999, p.105)*, represents inevitable outcome of ongoing development. In other world what American administration perceives as appropriate reaction, such as establishment of new partnership with old adversaries, innovations in the use of military forces, missile defense, or better intelligence is presented as something what United States must do.

Few will disagree that following 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington terrorism became the single most important threat for U.S. national security. President Bush told

West Point graduates that, "the gravest danger to freedom lies at the perilous crossroads of radicalism and technology. When the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons, along with ballistic missile technology -- when that occurs, even weak states and small groups could attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations." *(Bush, 2002b)* But neither terrorism, nor weapons of mass destruction were anything new for American decision makers. Thomas Schelling argued as early as in 1982 that, "sometimes in the 1980s and organization that is not a national government may acquire a few nuclear weapons. If not in the 1980s than in the 1990s." *(Schelling, 1982, p.61)* United States has experienced other terrorist attacks before 9/11, including those undertaken by supposed operatives of Al Qaeda in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, East Africa, and United States. Modus operandi of the USS Cole, Khobar Towers, Tanzania a Kenya embassy or WTC bombings suggest little about terrorist capacity, or desire to use weapons of mass destruction. As some critical scholars pointed, "the technological sophistication of the 9/11 attacks rested upon box cutters". *(Zulaika – Douglass, 2008, p.30)* However unprecedented, it were not 9/11 attacks, but rather choices made after the attacks what shaped outcome of history. The Bush administration decision to use language of war, made the 9/11 events more spectacular. Administration securitized the issue, rather than for example, treating it as a criminal act. *(Stohl, 2008, p.13; Smith, 2005, p.34)*

Causalities caused by terrorist attacks, particularly in western countries, are incredibly low. Probability that one will be killed by the terrorist incident is about the same as from the impact of a falling asteroid or an allergic reaction to peanuts. *(Mueller, 2006, p. 2, 13)* What made terrorism such vital threat after 9/11 was rather language of fear. American National Strategy for Combating Terrorism "describes today's realities" as "the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, were acts of war against the United States, peaceful people throughout the world, and the very principles of liberty and human dignity". *(Bush, 2006, p.3)* Not only are 9/11 events presented as the act of war, but one can observe traditional U.S. rhetorical strategy of connecting American and world interests, in this case together with and through the principle of liberty and human dignity. Even though President Obama has slowly limited this war language, it has not disappeared from U.S. security discourse. President himself argued in his inaugural addresses that, "our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred". *(Obama, 2009b)* Had there been any doubts, if it had been war against Al Qaeda in President's mind, than John Brennan Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism made it clear in his speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The President described it in no uncertain terms in his Inaugural when he said, 'Our nation is at war against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred.' And to win this war against al Qaeda, the administration continues to be unrelenting, using every tool in our toolbox and every arrow in our quiver." *(Brennan, 2009)*

As one can see, terrorism as a vital threat to the U.S. national security must have been constituted through shared images of American political elite. This is not to say, that there are no differences between various attitudes of various decision makers and respective policies. Certainly some positions differ from others, but shared persuasions make fundamental parts more or less same. While careful student of American politics would be able to swiftly point out several differences between approaches even within one administration, these would likely be more of the tactical manner. Therefore both 2008 leading candidates disagreed on what theater is to be a central battleground of the American struggle against terrorism. However they shared the war-like image of the conflict. Furthermore, while Barack Obama had a tendency to highlight importance of Afghanistan in this conflict, whereas John McCain stressed the centrality of Iraq theatre, they both identified the vital part of the struggle through the prism of state based enemy. *(see McCain, 2007; Obama, 2007)* Identification of the most important front against terrorism with war on foreign territories should not be ascribed only to the political elite. In fact one must take into account that better part of American elite, including leading scholars in terrorism studies is familiar with this shared belief. *(e.g. Hoffman, 2009, p.362)* Equipped with image of war playing central role to struggle with terrorism, American decision makers turned their attention to low intensity conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Therefore they consider various counterterrorism and counterinsurgency tactics in order to defeat those who oppose American military might in these conflicts *(Boyle, 2010)*, regardless of actual connection between most of these opponents and the concept of Al Qaeda. *(Fotini – Semple, 2009; also see Guranta – Nielsen, 2008; Jones, 2008)*

Every single American president shaped his country security policy in accordance with his own persuasion, and political preferences, at least to the extent that was available to him. That is natural, and one can hardly expect any presidents pursuing the very same policy as his predecessor. However these differences are mostly on the "tactical" level. They tend to reveal during election campaigns and domestic political struggles. Essential to American security policy, in fact prerequisite for any policies that will be ever suggested by any decision makers, are assumptions about American role in the world, character of threat America is facing, and interest that are vital for the country. These assumptions are neither objective nor stable. Quite to the contrary, they are always changing and defined in political discourse. Objects are treated on the basis of fluid meanings that are ascribed to them at the moment. Of course, this is not specific only for Americans. But this was not study about theory of security, even though it draws most of its outcomes from application of certain theoretical assumptions. The goal is not just theoretical interpretation of the concepts of national interest, threat, and security policy and a way through that they are constituted. It is foremost study of a security policy of the nation. The reference object is the state, since it is a reference object for decision makers. It is legitimate to make this problematic and show how this could be different. In fact state must not be necessarily the reference object of security policy. But as long as one asks questions about American security policy, than one works with the United States of America in the core of the study.

Once certain threat is established and securitized in the American discourse, it is likely to prevail as in the case of Iraq between 1991 and 2003. Even though material rationale that is believed to be centerpiece of this threat diminished after the Desert Storm, the issue of Iraqi threat remained important in the U.S. discourse up to the 2003 invasion, which toppled Saddam Hussein's regime. Whereat subsequent administrations oppose the same imagined threats, they tend to pursues similar policies toward them. Foremost American decision makers believe that their policies are matter of necessity, rather than choice. Agency is ascribe to the other side, while United States are viewed in this logic as following inevitable course imposed on them by aggressive evil other. Thus American security policy adjusted itself to this view, remaining today rather crisis management than grand strategy. Central to any policy for any today's administration is concept of American leadership. This concept in fact constitute precondition in thinking about interests of and threat for the United States, which is shared by both Republicans and Democrats. Since America is believed to be legitimate and appropriate leader of the world,

the interests of the United States are accordingly understood as overlapping with the interests of the world. However thorough examination of linguistic strategies employed in order to describe nexus between U.S. and the world interest in American discourse reveals that it comprises inherent hierarchy. While American and world interest are clearly believed to be the same, American is always having primacy. Furthermore as a legitimate leader they are obliged to set such interests (of course within the aforementioned notion of external pressure and inevitability of actions of certain manner. United States may have problem to pursue self-interests, but as long as they are believed to be unselfish and universal, they provide rationale for American security policy, despite the election results.

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Master Thesis Project

Faculty of Social Sciences – Department of America Studies

One or Two Security Policies?

Discourse Analysis of Differences between Republican and Democratic

Approaches to the U.S. Security Policy.

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Introduction

The suggested thesis will be devoted to the differences between Republican and Democratic security policy. This particular topic represents the crucial and important part of current debate about American foreign policy. Moreover the high expectations were given to the new administration of President Barack Obama, and major change of U.S. foreign policy has been expected.

The specific methodology of discourse analysis will be used to cover the research. Use of this methodology was previously rather limited in our understandings of many of Political Science subjects. Therefore one may hope that the research through discourse analysis can bring us important new findings or at least reinforce previous knowledge by new approaches.

Methodology

As I have suggested in previous paragraph, the specific methodology of discourse analysis will be used to examine the topic. This methodology is rather new in the research of Political Science and related subjects. Nonetheless some major works has been written, and those works can offer a very useful methodological inspiration for suggested thesis.

The research itself will be conducted by thorough study of major primary documents related to the Democratic Party and Republican Party security policy. This set of documents will include major doctrinal guidelines that were issued by administrations, crucial foreign security policy speeches of top representatives of both parties, important articles in various journals that were written by top level politicians, and other related sources. The goal will be the identification of key concepts and following exploration of differences between Republican and Democratic approaches.

The discourse analysis tends to be incompatible with strict positivist approaches. Rather on the contrary, the reality will be understood as socially constructed or at least particularly constructed through our perception of it. Epistemological and ontological approaches of the paper will therefore conform to previously suggested constructivism.

Theoretical Framework

Recent change of the administration in the United States provided other expectations about the possible major shift in American security policy. Therefore one should try to examine if there even exist two different security policies of Democrats and Republicans. This question is not new; it has been already examined by various scholars. But one must be careful, significant part of those authors has its own political affiliation, and therefore tend to highlight differences that shall be advantageous for their liberal or conservative persuasion.

Major attention was given to the George W. Bush presidency. Obviously American security policy was changed significantly after 9/11 terrorist attacks. The unresolved question is to what extend was all of that guided by specific political affiliation and to what extend by more general American identity. The presidency of George W. Bush therefore deserves attention that would correspond with such importance.

As for the theory of the international relations the suggested thesis would rather follow constructivist framework especially the one that was created by Alexander Wendt. Nonetheless constructivism should be understood rather as a skeleton, which offers only basic theoretical principles. Moreover the discourse analysis tends to be connected with critical approaches to the current society. I refuse such precondition, and suggest examining the topic from rather neutral position, even though at the same time I acknowledge that fully neutral position is impossible, while it is ever influenced by the author's perceptions.

Literature

The constructivists' approaches that will inspire this work were very precisely summarized by Alexander Wend in his *Social theory of international politics*. (Wendt, 2001) As for the methodological inspirations, I will mention especially David Campbell's work on U.S. foreign policy and identity, which explored the topic with the use of discourse analysis. (Campbell, 1998)

The discussion about the differences in the U.S. security policy is rather great, and it is not possible to mention all participants. I will therefore offer just few examples. Zbigniew Brzezinski criticized Bush's administration and offer interesting arguments for possible different approaches. (Brzezinski, 2004) On the contrary Robert Kagan expressed in his famous book Of Paradise and Power, that when Bush's administration published its 2002 National Security Strategy that was seen as a turning point of security policy, the most surprising part of this was that it only repeated the principals that guided U.S. policy for half a century. (Kagan, 2003) Similarly Gabriel Kolko expressed that: *"The studiously vague, increasingly inclusive preemptive doctrine that President George W. Bush enunciated on September 19, 2002, with its commitments to forestall or prevent hostile acts, was scarcely new; it was one of the crucial bases of US foreign policy throughout much of the nineteenth and twentieth century – notwithstanding President Franklin D. Roosevelt's proclamation of the Good Neighbor policy after 1933."* (Kolko, 2006, p.11)

It is not necessary to mention all authors who contributed to the debate, but the list of other related resources will be provided at the end of the project. Nonetheless one must reflect that debate is broad and no consensus was reached in academia. The suggested thesis shall contribute to the debate, while using new approach of discourse analysis.

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