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**U.S. GRAND STRATEGIES TOWARDS RUSSIA 2001–2017**

Doctoral Thesis

For a Ph.D. degree in Political Science

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## **Abstract**

This thesis analyzes the role that U.S. grand strategies play as an analytical concept and as a practical tool in U.S. foreign policy by focusing on U.S. strategy towards Russia. The theoretical part develops a U.S. grand strategy classification framework which serves as the basis for content analysis to code four U.S. National Security Strategies and 36 speeches about Russia by U.S. Presidents from 2001–2017. During this period, U.S. grand strategy towards Russia changed from liberal internationalism to a mix of primacy and liberal internationalism after Russia's aggression in Ukraine in 2014. While U.S. grand strategy has not been as long-term and as comprehensive as supporters of grand strategies claim, it is a useful tool for classifying and analyzing U.S. foreign policy.

Keywords:

United States, grand strategy, Russia

## **Anotācija**

Disertācija analizē ASV visaptverošo stratēģiju kā analītiska koncepta un praktiska rīka lomu ASV ārpolitikā, fokusējoties uz ASV stratēģijām pret Krieviju. Teorētiskajā daļā ir izstrādāta šo stratēģiju klasifikācijas sistēma, kas tiek izmantota, lai kodētu un veiktu satura analīzi četrām ASV Nacionālās drošības stratēģijām un 36 ASV prezidentu runām par Krieviju no 2001.–2017.g. Šajā laika periodā ASV visaptverošā stratēģija pret Krieviju pēc 2014.g. Krievijas agresijas Ukrainā mainījās no liberālisma internacionalizācijas stratēģijas uz dominēšanas un liberālisma internacionalizācijas sajaukumu. Lai gan ASV visaptverošā stratēģija nav bijusi tik ilgtermiņa un iekšēji saskanīga kā to apgalvo šo stratēģiju atbalstītāji, tas ir lietderīgs rīks ASV ārpolitikas klasificēšanai un analīzei.

Atslēgas vārdi:

ASV, visaptverošās stratēģijas, Krievija

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## Abbreviations

DoD	–	Department of Defense
EU	–	European Union
H	–	Hypothesis
NATO	–	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSA	–	National Security Agency
NSC	–	National Security Council
NSS	–	National Security Strategy
SALT	–	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
QDR	–	Quadrennial Defense Review
U.S.	–	United States
USSR	–	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	–	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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## Introduction

The United States (U.S.) has taken the central role on the international stage after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. It has been and still is the most significant player in the international arena, with unrivaled defense spending and the largest economy in the world. The military and diplomatic capabilities of the U.S. are unrivaled. Of all the countries in the world, only the U.S. has global interests and a global reach. The domestic and foreign policies of the U.S. have significance across the globe. A deeper comprehension of U.S. domestic and foreign policies is the key to making sense of many contemporary international issues. Grand strategies are among the analytical concepts for gaining an understanding of U.S. actions in the international arena. **Grand strategies are comprehensive, long-term plans used to achieve preferred U.S. foreign policy goals.** As Charles Krauthammer puts it, grand strategies discuss “the American role in the world” (Krauthammer, 1990/91, p. 23). Contemporary U.S. grand strategies – primacy, liberal internationalism and offshore balancing – are sets of ideas that describe what U.S. domestic and foreign policy should look like and describe the means and ends of U.S. involvement in the international system of states. These grand strategies also offer a framework that allows for the systematization, analysis and prediction of U.S. actions in the international arena.

These and similar arguments are made by scholars who support the use of grand strategies as an analytical tool or a practical tool for guiding foreign policy. However, grand strategies and their usefulness is a highly debated and contested topic amongst grand strategists and scholars researching grand strategies. Critics argue that the role and impact of grand strategies in the foreign policy making process is far overrated (Brands, 2014, p. 14; Drezner, 2011, p. 57; Goldgeier, November 5, 2009; Kreps, 2009, p. 630; Murray, 2010, p. 79) or even that grand strategies do not matter at all (Brands, 2014, pp. 191-192; Zenko, 2017). The main aim of this thesis is to evaluate the usefulness of grand strategies as a policy planning and analytical tool. This is done by analyzing U.S. grand strategies towards Russia during the administrations of President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama from 2001 to 2017. This thesis develops a grand strategy classification framework by building on the grand strategy classifications of various authors. This classification is used to code and analyze U.S. grand strategies towards Russia in the National Security Strategies (NSS) and speeches of U.S. Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama as well as Vice-President Joe Biden. The results of this analysis contribute to the academic debates about the role of grand strategies in U.S. foreign policy as well as offering insights into changes in U.S. grand strategies towards Russia during a turbulent period in the relations between both states.

## **Relevance of the Topic**

Grand strategies describe ideas for how a state should conduct its domestic and foreign policies in order to achieve its preferred goals in the international arena (Brands, 2014, p. 2; Hart, 1975, pp. 336, 366-372; Martel, February 25, 2013). These are sets of ideas, “the intellectual architecture,” “the logic that guides leaders” (Brands, 2014, p. 3), “broad set(s) of principles, beliefs, or ideas that govern the decisions and actions of a nation’s policymakers” (Martel, February 25, 2013). Grand strategies offer the most comprehensive and overarching guidelines on how a state should act, encompassing military, economic and diplomatic strategies. Thus, grand strategy is bigger than any single strategy towards a specific issue or specific tactics to achieve a short-term objective (Murray, 2010, p. 77). In depth comprehension of different grand strategy options or the nuances of the selected grand strategy a state has chosen allows us to understand the reasons why the state is conducting specific foreign and domestic policies as well as to predict the future actions of the state.

Research of U.S. grand strategies is especially important because of the U.S.’s role in the international system. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. became the sole superpower in the world. As the strongest state in the international system in terms of military, economic and diplomatic capabilities, the U.S. has unseen ability to choose and implement a grand strategy that is relatively less constrained by other states and the international system (Brooks, Wohlfarth, 2002, p. 21; Haass, 2005, pp. 8-9; Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 6; Kagan, 2007, p. 21; Walt, 2011, pp. 6-8). While external factors, for example, the regional or global balance of power, dictate the grand strategy of most states, the U.S. has been and still is far less constrained in its choice of how to conduct foreign affairs. Americans have had a chance to debate and to consciously choose grand strategy for the U.S.

Furthermore, debates on what U.S. grand strategy should be, are often easily accessible and public. Immediately after the U.S. gained independence, the Founding Fathers already debated publicly about what U.S. grand strategy and foreign policy should be. For example, Alexander Hamilton defended neutrality in the Federalist Papers and argued that “The rights of neutrality will only be respected when they are defended by an adequate power.” In essence, Hamilton was writing about U.S. grand strategy: how the U.S. should conduct foreign policy and the domestic foundations for this policy. This process of openly discussing and defending one or another grand strategy has continued to this day. This is in stark difference to many other states, especially those with authoritarian governments, where the formulation of grand strategy is a much more byzantine and inaccessible process. Thus, research of U.S. grand strategies and an analysis of debates about U.S. grand strategy offer a



more comprehensive outlook on how grand strategy influences foreign policy, compared to many other possible case studies that could be selected.

The ideational foundations and rationale behind U.S. foreign policy towards Russia specifically is an important case for two reasons. Firstly, this is a good case study from a research perspective. From 2001 to 2017, bilateral relations between these two states have experienced major shocks and change. Erosion of democracy in Russia, the Russia-Georgia war, Russia's aggression in Ukraine and Russian support for Assad in Syria are just a few examples. U.S. relations with Russia have become more strained and conflictual particularly since Russia's aggression in Ukraine. These turbulent bilateral relations allow for testing whether U.S. grand strategy is able to endure changes and new developments in the international system. Secondly, a resurgent Russia, flexing its military and diplomatic muscles in Eastern Europe since 2014, has been a significant issue globally and regionally. The interests of the U.S. and Russia are competing again, not only in Europe, but also in the Middle East and elsewhere. For this reason, research of U.S. grand strategy towards Russia is an important global issue. U.S. grand strategy towards Russia has been especially important for Latvia and other countries in Central-Eastern Europe which have been directly affected by U.S. strategy. The policies that U.S. grand strategy prescribes for China and the Middle East are important, however, grand strategy particularly towards Russia is of the utmost importance from the standpoint of the national and regional security of Latvia and other Central-Eastern European countries.

The accession of Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia to NATO and especially that of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 2004, was an important element of U.S.-Russia relations during the George W. Bush administration. In the 2014 NATO Wales Summit, as well as the 2016 Warsaw Summit, the U.S. specifically addressed the security concerns of the Baltic states which were caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine. Since then, the security of the Baltic states has played a role in U.S. Operation Atlantic Resolve of the European Deterrence Initiative (formerly known as the European Reassurance Initiative). Atlantic Resolve aims to augment the U.S. air, ground and naval presence in order to bolster U.S. capabilities in the region and to demonstrate solidarity with countries on the NATO Eastern flank. These are just some of the examples of how the Baltic states have been affected by U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, and the ideas and grand strategies that guide them have directly affected the security of the Baltic states in recent years.

It is not just the Baltic states which have played an important role in U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. U.S. grand strategy towards Russia has been proclaimed and discussed in the Baltic states. After the Baltic states joined the NATO Alliance, U.S. President George W.

Bush visited Riga in May 2005 and participated in the 2006 Riga NATO Summit. On both occasions he discussed Russia and the U.S. grand strategy towards it. After Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the Baltic States played a crucial role in U.S. grand strategy. In September of 2014, U.S. President Barack Obama visited Tallinn in Estonia, where he described the U.S. response to Russia's aggression. This speech was different from his previous speeches. He discussed NATO, Baltic security and emphasized the military power grand strategy element in relations with Russia far more than previously (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 03, 2014). When Vice President Joe Biden visited Riga in August 2016, he described the U.S. presence in the Eastern NATO states as a "deterrent" against Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 24, 2016). Both of these speeches are important for the analysis of this thesis. U.S. grand strategies towards Russia from 2001 to 2017 are an important topic, not only from a research perspective, but also from a security perspective for Latvia and other states in Central-Eastern Europe.

### **Research Problem, Question and Hypothesis**

There are broad disagreements between scholars about the usefulness of grand strategies. These discussions are described in depth in the first chapter about the role of grand strategies in international relations. To sum them up, grand strategists claim, and definitions of grand strategy describe, the long-term nature and broad scope of grand strategies. Grand strategy should provide coherent and comprehensive solutions for a variety of complex foreign policy issues as well as guide the U.S.'s actions in the long term. It should be able to adapt to changes in the international system as well as changes within U.S. government (Brands, 2014, p. 9; Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62; Murray, 2010, p. 77). This means that in relations with Russia, U.S. grand strategy should endure changes and new developments both domestically and in the international system, examples being the Russia-Georgia war, Russia's aggression in Ukraine, Russian support to Assad in Syria and others.

On the other hand, critics express doubts about the usefulness of grand strategies. Some argue that the world is far too complex, and the foreign policy-making process far too *ad hoc* for a single, coherent set of ideas to provide guidelines (Brands, 2014, p. 14; Goldgeier, November 5, 2009; Murray, 2010, p. 79). Other critics say that the structure of domestic politics and the international system limits any fundamental shifts and implementation of a real change in grand strategy (Drezner, 2011, p. 57; Kreps, 2009, p. 630). Another line of criticism is that grand strategies are useless because they do not work. They do not deliver the promise to provide effective guidelines for achieving U.S. foreign policy goals (Brands, 2014,

pp. 191-192). A few critics go even further and claim that grand strategies are useless altogether because policymakers don't think about strategic considerations in the everyday policy-making process (Zenko, 2017). The usefulness of grand strategies is a highly contested issue amongst scholars.

The overarching aims of this thesis are to assess these claims by grand strategists and their critics, to contribute to the aforementioned debates and to answer **the research question: whether U.S. grand strategy is as comprehensive, enduring and overarching as grand strategists argue?** U.S. grand strategy is the research subject of this thesis. This thesis aims to both evaluate the usefulness of grand strategies in foreign policy as well as to evaluate the usefulness of grand strategies as an analytical tool. Specifically, the research subject of this thesis is the grand strategies that the U.S. has used towards Russia from 2001–2017. **The first hypothesis (H1) tests the long-term nature of grand strategy: NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies.** This hypothesis tests whether a change in U.S. administrations influences grand strategy or whether the grand strategy outlined in the U.S. NSS's – the main documents which describe U.S. grand strategy – changed at some other point during the George W. Bush or Barack Obama administration for some other reason. The second hypothesis (H2) continues the evaluation of the usefulness of grand strategies by testing the comprehensive and coherent nature of grand strategies. **The H2 is: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies.** This hypothesis tests whether a single set of ideas about U.S. grand strategy was used in NSS's to describe the overall U.S. position and actions in the international system as well as the strategy specifically towards Russia.

The NSS's were selected for units of analysis to test these hypotheses according to the relevance sampling methodology (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 118-119). The NSS fulfils both of the criteria of relevance sampling. The NSS is a document that offers the most comprehensive outline of U.S. grand strategy as well as having the highest level of significance amongst other foreign policy planning documents. The NSS outlines U.S. goals and the defense, security, foreign as well as the domestic policies needed to achieve these goals. The goal of this document is to signal the agenda of the current administration to both domestic and foreign audiences (Dobson, Marsh, 2006, p. 12; Snider, 1995, pp. 5-6). Thus, the NSS is used as the main source where U.S. grand strategy and U.S. grand strategy towards Russia is outlined (for elaborate arguments about the selection of units of analysis, see the third chapter). The period from 2001 until 2017 was chosen, because it allows a comparison of two

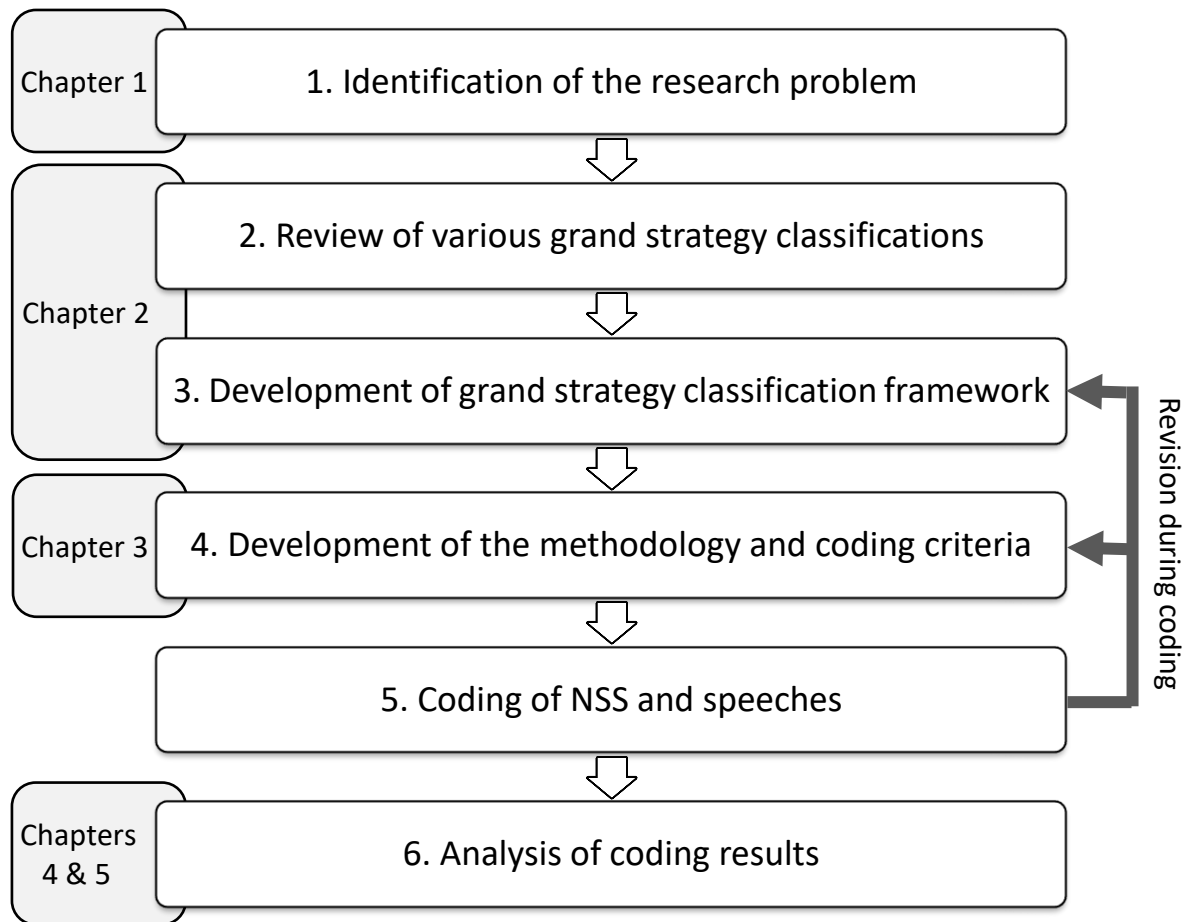
different U.S. administrations, to see whether U.S. grand strategy endures a change of U.S. presidents. This period is recent and events and shifts in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during these two administrations still play a significant role in contemporary international relations. In addition, this is the time frame when significant shifts occurred, both in the international arena, as well as U.S.-Russia bilateral relations, for example, the increasing authoritarianism in Russia and the wars in Georgia and Ukraine. Thus, it allows for the testing of the capacity of the grand strategy to adapt to changes in the international system.

Grand strategy, according to William Martel, does not consist only of articulation of such strategy in policy planning documents such as NSS's. It consists of both articulation of strategy and implementation (Martel, 2015, p. 158). To analyze the implementation of grand strategy, speeches and statements by U.S. presidents and vice-president were chosen as the units of analysis according to the relevance sampling methodology: they are the most significant sources compared to others and they offer the most comprehensive outline of U.S. foreign policy. The President plays the central role in U.S. foreign policy decision making. U.S. government institutions, policy makers and people working on implementing U.S. foreign policy take guidance from the statements of the U.S. president. Furthermore, these speeches offer the most comprehensive publicly available outline of official U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. In NSS's, U.S. strategy towards Russia is discussed only briefly and does not show the whole picture. Thus, the third hypothesis (H3) attempts to evaluate, whether there is a correlation and coherence between U.S. grand strategy articulated in the NSS's and U.S. foreign policy towards Russia articulated in the speeches of top U.S. officials. **Thus, the H3 is: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies.** This hypothesis will test whether there is a correlation between the everyday policy-making process which results in these speeches and the overall grand strategy considerations in the NSS's. If the supporters of grand strategy are correct, statements about grand strategies should be similar both in NSS's and speeches.

### **Research Design, Structure and Novelty of the Thesis**

This thesis is structured in the following way. This thesis consists of five chapters. The first two chapters make up the theoretical part of the thesis. The first chapter describes the theoretical framework behind this research: different perspectives on the role grand strategies play in international relations. The second chapter provides an overview of grand strategy classifications in order to develop a grand strategy classification framework for use in this thesis. The third chapter describes research methodology, the design of the coding process for

the NSS and speeches, as well as research limitations. The last two chapters contain an empirical analysis of U.S. grand strategies towards Russia from 2001 to 2017, building on the results of the coding process according to the grand strategy classification framework. The research design is laid out in six research stages that correlate with the structure and chapters of this thesis. Figure 1 shows the research stages and the correlating chapters in which the results of these stages are described.



*Figure 1 Research stages*

The first research stage of this thesis was to identify and define the research problem, to explain the rationale behind the research problem, questions, and the hypothesis of this thesis. This is done in the first chapter, which defines and describes in depth grand strategies and the role of grand strategies in international relations and U.S. foreign policy. This chapter also gives an overview of the criticisms of grand strategies. The last part of this chapter offers a historical outline of U.S. grand strategies up to the end of the Cold War. The hypotheses in this thesis are based on the theories about grand strategies and their role in U.S. foreign policy covered in this chapter. The rest of this thesis builds on the academic debate described in this chapter and evaluates the role and significance of grand strategy in U.S. foreign policy.

The goals of the second and third research stage, the results of which can be seen in the second chapter, were twofold: to describe existing grand strategy classifications and, building on this overview, to develop a grand strategy classification framework to be used in the analysis of this thesis. There is no consensus between grand strategists and scholars of grand strategy on a unified classification of grand strategies. Supporters of one or another grand strategy offer their own classifications and titles for grand strategies, which are often biased to favor the specific grand strategy which the respective author supports. There are also theoretical scholars of grand strategies who offer less biased classifications. This comparison of various classifications in the second stage lead to the third stage in this research which was to evaluate different grand strategy classifications in order to develop a grand strategy classification framework for this thesis.

The grand strategy classification framework describes underlying assumptions and elements behind the three most relevant grand strategies in U.S. foreign policy and in U.S. foreign policy, particularly towards Russia. The grand strategies which are used in this thesis are primacy, liberal internationalism, and offshore balancing. The second chapter describes the theoretical foundations of these three grand strategies and covers the most important threats to the U.S. according to each grand strategy. Most important, in the grand strategy classification framework, this chapter operationalizes each grand strategy as a sum of four different elements. Each grand strategy sees the international system in a different perspective. These four U.S. grand strategy elements on which grand strategists have different ideas are: the role each grand strategy sees for the U.S. in the international system; the role democracy, human rights, and other liberal values should play in U.S. foreign policy; the role of cooperation with others in U.S. foreign policy, as well as the type of power that the U.S. should emphasize in the international arena.

The fourth research stage and third chapter cover the methodology and build on this grand strategy classification framework in order to develop coding criteria for content analysis of the NSS and speeches. This thesis uses a single case study using the diachronic research method, which means that the grand strategies the U.S. has used towards Russia were researched focusing on changes within a single case over time and with varying objects of analysis – the NSS's and speeches of government officials. Building on the chapter two, the grand strategy coding framework (Table 3.3) is finalized by describing specific keywords, concepts and sets of ideas which define each element of each grand strategy. This grand strategy coding framework is used in the content analysis to code and to analyze the NSS's published during the presidency of George W. Bush and Barack Obama in chapter five, as well as to code and analyze speeches about Russia by both presidents in chapter six.

The results of this coding process allow for the evaluation of the role that different U.S. grand strategy elements – leadership, values, cooperation, and power – played in U.S. policy towards Russia. All three hypotheses in this thesis are about measuring whether statements in documents or speeches belong to a specific grand strategy, whether there is “coherence” and “correspondence” within NSS’s and between NSS’s and speeches. This grand strategy coding framework allows for the measurement of that exactly. After the coding process, statements can be attributed to a specific grand strategy element and, thus, classified as belonging to one or another grand strategy. Even more, each grand strategy element in all documents and speeches can be depicted as a percentage value to show how much emphasis the specific document or speech puts on the specific element of grand strategy. This allows for the operationalization and measurement of “coherence” and “correspondence.” If these documents and speeches are logically consistent, closely similar or almost exactly overlapping in their support to grand strategy elements across all units of analysis, they are considered to be “coherent” and “corresponding.”

This chapter also describes the criteria for selecting the specific units of analysis. Altogether, four NSS, two for each administration, were coded and analyzed. To analyze grand strategies towards Russia during George W. Bush’s presidency, 12 speeches and 4 short statements (used as a single unit of analysis) on the Russia-Georgia War during the August 2008, in the speeches by George W. Bush were included in coding and analysis. To analyze grand strategies towards Russia during Barack Obama’s presidency, 17 speeches and 4 short statements during Russia’s aggression in Ukraine (used as a single unit of analysis) by Barack Obama and 5 speeches by Vice President Joe Biden, being 23 units of analysis in total, were used. Speeches by Vice President Joe Biden were included in the analysis because he played a prominent role in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. This chapter concludes with a consideration of the research limitations of the selected methodology and research design.

The empirical part of this research started in the fifth research stage which was to code the selected NSS’s and speeches, building on the developed grand strategy classification framework and coding criteria. Coding units were whole sentences, unless there was more than one grand strategy element in the sentence. In such case the sentence was divided in smaller units. This stage was the most time and labor intensive. The results of this stage are seen in the analysis done in the empirical part of this thesis. The coding process was connected with the development of coding criteria in the fourth research stage and the development of the grand strategy classification in the third research stage. In cases where the NSS’s and the speeches contained issues that the initial descriptions of grand strategies did not cover or contained subtle differences between different grand strategy elements, it was

necessary to return, revise and update the grand strategy classification framework as well as the coding criteria.

The sixth research stage was an analysis of the coding results. The grand strategy classification framework was used to analyze the coding results of the NSS and speeches, to classify U.S. grand strategies towards Russia during two administrations in order to test the hypothesis. The fourth and fifth chapter start with the big picture. Chapter Four analyzes overall grand strategy elements used in the NSS of both the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. Section 4.4 then looks specifically at proposed grand strategies towards Russia in the NSS. This allows a testing of H1, whether the NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies, as well as H2: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's. Then in the fifth chapter analyzes speeches about Russia during both administrations. This analysis discusses grand strategy elements used in these speeches to test H3: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. This shows whether the NSS's correlate with the foreign policies implemented towards Russia discussed in the main speeches. In order to test this hypothesis, this chapter offers a description of various stages in foreign policy towards Russia during both administrations.

This research design allows for the testing of theories about the role and usefulness of grand strategy in U.S. foreign policy. This thesis offers a comprehensive overview of different grand strategy classifications. The advantage of this research design is that it is not built simply on a single grand strategy classification, but takes into account the strong suits and weaknesses of many classifications. By identifying the weaknesses and strengths of grand strategy classifications, this thesis complements existing classifications by developing the grand strategy classification framework. This classification framework contains a detailed, unified coding system, a set of specific criteria for how to attribute different ideas about foreign policy to one or another grand strategy element. Thus, the analysis in this thesis is built on systematic in-depth content analysis of the NSS's on speeches. This thesis tests theories about the usefulness of grand strategies as an analytical concept as well as the usefulness of the grand strategy classification framework developed in the theoretical part.

This grand strategy classification framework and systemic coding and classification of NSS's and speeches is the main added value of this thesis. Often grand strategists use anecdotal evidence or cherry-picked quotes to classify one or another policy or individual as supporting a specific grand strategy. In fact, none of the books and articles covered in the



theoretical part of this thesis has used content analysis to classify the statements of U.S. presidents or the NSS's as belonging to one or another grand strategy. Content analysis, built on specific coding criteria, and analysis using both quantitative and qualitative instruments allows identification of grand strategies with higher credibility. Thus, this thesis improves the application of grand strategy to foreign policy analysis. The coding of the NSS and speeches during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations allows for U.S. foreign policy towards Russia to be divided into specific stages, based on this grand strategy classification.

### **Approbation of the results of the work**

#### Publications in academic journals and articles

1. Hirss, M. (2019). *U.S. Grand Strategy Towards Russia 2001-2017*. Security and Defence Quarterly (peer-reviewed journal). 26(4). pp. 98–121. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35467/sdq/112050>
2. Hirss, M. (2018). *Kā Eiropa sadzīvo ar Trampa ASV?* [How Europe has Adapted to Trump's USA?] Latvian Interests in the European Union (academic journal). No.2. pp. 64.-75.
3. Hirss, M. (2017). *Donalds Tramps: Amerika pirmā* [Donald Trump: America First]. Centre for East European Policy Studies. Policy paper Riga, p. 39.
4. Hirss, M. (2016). *2016. gads - izšķirošs brīdis transatlantiskajām attiecībām*. [2016 - Crucial Moment for Transatlantic Relations] Latvian Interests in the European Union (academic journal). No.1. pp.31-43.
5. Hirss, M. (2016). *Drošības riski Baltijas valstīm pēc ASV prezidenta vēlēšanām*. [Security Risks for Baltic States after U.S. Presidential Elections] Center for Security and Strategic Research. Policy paper. No. 01/16. p. 26.
6. Hirss, M. (2016). *The Extent of Russia's Influence in Latvia*. Center for Security and Strategic Research. Policy paper. No. 03/16. p. 32.
7. Bērziņa, I., Bērziņš, J., Hiršs, M. et al. (2016). *The Possibility of Societal Destabilization in Latvia*. Center for Security and Strategic Research. Policy paper. p. 29.

#### Presentations at international academic conferences

1. *Fourth Annual Tartu Conference on Russian and East European Studies "Communities in Flux: Rethinking Sovereignty in an Era of Change."* Tartu, Estonia, 9-11 June 2019. Presentation: "*U.S. Grand Strategies Towards Russia.*"
2. *Advanced Social and Political Research Institute conference "Riga Readings in Social Sciences 2018."* University of Latvia, Riga, 22-33 November 2018. Presentation: "*The Extent of Russia's Influence in Latvia.*"

3. *Third Annual Tartu Conference on Russian and East European Studies “Reflecting on Nation-Statehood in Eastern Europe, Russia and Eurasia.”* Tartu, Estonia, 10-12 June 2018. Presentation: *“The Extent of Russia's Influence in Latvia.”*
4. *Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) conference “The 100th Anniversary of Baltic Independence.”* Stanford University, California, USA, 1-3 June 2018. Presentation: *“How Russia has Shaped Russian Speakers' World Views in Latvia.”*
5. *Forum “Russian (dis)information operations in the Baltic States.”* Baltic Defence College, Tartu, Estonia, 27 November 2016. Presentation: *“The Extent of Russia's Influence in Latvia.”*
6. *International Society of Military Sciences Annual Conference “Influence and War: Fighting for Minds.”* War Studies University, Warsaw, 12-14 October 2016. Presentation: *“The Extent of Russia's Influence in Latvia.”*
7. *AABS conference “Global, Glocal, and Local: Distinction and Interconnection in the Baltic States.”* University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA, 26-28 May 2016. Presentation: *“The Extent of Russia's Influence in Latvia.”*
8. *11th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe “Traditions, Transitions, Transfers.”* Marburg, Germany. September 6-10, 2015. Presentation: *“Discussions about foreign policy of the U.S. towards the Baltic States after Crimea.”*

#### Presentations at local academic conferences

1. *73. University of Latvia conference political science section “Challenges in domestic and foreign policy.”* University of Latvia, Faculty of Social Sciences, 5 February 2015. Presentation: *“ASV ārpolitikas stratēģijas attiecībās ar Krieviju: 2009.gada attiecību restartēšana”* [U.S. foreign policy strategies towards Russia: 2009 Reset].

#### International academic conference organization

1. Panel discussion *“The West versus the Rest?”* moderation and conference organization. *Center for Security and Strategic Research VI Annual Conference “The West, China, Russia: Frictions and Strategic Dilemmas.”* National Defence Academy of Latvia, Riga, 1 November 2018.
2. Conference organization. *Center for Security and Strategic Research V Annual Conference “Challenges for the West: Mitigating Domestic Vulnerabilities.”* National Defence Academy of Latvia, Riga, 7 December 2017.
3. Panel discussion *“US Commitment to Europe in Increasingly Multipolar World”* moderation and conference organization. *Center for Security and Strategic Research IV*

*Annual Conference “Strategic Implications of Multipolarity for European Security.”*  
National Defence Academy of Latvia, Riga, 10 October 2016.

4. Conference organization. *Center for Security and Strategic Research III Annual Conference “Security Challenges for an Insecure Europe.”* National Defence Academy of Latvia, Riga, December 9, 2015.
5. Conference organization. *Center for Security and Strategic Research II Annual Conference “Russia and the Return of Geopolitics: Strategic Challenges for the West.”* National Defence Academy of Latvia, Riga, 2-5 December 2014.

In addition to the abovementioned publications, participation and organization of academic conferences, from 2014 to April 2019 author has worked as a researcher at the Center for Security and Strategic Research of the National Defence Academy of Latvia working with issues related to Russia and U.S. – Russia relations. From April 2019 author has been an associated scholar at the Center for European Policy Analysis, Washington based research institute dedicated to the study of Central-East Europe and Russia and U.S. foreign policy towards these regions. In 2015 author participated in a 7-week training course on Target Audience Analysis & Strategic Communication organized by the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence. Every second fall since 2017 author has been lecturing a master’s level 4 credit point course U.S. Foreign Policy in Diplomacy study program at the University of Latvia. From 2015 author has been lecturing 4 credit point Contemporary World History course and since 2018 also 2 credit point International Security course in Law and Diplomacy program at the Riga Graduate School of Law both of which include topics related to the U.S. foreign and security policy and the U.S. – Russia relations.

## **1. Role of Grand Strategies in International Affairs**

Before comparing different U.S. grand strategy classifications and developing an analytical framework for the case study of this thesis, it is necessary to take a deeper look at grand strategies. To define the term, to show its historical origin and to differentiate grand strategy from similar terms: strategy, doctrine, tactics and foreign policy. Grand strategy is an often-used, but also often poorly defined term, without any specific definition and meaning behind it. This term can invoke both clarity and create confusion because it is often used in different, contradictory ways (Brands, 2014, pp. vii, 1). Thus, the first section of this chapter sets out to define the term “grand strategy” and to describe the role of grand strategy in foreign policy in order to focus the thesis and minimize potential confusion that could stem from the different interpretations of this term. The second section discusses various criticisms of grand strategy and explains the logic behind the research problem, questions, and hypothesis of this thesis.

One of the key scholars of grand strategy, Hal Brands, has described the origins of the term “grand strategy” in great detail. The term “grand strategy” originated in the period after the First World War. It was an expansion of the term “strategy,” a term used in a purely military sense. Only looking at strategy through military means is limiting, thus British historians and officers, for example, John Fuller adapted the term “grand strategy” to describe both military and non-military means to defeat an opponent. “Grand strategy” became a widely used term during the Second World War – a conflict in which military means were combined with political, diplomatic and economic tools on a global scale to gain an advantage over enemies. Military historians Basil Liddell Hart and Edward Mead Earle contributed to the spread of this term. Earle was the first author who argued that this term applies not only to wartime but also to peace. Liddell Hart broadened the scope of grand strategy beyond purely military victory in a war, to a set of political goals: it is not only crucial to defeat the enemy, it is also necessary not to destroy own nation and economy during the war. It is also necessary to create a sustainable post-war peace (Brands, 2014, p. 2; Fuller, 1929, pp. 4-5; Hart, 1975, pp. 336, 366-372; Earle, 1943, pp. vii-x). Grand strategy is a broader term than strategy or tactics. Grand strategies include a political, diplomatic and economic dimension not only in foreign policy but also domestically. This broad scope of grand strategies is reflected in most contemporary definitions of grand strategies.

Robert Art is one of the most influential contemporary scholars of grand strategies. He offers the most concise, yet comprehensive definition of grand strategy: it is “a set of foreign policy goals to pursue... that will do the best for the United States” (Art, 2003, p. 1). Other

minimalistic definitions expand Art's definition by adding that a grand strategy describes how states can better achieve preferred ends with available means (Kreps, 2009, p. 633). Henry Kissinger, for example, expands this definition even more. According to Kissinger, grand strategy is far more than matching foreign policy ends with means. Grand strategy describes how a state should work with an uncertain and anarchic world (Brands, 2014, p. 54). These oversimplified definitions of grand strategy serve only as a starting point for grasping the complexity and scope of grand strategies.

A more elaborate definition is the one put forward by Christopher Layne: "In choosing a grand strategy, a state will define its interests and objectives, identify threats to its interests and objectives, and decide in response on the most appropriate political, military, and economic strategies to protect those interests" (Layne, 1997, p. 88). To do so, the first task is to decide the priorities for U.S. national interests and U.S. foreign policy, to define the goals for U.S. foreign policy (Layne, 1998, p. 8). Already, from the emergence of this term, one of its authors – Liddell Hart – also argued that grand strategy is about using limited resources and prioritizing the goals (Brands, 2014, Hart, 1975, pp. 336, 366-372). Hal Brands, on the other hand, takes a more constructivist approach and defines grand strategy as "the intellectual architecture that gives form and structure to foreign policy." It is "the logic that guides leaders seeking security in a complex and insecure world." Nonetheless, Brands agrees about the necessity for grand strategies to match ends with means. Grand strategies for him are "a purposeful and coherent set of ideas about what a nation seeks to accomplish in the world, and how it should go about doing so." The formulation of a grand strategy for Brands is a monumental task: it is necessary to understand the international system, interests of the state and the threats to those interests (Brands, 2014, p. 3). Definitions by other scholars also contain elements from and have a similarity with the definition provided by Layne and Brands. Additions that other students of grand strategy contribute are that, on an individual level, grand strategy is: "a broad set of principles, beliefs, or ideas that govern the decisions and actions of a nation's policymakers" (Martel, February 25, 2013). Sometimes the basic realist premise that the main goal of the grand strategy is to ensure survival and promote the security of the state is added to definitions of grand strategies as well (Sloan, 2003, p 303).

Grand strategy also ties down short-term objectives with the long-term goals (Brands, 2014, p. 4). Any grand strategy should acknowledge the realities and difficulties of the present, consider practical day-to-day execution and decision-making procedures but keep long-term goals in mind. This must be done so that grand strategy can be developed into a more specific military and diplomatic strategy and tactics that can be implemented in the real world (Murray, 2010, p. 77). Gaddis agrees. For him, any grand strategy consists of two

elements: the articulation of strategy and implementation (Martel, 2015, p. 158). At the same time, grand strategy should look at the bigger picture behind bureaucratic decision-making, behind policy-making procedures, and specific strategic approaches to a single issue. The long-term nature of grand strategy means that it should be able to endure over time, in times of both war and peace, foresee issues that leaders executing and developing grand strategy will face in the future as well as be able to adapt to unexpected changes and newly arising problems in the international system (Murray, 2010, p. 77).

Grand strategies must consider not only the domestic realities of the political system but also the complexities of the international system of states. Grand strategy does not exist in a vacuum; it takes into account the relative strength and foreign policy goals of other states (Brands, 2014, p. 5). However, grand strategy offers more than a description of interstate relations. Grand strategy describes the domestic foundations of the strength of a state and the means to bolster these foundations (Martel, February 25, 2013). Grand strategy embeds an understanding of broad elements of the international system, being political, economic and diplomatic elements. Only with such a broad in-depth understanding of domestic and international complexities can grand strategies “exert leverage over distant societies... build effective allies and institutions... [and] co-opt and deter potential adversaries,” in order to pursue national interests (Suri, 2009, p. 615).

The broad definition of this term would attribute five elements to grand strategy: resource allocation, ensuring the survival of the state, serving as a manual for coherent foreign policy, acting as a signaling device for others, and guiding policymakers in dangerous and uncertain times (Murray, 2010, pp. 78-79). Firstly, grand strategy is fundamental to any state, because all states must make decisions on how to allocate resources available to them. States need to prioritize the issues on their foreign policy agenda. Grand strategy gives a clear lens from which to view the world and prioritize challenges that arise (Brands, 2014, pp. 7-8). Secondly, chaotic or drifting foreign policy and ad-hoc decision making can lead to strategic errors and endanger the survival of the state, thus the long-term strategic vision that grand strategy provides is needed (Murray, 2010, pp. 78-79). Without a purposeful strategy, there can be confusion among decision makers and especially implementers of foreign policy which leads to chaotic foreign policy. Thus, thirdly, grand strategy signals the intentions of the political leadership of a country to a domestic audience and implementers of foreign policy as well as, fourthly, foreign audiences. All members of the international system want to understand the role that other countries want to play in the world, what their foreign policy goals are and the means by which they strive to achieve those goals. The U.S.’s role in the international system, U.S. foreign policy goals and their preferred means are especially

significant for all states as the U.S. has unprecedented preeminence in terms of military power, global interests and global reach that can affect all of the world (Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62). Grand strategy should provide guidelines for the functioning of the whole of government in its relations with the external world. Fifthly, grand strategies are especially valuable during times when the international system of states is in rapid change: changes in the balance of power, wars, revolutions or economic turmoil (Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62; Brands, 2014, p. 9). They offer a clear prescription for action based on an analysis of the foreign policy priorities of a state.

Developing grand strategy is difficult, taking into account the complexities described. In addition, decision-makers usually have limited time to craft a comprehensive and well-developed response to address the complexities of the domestic and international system. There are problems that plague both the crafting and implementation of grand strategies as well: humans are plagued by cognitive biases and are not perfectly rational. Bureaucracy is often path dependent and averse to the change that a new grand strategy would entail. It too, is open to human error and misinterpretation. The democratic system of political compromises and checks and balances can influence implementation of the grand strategy and the overall foreign policy decision making process too (Brands, 2014, pp. 11-12).

To sum up, the grand strategies of the U.S. and any other state can be defined as a set of ideas for how a state can better achieve preferred ends with available means. This is the most concise way of defining this term. However, such an oversimplified definition serves only as a starting point for grasping the complexity and scope of grand strategies. In places where such an oversimplified definition is used in this thesis, it always takes the complexities of the term discussed here into consideration. The main difference that grand strategy has compared to other forms of policy planning ideas and documents, is the scope grand strategy claims to have. It is more long-term than a doctrine put forward by a single president, more than a strategy of a particular campaign or tactics of a specific military operation. Thus, grand strategy is also a much broader concept than short, simplified definitions can uncover. Grand strategy is not the sum of foreign policy actions; it is broader than foreign policy. Foreign policy includes all the actions of a state towards the outside world, including economic, diplomatic and military, while grand strategy is also the logic behind foreign policy, used in order to maximize the effect of the foreign policy.

The next chapter analyzes both the tools each U.S. grand strategy prescribes for U.S. foreign policy, as well as the logic behind these recommendations. However, before going into detailed descriptions of the three grand strategies that are discussed in the context of contemporary U.S. foreign policy, being primacy, liberal internationalism and offshore

balancing, the next two sections will discuss the limitations of grand strategies and look at the development and transformation of U.S. grand strategies up to the end of the Cold War in 1991, to explore the origins of contemporary grand strategies.

### **1.1 Criticism of Grand Strategies**

Grand strategy is not only a highly discussed term with various narrow and broad definitions, it is also a highly criticized term. Grand strategies naturally draw strong criticism as definitions and descriptions of grand strategies often describe grand strategies as almost omnipotent and all powerful, able to understand the complexities of domestic and international systems and capable of prescribing the best course of action for both the short and the long-term. Critics discuss the usefulness of a comprehensive grand strategy because it is impossible to predict the future and form comprehensive long-term plans for potential future developments. Even if such a strategy is developed, it is also hard to change bureaucratic inertia. It is hard to implement broad changes in foreign policy. Even if both of these challenges are overcome, critics argue that grand strategies do not deliver, that they are not prescriptions for successful foreign policy, or that grand strategy considerations are not used in the day to day foreign policy making process at all. This section covers each of the four types of criticism of grand strategies.

Firstly, critics doubt the usefulness of grand strategy in the formulation of a long-term vision for U.S. foreign policy. It is impossible for a grand strategy to predict the future. It is impossible for a comprehensive grand strategy to predict and accommodate all the technological and political changes in the world, especially in the rapidly changing 21st century with the multitude of new threats and challenges (Murray, 2010, p. 79). This is not a new criticism that has arisen only in the 21st century. Already in the 1990s, George Kennan, the architect of the Cold War containment grand strategy argued that the post-Cold War world has become too complex. Grand strategy can no longer accommodate these far too many, diverse and hardly connected challenges, ranging from proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to global climate change, human trafficking and others (Goldgeier, November 5, 2009). A similar argument used by critics of grand strategies is that foreign policy is inherently *ad hoc*. They agree that the world and the international system is complex and in constant flux. Thus, U.S. foreign policy also changes too often for a coherent grand strategy to emerge, thus grand strategies are irrelevant (Brands, 2014, p. 14). The complexities of the international system cannot be captured by a single set of ideas. Even if a grand strategy is formulated and adopted, it would not be a strong guideline that would



influence all aspects of foreign policy. As new challenges arise in the international system, there would be more and more deviations from the adopted grand strategy.

Secondly, critics argue that it is hard to overcome path dependency in foreign policy even if a new grand strategy is formulated and adopted. Not only bureaucratic inertia, and public opinion that tends to support the status quo and are averse to change, are a problem in introducing a new grand strategy. External factors also play a role, such as existing commitments, binding international treaties and traditions, as well as the international distribution of power, that limit the possibility of implementing a grand strategy. Any incoming president has limited freedom of action because of the challenges inherited by the decisions of the previous administration(s) (Kreps, 2009, p. 630). It might be easy for a new administration to change rhetoric to a new grand strategy, however, implementation and a real change in foreign policy is difficult. Actions, not rhetoric is needed for the grand strategy to take root and what matters most in the international system (Drezner, 2011, p. 57). Formulation of grand strategy is not enough, as implementation also matters. However, there are various institutional obstacles that hamper rapid and overarching changes in foreign policy, rendering ideas about grand strategy less effective during their implementation.

Thirdly, another criticism of grand strategies is that grand strategy does not always provide the successful results it has promised. Grand strategists often describe the strategies they propose as a solution to most of the problems and challenges that the U.S. faces in the international system. However, neither the strategy that the U.S. adopted up to 1991, described in the next section, nor the strategies adopted after the end of the Cold War, have proven to be easy or simple in their implementation or have led to fast and undisputed successful results in U.S. foreign policy. For example, an argument that can be often heard is that the grand strategy of George W. Bush led the U.S. towards the mismanagement of campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as to rampant anti-Americanism across the world. George W. Bush's grand strategy which had promised to solve international problems for the U.S. did the opposite. They created a backlash and created only more problems for the U.S. (Brands, 2014, pp. 191-192).

Finally, there are authors who dismiss grand strategies altogether. Zenko writes that the U.S.'s NSS, which is the main document outlining U.S. grand strategy, is close to being useless. Zenko writes that the NSS is "either quickly forgotten or never implemented in any meaningful way in the first place" and that "nobody consults the NSS along the way" in the foreign policy-making process (Zenko, 2017). The articulation of a long-term grand strategy in a document does not influence the day to day policy making process. Foreign policy is

made on a case-to-case basis and is an *ad hoc* process. This would be the most cynical perspective on the role of grand strategies in international relations and domestic policy.

This thesis aims to add to the debate about the usefulness of grand strategies by evaluating the role of grand strategy in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. All three hypotheses used in the thesis test the claims of grand strategists against their critics. Scholars of grand strategies claim that these strategies should have a long-term nature. Thus, H1 firstly tests, whether NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies or have used a multitude of approaches. Furthermore, two other hypotheses test whether the grand strategies of the U.S. are coherent and comprehensive. Whether, secondly, the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's (H2). Thirdly, H3 tests, whether the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies.

To prepare the analytical framework for testing these hypotheses, the next chapter summarizes different classifications of grand strategies developed by various authors, favoring one or another grand strategy. Building on these classifications, an analytical framework is then developed to analyze U.S.-Russia relations, building on three different grand strategies that are used for classification in the thesis: primacy, liberal internationalism, and offshore balancing. However, before going into contemporary U.S. grand strategies in-depth in the next chapter, the next part of this chapter outlines the historical development of U.S. grand strategies up to the end of the Cold War in 1991.

## **1.2 U.S. Grand Strategies until 1991**

This section offers a brief overview of the U.S. grand strategies until the end of the Cold War. This section does not go in-depth in the history of U.S. grand strategies as this is not the primary goal of this thesis. However, the contemporary grand strategies this thesis is about, take their roots in history and the historical ideas about U.S. grand strategy described in this section. More in-depth overviews of U.S. grand strategies throughout last two centuries can be found in William Martel's *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* (2015) and Walter McDougall's *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (1997). John Lewis Gaddis covers U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War in *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War* (2005), while the book *US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion* (2013), edited by Michael Cox, Timothy Lynch and

Nicolas Bouchet, offers insight on liberal internationalist elements in U.S. foreign policy throughout the history. This section builds on aforementioned authors as well as others to give a brief outline of grand strategies the U.S. has used throughout history. This overview of historical U.S. grand strategy will stop at 1991 at the time when the Soviet Union collapses and the Cold War ends because further sections dwell in depth on U.S. grand strategies that started developing in the late 1980s, early 1990s.

Looking at grand strategies of all states, until the 16th century, the goal of grand strategies was territorial conquest. Since then, grand strategies of various states until the second world war shifted more and more towards the idea of “complete victory” – a total defeat of opponent mobilizing society, economy and armed forces. The culmination of these ideas was the “total war” doctrines of First and Second World Wars (Martel, 2015, p. 159). However, while Europe was dominated by ideas such as *machtschule* and *realpolitik*, that promoted such aggressive grand strategies, U.S. had adopted an entirely different perspective on foreign policy and radically different grand strategy.

After U.S. gained independence the goal of U.S. grand strategy was nation-building at home, expansion westwards as well as building of the domestic foundations of U.S. power. Alliances with European great powers would mean involvement into unnecessary conflicts (Martel, 2015, p. 206-207), so the U.S. pursued a grand strategy of “neutrality, regional autonomy, and nonentanglement in Europe” (Martel, 2015, p. 210). This unilateral foreign policy, reliance only on itself and policy of no alliances characterized U.S. foreign policy throughout the 19th century (McDougall, 1997, p. 46-49). However, at the time this grand strategy was never described as isolationism. This term first appeared during the interwar period to characterize similar U.S. foreign policy, but for all intents and purposes, this period of unilateral U.S. foreign policy throughout the 19th century can be described as following isolationist grand strategy (McDougall, 1997, p. 40).

At the end of the 19th century, ideas about the promotion of liberal values in foreign policy started to appear in the U.S. grand strategy. Although liberal internationalist agenda in U.S. foreign policy has its roots in, for example, American revolution and Monroe doctrine, only at the end of 19th century it started playing a stronger role in foreign policy. First such case was the Spanish-American War of 1898 when the U.S. started a war against Spain to stop the humanitarian disaster in Cuba caused by Spanish attempts to quell the Cuban independence movement (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 5, 20-21). This event and the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, as William Martel puts it, introduced a new principle in U.S. foreign policy: “Restraining the sources of world disorder and serving as the system stabilizer” (Martel, 2015, p. 209). Theodore Roosevelt gradually increased activity in U.S.

foreign policy previously unseen throughout the 19th century. Theodore Roosevelt used diplomatic tools in U.S. foreign policy – for example, building the Panama Canal, establishing protectorate over Dominican Republic, mediating between Russians and Japanese after 1905 war as well as France and Germany in 1911 Moroccan crisis – and expansion of blue-water navy in order to increase U.S. power (Martel, 2015, p. 212). A grand strategy that promotes liberal values, more active engagement in the international system and supports the increase of U.S. power was even more clearly established under the presidency of Woodrow Wilson.

Although initially Woodrow Wilson wanted to start “America First” foreign policy – to return to less active foreign policy compared to Roosevelt’s, to refrain from intervention in European conflicts – after German naval attacks on U.S. ships during the First World War as well as German alliance proposal to Mexico, that would threaten the U.S., America joined the Great War (Martel, 2015, p. 222). When the U.S. joined this conflict amongst European great powers, it did so on its own terms that were different than European *realpolitik* ideas about total victory over enemies of the era. Wilson wanted “peace without victory.” This war was supposed to be “the war to end all wars” (Martel, 2015, p. 223, 228-229) and he described U.S. entrance in this conflict as a “moral crusade to make the world safe for democracy” – a unique goal for a war for that era (McDougall, 1997, p. 123). For the aftermath of the Great War Wilson offered European states a program of 14 points, built on Kantian ideas, that would transform the anarchic international system into a more peaceful one. Wilson’s 14 points were: Open diplomacy (1), freedom of seas (2) and trade (3), arms reduction (4), colonialism in interests of locals (5), self-determination for Europeans (6-13), as well as establishment of the League of Nations (14) in order to ensure “political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike” (“President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points,” 1918). This was an early attempt to build a collective security regime built on liberal ideas through the League of Nations (Martel, 2015, p. 229; Ikenberry, 2009. p. 73-74). These were the origins of liberal internationalist U.S. grand strategy.

These ideas were radical for the time, as the states were supposed to give up some of their sovereignty, namely, the right to wage war, to the League of Nations. In case of an aggressive war, the sovereignty of these states would be encroached even more, because Article X of The Covenant of the League of Nations provisioned rights for League of Nations to dictate action of its member states to stop aggressive wars: “In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled” (“The Covenant of the League of Nations,” 1924). This infringement on sovereignty was one of the reasons why the U.S. Senate did not ratify the Versailles Treaty (Ikenberry, 2009. p. 75) and returned to the isolationist grand strategy.

Other causes of isolationism in the interwar period were regrets about U.S. participation in the First World War and later – the Great Depression (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 6). Even in 1937 70% of the U.S. population thought that U.S. participation in the First World War was a mistake (Martel, 2015, p. 235). Both U.S. public and policymakers favored U.S. withdrawal from the world, less active, unilateral foreign policy.

Isolationist grand strategy continued in the U.S. until 1941, when U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, fearing the threats from Nazi Germany, started Lend-Lease supplies to Great Britain and USSR, imposed sanctions on Japan (Martel, 2015, p. 236). Christopher Layne describes this brief period from the defeat of France in 1940 until U.S. joined the World War as a period when the U.S. used offshore balancing grand strategy. The U.S. maintained neutrality but provided military and economic assets to the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union to balance Nazi Germany. Even more, not only the U.S. shared its intelligence about German U-boat movements, but in 1941 U.S. was actively involved in an undeclared naval war against German submarines in the Atlantic (Layne, 1998, p. 25). This short period Layne describes as an example of offshore balancing strategy – letting others bear the burdens of international conflicts while maximizing U.S. power at home.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, U.S. joined the war, but Roosevelt, similarly to Wilson, entered Second World War with idealist rhetoric about the struggle of democracy against tyranny. He envisioned a multilateral post-war setting as a world where major powers multilaterally cooperate in United Nations to solve international problems. However, he was more realist than Woodrow Wilson and he envisioned acknowledged special status for great powers by giving them veto's in this international organization (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 6, 23; Ikenberry, 2009. p. 76; Martel, 2015, p. 238). Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his foreign policy was another U.S. president to whom supporters of liberal internationalist grand strategy look up to.

After the Second World War, the world had changed dramatically. The U.S. had risen not only to be the most powerful economic power in the world but also to be the number one military power. Especially with the onset of Soviet threat, retreat back to isolationist grand strategy was not an option anymore for U.S. Pearl Harbor had proven that with technological developments two oceans that surround the U.S. no longer protect America from events elsewhere in the world. Thus, U.S. embraced more active foreign policy with emphasis on military power and alliances with other states in order to counter Soviet threat (Martel, 2015, p. 244). However, the grand strategy that the U.S. used towards the Soviet Union and the rest of the world during the Cold War was not unified and unchanging throughout the years.

American diplomat George Kennan in 1947 his article *The Sources of Soviet Conduct* outlined his perspective on the logic behind the aggressive Soviet foreign policy. He argued that the Soviet Union and Russia have always felt insecure. Soviets will feel insecure as long as the U.S. exists, thus for Soviets, there can be no peace with the U.S. However, according to Kennan, unlike Hitler's Germany, Soviet Union is neither schematic nor adventurist and will not start aggressive wars against the U.S. (Kennan, 1947). Furthermore, the nature of grand strategies changed after the Second World War. Until then the goal of grand strategies of many states often was to pursue aggressive conquest and total victory over the enemy. With the rise of the apocalyptic destructive capability of nuclear weapons, the focus of grand strategies for both U.S. and USSR shifted towards avoiding war (Martel, 2015, p. 159). So in order to counter this Soviet threat, but at the same time to avoid direct confrontation with Soviet Union Kennan proposed a grand strategy of containment. As Kennan described it, it was a balance of power approach to Soviet expansion. The goal of U.S. strategy should be to prevent "centers of industrial-military capability" from falling into Soviet hands (Gaddis, 2005, p. 89). At the same time, Kennan argued that the Soviet economic system and ideology, namely the idea that the state can control human nature, is not sustainable and will self-destruct. Thus, U.S. should not use overly militarized and aggressive foreign policy to defeat the Soviets (Martel, 2015, p. 244). Kennan's idea of containment grand strategy was close to realist offshore balancing grand strategy that will be described in depth in further sections. Although Kennan's ideas influenced Cold War containment policy, Kennan's idea of containment was different from the containment grand strategy adopted by the Truman administration with the start of the Korean War in 1950.

In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Truman administration immediately set the U.S. on a path of demobilization. Truman did not want to pursue militarized containment (Martel, 2015, p. 247). However, as the Soviet Union continued aggressive support for communist "national liberation wars" in Greece, Turkey and elsewhere, exploded its own atomic bomb in 1949, U.S. relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated. In 1950 U.S. embraced containment as the grand strategy towards the Soviet Union (Martel, 2015, p. 251). National Security Council Report 68 or NSC-68 was the first document which outlined the containment strategy in a comprehensive manner. The U.S. containment strategy was to counter any Soviet expansion anywhere in the world, not only in the regions vital for U.S. national interests as Kennan would have it (Gaddis, 2005, p. 89): "defeat of free institutions anywhere is defeat everywhere" (A Report to the National Security Council - NSC 68, 1950, p. 8). NSC-68 also did not embrace the strategic patience of Kennan. The Soviet Union might collapse in the long term, as Kennan predicted, but Soviet Union

presents an immediate threat to U.S. interests and the U.S. needs to use active diplomacy, the help of the broadest possible set of allies and conventional military tools to contain this threat. NSC-68 was written immediately before the start of the Korean War. This communist aggressive expansion seemed to prove everything Kennan and NSC-68 had warned about (Martel, 2015, p. 253) and militaristic containment became U.S. grand strategy for the offset of the Cold War.

During Truman's administration U.S. created the liberal world order based on U.S. leadership and international institutions – for example, NATO, Marshall Plan, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Bretton Woods, World Bank and others – that promoted interdependence and still makes up the foundations of contemporary international system (Ikenberry, 2009. p. 76-77; Martel, 2015, p. 239). However, although the U.S. supported democracy in territories it controlled after the end of the Second World War and promoted democracy and liberal values there (Martel, 2015, p. 252), in the rest of the world “Truman set the United States on a course that privileged ‘order and stability’ over freedom” (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 7). This containment grand strategy with active, militarized containment and support to democracy was closer to the primacist and liberal internationalist contemporary grand strategies and further away from the offshore balancing grand strategy which Kennan had described and recommended.

However, this containment strategy was not homogenous and constant throughout the Cold War. Containment, on the one hand, shifted towards even more militarized versions with attempts to “roll back” Soviet influence, leaning towards the contemporary primacist grand strategy. On the other, it shifted towards détente – more pragmatic and cooperative version of containment, leaning towards offshore balancing. For example, during Dwight Eisenhower's administration after 1952, there was a planning exercise known as “Operation Solarium” with discussions on four different strategies. Firstly, containment, as described previously in NSC-68. Secondly, more active containment, trying to deter Soviet expansion anywhere in the world, with use of nuclear weapons if necessary. The third option discussed was called “liberation.” It suggested to “roll back” Soviet sphere of influence using non-military means. The fourth option was a preventive attack on the Soviet Union (Gaddis, 2005, p. 143-144; Martel, 2015, p. 256).

In the aftermath of these discussions in 1954 Eisenhower adopted the *New Look* strategy. He slashed defense spending because it's hard to convince population for long-term, expensive containment: producing military equipment, not public goods during peacetime. Another goal for Eisenhower was to motivate U.S. allies to spend more on their defense (Gaddis, 2005, p. 131, 144-145; Martel, 2015, p. 257, 260). His grand strategy relied not on

massive conventional forces, but mainly on “massive retaliatory power” of nuclear deterrence. However, this approach did not rely only on nuclear deterrence, but also alliances, psychological warfare, covert actions and diplomatic negotiations (Gaddis, 2005, p. 159; Martel, 2015, p. 257). This was an asymmetric approach to the Soviet threat, contrary to Truman’s which called for symmetry in conventional capabilities compared to Soviet Union (Gaddis, 2005, p. 212; Martel, 2015, p. 258). The logic of emphasizing nuclear deterrence was that if the only response option to Soviet provocations or attacks for the U.S. would be massive nuclear retaliation, Soviet Union would never attempt to challenge the U.S. (Martel, 2015, p. 259). However, as the Cold War progressed, around 1957 Eisenhower shifted towards more active containment. He started to support anti-communist governments with military aid and was willing to use U.S. force to prevent communism from spreading around the world (Martel, 2015, p. 255). Although Eisenhower adopted more robust and assertive rhetoric, used covert CIA actions to stop the expansion of communism across the world, his administration never really considered a rollback of Soviet forces, the liberation of Eastern Europe – Eisenhower did nothing during the Hungarian uprising in 1956 (Gaddis, 2005, p. 153). Eisenhower continued Truman’s support to democracies in the first world, but he also valued stability over democracy and did not attempt to change the second and third world. Quite the contrary, he allowed CIA to topple governments in Iran and Guatemala in order to ensure pro-American autocrats, instead of communists, would control these states (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 7, 24).

John Kennedy after 1960 returned to strengthening both conventional and unconventional forces as well as non-military tools of U.S. foreign policy. Kennedy offered a symmetric response to the Soviet threat. The goal of his foreign policy was for U.S. to be able to give “Flexible Response” to any Soviet threat, to expand the range of possible U.S. responses, to increase “number of escalatory steps that could be taken prior to resorting to nuclear weapons.” These goals for Kennedy’s foreign policy came from the lessons he had learned after the 1961 Berlin crisis (Gaddis, 2005, p. 214-215, 226; Martel, 2015, p. 264-265). He, similarly to Eisenhower and contrary to NSC-68, disagreed that U.S. should get involved in conflicts that posed no threat to U.S. national interests (Gaddis, 2005, p. 200). However, his administration agreed that expansion of individual liberties and democratic societies all across the world is in U.S. national interests (Gaddis, 2005, p. 202). This led to more active U.S. foreign policy, compared to Eisenhower’s, who in spite of his rhetoric wanted to save U.S. resources (Gaddis, 2005, p. 204). A unique introduction to the U.S. foreign policy from Kennedy’s administration was an emphasis on “soft power” in U.S. foreign policy. Kennedy used uplifting and inspiring rhetoric, created Peace Corps and other initiatives to fight



communism not only with military tools, but also political, diplomatic and ideational tools (Martel, 2015, p. 267-268). Kennedy was also more assertive than previous presidents about democracy promotion. He supported nationalist movements in the third world in the hope they would favor a democratic form of government (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 7).

Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson from 1963 continued this approach and more active foreign policy that aimed to stop Soviet expansion anywhere communists attempted to take roots (Gaddis, 2005, p. 210). However, these policies did not lead to the promised successes. For example, support to nationalist movements in the third world was not very successful, because it was hard for democratic ideals to take root in poor countries with anti-imperialist sentiments (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 7), especially so in Vietnam (Martel, 2015, p. 270-271). These more active, militarized containment strategies with active, militarized democracy promotion across the world leaned towards the contemporary primacist grand strategy.

In the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, it became evident in both Moscow and Washington, that such confrontations between two superpowers are extremely dangerous as they give both superpowers choice between humiliating defeat or nuclear war (Gaddis, 2005, p. 233). Throughout these militarized versions of containment strategy Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson had made attempts to open diplomatic channels for negotiations with Russia (Gaddis, 2005, p. 214). For example, Johnson signed various arms-control treaties with the Soviet Union, such as Outer Space Treaty and Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Martel, 2015, p. 269). However, only during the Richard Nixon administration starting with 1968 a less militarized, more diplomatic version of containment – *détente* or relaxation of hostilities – was adopted. The idea of Nixon and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was to engage the Soviet Union in order to create mutually beneficial “structure of peace” to the Cold War (Gaddis, 2005, p. 287). “Mutual restraint” would be beneficial to both superpowers (Gaddis, 2005, p. 277), so it would be possible to enter negotiations on specific issues which would lead to mutually beneficial outcomes (Gaddis, 2005, p. 278, 290), such as such as SALT I arms control treaty and the Helsinki Accords. Thus, Nixon was the first U.S. presidents to use Kennan's balance of power approach, more realist grand strategy. It is not necessary to stop the Soviet expansion everywhere, only in the regions central to U.S. national interests (Gaddis, 2005, p. 278, 295, 306; Martel, 2015, p. 281-282). Furthermore, Nixon and Kissinger abandoned democracy promotion from U.S. foreign policy. It did not matter for Nixon administration, whether the government in a country was democratic or authoritarian as long as the state was leaning towards the U.S. and away from communism (Cox, Lynch,

Bouchet, 2013, p. 8). This more pragmatic, less militarized, more cooperative period of containment leans towards contemporary offshore balancing U.S. grand strategy.

This period of more productive relations between two superpowers lasted throughout the 1970s during presidencies of Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. However, Jimmy Carter and his National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski returned to the promotion of democracy, freedom and human rights as a tool to fight communism in the Cold War (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 8). The pragmatism of Nixon and Ford administrations was perceived as U.S. weakness. The critics of this realist approach called it “retrenchment” – U.S. withdrawal from the world, abandonment of U.S. values and giving up in front of Soviet pressure (Martel, 2015, p. 274). Contrary to previous administrations, Carter believed that democracy, human rights, and freedoms were the fundamental values of the U.S. and U.S. must inspire others by example both by U.S. domestic political system as well as how the U.S. acts abroad (Martel, 2015, p. 283). The goal of this grand strategy was to put the Soviet Union on the defensive about lack of these values in the Soviet sphere of influence (Martel, 2015, p. 285). Although Carter attempted to continue cooperation with the Soviet Union, it became harder as the U.S. increased criticism of the Soviet Union. The culmination of this was the U.S. boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Martel, 2015, p. 285, 288). This idealistic containment can be seen as similar to contemporary liberal internationalist grand strategy.

In 1981 Ronald Reagan became U.S. president and responded to December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with a new strategy. Relatively more pragmatic cooperation with Soviet Union during the previous era was abandoned. Reagan put even bigger emphasis than Carter on tough, idealistic rhetoric about U.S. democratic values, criticizing human rights violations and lack of democracy in the Soviet Union. This idealist component was complemented with largest peacetime military buildup in the U.S.: renewed arms race with the Soviet Union, Strategic Defense Initiative and other technological advances. This is a new stage in U.S. grand strategy towards the Soviet Union, reminiscent of NSC-68, with the goal to undermine political and economic weaknesses of the Soviet Union (Gaddis, 2005, p. 351-354; Martel, 2015, p. 289, 294). Reagan argued that the U.S. should actively promote conditions that foster democracy throughout the world, supporting new democracies and pro-democracy movements as well as pressuring non-democratic states with diplomatic and economic means (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 8, 24-25). Not only to contain, to deter the Soviet Union but also to reverse Soviet sphere of influence through fostering a relationship with China, providing covert assistance to governments resisting Soviet incursions (Martel, 2015, p. 290-291, 293, 296). Later, after restoring U.S. forces and being able to talk to the

Soviet Union from the position of strength, Reagan's strategy shifted towards engagement with the new Soviet leader Michael Gorbachev through various meetings and international conferences (Martel, 2015, p. 295). Ronald Reagan added a militarized aspect to U.S. foreign policy and, thus, shifted the containment strategy to be more similar to the contemporary primacist grand strategy. Reagan's grand strategy was the last U.S. had used during the Cold War as in 1991 Soviet Union collapsed.

Currently, amongst scholars, there are major debates whether these various types of containment grand strategy were one single, adaptive grand strategy that lasted over a period of more than 40 years or series of multiple grand strategies. Martel argues that U.S. containment grand strategy was a single set of foreign policy goals, that was flexible to adapt to changing circumstances. That détente and rollback were different aspects of the same containment grand strategy (Martel, 2015, p. 244). Christopher Layne goes even further and claims that the term containment does not describe U.S. grand strategy throughout the Cold War. It is a euphemism for preponderance grand strategy that the U.S. did pursue. U.S. created and maintained U.S. led world order based on U.S. dominance in terms of economic, military power as well as American values. The necessity to contain the Soviet Union was a good way how to make this preponderance sound more peaceful and less threatening to others (Layne, 1998, p. 8-9). Gaddis, on the other hand, makes no such claims as he writes about multiple strategies of containment. Rollback and détente for him were much different strategies from what Truman's containment was. Even more, Gaddis differentiates also between asymmetrical and symmetrical containment strategies. Former were strategy Kennan prescribed, the Truman administration implemented from 1947 until 1949, "New Look" of Eisenhower and détente of Nixon. Symmetrical containment was used starting with Korean war in 1950 and during presidencies of Kennedy and Johnson. Reagan's grand strategy for Gaddis was not containment. Reagan did not want to contain the Soviet Union, but to aggressively put an end to it (Gaddis, 2001). Sestanovich agrees with Gaddis and argues that since the Second World War, there have been three grand strategy cycles. Cold War started with the most active U.S. foreign policy ever, as he calls it – maximalist or primacist – a grand strategy that lasted until the late Eisenhower presidency, who started to scale back U.S. activities abroad. The second wave of primacy activism started with Détente of Nixon and Kissinger and lasted until Nixon's presidency. The third cycle started with Ronald Reagan and his renewed fight against the Soviet Union (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 9, 326). For some scholars, containment was one grand strategy with different stages but build on the same basic principles. For others containment was not one internally coherent grand strategy, but a series of various grand strategies.

This, however, is a debate to be explored further elsewhere. Nonetheless, over the course of history, U.S. grand strategy has shifted from less active on the international arena – isolationist – towards more active: from more pragmatic cooperation with the Soviet Union to decrease tensions with minimal or no emphasis on democracy and liberal values – offshore balancing – towards more idealistic supporting democracies and pro-democracy movements across the world. From more militarized – primacy – towards strategy relying more on non-military tools and soft power – liberal internationalist grand strategy. Each of these elements and others, as well as these three grand strategies, except isolationism, still play role in debates about what U.S. grand strategies shall be after the end of the Cold War and, thus, will be described in-depth in the next chapter.

## **2. The U.S. Grand Strategy Classification Framework**

Since the late 1980s, a multitude of grand strategists, experts and pundits have offered their insight into what the U.S. grand strategy for the post-Cold War world should be. This chapter starts with a broad overview of grand strategy classification that is used as the analytical instrument in this thesis. First, this chapter explains the elements that make up each grand strategy with two graphic depictions of grand strategy classification in broad strokes. The rest of this chapter explains the origins of this classification in depth. The next section of this chapter analyzes the grand strategy classifications of various authors. Their classifications serve as the basis for the classification used in the thesis. The following section describes the theoretical origins and threat perception of primacy, liberal internationalist, and offshore balancing grand strategies. The next four sub-sections offer a detailed analysis of four elements that make up each of the three grand strategies used in this thesis: U.S. leadership, values, cooperation and the role of power in foreign policy.

The theoretical part of this thesis develops a grand strategy classification which serves as the main analytical tool for this thesis. The empirical part of the thesis uses this grand strategy classification as the framework for coding and analyzing U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. This grand strategy classification is built on classifications and descriptions of U.S. grand strategies by various authors covered further in this chapter. Summarizing the classifications and work of these authors, there are four distinctive grand strategies: primacy, liberal internationalism, offshore balancing, and isolationism (see table 2.1). Although isolationism is mentioned by all authors, isolationism is not covered in depth in this thesis and this table, because it does not play an important role in the foreign policy considerations of the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations and thus is irrelevant for this thesis. Table 2.1 shows four different elements of U.S. foreign policy that make up each grand strategy and compares where each grand strategy stands on different foreign policy elements. Firstly, what role should the U.S. play in the world? Secondly, what role values and ideals, such as democracy and human rights, should play in U.S. foreign policy? Thirdly, what role should cooperation take in U.S. interaction with other states and international organizations? Fourthly, what kind of power does each grand strategy support the most? According to Sartori's description of minimal definitions, it is necessary to make abstractions to be able to define concepts and any definition should include only the minimum necessary characteristics to give a complete description of any concept (Sartori, 1970, p. 65). The sum of these four elements is the

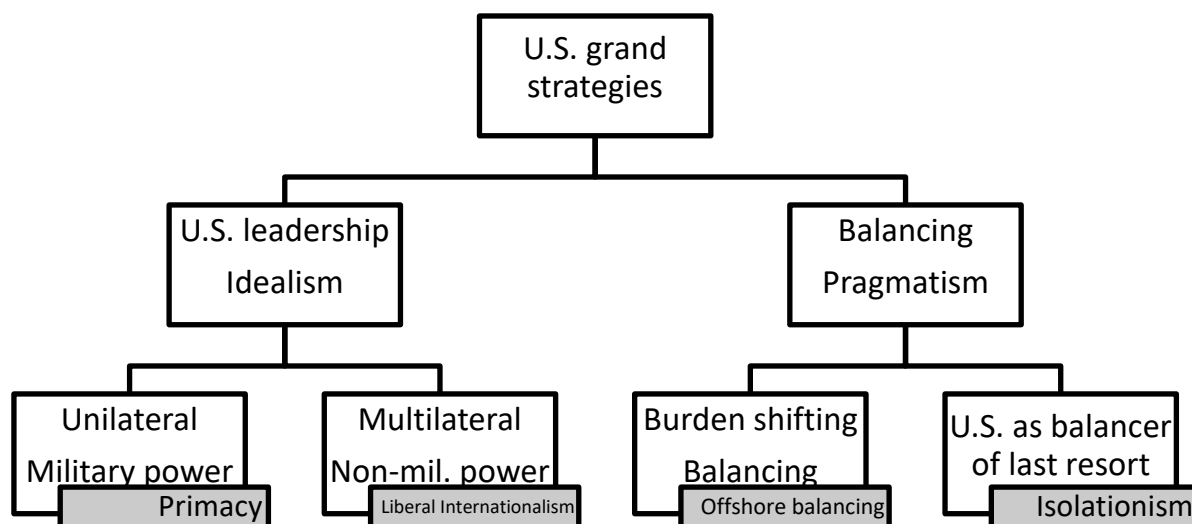
minimal number of characteristics that allow for the definition of each grand strategy. Further on in this chapter, each of these elements is explored in-depth for all three grand strategies.

*Table 2.1*

**The U.S. grand strategy classification framework**

<b>Foreign policy elements:</b>	<b>Primacy</b>	<b>Liberal Internationalism</b>	<b>Offshore Balancing</b>
<b>1) U.S. global role</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Balancing</b>
<b>2) Values</b>	<b>Idealism</b>	<b>Idealism</b>	<b>Pragmatism</b>
<b>3) Cooperation</b>	<b>Unilateralism</b>	<b>Multilateralism</b>	<b>Burden shifting</b>
<b>4) Most supported type of power</b>	<b>Military power</b>	<b>Non-military power, Soft-power</b>	<b>Balancing, Maximizing power at home</b>

Another way of looking at this grand strategy classification is to arrange the elements that make up different grand strategies in a hierarchy, banding similar elements together. This allows a step by step two-level classification. The hierarchical organization chart in figure 2.1 offers a complementary schematic way of understanding the grand strategy classification process. According to most scholars of grand strategies covered further in this chapter, all U.S. grand strategies can be divided into two groups. Strategies that support U.S. leadership and idealist values in U.S. foreign policy, and strategies that support the opposite, which is a pragmatic and less active U.S. foreign policy, sharing burdens with other states. This is displayed in the second level of the hierarchical organization chart. The third level of this chart makes it possible to differentiate specific grand strategy by determining where specific grand strategy stands on the remaining two elements: the role of cooperation with other states and international organizations in U.S. foreign policy, as well as support for different kinds of power in foreign policy.



*Figure 2.1 Two-level grand strategy classification framework*

The first element on which there are major differences between grand strategies is about the global role the U.S. should take. Most authors differentiate grand strategies between active, dominant grand strategies and grand strategies that prefer the status quo or even retrenchment, withdrawal from the international arena (see figure 2.1 and element 1 of table 2.1). For example, Robert Kagan argues that a hegemon, such as the U.S., should employ the primacist grand strategy and provide international norms, peace, and stability. A lack of U.S. leadership, which he associates with other grand strategies, will lead to U.S. decline and a volatile international system (Kagan, 2012, pp. 5-6). Sestanovich differentiates between “maximalist” and “retrenchment” grand strategies. Maximalist grand strategies promote active foreign policy, engagement and changes to the status quo. Strategies which Sestanovich characterizes as “retrenchment” support doing less in the international arena, a decreasing U.S. role and relying more on other states (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 8-9). Haass too talks about grand strategies that support U.S. leadership (Haass, 2005, pp. 188-193) and other strategies that will lead to U.S. decline which in turn lead to conflictual great power competition (Haass, 2005, pp. 11-19, 200-202). Mearsheimer’s classification differentiates between grand strategies which want to preserve U.S. global dominance, neoconservatism (as he calls primacy)<sup>1</sup> and liberal internationalism, and grand strategies like offshore balancing and isolationism that support a decreased U.S. role in the world (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17).

Looking specifically at the U.S. grand strategy classification framework in table 2.1, one possibility, embraced by supporters of primacy and liberal internationalism, is that the

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<sup>1</sup> Here and elsewhere throughout this section in brackets is given an indicator towards which grand strategy, according to the classification developed in this thesis, different names of different grand strategies belong to.

U.S. should have a proactive foreign policy. Primacists argue that the U.S. should take an active leadership role in the global arena because U.S. leadership has historically provided peace and stability in the international system, thus the U.S. should continue this successful policy of active engagement (Kagan, 2012, pp. 5-6). Liberal internationalists argue that U.S. leadership is necessary to ensure collective action and to prevent great power competition (Haass, 2005, p. 23-24). Another possibility is for U.S. foreign policy to be less active, to decrease U.S. engagements in the world, and offer less U.S. leadership and involvement. This would lead to burden-sharing with other states, which is how supporters of offshore balancing grand strategy would like to see U.S. foreign policy. For example, Mearsheimer supports an offshore balancing grand strategy and argues that the U.S. is wasting its resources by getting actively involved in solving many problems across the world. A far too active U.S. foreign policy promotes the free-riding of U.S. allies and other states. Instead, the U.S. should decrease its global engagement, save its resources, focus on domestic issues and let other states take care of their own problems. The U.S. should only get actively involved in the international system as a balancer of last resort when international balances of power break down (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18, 31-34). Support for a more active or passive U.S. leadership is the first indicator, by which grand strategy classification can start.

A similar dichotomy exists about the second element of grand strategy classification. Different grand strategies assign a varying level to the extent idealist values like democracy, human rights and freedoms should play in U.S. foreign policy (see figure 2.1 and element 2 of table 2.1). There are grand strategies which support the use and defense of idealist values in foreign policy and there are pragmatic strategies which do not support idealist values. For example, Posen and Ross separate strategies that do not support humanitarian interventions (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 17-21) and strategies which prioritize alleviation of human suffering as well as cooperation with democracies (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30).

Liberal internationalist and primacist grand strategies share their origins in liberal international relations theory (this is explained in depth in section 2.2). Both strategies agree with the democratic peace theory: democracy, human rights, and other values are essential for a peaceful international system. Both grand strategies agree that a more democratic world would be in U.S. interests because democracies do not fight aggressive wars against each other. Thus, the U.S. should use its current unipolar preponderance to make the world more democratic and thus more stable and peaceful by promoting and defending democracy, human rights, rule of law, preventing genocide and defending other liberal values. Kagan talks about the necessity of primacist grand strategy to support democracies over other non-democratic types of government. As he sees it, other grand strategies do not support this element enough



(Kagan, 2012, p. 4). Haass and Martel emphasize that liberal internationalism should support the promotion of idealistic values in foreign policy as it benefits the U.S. (Haass, 2005, p. 20; Martel, March 04, 2013). Offshore balancing grand strategy, contrary to the previous two, supports the idea that pragmatic foreign policy will be more successful. A more democratic world will not necessarily be more pro-American. Democracies can also oppose and hinder U.S. foreign policies (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). U.S. should not treat authoritarian states differently, because their support is necessary to address various international problems. U.S. should look at whether these states are ready to cooperate with the U.S. or not. If idealist values are at the forefront of U.S. foreign policy, cooperation with authoritarian governments would become impossible (Mearsheimer, 2005).

This sums up the second level of the hierarchical organization chart (see figure 2.1). Regarding the first two foreign policy elements that make up grand strategies, primacy and liberal internationalism offer a very similar approach: active engagement in the world and support for idealistic values in foreign policy. Offshore balancing and isolationism support a decreased U.S. role in the international arena and a pragmatic foreign policy. However, on the other two elements, like how much should the U.S. cooperate with other states and international organizations, on what kind of power should the U.S. rely the most – primacy, liberal internationalism, offshore balancing and isolationism offer significantly different approaches (see element 3 and 4 of table 2.1). The following paragraphs describe the positions on the third and fourth elements of each grand strategy.

Primacy and liberal internationalist grand strategies support active U.S. leadership and the promotion of idealist values, but they differ on the means for providing it: they differ in the varying level of support for cooperation with other states as well as the level of support for the use of military power in foreign policy. Primacists emphasize unilateral leadership and the role of military power, while liberal internationalists, multilateral leadership and the role of soft and non-military power. The first grand strategy used by this classification is primacy.

Different scholars call this grand strategy differently, for example, hegemony, hegemonic stability theory, democratic globalism, new unilateralism, preponderance (Layne, 1998), neo-conservatism (Rathbun, Mearsheimer), democratic realism and others. Robert Kagan is often called the leading “neoconservative,” but he himself prefers to call this grand strategy “liberal interventionism.” Some of the most notable primacists like Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer Irving Kristol, and William Kristol, all have often been called neoconservatives. However, the name primacy is used to describe this grand strategy, because it is widely used, it is a more descriptive term and it captures the essence of a grand strategy that supports active, dominating, unilateral U.S. foreign policy (Kagan, 2012, p. 59), with the

emphasis on active use of military might to solve and even preempt international threats and problems from materializing (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 32-36; Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). These policies, according to primacists, have created the current international system after the end of the Second World War and should be continued.

The second strategy that the classification in this thesis uses in its analytical framework is liberal internationalism. The name liberal internationalism is used to characterize this strategy, because this is the term most liberal internationalists call themselves and this is a descriptive title that captures the essence of this grand strategy, which supports a normative, liberal agenda on a global scale. The liberal internationalist grand strategy supports multilateralism because contemporary global problems cannot be solved by any state working alone (Haass, 2005, p. 187; Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19; Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 335-336). It would be easier for the U.S. to advance its interests if it was working with its partners and through international organizations to build an international consensus supporting U.S. foreign policies (Haass, 2005, p. 17). Posen and Ross call this grand strategy “cooperative security”, as it prescribes cooperation with other countries and international organizations (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30). Liberal internationalists argue that the usage of military power undermines U.S. soft power, which should be at the core of U.S. foreign policy. Thus, liberal internationalists are also critical of the overly active use of military power in foreign policy. They prefer the use of non-military tools and soft power. Posen and Ross argue that security-building measures, economic sanctions, arms control and non-proliferation are at the core of liberal internationalism (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30). Haass argues that in the complex modern world, there are many issues military power cannot help to solve in any way (Haass, 2005, p. 203). However, Posen and Ross, as well as Mearsheimer, have stated that liberal internationalists are willing to use force when necessary, but they will work with allies and through international organizations when doing so (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30; Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19).

Another set of two grand strategies that support decreased U.S. leadership and an emphasis on pragmatism not values in foreign policy, are offshore balancing and isolationism (see figure 2.1 and elements 3 and 4 of table 2.1). Supporters of offshore balancing argue that the U.S. should not lead the world either unilaterally, or multilaterally. Instead, the U.S. should shift the burdens of global leadership to other states. The U.S. also should save its power. With decreased involvements in the international arena, the U.S. should maximize its military power for homeland defense, build U.S. infrastructure and develop society in order to inspire other states by example. In the international arena, supporters of offshore balancing argue that the U.S. should limit its use of military power as well as military deployments on

foreign soil and play the role of balancer between different players in various regional balances of power (Mearsheimer, 2011, p. 18). Posen and Ross call offshore balancing grand strategy “selective engagement” and argue that the U.S. should not overextend and spend too many resources on foreign policy. Instead of active foreign policy, the U.S. should keep a distance and maintain regional balances of power (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 17-21). One of the supporters of an offshore balancing grand strategy, Mearsheimer, also argues that the U.S. should decrease its global involvement, focus on domestic issues and shift the burdens of global leadership to other rising second-rate powers. This will allow the U.S. to save resources and overcome the free-riding of other states. The U.S. should get involved only if a regional balance of power starts to change (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34). This strategy, in a way, supports the increase of U.S. military power, but only for the defense of the homeland, or maximizing power at home. This strategy supports soft power as well: leading the world by the example set at home. Although some grand strategists, for example, Mearsheimer and Kagan, also include “selective engagement” as a different grand strategy from offshore balancing, it is very similar to offshore balancing and is not added as a separate grand strategy in the classification of this thesis. Both offshore balancing and selective engagement emphasize that the U.S. should get less involved in international issues, prioritizing the regions where U.S. national interests are at stake. The difference is that offshore balancing emphasizes the withdrawal of U.S. troops even from the regions that are priorities for U.S. national interests (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34). Other than that, both strategies are quite similar.

Isolationists argue that the U.S. should not use its power in the international arena. The U.S. should have a very limited definition of what constitutes U.S. national interests. Investments in the economy and infrastructure should be more important than foreign policy and expensive military deployment abroad. The U.S. should withdraw from all involvements abroad, withdraw U.S. troop presence on foreign soil and bring troops back to the U.S. The U.S. should build up and use its power only as a measure of last resort when regional balances of power have completely broken down. Other countries should solve their own and regional problems without U.S. involvement (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 12-15). However, this grand strategy is not widely discussed amongst grand strategists, was not used in U.S. foreign policy during George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations and, thus, is irrelevant for this thesis and the theoretical part does not describe this strategy in depth.

To sum up, looking at all possible U.S. grand strategies, the first variable by which to characterize the proposed strategy, is the U.S. role in the world. It forms a spectrum from primacy and liberal internationalism, which supports active engagement and U.S. leadership

to offshore balancing at the other end of the spectrum which supports limited engagement and burden sharing with other states. There is also a difference between the role values like democracy, human rights, the responsibility to protect and similar should play in their foreign policy. Here again, primacy is at the far end of the spectrum, making support to democracy a core of foreign policy. Liberal internationalists would be less so inclined. Democracy and values should play a significant role, but it should not define relations with all countries. Offshore balancing supports pragmatic U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. should be able to pragmatically cooperate with non-democratic states as well and should not promote democracy internationally. In terms of cooperating with other states, primacists insist that the U.S. should lead the world unilaterally, while liberal internationalists, that multilateralism is the way to go, while supporters of offshore balancing want to shift the burdens of addressing global challenges to other states. Regarding power, primacists emphasize the use of military power; liberal internationalists support non-military and soft power, while supporters of offshore balancing want to maximize power at home, saving U.S. power by less active foreign policy. The U.S. should use its power only to balance between regional hegemony to maintain regional balances of power.

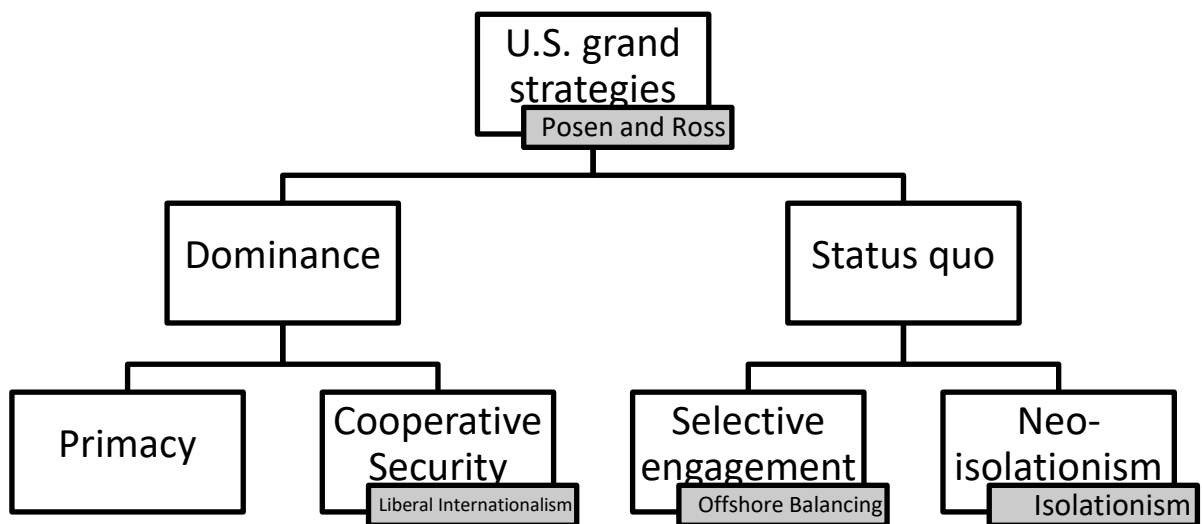
This grand strategy classification, with four different elements that make up each grand strategy, is the core analytical tool for this thesis. This grand strategy classification is the framework, which is used to code the NSS and speeches of U.S. presidents about Russia from 2001 to 2017 and to analyze the grand strategies that the U.S. has used towards Russia. The following sections offer a detailed analysis of each of the three grand strategies used in the analytical framework of this thesis. The next section outlines various grand strategy classifications by different authors and explains the classification used in this thesis. The further sections describe the theoretical origins and threat perception of each grand strategy as well as in-depth descriptions of the four elements that define each grand strategy. This theoretical framework allowed for the classification of the statements and policies of U.S. administrations as belonging to one or another grand strategy in the coding process of this research.

## **2.1 Overview of Existing Grand Strategy Classifications**

Before going into detailed descriptions of each grand strategy and various elements that make them up and allow to classify foreign policy as belonging to a specific grand strategy, it is necessary to analyze, how grand strategists supporting one or another strategy, classify grand strategies themselves. This section looks at ways how primacists, liberal internationalists, and offshore balancers see their own strategy fitting in among other grand

strategies. As there is no universally acknowledged definition of grand strategy, there also is no universal classification system of them. As covered previously, there are even different titles that different authors give to the same grand strategy. Thus, this section explores the reasoning behind grand strategy classification adopted in this thesis. The analytical framework for classifying and analyzing grand strategies the U.S. has used towards Russia described in the previous section is built on analysis of different grand strategy classifications of authors covered in this section, which describes various grand strategy classifications and analyzes how they correspond to grand classification used in this thesis, focusing on alternative classifications and explaining the reasoning behind the classification adopted in this work. Following sections explore in detail three grand strategies relevant for this thesis.

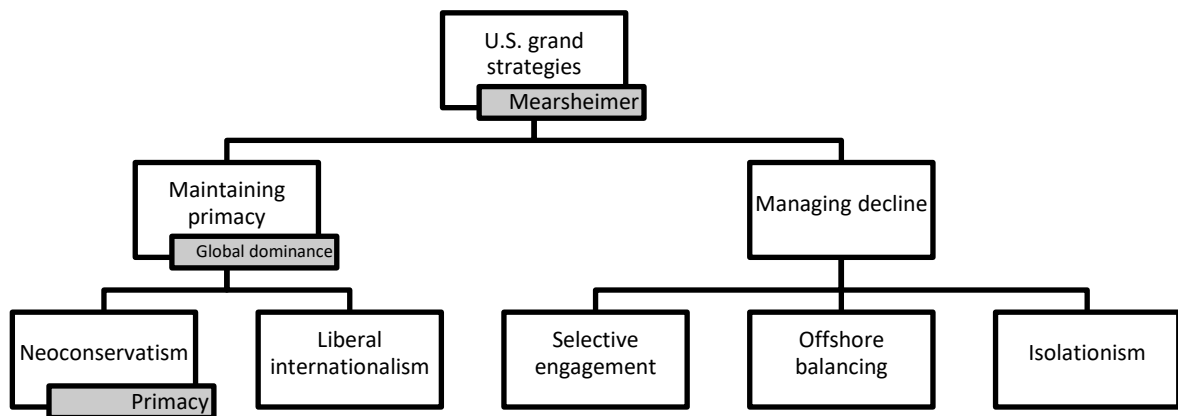
All grand strategy classifications of various authors can be displayed as two-level hierarchical organization charts like in figure 2.1 because all authors have a binary variable, by which they group together different grand strategies. These variables can be seen in the second level of each hierarchical organization chart for each alternative classification covered. Most common and more widely used types of grand strategy classification are with four different grand strategies. The third level of all classification organization charts shows the names specific author offers in their grand strategy classification. The corresponding title according to the classification of this thesis from figure 2.1 is provided in grey boxes below the titles of grand strategy originally given by each author.



*Figure 2.2 Grand strategy classification according to Posen and Ross*

Classification offered by Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross is widely used (see figure 2.2). They differentiate between strategies which want to actively work to maintain and expand U.S. dominance, preponderance in the international system and strategies which are

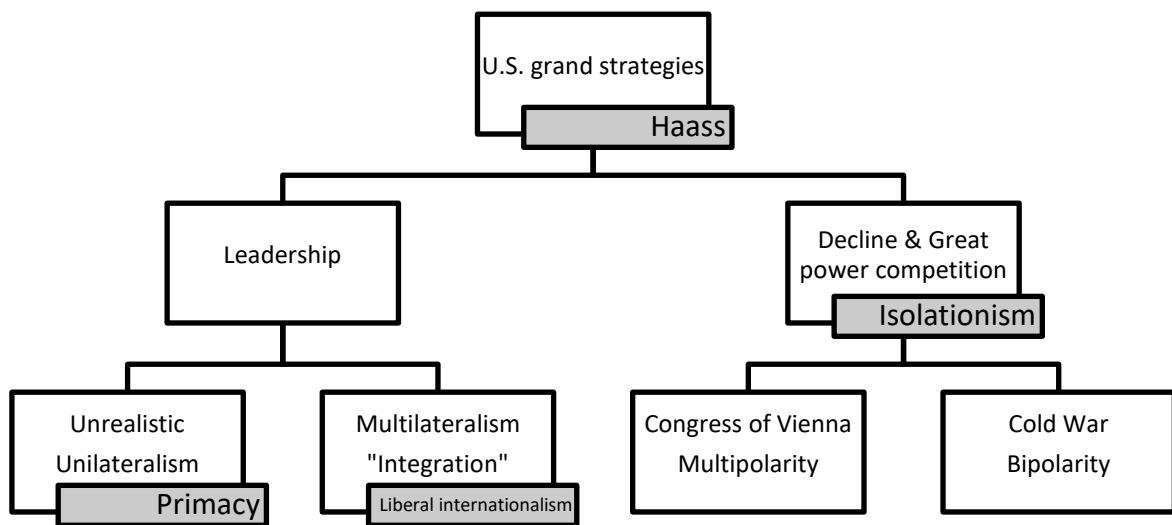
less active and want to preserve status quo – selective engagement (similar to offshore balancing) and neo-isolationism. Grand strategies which support U.S. dominance for Posen and Ross are primacy and cooperative security. Primacy in this classification corresponds to primacy in the classification used by this thesis. The U.S. should use active foreign policy using military force when necessary to provide and keep global peace. Historically the U.S. has played a unique role unilaterally shaping international system and the U.S. should continue to do so. The U.S. should promote international law, democracy, and a free-market economy and this liberal agenda will make other states follow the U.S. leadership (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, p. 34). Cooperative security grand strategy in this classification corresponds to the liberal internationalism of classification used in this thesis. This strategy differs from primacy as it argues that active U.S. leadership should be achieved through international institutions and cooperation with other democracies. Diplomacy, soft power, and non-military tools should be at the forefront of foreign policy according to this grand strategy (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30).



*Figure 2.3 Grand strategy classification according to Mearsheimer*

John Mearsheimer offers similar classification to Posen and Ross but adds another grand strategy – selective engagement (see figure 2.3). Identically to Posen and Ross, Mearsheimer differentiates between two sets of grand strategies. One group of strategies is about maintaining U.S. primacy. These strategies are about the global dominance of the U.S. Another group of strategies is about managing decreasing U.S. role in the world. Here he has three grand strategies. He differentiates between not only offshore balancing and isolationism but also selective engagement. Regarding strategies about preserving U.S. global dominance, he defines neoconservative grand strategy similar to how Posen and Ross defined primacy – an active foreign policy with support to the use of military force, unilateral foreign policy

with the goal of spreading democracy to actively transform the world. However, Mearsheimer is a realist who supports offshore balancing, thus he is critical of neoconservatism (primacy). This grand strategy has led to the U.S. being dragged down in multiple unnecessary interventions and wars in the last two decades (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17). Mearsheimer also defines liberal internationalism similarly to Posen and Ross: this strategy supports active, but multilateral foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). Overall Mearsheimer offers a very similar classification to Posen and Ross.



*Figure 2.4 Grand strategy classification according to Haass*

Richard Haass divides grand strategies similarly to previous authors but puts emphasis only on two grand strategies. For him, there are two strategies that are about providing U.S. leadership in the world. Another option is U.S. decline that will lead to U.S. decline and great power competition (see figure 2.4). Haass emphasizes the unilateral nature of primacy in the name he gives this grand strategy – unrealistic unilateralism. This emphasis is given because he sees unilateralism (primacy) as unrealistic and unsustainable grand strategy because complex problems of the 21st century cannot be solved by unilateral action. In this regard, he is similar to Mearsheimer, who is also critical of primacy, although Mearsheimer is critical of primacist support to militarized foreign policy. As Haass opposes unilateralism, he supports multilateral grand strategy, which he calls the doctrine of “integration.” This strategy corresponds to liberal internationalism. The U.S. must provide leadership, work with allies and through international institutions to achieve its goals (Haass, 2005, p. 19). More than other authors he emphasizes the role of idealistic values in U.S. foreign policy. Not only to

prevent genocide but even to prevent states from failing and helping failed states to recover as well as coordinating cooperation against terrorism. All of this is necessary for U.S. to maintain peaceful international order which benefits both U.S. and also other states, thus creating international goodwill towards the U.S. (Haass, 2005, p. 20). Furthermore, other states should be “integrated” into the U.S. world order based on norms, values as well as peaceful dispute resolution (Haass, 2005, p. 24).

Haass is different from previous authors, because he does not even describe in detail grand strategies that, as he sees it, would lead to U.S. decline and great power competition, which would be unwelcome outcome for the U.S. Decline of U.S. power under other grand strategies would lead to conflictual great power competition that would be either similar to multilateral “Great power concert” or bipolar “Cold War” type of international order. Both of these will be less stable and more conflictual than U.S. unipolarity (Haass, 2005, pp. 11-19, 200-202). Specific grand strategies that would lead to these outcomes Haass describes as isolationism and talks about them briefly because he does not perceive them as a viable alternative. It is impossible to avoid the challenges of globalization and the world needs U.S. leadership. Collective action without leadership does not work and any form of isolationism would lead to disastrous results (Haass, 2005, p. 27). In this regard, Haass differs from both Mearsheimer as well as Posen and Ross. These authors differentiate between various strategies that prescribe decreased U.S. leadership and involvement in the world. Isolationism is only one of them. Posen and Ross discuss also selective engagement grand strategy (see figure 2.2). Mearsheimer describes three grand strategies which would support managing U.S. decline with less active foreign policy. In addition to isolationism, Mearsheimer breaks down selective engagement into two distinct grand strategies: selective engagement and offshore balancing (see figure 2.3).

Posen and Ross describe selective engagement grand strategy as building on two pillars. One is maintaining regional balances of power. Other is the fact that the U.S. cannot devote resources to all global problems, thus U.S. should prioritize which regional balances of power and regional problems are most important for the U.S. national interests. Eurasia-Europe, East Asia, the Middle East, especially the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia would be these regions. In rest of the world, the U.S. should decrease its military presence and diplomatic engagements (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 17-21). Mearsheimer divides selective engagement grand strategy into two separate grand strategies. He similarly to Posen and Ross argues that selective engagement wants the U.S. to focus on preventing the rise of regional hegemony through regional balances of power. Upheaval in any of these regions would damage the global economy and thus the U.S. as well. Thus, this grand strategy supports military



involvement, stationing of U.S. troops in these regions in order to provide peace and stability. If the U.S. allows regional conflicts to fester, U.S. would get dragged into these conflicts sooner or later (Mearsheimer, 2011, p. 18).

Contrary to selective engagement, offshore balancing strategy that Mearsheimer himself supports, would see the withdrawal of U.S. troops even from the most important regions for U.S. national interests. Mearsheimer agrees that the U.S. should focus on Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf and prevent any state in these regions from becoming a regional hegemon. However, the emphasis of offshore balancing is on the necessity to withdraw military presence from countries in these regions, but to maintain the capability to project force there from bases on U.S. soil and through aircraft carrier fleets and air force. Both selective engagement and offshore balancing grand strategy agree that in non-vital regions for U.S. interests the U.S. should rely only on diplomatic and economic tools of statecraft. Such decreased U.S. involvement in the world would be cheaper policy and decrease resentment towards the U.S. (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34).

This thesis does not divide selective engagement into two grand strategies, because this division only adds an extra step between grand strategies that support active U.S. foreign policy and wants to maintain U.S. military deployments and isolationism. The difference between selective engagement and offshore balancing is about the extent of U.S. troop withdrawal. Both grand strategies support U.S. involvement in the maintenance of regional balances of power. Both grand strategies support prioritizing regions where U.S. national interests are at stake and decreased U.S. involvement in the rest of the world. Instead, this thesis uses the term offshore balancing to describe this grand strategy because this term describes the main element of this strategy – the necessity to balance regional powers – better than title selective engagement, which focuses only on prioritizing U.S. engagements. Prioritizing U.S. engagements in the world is not unique even for supporters of primacy and liberal internationalism. Most scholars define most important threats and regions for the U.S. In addition to that, supporters of offshore balancing do not explicitly define the extent of U.S. withdrawal but talk about it as a principle. For example, abandonment of U.S. naval bases on foreign soil would limit the capability to project force in the case regional balance of power brakes down. Thus, some level of foreign deployments would still be necessary even if implementing offshore balancing grand strategy. Retaining troop deployments on foreign soil is policy supported by selective engagement.

Regarding isolationism, Mearsheimer, Posen, and Ross are more elaborate in their description of this grand strategy than Haass. Mearsheimer describes the logic of isolationism as following. Isolationism grand strategy sees the U.S. surrounded by two oceans. They create

a defensive barrier separating the U.S. from the rest of the world. In addition, U.S. is armed with nuclear weapons and has no immediate existential threats. Thus the U.S. should be less involved in the international affairs and withdraw its troops from deployments abroad (Mearsheimer, 2011, p. 18). Posen and Ross write that neo-isolationism defines U.S. national interests in a very narrow way. The main priority for isolationists is the maximization of security, liberty, and prosperity at home. They agree with Mearsheimer that isolationists put emphasis on two facts: the U.S. has unchallenged military superiority and it is protected by Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Thus, the need for the U.S. to intervene abroad is minimal. The world without active U.S. leadership would not be more conflictual, because all major players are armed with nuclear weapons that create strategic balance, making wars impossible. If the U.S. keeps out of the international conflicts, it will save resources and decrease the anti-Americanism that has been an inevitable side effect of U.S. interventions historically. This policy will not lock U.S. in alliances and international organizations that limit U.S. sovereignty and capacity to act. Isolationist grand strategy would give U.S. freedom of action. Europeans and other U.S. partners would have to take care of their own security. The role the U.S. should play internationally would be to support non-proliferation of WMD through diplomatic means and financial assistance, as well as support to post-war reconstruction and peace. Otherwise, the defense budget should be scaled down and the priorities of defense sector should be strong navy and preservation of ground and air warfare skills (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 12-15). However, this grand strategy is not highly relevant in the 21st century and was not user or discussed by the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. Thus, this grand strategy is not relevant for this thesis and this brief overview of isolationism is the extent this thesis goes into this grand strategy.

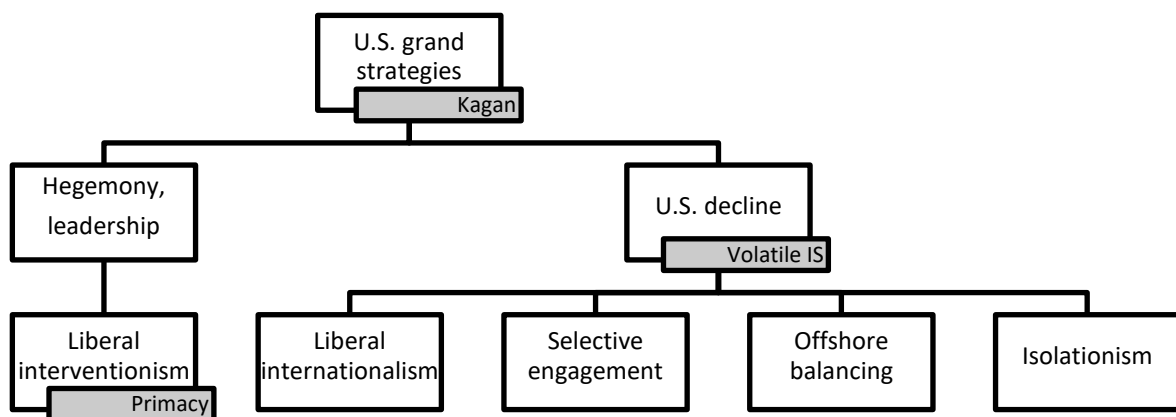


Figure 2.5 Grand strategy classification according to Kagan

Largely similar grand strategy classifications described previously are not only ways grand strategies can be classified. Some authors who support primacist grand strategy, for example, Robert Kagan and Stephen Sestanovich, offer an alternative division of grand strategies on the second level of the hierarchical organization chart. According to Kagan (see figure 2.5), there are two interpretations for why the world after the Second World War has had fewer wars and military conflicts and more prosperity than ever before. First is the optimistic outlook of human evolution and progress that led to advances in technology and social norms that led to the triumph of democracy over other non-democratic types of government. The second perspective, which Kagan defends, is that this was no accident or byproduct of modernity. The peaceful contemporary international system is an outcome of deliberate policies by the most powerful nation in the world, the United States. The U.S. shaped the world according to its own democratic and market ideals and institutions. The United States has provided and maintained the relatively peaceful international system (Kagan, 2012, p. 4).

History shows that hegemons have provided international norms, peace, and stability before. And when these hegemons fell, the system they had created fell as well and the world shifted into more conflictual, more unstable period of history. This happened, for example, after the Roman Empire collapsed and after world order created by it began to crumble (Kagan, 2012, pp. 5-6). End of the American world order would be a dangerous and volatile period as well. Taking historic lessons into account, it is unlikely that without the underlying foundations of the liberal international order that have been provided by the U.S., prosperity, lack of conflicts between major powers and global dominance of democracy would continue (Kagan, 2012, pp. 6-7). Thus, U.S. must maintain its liberal interventionist (primacist) grand strategy. Everything else will lead to U.S. decline and volatile international system that will not benefit the U.S. and other states. Thus, the rest of grand strategies – liberal internationalism, selective engagement, offshore balancing, and isolationism (see figure 2.5) – according to Kagan support or will lead to U.S. decline and the breakdown of the international world order. Kagan does not dwell on them in depth, but it is safe to assume that he perceives them similar to descriptions of previous authors.

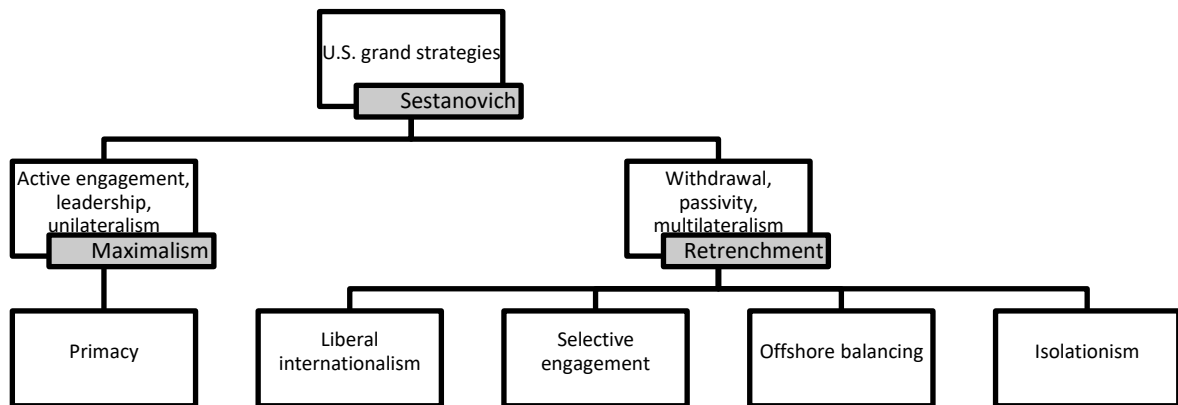


Figure 2.6 Grand strategy classification according to Sestanovich

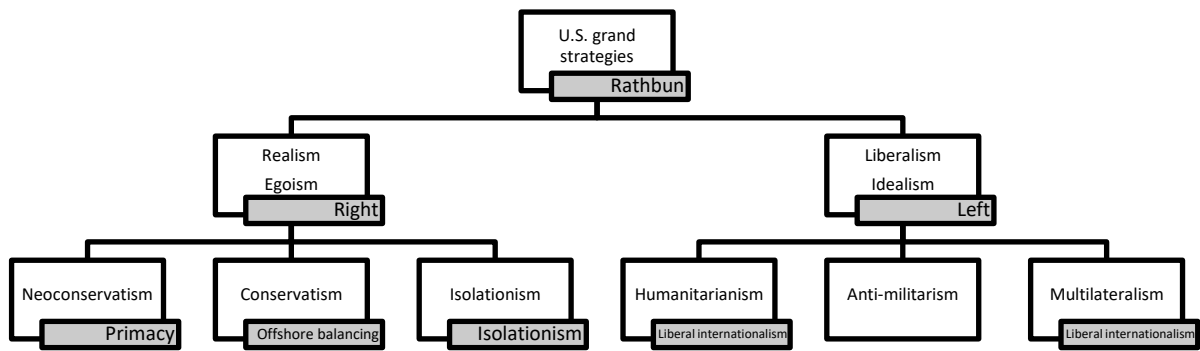
Another scholar defending U.S. primacy grand strategy and offering similar grand classification is Stephen Sestanovich. In his book, *Maximalist: America in the world from Truman to Obama*, Stephen Sestanovich argues that after the Second World War the U.S. with its economic, military, diplomatic and innovative supremacy has been the most important actor in the international system (Sestanovich, 2014, p. 325). U.S. foreign policies after the Second World War can be classified by a simple binary dichotomy: two strategies he has dubbed “maximalism” and “retrenchment” (see figure 2.6). The first is a strategy of active foreign policy and engagement with new ideas, new commitments in order to change the status quo. Latter is a strategy to do less in the international arena. It is a strategy of withdrawal from previous engagements and commitments, after a period that is perceived as the overreaching of U.S. foreign policy. The goal of other grand strategies is to scale back U.S. involvement and to achieve more with fewer resources (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 8-9).

Sestanovich offers a similar classification to Kagan, but his logic behind this classification is different. Kagan argues that primacy has been a dominant U.S. grand strategy that has led to the development of the current international system and ensured its peaceful nature. Any other approach to foreign policy would lead to disaster. Sestanovich argues that history of U.S. foreign policy shows, that these both strategies – maximalism and retrenchment – have been interchanging one another in a cyclical nature. After overextension created by “maximalist” strategy comes “retrenchment.” When “retrenchment” fails to meet new challenges, defend U.S. power and interests, it is replaced by more active foreign grand strategy (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 8-9). Sestanovich argues that historically retrenchment after unsuccessful maximalism had not been only about decreasing U.S. involvement, but also about shifting U.S. foreign policy towards new goals, something that has usually been popular

with the voters (Sestanovich, 2014, p. 327). At the same time in the long term, both approaches gain an ever-increasing number of opponents and are criticized. Maximalism is perceived as “overextension,” “overreacting,” “doing too much,” and undermining American core national interests. Retrenchment has been accused of showing the U.S. as weak and also against core national interests (Sestanovich, 2014, p. 8). However, maximalism can be cautious and gradual, while presidents engaging retrenchment tend to care about how U.S. disengages from old involvements, in order not to diminish U.S. influence (Sestanovich, 2014, p. 311). Nonetheless, when the critics start to dominate the political discourse and usually after a new president is elected, the U.S. foreign policy strategy changes from one grand strategy to another.

Sestanovich writes that retrenchment is, in essence, a multilateral grand strategy. According to him, for example, the Barack Obama administration put emphasis on cooperating with other governments. Eisenhower supported European unity and increased European involvement in international affairs. Nixon wanted China to play a bigger role (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 335-336). However, according to Sestanovich, all of these presidents who have pursued retrenchment have been failed by multilateralism, because other states are not willing to address global issues as U.S. has been and still is. Thus, according to Sestanovich, U.S. foreign policy and grand strategies can be conceptualized as displayed in figure 2.6. What he characterizes as “maximalism” is primacist grand strategy. Maximalism or primacy offers active, unilateral U.S. leadership. Rest of grand strategies would fall under what he describes as “retrenchment:” a strategy of doing less, decreasing U.S. role in the world and relying more on others. Liberal internationalism, selective engagement, offshore balancing, and isolationism – all grand strategies offer varying degree of multilateralism.

This is similar to the grand strategy classification put forward by Kagan. The main difference is that Kagan emphasizes U.S. leadership and hegemony as the origins of contemporary world order. All other grand strategies will weaken these two elements and thus lead to U.S. decline and volatile international system. Sestanovich, on the other hand, emphasizes the strengths of unilateralism and weaknesses of multilateralism. Primacy is a unilateral grand strategy and thus it can work. For Sestanovich any form of multilateralism in grand strategies will lead to international problems, because other states are not ready to bear the burdens, will not agree on collective action on their own and international organizations without U.S. leadership do not work.



*Figure 2.7 Grand strategy classification according to Rathbun*

A major alternative to grand strategy classifications described by most authors is offered by Brian Rathbun. Scholars described up till now differentiate between grand strategies that support active or dominant U.S. foreign policy and strategies that prescribe decreased U.S. engagement in foreign policy. Some authors add to this also a difference between idealist grand strategies and pragmatist grand strategies. Rathbun offers an entirely different perspective. He offers another way how one can classify U.S. grand strategies. He starts the classification from the perspective of international relations theory (see figure 2.7). According to Rathbun, neoconservative (primacy), conservative (offshore balancing) and isolationist grand strategies build on realist international relations school and are on the right on the foreign policy spectrum, while liberal internationalism and its sub-grand strategies – humanitarianism, anti-militarism, and multilateralism – builds on liberal international relations theory and is located on the left of foreign policy spectrum. Grand strategies based on realism are egoistic in the sense that they support U.S. national interests and pragmatic foreign policy. Grand strategies based on liberalism support idealistic foreign policy and want to constrain U.S. self-determination by following international norms and constraints put on by other states through international organizations (Rathbun, 2008, pp. 273-274).

All three of the realist grand strategies believe that egoistic self-interest should be at the center of U.S. foreign policy. Conservatives are interested in the sovereignty, national interests, and pragmatic foreign policy. They see force as a necessary instrument and are wary of the U.S. primacy because primacy creates fears and insecurity in other states which in turn start balancing U.S. Other states will start working together to limit U.S. power. International organizations are only a tool in U.S. foreign policy. Primacists, however, disagree about the problematic nature of U.S. primacy. They want to maintain and increase U.S. preponderance

and are even more protective of the U.S. sovereignty, weary of multilateral international organizations that limit sovereignty (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273). U.S. pre-eminence in the international system only furthers U.S. power, while the balance of power that is supported by conservatives, would only diminish relative U.S. power (Rathbun, 2008, p. 284).

In addition, neoconservatives offer a positive and moral foreign policy agenda based on idealism and values like democracy, human rights, and freedoms. However, neoconservatives are not idealists. They believe that promotion of democracy and liberal values in the world has created more peaceful world and thus serves narrow U.S. self-interest. This is also good for the world, but the primary motivation for these policies is U.S. security. According to Rathbun, in this regard neoconservatives “are not idealists or realists, but nationalists” (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273). But at the same time American ideals and values are not only American, they are universal. Ideals and values serve U.S. national interests. These ideals and values in foreign policy make the U.S. a benign hegemon, give U.S. strength over non-democracies and inspire other democracies in the international system helping U.S. foreign policy (Rathbun, 2008, p. 283). However, this is not a muscular and unilateral version of Wilsonian idealism. The use of ideals in neoconservatism is strictly in accord with the U.S. national interests and idealism does not tie down U.S. freedom of action by joining multilateral organizations (Rathbun, 2008, p. 285).

Isolationists build on the same premise of U.S. self-interest; however, they seek to decrease U.S. involvement abroad. It is a cheap foreign policy strategy, where the U.S. will join wars only as the measure of last resort and return home as quickly as possible. Isolationists support a focus on domestic issues, preservation of U.S. resources and their investment in U.S. society and infrastructure, rather than in expensive deployments and campaigns abroad (Rathbun, 2008, pp. 273-286). This Rathbun’s classification and description of realist grand strategies corresponds to categories adopted in the grand strategy classification used in this thesis. Neoconservatism in the classification of this thesis is primacy. Conservatism is offshore balancing while the name for isolationism remains the same.

Rathbun divides liberal internationalist grand strategy into three sub-categories: humanitarianism, anti-militarism, and multilateralism. All of them are idealist: they believe that moral values transcend the national self-interest of the U.S. There must be restraints on the egoistic pursuit of self-interest. Humanitarianism believes that it is necessary to use U.S. power to protect and defend others. Anti-militarism rejects the use of U.S. military in foreign policy, rejects U.S. preeminence in this area and, thus, levels the international playing field with other states. Multilateralism wants also to decrease U.S. self-determination and to level

the playing field by creating set of international norms and organizations to create more equal world order for all states in the international system (Rathbun, 2008, p. 274). Liberal internationalism, as defined in the classification of this thesis is a combination of humanitarianism and multilateralism in Rathbun's classification.

Rathbun's classification is different from other classifications described previously because his starting point for division of grand strategies is their theoretical origin. This leads to an entirely different classification compared to other authors. He puts neoconservatism (primacy), conservatism (offshore balancing) and isolationism together because all these strategies are based on realism, on egoistic self-interest. Other classifications separate primacy grand strategy from other two others, because offshore balancing and isolationism prescribe entirely different, much-decreased level of U.S. involvement in the international arena, for example, through decreased U.S. troop deployments abroad. Even more, many other authors put primacy together with liberal internationalism because both of them support active U.S. foreign policy and idealist values. However, Rathbun's classification emphasizes different logic behind this support to idealism in both grand strategies. For primacists liberal democratic values is not an end in itself. Primacists are realists and they see U.S. national interests as the most important. Promotion of democracy and liberal values creates more peaceful world, thus gives more security for the U.S., which is in U.S. national interests. Such positive international agenda also creates goodwill towards the U.S., which allows the U.S. to carry out its foreign policy better. All of this is good for U.S. national interests. Liberal democratic values are only a mean for primacists to further U.S. national interests, while for liberal internationalists values tend to be a mean in itself. They transcend U.S. national interests and put constraints on them.

The main difference between Rathbun's classification and classification used in this thesis is that the latter does not display this logic behind the use of idealist values in U.S. foreign policy. However, the classification used in this thesis offers a more concrete analytical framework that can be applied to the real world much easier. This classification starts out with real-world variables: e.g. active U.S. leadership vs. decreased involvement from the world, not theoretical variables realism vs. liberalism, which are hard to detect and code. However, starting classification from realism and liberalism, as Rathbun does, shows a crucial difference between grand strategies and does show a weakness of the classification used in this thesis.

Nonetheless, most of the contemporary grand strategy classifications adapt some variation of the classification provided by Posen and Ross. Rathbun's classification does offer alternative insight and some valid criticisms to this classification, however classification by



Posen and Ross is easier to use in order to determine to which class specific foreign policy strategy carried out by policymakers belongs to, because it starts out not with theoretical concepts to realism and idealism to classify grand strategies, but with description of U.S. role in the world, what global role the U.S. should play, which can be operationalized far easier when analyzing foreign policy by using grand strategy classification. Other primacists covered in this section tend to see primacy as a separate, unique category and brand the rest of grand strategies together, often criticizing them as a whole. However, this approach usually leaves out similarities between primacy and liberal internationalism. There exist also other possible grand strategy classifications, however, most are similar to the classifications described so far.

## 2.2 Underlying Assumptions behind Grand Strategies

Before describing elements that make up grand strategies, it is necessary to look at the underpinning logic that shapes the core assumptions of each grand strategy. Thus, firstly, this sub-chapter looks at the theoretical origins of the grand strategies used in this thesis, how each grand strategy sees the international system. Secondly, as definitions of grand strategies often include evaluation of threats to U.S. interests (Layne, 1997, p. 88; Brands, 2014, p. 3), this section describes and compares the short and long-term threat perception of each grand strategy. Table 2.2 shows different theoretical origins of each grand strategy described below, starting with offshore balancing, which is based on realism, continuing with liberal internationalism, which takes its roots in liberalism, and, finally, primacy is described, because this grand strategy is a combination of realist and liberal international relations theory.

*Table 2.2*

**Theoretical origins of each grand strategy**

	<b>Primacy</b>	<b>Liberal Internationalism</b>	<b>Offshore Balancing</b>
<b>Origins</b>	<b>Liberalism &amp; Realism</b>	<b>Liberalism</b>	<b>Realism</b>

Offshore balancing grand strategy is based on realist international relations theory, particularly on the balance of power concept. Realists explain international system as in a state of competitive anarchy where the goal of all states is to maximize their security. The means to maximize security is to maximize power, especially military power. Classical

realists would explain this anarchic state of nature by aggressive and selfish, Hobbesian (Hobbes, 1965, pp. 96-97) human nature. Neo-realists, for example, Kenneth Waltz would explain the anarchy by the nature of the international system. As the goal of any rational state is to survive, the goal of any rational state is to increase its security, because, in terms of military power, the world is a zero-sum game. Increase in military power in one actor leaves other states weaker. There are only relative gains. States cannot trust the intentions of one another, thus states cannot trust one another. As there is no global government that could enforce order and international laws through some sort of a global police force, the international system is bound to be anarchic. States as a minimum will try to preserve their positions. Most states will attempt to get into better relative positions and, thus, the conflict between states is inevitable. Cooperation is hard to achieve (Waltz, 1979, pp. 103-104). All of this means that the balance of power logic will dominate amongst the actors in the international system.

After the end of the Cold War U.S. became a global hegemon – no other state possessed the economic, military and diplomatic power as the U.S. did. According to realism, other states fear the power of a hegemon and naturally band together, attempting to balance out hegemon's power. Even if the intentions of the hegemon are benign, other rational states do not trust the intentions of any other state. If any state has a lot of power, even if its intentions currently are good, it is a potential threat for others, because its intentions can change. Thus, states fear the power of other states. Especially so in the case of the hegemony of one state. According to Stephen Walt, this is currently happening in the world. Aspiring powers in various regions, e.g. Brazil, Russia, India, China are challenging U.S. hegemony and increasing ties with one another (Walt, 2011, p. 10). States do not have to balance the U.S. by military means. Even allies of a hegemon, according to realist theory, will engage "soft balancing." They will not follow U.S. lead. They will try to put constraints on the hegemon through international organizations and will try to increase costs for U.S. foreign policies they do not support (Posen, 2013, p. 121). This is one aspect of how realism shapes offshore balancing. The consequence of this is, that this grand strategy attempts to decrease U.S. hegemonic tendencies, in order to decrease balancing tendencies of other states. According to offshore balancing, it is necessary for U.S. to decrease its presence internationally focusing only on key regions vital to U.S. interests. The goal of U.S. foreign policy would be to uphold regional balances of power, so regional wars do not break out (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 17-21; Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34).

Another way how realism influences thinking of people who support offshore balancing is that contrary to liberalism, democracy is not a precondition for stability in the international

system, the balance of power is (Rosenthal, 2009, p. 6). Idealist values do not matter. Following this logic, realism does not differentiate between democracies and other political regimes. According to realism and offshore balancing grand strategy, U.S. should work with both types of political regimes as long as the country in question is not obstructing U.S. interests (Rosenthal, 2009, p. 4). U.S. should share burdens of dealing with international challenges with allies and other states so others would bear the costs of international stability and will not be able to free-ride on U.S. hegemony. The influence of classical realism for the offshore balancing grand strategy will be seen throughout the further descriptions of offshore balancing grand strategy.

Liberal internationalism is based on liberalism. This theory of international relations emphasizes the role of established norms, international cooperation, international organizations, democracy and other values. Contrary to realists, liberals in their analysis include ideas and institutions, not only states (Doyle, 2012, p. 54). Furthermore, states are not unitary actors with goals to survive and maximize their powers. States can have other goals, that are as important as the maximization of power. Domestic processes can influence international relations. Even more, international organizations and international norms can give addition goals to international system (Keohane, Nye, 1977, p. 30). Democracy and human rights, the United Nations, and World Bank can influence the international system. Not only idealistic values influence the international system, but they are also universal. The same as individual rights should be protected within a state, human rights of each individual should be protected on a global scale through international organizations and institutions, such as UN, International Criminal Court, Universal Human Rights Declaration and others (Burchill et al., 2005, p. 67-69).

These and other ideas are based on a worldview that is opposed to realist anarchic, Hobbesian outlook. Liberals assume that human nature is good. Mutual cooperation can be in the rational self-interests of individuals (Locke, 1823, pp. 111-113) and also of states. As the war against all in a society can be overcome with social contract amongst rational individuals (Locke, 1823, p. 140), the international system is not inevitably anarchic, zero-sum game. Anarchy in the international system can be minimized with the right institutions, states are interested in mutual gains (Doyle, 2012, p. 66; Burchill et al., 2005, p. 60; Keohane, Nye, 1977, pp. 23-24). Individual egoism, according to Locke, transforms into common good and positive economic, ideational competition. Similarly, competition in a globalized international system can lead to mutual benefits, not an international conflict. Globalization and free trade create not only competition but also interdependency that decreases anarchy by creating incentives for cooperation (Tooze, 1992, p. 235). Furthermore, interdependency makes it hard

for states to withdraw from the globalized international economy and to start a war against others. Wars are destructive and only decrease prosperity, thus wars are irrational (Burchill et al., 2005, pp. 59, 62-63). Another explanation from the complex interdependence theory would be that cooperation under conditions of anarchy in the international system is promoted by a broad network of informal and formal channels between societies and their non-governmental, political and economic elites (Keohane, Nye, 1977, pp. 24-25). If this complex interdependence dominates in a region, military power becomes a less important factor influencing international relations between the states, as hard power does not help to find solutions to economic or diplomatic problems amongst friendly societies and states (Keohane, Nye, 1977, p. 25). Liberals believe that it is possible to create regional or even international system which does not function by the realist logic of anarchy and survival, but by the more peaceful logic created by interdependency.

One of the key theories influencing liberal internationalist and primacist U.S. grand strategies is the liberal peace theory: democracies do not fight wars amongst themselves, while authoritarian, fascist and communist regimes have. Immanuel Kant already in the beginning of the 18th century started to talk about the necessity of a “pacific federation” amongst democratic states that would lead to the end of aggressive wars (Kant, 2006, p. 80) and offered normative agenda, how to transform the international system so it would become more peaceful. In his work *Toward Perpetual Peace* Kant outlined various liberal proposals to eliminate war from the international system, such as no secret treaties, equality, territorial integrity and sovereignty of states, disarmament, the humane conduct of conflicts, no debt buildup to prepare for wars (Kant, 2006, pp. 67-71). Even more, to create a peaceful international system, it is necessary that all states are democratic republics, that there would be a federation of international states as well as cosmopolitan rights for all individuals (Kant, 2006, pp. 74-85). According to liberalism, this normative Kantian framework together with ideas of Woodrow Wilson and other philosophers and policymakers have shaped the international system over last two centuries and have succeeded to create more peaceful international order. Liberal democracies do not fight amongst themselves and have not fought for the last 200 years. Supporters of this theory argue that as the number of democracies has increased, the international system has become increasingly more peaceful. Liberals explain this in various ways.

Firstly, democracies have no reason to discuss the legitimacy of any other democratic states. Secondly, the representative nature of democracies – rule of law, popular opinion – are against aggressive wars and limit government officials. Thirdly, liberal values of individual freedom and self-determination of democracies are against war with a society that has

embraced the same values (Doyle, 2012, p. 57). Fourthly, democracies lack the incentives authoritarian leaders have that motivate them to resort to wars. The anarchic international system does not create inevitable conflict amongst states, militaristic and undemocratic leaders do (Burchill et al., 2005, p. 60). Democratically elected leaders do not need prestige from wars and do not need external enemies to solidify support for their rule (Doyle, 2012, p. 59). Fifthly, an alternative explanation is that democracy together with capitalism transforms the community of democratic states the same as an “invisible hand” guides and transforms the liberalized economy. Capitalist and democratic ideas embrace conflict between individuals as the driver for prosperity and new ideas. The same approach is transferred to international relations. Peaceful competition is a good and necessary thing. States can compete for better positions in the international system without resorting to war (Doyle, 2012, p. 67). Thus, democracies are more peaceful amongst themselves compared to other types of political regimes. States can overcome anarchy and security dilemma. States can come to mutual action and create more stable international system. The balance of power logic is flawed, the international system is not all about military force. Strongest states in the international system do not necessarily threaten everyone else (Ikenberry, 2009, p. 72). As will be described in the further sections, all of these liberalist premises about the international system create many implications for U.S. grand strategies.

Primacy is a mix of realism and liberalism. The primacist grand strategy combines the liberal approach embraced by liberal internationalism with the realism of offshore balancing. Primacists, similar to supporters of offshore balancing, agree to realists that in international organizations are either too weak, to play a meaningful role in the international system, or work to constrain U.S. sovereignty on behalf of other states. Power matters more than norms and values in the international system. However, norms and values can be used as a tool to further U.S. power. Primacists, for example, Charles Krauthammer, agree with the argument of democratic peace theory, that democratic states do not fight one another and thus, the spread of democracy in the world leads to more peaceful international system. This argument comes from the influence of liberalism. For Krauthammer, the “spread of democracy is not just an end but a means, an indispensable means for securing American interests” (Krauthammer, 2004). Some primacists, for example, Rathbun, argue that primacy is based only on realism, because this idealist component and work with international organizations is only an end to the means. Under primacy grand strategy U.S. uses idealism only where it serves U.S. national interests. Values and ideals, which are supported by liberalism, should not constrain U.S. foreign policy (Rathbun, 2008, p. 285). However, although, primacists support democracy, because it is in U.S. national interests, this grand strategy puts a major

role on idealist values in foreign policy. It is impossible not to see the influence of liberalism. Rosenthal, for example, classifies primacy as “idealism with [a] sword” (Rosenthal, 2009, p. 4), emphasizing the dual nature of primacist grand strategy.

Hegemonic stability theory embraced by primacists is different from classical realist balance of power theory embraced by offshore balancing. Classical realist balance of power theory would argue that when another state sees a disproportional increase in power of a state, they start creating coalitions against the potential hegemon, this leads to conflict in the international system. For hegemonic stability theory, the balance of power creates the potential for war, while hegemony makes international system more peaceful. If one state has a preponderance in military and economic power, there are fewer incentives for others to challenge it, as they would lose any conflict with a hegemon. Hegemonic stability theory disagrees with the balance of power theory that if power is dispersed equally, the international system becomes more unstable and more war-prone as revisionist states have the incentive and potential to rework the international order for their benefit. Building on hegemonic stability theory, primacists conclude that U.S. hegemony is of utmost necessity for the international system in order to guarantee stability and to prevent great power conflict in the future (Layne, 1998, p. 10).

These theoretical underpinnings go through the next sub-chapters analyzing various elements that U.S. grand strategies are made of. Different theoretical origins influence also threat perception of each grand strategy discussed further below. These three grand strategies have major differences in the identification of main threats for the U.S. As these grand strategies discuss the world after the end of the Cold War, neither of them sees other great powers as immediate major security threats for the U.S. Although they might not agree on the level of U.S. preponderance, whether there has been significant U.S. decline over last decade, whether unipolarity is a good thing, should U.S. dominance be preserved or not, all grand strategies agree that the U.S. starting at least with 1991 has been a hegemon in a unipolar world. Table 2.3 shows the most important threats to the hegemonic U.S. as perceived by each grand strategy. All grand strategies differentiate between short and long-term threats. First, long-term threats will be described, followed by a description of short-term threats as perceived by each grand strategy.

**Main threats to the U.S. according to each grand strategy**

	<b>Primacy</b>	<b>Liberal Internationalism</b>	<b>Offshore Balancing</b>
<b>Long-term threats</b>	<b>Rising powers End of U.S. hegemony</b>	<b>Not “integrated” rising powers</b>	<b>Rising powers</b>
<b>Short-term threats</b>	<b>Terrorism, Rogue states, WMD proliferation</b>	<b>Terrorism, Rogue states, WMD proliferation, Non-milit. threats, Hegemonic U.S. tendencies</b>	<b>Hegemonic U.S. tendencies, U.S. overextension, Hard and soft balancing</b>

All grand strategists agree that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the global balance of power shifted from bipolar to unipolar world order. Starting with 1990s primacists have argued that U.S. economic and military power, as well as influence, is without a peer. Japan, Germany, China, and Russia are only second-rate powers, compared to the U.S. in these aspects (Krauthammer, 1990/91, pp. 23-24). Russia, compared to the Soviet Union, is more unstable and weakened. European Union is preoccupied with internal problems. The economy of Japan is in stagnation. China has grown, but it cannot currently aspire to a global power status (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 6). The U.S. maintains military preponderance. The U.S. spends on defense more than all its closest followers together. The U.S. is ahead of any other country in terms of military, economic, innovative and other capabilities that are necessary to maximize power in the international system (Kagan, 2007, p. 21). As Brooks and Wohlfarth write, “If today's American primacy does not constitute unipolarity, then nothing ever will” (Brooks, Wohlfarth, 2002, p. 21). Liberal Internationalists agree with primacists that the U.S. is the supreme superpower with the biggest military power and defense spending. Plus, unlike other states, U.S. is secure. There are no states that would threaten U.S. existence. However, liberal internationalists also talk about non-military aspects of U.S. preponderance. The U.S. has vast economic wealth and power. The dollar is the international reserve currency. The U.S. possesses political power and influence through international organizations and allies, as well as soft power and cultural dominance (Haass, 2005, pp. 8-9). Supporters of offshore balancing, for example, Stephen Walt, agree that U.S. great power status during the Cold War and unipolarity after it has allowed the U.S. to create peaceful, prosperous and stable

international system and has benefited the U.S. and most countries in the world greatly (Walt, 2011, pp. 6-8).

However, each grand strategy sees U.S. unipolarity and threats to it in a different way. Primacists agree to the hegemonic stability theory – states will try to balance out hegemon. Although U.S. unipolarity since 1991 has provided historically unseen peace, stability, and prosperity, aspiring hegemons will want to change existing world order. The emergence of a new great power or a conflict between regional powers are the biggest long-term threats to U.S. security and the U.S. must use its primacy to prevent them (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, p. 34; Layne, 1998, p. 10). Liberal internationalists agree with primacists, that U.S. preponderance and unipolarity is a fact and it benefits the international system. However, liberal internationalists are critical of realists who see the international system as inevitable conflictual anarchy. Thus, they see U.S. unipolarity in a different light than primacists and they offer a different approach. For example, Haass argues, that in the long-term U.S. cannot and will not prevent the rise of other powers. U.S. foreign policy towards growing powers should be to manage how these states use their growing strength in order to allow these states to become responsible stakeholders in the international system (Haass, 2005, p. 21). These states should be “integrated” into U.S. world order to multilaterally deal with challenges of globalization (Haass, 2005, p. 23). If the U.S. does this successfully, these long-term threats from rising powers can be overcome. Supporters of offshore balancing perceive U.S. unipolarity different from primacists and liberal internationalists. Mearsheimer argues that both primacists and liberal internationalists want to maintain U.S. primacy. However, it is impossible to preserve U.S. primacy as Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations have tried since the collapse of the Soviet Union, because the balance of power logic means that other states will inevitably try to balance out U.S. dominant power (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19), thus causing threats to U.S. Multipolar system would be far more stable than unipolar. Only way the U.S. can decrease these balancing tendencies would be with less active U.S. foreign policy, fewer troop deployments (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17, 31-34). Although offshore balancing agrees that U.S. primacy exists, to decrease threats from other aspiring great powers, offshore balancing supports managing U.S. decline to decrease potential threats, rather than maintaining primacy.

Considering U.S. unipolarity, for all three grand strategies aspiring great powers are long-term threats, however, there are new threats that have emerged. For primacists terrorists are non-state actors that can cause a serious harm to the U.S. citizens, U.S. embassies abroad and U.S. armed forces. Another threat for primacists comes from the rogue and weak states with WMD. These states can either lose WMD or transfer it into the hands of terrorists. This



threat is so important, because terrorists cannot be deterred in the way state actors can. These two are unique characteristics of the international system after the end of Cold War (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 8-10). Already in 1990, Krauthammer wrote, “The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery will constitute the greatest single threat to world security for the rest of our lives” (Krauthammer, 1990/91, p. 30). WMD, for example, nuclear weapons, dirty bombs, smallpox or anthrax and others, have tremendous capability to harm civilian population and wreak havoc in the U.S. Even the smallest possibility of attack with WMD on U.S. soil is unacceptable for primacists (Ikenberry, Walt, 2002, p. 50).

Liberal internationalists agree to primacists that terrorism, weak states, and proliferation of WMD, especially nuclear material, are the core threats to the U.S. However, they also add other non-military threats such as piracy, organized crime, climate change and even pandemics (Brooks, Ikenberry, Wohlforth, 2013, p. 141). For example, Richard Haass describes a broad array of threats to the United States in the 21st century. For him, states with nuclear arsenals, nuclear proliferation, failed states and terrorists attempting to acquire WMD are the main threats, but there are also many others. Regarding the economy, interdependence, especially energy resource imports create vulnerabilities. There are many threats stemming from globalization, such as cyber warfare, drug trafficking, global pandemics and others. Global warming is another threat to the U.S. (Haass, 2005, pp. 13-15). However, liberal internationalists also argue that wrong U.S. foreign policies, for example, unilateral, militarized primacist response to these threats can be perceived by other states as overly aggressive hegemonic tendencies, arrogance of U.S. Use of unilateral military force to defend human rights historically has not been successful, even worse – it has caused harm to the U.S. (Nossel, 2004, p. 135). The primacist grand strategy can create disdain and resentment towards U.S. foreign policy. Primacy breeds accusations of U.S. imperialism and alienates U.S. allies (Nye, 2002). Pure military power does not grant influence. Overactive use of military power creates a backlash in the international society, which decreases U.S. capability to influence other states and persuade them to support U.S. foreign policy. It is not hard for a hegemon to do what it wants to do, but the U.S. alone cannot find solutions to many complex problems in the world (Jentleson, 2003, p. 10). Arrogant and selfish U.S. grand strategy – which is how some liberal internationalists describe primacy – creates anti-U.S. sentiment and decreases U.S. capability to pursue the goals of its foreign policy (Jentleson, 2003, p. 11). For example, liberal internationalists criticize over-militarized and unilateral U.S. foreign policy during the George W. Bush administration. Such foreign policy decreased created an international backlash, anti-American sentiments, which diminished U.S. soft power and thus

decreased U.S. capability to address global threats (Schadlow, 2013, p. 501). Addition of hegemonic U.S. foreign policies to threat analysis calls for entirely different grand strategy. The U.S. must play an active role in the international arena, but as unilateral and overly militarized foreign policy creates a backlash, U.S. should embrace multilateralism, work with partners and through international organizations using soft power. These tools allow the U.S. to work with the international system and other states, not against them.

Supporters of offshore balancing are far less worried about terrorism, weak states, and nuclear proliferation. These are problems, but they are not existential threats for the U.S., because as Christopher Layne puts it, for offshore balancing grand strategy, “deterrence not dominance in global affairs is essential,” because dominance provokes “other states to balance against the United States” (Layne, 1997, p. 113). Offshore balancers put deterrence at the center of their threat analysis and it changes threat perception of WMD and rogue states. Deterrence worked during the Cold War when threats to U.S. national security from the Soviet Union were far greater than threats coming from rogue states, even if they are armed with WMD, and terrorists. The logic of deterrence still applies to rogue states the same way it applied to the Soviet Union. Rogue states will not transfer WMD to terrorists, because they will face retaliation from the U.S. if they do so. It is important to prevent non-state actors from acquiring WMD, but catastrophic scenarios if they do are unlikely. The U.S. should not overreact and should not use preemptive or even preventive wars to stop minuscule potential that such threats could materialize in the long term. This primacist approach overexaggerates these threats. Instead, a multilateral arms control regime, reduction of WMD is a much better solution to this problem (Posen, 2013, pp. 124-125).

In addition, supporters of offshore balancing perceive foreign policies used by liberal internationalists and primacists as a threat to U.S. Hegemonic U.S. tendencies lead to an overextension of U.S. forces and also to soft balancing by other states. After the end of the Cold War, U.S. gained a unique unipolar preponderance in the international system. Unipolarity by definition lacks other states that could check and limit U.S. actions in the international arena, so without them, hegemonic tendencies, unsustainable, harmful policies have taken over U.S. foreign policy. According to Posen, the U.S. adopted “unnecessarily militarized and forward-leaning foreign policy” that created “pushback.” As the realist balance of power theory predicts, other states responded to us hegemony by both hard and soft balancing (Posen, 2013, p. 118, 121). Not only states which are hostile to U.S. interests use their military and non-military tools to oppose U.S. foreign policy, but also U.S. allies hinder U.S. foreign policy through soft balancing, which means opposition to and hindrance of U.S. foreign policy through diplomacy and international organizations. The other side of

U.S. hegemony is free-riding of U.S. allies who cut military spending and rely on the U.S. for solutions to their regional problems (Posen, 2013, p. 121). Thus, as offshore balancing indicates an entirely different set of threats for the U.S., it prescribes an entirely different grand strategy.

The threat perception of grand strategies forms a spectrum. Primacy is on the one end of the spectrum and perceives rogue states, terrorism and nuclear proliferation as the most significant threats to the U.S. in the 21st century. Offshore balancing is on the other end of the spectrum and perceives classical great powers as challengers of U.S. foreign policy because the U.S. is acting as a hegemon in the international system and the balance of power logic leads even U.S. allies to oppose U.S. foreign policy using diplomatic tools, so-called soft balancing. In between these two grand strategies lies liberal internationalism. This grand strategy acknowledges the threats seen by both primacy and offshore balancing. Terrorism, rogue states, and proliferation of nuclear weapons are security threats by the U.S. But a wrong – unilateral and overly militarized – U.S. response to these threats can be a problem as well. Thus, liberal internationalism grand strategy in its threat perception is in between primacy and offshore balancing. Both theoretical origins and threat perception influences specific foreign policies that each grand strategy supports. Next four sub-chapters of this thesis describe four elements that make up U.S. grand strategies. Firstly, the role of U.S. leadership is covered. Secondly, the role of democracy, liberal values, and other idealist ideas is described. It is followed third section which describes the role of cooperation and international organizations. The last, fourth, section describes the role of the military and non-military power in relations with other states.

### **2.2.1 U.S. Leadership**

Each grand strategy offers a unique prescription, what U.S. foreign policy should look like. This and following four sub-chapters describe where primacy, liberal internationalism, offshore balancing stand on a specific foreign policy element, building on the theoretical origins and threat perception of each grand strategy covered previously. Each of these sub-chapters serve as the basis for coding of the NSS and speeches of U.S. presidents as specific attributes for each element and the differences between grand strategies are defined here in depth. The first element discussed is U.S. leadership: whether the U.S. should play an active or passive role in the international system. Primacy and liberal internationalism support former, while offshore balancing – latter.

**Primacists** perceive U.S. hegemony good for the world. Current peaceful and stable international system was not created by an accident. U.S. leadership and deliberate policies

since the end of Second World War have created the current world order. The U.S. has provided its institutions, ideals and values – democracy and the free market – as the basis of international order. U.S. has created the most important international organizations, for example, UN, World Bank, NATO, and others. U.S. leadership has led to a more peaceful and prosperous international system than ever before (Kagan, 2012, p. 4). Since the Second World War, the U.S. has been the most important actor in the world and has had unique ability to shape international system with its economic, military, diplomatic and innovative supremacy (Sestanovich, 2014, p. 325). Especially after the end of the Cold War, after the end of bipolar world order, U.S. hegemony has given the world unseen prosperity, stability, and order. This stability should be preserved and, thus, U.S. should continue the active foreign policy in order to preserve its hegemony (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, pp. 5-8). Authors of neoconservative Project for New American Century in the late 1990s argued that the U.S. has a unique role in the current world order. The hegemonic U.S. as the strongest actor in the international system must provide leadership (Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, 1997, p. 1).

Primacists argue that U.S. primacy and leadership is not only in the interests of the U.S., it in the interests of the world. Unipolarity provides international norms, peace, and stability. The collapse of hegemony has historically led to unstable and conflictual international system (Kagan, 2012, pp. 5-6). Without U.S. leadership and the liberal international order the U.S. has provided, the current period of relative stability and peace will end. Conflicts between regional powers will erupt. Unseen growth in prosperity will cease. Spread of democratic form of government will stop (Kagan, 2012, pp. 6-7). Thus, active U.S. foreign policy is the only possible action for U.S. Furthermore, primacists argue that active U.S. foreign policy is supported by most countries in the international system. Most states embrace U.S. primacy and call for U.S. help when there is an international crisis or balance of power breaks down. Other states are not either capable or ready to bear the burdens and costs of international leadership as the U.S. is (Huntington, 1993, pp. 82-83). Coalitions and alliances are not enough to provide and keep global peace. In the long term, when a new rising power will want to change the status quo in the international balance of power, not only the U.S. but also other countries will feel threatened by this rise of a new hegemon, which would want to change U.S. led international political and economic order. Thus, there will be a broad support to active U.S. foreign policy that is aimed at preventing the rise of other great powers (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, p. 34).

Another primacist, Samuel Huntington, offers a different reasoning, why the U.S. should proactively maintain its primacy. Huntington writes that primacy is undeniable requisite for the U.S. Primacy means power and the more power the U.S. has, the better.

Power in international politics is the ability of actor, both governmental and non-governmental, “to influence the behavior of others, who may or may not be governments” (Huntington, 1993, p. 68). Huntington refers to what Garold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan have written about power and summarizes, that “the amount of power an actor possesses is a function of weight (degree of participation in decision making), scope (the values that are influenced), and domain (the people who are influenced)” (Huntington, 1993, p. 68). He also argues that there are no absolute gains in the realm of power. If one actor gains power, it has increased its relative power to others. Power is only relative. “International primacy means a state has more power than other actors and hence primacy is inherently relative” (Huntington, 1993, p. 69). Power allows states to shape international system according to its interests and values. Power provides security and ability to decrease threats to security (Huntington, 1993, pp. 69-70). Thus, he concludes that the more power U.S. has, the better. The U.S. should actively maintain its primacy. This is a different reasoning compared to other primacists. For Huntington primacy is the end in itself. The necessity for the proactive upkeep of U.S. primacy is a rational conclusion in an anarchic international system.

**Liberal internationalists**, for example, Haass agrees with primacists that the U.S. has created peaceful international order where the war between major powers is less likely than ever before. Even if there are some territorial conflicts, there is no great power struggle or ideological struggle like during the Cold War and before that. The U.S. must preserve this world order. (Haass, 2005, pp. 5-7). However, he disagrees with realists, who argue that other states will start to balance hegemon. Balancing will not happen, because U.S. intentions and foreign policy goals are beneficial for the rest of the world (Haass, 2005, p. 20). U.S. hegemony is benevolent as it offers a set of positive values for the international system. The U.S. is not bent on continental domination or colonial conquest as previous hegemons have been, thus the U.S. is perceived differently than previous hegemons and rising, potential hegemons (Haass, 2005, p. 7).

This does not mean that U.S. has unlimited power and does not have internal and external challenges, however, the U.S. is in a far better position to address these compared to other states (Haass, 2005, pp. 10-11). Thus, U.S. must provide leadership and provide objectives and agenda for international society. However, “noncooperation is likely to be a more frequent and a bigger problem for U.S. foreign policy than the direct opposition,” because it will drain U.S. resources (Haass, 2005, p. 22). To overcome noncooperation, in the case U.S. national interests or if the stability of international order is challenged, U.S. must create international coalitions and work through international institutions to achieve its goals (Haass, 2005, p. 19). In addition, the U.S. must actively encourage the integration of other

states and aspiring great powers in the U.S. led world order in order to prevent great power competition (Haass, 2005, p. 23-24). Active U.S. foreign policy, various international security commitments the U.S. has granted creates stability and diminishes the possibility of conflict. The U.S. should “deter states with aspirations to regional hegemony from contemplating expansion and dissuade U.S. partners from trying to solve security problems on their own in ways that would end up threatening other states.” Active foreign policy will “make it easier for the United States to secure cooperation for combating a wide range of global threats” (Brooks, Ikenberry, Wohlforth, 2013, p. 132).

As covered in the previous section, supporters of **offshore balancing** agree to primacists and liberal internationalists that the U.S. currently is a unipolar hegemon. However, supporters of offshore balancing, differ from other two grand strategies because they argue that this unique U.S. unipolarity cannot be preserved (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). Instead offshore balancing offers a way for managing U.S. decline: less active U.S. foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17, 31-34) for various reasons. Firstly, any unipolarity is unsustainable in the long term. The logic of the international system, according to realism, makes states balance against any hegemonic power. Even now the U.S. is balanced by various new aspiring great powers across the world, for example, Brazil, Russia, India, China (Walt, 2011, p. 10). Secondly, too active U.S. foreign policy, such as supported by primacist grand strategy, according to realist balance of power logic, will lead to an accelerated balancing of U.S. by other states, because U.S. dominance creates insecurity for other states (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273). Offshore balancing would be a much cheaper policy and would decrease resentment towards U.S. foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17, 31-34), thus allowing the U.S. to preserve unipolarity longer. Thirdly, some supporters of offshore balancing argue that U.S. unipolarity has been exaggerated and the U.S. has been in decline for some time. According to Stephan Walt, U.S. was in its strongest position in the international system after the Second World War, when it created the current world order. Ever since U.S. power has slowly declined. For example, currently U.S. economic power is lower than after the Second World War, the U.S. could not afford another Marshal plan for Eastern Europe in the 1990s and for countries which attempted democratic reforms during Arab Spring. Although the U.S. still maintains military preponderance over closest competitors, wars in Iraq and Afghan have shown the limits to U.S. military power (Walt, 2011, p. 11). This is in stark contrast to the previously described primacist approach. They also embrace realism, but they disagree about a solution to the problematic nature of unipolarity according to the logic of the balance of power theory. Primacists believe that decrease of hegemon’s power leads to conflict and want to defend U.S. preponderance.

Offshore balancers argue that the decline of U.S. power cannot be avoided (Rathbun, 2008, p. 284).

Different levels of U.S. global engagement prescribed by primacy and liberal internationalism on the one hand and offshore balancing on the other is only one aspect in which there exists this dichotomy between these grand strategies in which primacy and liberal internationalism support similar approach. In the case of U.S. global role, both these grand strategies support global leadership, while offshore balancing grand strategy supports less active foreign policy. A similar dichotomy exists for the role of values grand strategies assign to U.S. foreign policy. Primacists and liberal internationalists support value-driven U.S. foreign policy, while supporters of offshore balancing are against idealistic foreign policy and recommend pragmatism.

### **2.2.2 Values**

**Primacists** look up to William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan. These are U.S. presidents, who expanded U.S. political and economic interests and used American moral ideals to do so. For example, Ronald Reagan used forceful, idealistic and foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. Reagan both expanded the U.S. military expenditure and intensified competition with the Soviet bloc. Ragan also adopted idealistic rhetoric. U.S. represents democracy, human rights, while USSR represents oppression and inhumane political regime. For example, in his speech of 1983 Reagan called the Soviet Union the “evil empire” (Rathbun, 2008, p. 282) and characterized U.S. struggle with the Soviet Union as a “struggle between freedom and unfreedom... good and evil.” This ideological offensive, according to primacists, in the late stages of the Cold War helped to defeat the Soviet Union, because, as Krauthammer writes, the “engine of history” is “not the will to power but the will to freedom” (Krauthammer, 2004). Historically, U.S. has been in a unique position to use its power with the goal to shape the world by exporting its own ideals and institutions of democracy and human rights, especially after the Second World War, when the U.S. become one of the two superpowers in the world. These idealistic U.S. policies have successfully created current peaceful world order (Kagan, 2012, p. 4). Neoconservative Project for New American Century also called for promotion of liberal political values in foreign policy. According to the primacists U.S. should be the “arsenal of democracy” for the 21st century (Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, 1997, p. 1). Primacists agree that support to idealist values in foreign policy provides the best results for the U.S.

Many primacists also agree to the democratic peace theory. Democracies do not fight wars amongst themselves. Thus, the more democratic world is, the more peaceful it will be.

Promotion of democracy and other liberal values is in U.S. interests and building more democratic international system should be the goal of U.S. grand strategy (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, pp. 5-8). The “spread of democracy is not just an end but a means, an indispensable means for securing American interests” (Krauthammer, 2004). This is an important distinction that separates primacists from liberal internationalists. Although primacists argue that American ideals are universal, primacists support promotion of idealist values, because they believe it serves U.S. self-interests (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273). Liberal internationalists support idealistic foreign policy because it is the moral thing to do. It helps not only U.S. but all societies and states. *The U.S.* represents universal political and economic values that are supported in some degree by most states: liberty, democracy, equality, private property, and markets. The U.S. is the only country which can actively create a democratic international order because it has the diplomatic, economic and military capacity to do so. Furthermore, other states are not defined by these values and are not ready to bear the burden of promoting these idealist values in the world as the U.S. is (Huntington, 1993, pp. 82-83). In addition to this, adoption of liberal idealistic agenda in foreign policy makes the U.S. stronger. Contrary to previous hegemon, the embrace of liberal values makes the U.S. a benign hegemon. Idealist values also attract people to the U.S. as well as give U.S. moral edge over non-democracies (Rathbun, 2008, p. 283).

**Liberal internationalism** shares the primacist embrace of democratic peace theory, however, there are some major differences between these two strategies. Similar to primacists, liberal internationalists argue that historically the role of U.S. leadership has been associated and still should be associated with a set of idealistic values and the goal of maintaining peaceful international order which benefits the U.S. and every other state in the international system. Liberal internationalists look up to, for example, Franklin Delano Roosevelt whose policies during the Second World War “outlined his iconic four freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear” (Martel, March 04, 2013). Some liberal internationalists add that, in addition, to support of liberal democratic values U.S. should also prevent genocide, prevent states from failing as well as help failed states to recover, plus, organize international cooperation against terrorism (Haass, 2005, p. 20). Other liberal internationalists argue that U.S. must offer “a positive, hopeful, and optimistic vision for the world that it seeks to build,” because it helps U.S. international leadership (Martel, March 04, 2013), thus emphasizing the pragmatic added value idealism gives U.S. soft power.

Even more, some liberal internationalists argue that the U.S. still is in an endless ideological competition with other states. Although the Cold War has ended, the ability to influence the hearts and minds of people still play a major role in the international relations



and help U.S. soft power and foreign policy. This in combination with extensive international mass media coverage of U.S. domestic affairs means that U.S. must keep its “domestic values” in line with U.S. “international values.” Any inconsistencies, for example, torture of terrorists, will decrease U.S. soft power. Thus, in a sense, U.S. should lead by example domestically and in the international arena (Jentleson, Weber, 2008, pp. 45,47). William Martel agrees that in a globalized world “to be effective, America’s new strategy must reinforce the domestic foundations of American power, reassure friends and allies that American foreign policy embraces a prudent balance between our principles and ideals, and avoid the twin perils of strategic overreach or neglect” (Martel, February 25, 2013). Meanwhile, this idealist rhetoric also has geopolitical goals coming from the democratic peace theory. Liberal internationalists argue that the U.S. must discourage other actors from “taking actions that harm the interests of the United States or other free societies” (Martel, March 04, 2013). U.S. needs a positive image that increases U.S. soft power and helps to create goodwill towards U.S. foreign policies, otherwise, U.S. capacity to achieve its foreign policy goals is diminished.

The main difference from primacy is that various liberal internationalists support the promotion of democracy in varying degrees. Some want to see strong, value-driven democratic component to U.S. foreign policy, others argue, that, although important, this should not be the first priority of U.S. foreign policy. Francis Fukuyama warns of dangers from exporting democracy too aggressively. It takes much more than overthrowing authoritarian regimes to create a vibrant democracy in any country. The U.S. should not pursue such controversial policies (Fukuyama, 2006, p. 4). Richard Haass, for example, argues that democracy promotion should not be the first priority of U.S. foreign policy as it was in George W. Bush’s second term. It decreases U.S. capability to cooperate with and integrate non-democratic states. National security interests should be the prime element in relations with countries like Russia and China (Haass, 2005, p. 28). Democracy should be promoted, but it should not dominate the foreign policy agenda hampering other priorities (Haass, 2005, p. 204). However, although the extent of support for democracy amongst liberal internationalists varies, both liberal internationalism and primacy support idealism in foreign policy far more than offshore balancing does.

Supporters of **offshore balancing** grand strategy, on the other hand, support a significantly different vision what U.S. foreign policy should look like regarding value promotion. Supporters of offshore balancing do not support idealistic foreign policy, they do not agree with the democratic peace theory. A democratic form of governance in many states in itself does not guarantee peace and stability in the international system (Rosenthal, 2009, p.

6). The U.S. should focus more on its sovereignty, national interests and pragmatic foreign policy (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273). Even more than some liberal internationalists, supporters of offshore balancing are critical of democracy promotion. Mearsheimer argues that after the Cold War, most U.S. policymakers have agreed to the thesis described in the book *The End of History* by Francis Fukuyama (1992): liberal democracy has won communism and fascism and is the only viable form of government (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17). Thus, spreading democracy in order to create a democratic world would be a good, pro-American foreign policy. The U.S. can and should interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries. However, according to Mearsheimer, this would create a backlash and alienate other states (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). The dichotomy that democracies are “good” and authoritarian states are “bad” and illegitimate leads to wrong conclusions. If this is true, U.S. has the legitimacy to intervene in domestic affairs of authoritarian states, including using unilateral military action to overthrow authoritarian regimes in “bad” states. Mearsheimer describes this “Wilsonianism with teeth” (Mearsheimer, 2005) and argues that it has created international backlash not only from other authoritarian regimes but also from democracies. Supporters of offshore balancing do not share primacist and liberal internationalist premise that democratic aspirations that exist in the U.S. are the driving force for people all across the world. Instead, they argue that nationalism is the driving ideological force of people, especially when a foreign power attempts to intervene in their domestic politics or even occupies the country. This nationalism makes it hard for the U.S. to export democracy through military means (Mearsheimer, 2005).

The U.S. should see the world as it is, work with what it has got, and not attempt to change the international system (Walt, 2012). There is no need to spread democracy and intervene in the domestic affairs of other states (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34). Treating authoritarian governments as worse than democracies and, thus, not working with them limits U.S. options in foreign policy and limits U.S. capability to address many international issues. The U.S. should not divide states by their political regimes, but whether they support U.S. foreign policy or not. Both democracies and authoritarian states can fit into both categories. This primacist militarized democracy promotion depletes U.S. resources and capabilities, which are not unlimited (Rosenthal, 2009, p. 4). Even humanitarian interventions should be done only when there is a high chance of success (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 17-21). As the sixth President of the United States John Quincy Adams puts it: the U.S. “goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own” (Adams, 1821).

### 2.2.3 Cooperation

While there is an agreement between primacists and liberal internationalists on the first two elements that make up U.S. foreign policy, these grand strategies disagree about the means how the U.S. should lead the world and how the U.S. should promote idealistic values. In terms of cooperation with other states and international organizations, primacists support unilateral U.S. foreign policies. Primacists perceive U.S. unipolarity as good for the world. It has provided stability, peace, and prosperity that has not been experienced in the world before. However, history shows that the decline of a hegemon leads to a period of international instability, as the balance of power changes (Kagan, 2012, pp. 5-8). This would be unbeneficial to the U.S., so the U.S. should do what it can to maintain its unipolarity, its primacy in the international system of states. The rise of another great power competitor would create a major security risk for the U.S., so the U.S. should delay that as long as possible. Thus, Krauthammer and other primacists support U.S. foreign policy that attempts to maintain U.S. primacy and prevents any second-rate power from acquiring regional hegemony (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 9). It is in U.S. national interests to maintain “a stable, open and functioning unipolar system” (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 15). The best way to reach these goals is by unilateral foreign policy.

Primacists argue that all nations pursue their own national interests, thus the U.S. can rely only on itself to guarantee its national security. Even more, primacists agree with realists that the international community is anarchic and conflictual. States on their own, without U.S. leadership, will not be able to resort to multilateral action that is needed to solve many of the international problems. Even U.S. allies often cannot come to an agreed upon common action, even through multilateral institutions (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 330-334). “Again and again, the United States has seen itself as willing to pursue fundamental solutions to problems, while others simply hoped for the best” (Sestanovich, 2014, p. 334). Huntington too rejects the possibility that there could be a multilateral cooperation between like-minded states to solve global issues. Without the Soviet threat, despite shared political and economic values as well as common economic interests, NATO and other U.S. alliances would not exist. Without the Soviet threat of the Cold War, now there is increased economic and political competition among allies. Similarly, without external threat, conflicting interests will diverge and there will be increased divisions among democratic states. Competition in the realm of power, where only absolute gains exist, is inevitable (Huntington, 1993, p. 71). Realist balance of power or isolationism will also not work, because equilibrium of power will lead to war-prone international system. Primacy ensures that the U.S. will not have to fight a war, by providing

stability and ability for the U.S. to achieve its goals unilaterally through preponderance (Huntington, 1993, p. 70).

Furthermore, primacists argue that U.S. action should not be constrained by authoritarian governments through international organizations. For example, U.N. Security Council decisions are determined by votes of Russia and China – two authoritarian countries which oppose democratic values and ideals. Thus, approval through international organizations by states that oppress their own citizens does not mean that U.S. actions in the international arena will be more legitimate (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 1). Looking at history, U.N. Security Council has been a weak organization, unable to agree on most issues. U.N. Security Council approval has never been mandatory for U.S. action (Kagan, 2004, pp. 67-69; Kagan, 2007, p. 20). Historically the U.S. has not been constrained by international law and institutions. The U.S. has attempted to overthrow governments in other countries and the U.S. has not always let itself to be constrained by its allies or the United Nations (Kagan, 2012, p. 59). Thus, U.S. should not put a big emphasis on multilateral international organizations. Some primacists argue that international organizations only limit U.S. sovereignty and the U.S. should not be constrained by any other state (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273, 285). The U.S. must bear the burden of international leadership and unilateral action because no other state or coalition of states will. However, other states will welcome U.S. leadership, because the U.S. is different from previous hegemon. This is the main difference that separates primacy from liberal internationalism: the lack of acquiescence to the interests and opinions of allies and international organizations.

Another line of primacist reasoning is what, for example, a supporter of primacy Kagan argues. U.S. primacy has not been that unilateral and primacists do not want the U.S. going entirely alone, as they have been often criticized. In all major wars, the U.S. has worked with its allies. Even in Iraq, thirty-eight states participated in the war or post-war stabilization (Kagan, 2012, pp. 54-55). Even if the U.S. adapts rhetoric of multilateralism, it still is the main leader of international coalitions and in essence pursues unilateral foreign policy (Kagan, 2012, p. 60). Nonetheless, as Kagan writes, the world will accept such active and decisive U.S. leadership, which other scholars describe as unilateralism, because of U.S. goals and motives. The U.S. does not pursue only narrow self-interest. The U.S. upholds and defends liberal international order which is beneficial to other liberal and democratic nations as well. The U.S. is reluctant to control foreign territories, making it unique among hegemon (Kagan, 2012, p. 61). Krauthammer adds, that U.S. is a unique hegemon, a “commercial republic with overwhelming global power” that does not “hunger for territory” (Krauthammer, 2004) and represents global, not only U.S. interests (Krauthammer,

2002/2003, p. 15). Even “pre-emptive non-proliferation ...are clearly in the interest of both the United States and the international system as a whole” (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 15). Kagan agrees to this (Kagan, 2004, p. 81) and adds that even regime change of rogue states benefits not only U.S. but the international system in general (Kagan, 2007, p. 19). However, U.S. does not pursue these policies, because of Wilsonian idealism as liberal internationalists would. Although the U.S. does good for all members of all international system, it does so in U.S. national interests (Rathbun, 2008, p. 285), which should be the main *raison d'etre* for U.S. foreign policy according to primacists.

According to Kagan, U.S. primacy does not really threaten the world. There has been a lack of increased defense spending by most nations in the world even if in their rhetoric they have criticized the dominance of the United States (Kagan, 2012, p. 56). Kagan explains this by geography. The U.S. has been and still is guarded by two oceans and lack of rivals in American continent from the balance of power in other regions. Thus, most of the other states are not threatened by U.S. power; however, they are wary of regional balances of power. When the regional balance of power starts to change, states often ask for U.S. involvement. Others welcome U.S. power, because they can use U.S. power in their self-interest if necessary (Kagan, 2012, p. 62). Only China and Russia have been the two major powers truly dissatisfied with U.S. preponderance. Both perceive U.S. foreign policy as encirclement, as attempts by the U.S. to create alliances in their neighborhood to contain Russia and China (Kagan, 2012, p. 64). Yet America has been providing the economic world order, a free and unrestricted trade that has benefited everyone and all have been freeriding on U.S. dominant navy (Kagan, 2012, p. 77). Even China has benefited by world order created by the U.S. in the aftermath of the Second World War. China has used the economic order to become the second largest economy in the world, other rising powers have done the same, so their aim is not the destruction of the liberal world order, but to change it according to their specific interests (Kagan, 2012, p. 75). Furthermore, even Russia and China, who are unhappy about U.S. primacy and have increased their defense spending, have no choice but to acquiesce if the U.S. wants to “unsheathe its sword,” to engage in active foreign policy, e.g. as was the case of Iraq war when both countries could not stop U.S. foreign policy (Kagan, 2012, p. 57).

Although many criticisms were directed against George W. Bush and his unilateral foreign policy, this policy was nothing new or unique in U.S. history. Similar to post-Iraq era, during the Cold War there have been major discords on multiple occasions between the U.S. and its closest European allies. Even British leaders have on multiple occasions expressed dissatisfaction with being the youngest partner for the U.S. According to Sestanovich, each country is influenced primarily by their own history, geography, ideology and it is hard to

overcome these biases and come to a mutual agreement even when there is a common interest. Allies often don't agree on a unified course of action, multilateral institutions have been hardly functional (Sestanovich, 2014, pp. 330-334). According to Sestanovich and other primacists, the world needs and supports active, unilateral U.S. leadership.

**Liberal internationalists** argue that unilateral foreign policy is perceived as U.S. arrogance and destroys U.S. soft power. If U.S. acts like a hegemon, uses preventive and preemptive war in its foreign policy, it will only create resentment and anti-Americanism not only amongst U.S. competitors but even allies. This was what happened during the George W. Bush administration (Fukuyama, 2006, p. 4). While primacists argue that small coalitions of the willing are enough for the legitimacy of U.S. action, other major powers do not see it that way and unilateral policies weakly masked as multilateral, create distrust towards U.S. foreign policy (Nossel, 2004, p. 135). Another argument liberal internationalists use is that "Washington does not have enough power to compel others to follow its lead – unless other countries think there is something in it for them," thus U.S. must use diplomacy and international organizations, not pure power and unilateral arrogance to pressure others into cooperation (Gelb, 2009, p. 338). The relative power of the U.S. is not as great as it was immediately after the Second World War when it could easily shape the international system. Wrong tools in U.S. foreign policy toolbox can create problems and weaken the U.S.

Liberal internationalists instead support multilateralism and working through international organizations, because it gives legitimacy to U.S. action, which helps U.S. implement its foreign policy. Multilateralism would mean upholding international norms, treating other states as partners and attempting to build international consensus supporting U.S. policies. Ikenberry summarizes liberal internationalism as a grand strategy that offers "an open, rule-based system in which states trade and cooperate to achieve mutual gains" (Ikenberry, 2009, p. 72). According to Haass, the goal of the U.S. foreign policy should be to get other major powers and as many countries as possible to follow international norms and international institutions in order to create a peaceful international system, stop the spread of WMD and decrease the spread of terrorism (Haass, 2005, p. 17). Multilateralism not only works, it also creates legitimacy for U.S. foreign policy. Fukuyama argues that international organizations are the only source for legitimate action in the international system (Fukuyama, 2006, p. 4), while Nye argues that legitimacy comes also from the multilateral action that does not go through international organizations. (Nye, 2002). However, all agree that multilateralism enhances U.S. soft power, generates international support and goodwill to U.S. foreign policy. As Jentleson writes, "the freedom of action given up by acting multilaterally tends to be outweighed by the capacity gained to achieve shared objectives"

(Jentleson, 2003, p. 9). For example, international organizations provide international norms and mechanisms to start any cooperative multilateral action, which makes U.S. foreign policy easier to implement and should be used (Finnemore, M. 1996, p. 158). Instead of working against them, U.S. “must learn to use existing international institutions, while building new ones, as part of its strategy for promoting states and actors to work together to restrain the dangers to international security” (Martel, March 04, 2013). Furthermore, liberal internationalists agree that there are many threats in the 21st century the U.S. cannot solve unilaterally (Haass, 2005, p. 187; Finnemore, M. 1996, p. 158; Jentleson, 2003, p. 15), especially relying only on military power (Haass, 2005, p. 203). Thus, collective action and decision making, burden sharing, alliances, cooperation are necessary for U.S. foreign policy to be successful (Jentleson, 2003, p. 15). Even more than that, U.S. should actively support the establishment of regional international organizations, as they help states to address their regional issues far better than these states working alone or under U.S. leadership would (Mead, 2005, p. 202-201).

Richard Haass, American diplomat and the president of the Council on Foreign Relations defends liberal internationalist grand strategy. In his book *The Opportunity: America's moment to alter history's course* Richard Haass does not even describe unilateralism in depth as he perceives it unrealistic and unsustainable, because complex problems of the 21st century cannot be solved by unilateral action. For example, unilateral economic or political sanctions are useless (Haass, 2005, pp. 11-19, 200-202). Haass states that primacists, which he describes as unrealistic unilateralism, and George W. Bush believe that the U.S. doesn't need a permission from others to act, however, according to Haass, U.S. does need the support of others to achieve its goals (Haass, 2005, p. 27). Primacy and unilateral rhetoric of George W. Bush, together with disagreement about U.S. policies in Iraq and towards Israel created anti-Americanism across the world (Haass, 2005, p. 30). For Haass, isolationism is not an alternative, because it is impossible to avoid the challenges of globalization and the world needs U.S. leadership. Collective action without leadership does not work (Haass, 2005, p. 27).

Liberal internationalism is the only viable grand strategy, according to Haass. He defines liberal internationalism as multilateral cooperation with other states and “integration” of aspiring great powers in the international system of states (Haass, 2005, p. 23). Other grand strategies are not suited for the U.S. in the 21st century. This “integration” would have three elements. First element would be the cooperative relations among major powers cooperating in a normative framework. Second, effective arrangements and actions coordinated between these states. Third element is increasing physical security, economic opportunity, and political

freedom across the world. This policy would be a continuation of the successful Cold War containment policy which aimed to upkeep liberal world order and peace and to counter aggression from the Soviet Union (Haass, 2005, p. 24). Even if European Union or China becomes as strong as the United States as the result of this integration policy, it is much better to have them as responsible members of the international system and to have positive relations with these powers contrary to being in competition and conflict. Latter would mean that the international system of states is a much dangerous and war-prone than the former (Haass, 2005, p. 29).

Posen and Ross at the same time call liberal internationalism cooperative security. However, they describe the same grand strategy. A grand strategy that wants to see the U.S. actively maintaining global peace through: international institutions, cooperation with democracies, alliances and collective security. Their logic, why liberal internationalism supports these policies, is that problems in distant corners of the world tend to spill over and will sooner or later affect the U.S. and other democracies. Thus, the primary goal of U.S. foreign policy should be to deter, prevent and punish military aggression, alleviate humanitarian suffering everywhere using these multilateral mechanisms, especially the United Nations. There are non-democratic states, especially China and Russia, which have the capability to create troubles for U.S. foreign policy, however, they are motivated to cooperate by mutual benefits and they can be democratized in the long term. Security-building measures, economic sanctions, arms control and non-proliferation is at the core of cooperative security. International organizations, such as NATO, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe are put there to coordinate these collective actions. The role of U.S. is to provide coordination and leadership and in initial stages when this global collective security regime is established, the role of U.S. military is to provide the bulk of a multinational force carrying out multilateral missions that this grand strategy would entail (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30). Haass agrees to Posen and Ross that U.S. leadership is crucial in solving international problems because multilateral sanctions often do not work and are not enough to punish rogue states. U.S. partners are often unwilling to bear the necessary burdens, for example, as was the case of Iraq war in 2004, which according to Haass was necessary (Haass, 2005, pp. 188-193). The U.S. should play a role of leadership in the international arena, but it should work with allies, partners and international organizations instead of working against them.

**Offshore balancing** grand strategy, contrary to both primacy and liberal internationalism, prescribes less active U.S. foreign policy – U.S. should do less and others should do more. Thus, unilateralism is out of the question. For example, Mearsheimer argues



that U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s has been influenced by a set of ideas described in the article *The Unipolar Moment* by Charles Krauthammer (1990/91), which defends the preservation of U.S. unipolarity by unilateral and military means. This idea has created the essence of primacist grand strategy that has led to the U.S. being dragged down in multiple unnecessary interventions and wars in the last two decades (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 16-17). However, supporters of offshore balancing are critical about multilateral foreign policy supported by liberal internationalists as well.

For example, Christopher Layne argues that the U.S. is different from other historical great powers because it is separated from the rest of the world by two oceans – the U.S. is an insular great power. Thus, U.S. much more secure from any conventional attack and is far less likely to be affected by international instability than any other great power. Thus, it is irrational for U.S. to lose this strategic advantage by being bogged down in alliances and security commitments that tie the U.S. down in regions that are not vital to U.S. national security interests. Instead, the U.S. should stay away from problems of other states and “engage in strategic “buck-passing,” thereby forcing others to assume the risks and costs of balancing against threatening great powers” (Layne, 1998, p. 22). Other supporters of offshore balancing would argue as well that other states are not doing enough to address their own problems, while U.S. is bearing the costs of solving most problems in the international system. U.S. allies like Germany, United Kingdom, France, Japan, and others could solve problems in their regions themselves. These are some of the most advanced, most economically developed countries in the world, with some of the best-armed forces. However, they have decreased military spending and are increasingly either asking for the U.S. to solve international problems or are not willing to work on solving international challenges at all (Posen, 2013, p. 121; Layne, 1998, p. 22-23).

To overcome aforementioned problems, U.S. should seek a burden-shifting in its foreign policy – encourage other states to play a more active role in the international system in order to overcome free-riding on the back of U.S. military, economic and diplomatic resources. This is not multilateral cooperation under U.S. leadership, as supported by liberal internationalists, this is other states taking care of their own security (Layne, 2012). Burden shifting would address another problem created by overly active U.S. foreign policy. Not only it would be a cheaper policy for U.S. taxpayers and decrease the “imperial overstretch” (Layne, 1998, p. 23), it would also decrease resentment towards the U.S. foreign policy created by the unilateral primacist approach to foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34). Furthermore, supporters of offshore balancing, similarly to primacists, defend U.S. sovereignty. Other states through international organizations should not dictate what the U.S.

can or cannot do. International organizations are a tool in U.S. foreign policy toolbox, but they should not limit U.S. foreign policy (Rathbun, 2008, p. 273). Offshore balancing grand strategy is different from the other two. The U.S. should involve its free-riding allies and involve even authoritarian states in sharing the burden of fixing international problems and picking up international responsibilities. This would be a very different strategy from primacy and liberal internationalism.

#### **2.2.4 Power**

**Primacists**, as covered previously, argue that U.S. military, political and economic might has created the post-Cold War international order and stability. Coalitions and alliances have helped, but they have always been led by the U.S. Primacists also support the hegemonic stability theory. The idea that world will be stable only if the U.S. maintains its primacy – is the strongest country in terms of economic and military power in the international system. This is what happened after the end of Cold War: the U.S. became the sole remaining superpower and this U.S. preponderance ensured a unique period of relative peace and prosperity globally (Krauthammer, 2002/2003, pp. 5-8). Kagan argues that the U.S. is the only state in the world that can solve multiple international problems that require military force because U.S. armed forces are the only fighting force in the world capable of projecting force anywhere in the world (Kagan, 2007, p. 21). Such policies used by George W. Bush in Iraq and elsewhere is nothing unique for U.S. Primacists argue that use of military power in foreign policy has been at the core of U.S. foreign policy since the end of the Second World War. As Kagan writes: “preemptive or preventive action is hardly a novel concept in American foreign policy. ... As for “regime change,” there is not a single administration in the past half-century that has not attempted to engineer changes of regime in various parts of the world” (Kagan, 2007, p. 19).

The decrease of U.S. might, the rise of secondary powers will lead to conflicts in the international system. So, the goal of U.S. grand strategy should be to prevent any other state to acquire a regional hegemony, because any regional hegemon in time will become a threat to the U.S. To do so U.S. must maintain “overwhelming U.S. power and influence,” promote international law, democracy, and a free-market economy. The U.S. should do more than it is currently to keep its political, economic and military preeminence (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, p. 34). For example, authors of The Project for New American Century insist that the U.S. should increase its defense spending and become the “arsenal of democracy” for the 21st century. Furthermore, U.S. should use its military power to challenge rogue states – regimes hostile to U.S. interests – in order to upkeep and preserve current world order (Rumsfeld,

Wolfowitz, 1997, p. 1). Supporters of other grand strategies criticize primacist grand strategy as overly militaristic (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 32-36; Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). There is even a debate amongst primacists, how big emphasis on the military power should U.S. foreign policies have. Brooks and Wohlforth argue that “the iron fist of American power should be covered with a velvet glove” – overly militarized U.S. grand strategy can create more active balancing from other states (Brooks, Wohlforth, 2002, p. 30). Nonetheless, supporters of this grand strategy think that the U.S. should use its military superiority to do good in the world.

**Liberal internationalist** grand strategy, contrary to primacy does not emphasize the use of military power in U.S. foreign policy. Doyle argues, that support for individual rights and freedoms across the world, the necessity to stop genocides or ethnic cleansing are important values for liberals. However, Doyle argues that liberals should not “embark upon crusades for democracy,” because it can destabilize the international order and uses too many resources. Instead, democracies should protect one another and create conditions for democracy to spread naturally through example and nongovernmental sector (Doyle, 2012, 69). Military interventions and support to pro-democratic rebels in authoritarian states do not work, because it creates a nationalist backlash. Support for human rights abroad through diplomacy and soft power – inspiring people with a domestic example – works much better (Doyle, 2012, 73). Furthermore, attempts to liberate people with external intervention, go against the liberal principle of self-determination (Doyle, 2012, 75). Militarized attempts to export democracy do not work and are harmful to U.S. foreign policy.

For liberal internationalists, military power even is not the most important element of U.S. power. Joseph Nye, for example, argues that there are three different types of power that exist in the international system. One type is military power. In this type of power U.S. clearly maintains preponderance over all competitors. In terms of military power, the world indeed is unipolar. The other type of power is economic power. Here the world is multipolar because although the U.S. still is the largest economy, its relative share of global GDP has steadily declined since the end of Second World War. China, Japan, Germany and perhaps even other major economies wield significant power in this realm. The U.S. can no longer enforce its will on the global economy as it could after the Second World War. The third type of power is the capability to address a variety of areas that do not fit in the military and economic category, but nonetheless are serious issues for the world and U.S. for example, global terrorism, climate change, global pandemics, human trafficking and similar issues. In these issues, the power is dispersed. No one state working alone can solve climate change or other issues. They require the cooperation of all states. In some cases, small states can have

disproportionally large power in addressing these issues compared even to great powers. What is important to note in this power division described by Nye, is that it is hard to transfer power from the military realm to the other two (Nye, 2002). Other liberal internationalists, for example, Haass agree that military power has limited application in many problems the world is currently facing (Haass, 2005, p. 203). These issues cannot be solved by the U.S. or any other state working alone. They need to be addressed by the international community working together. Global issues require global responses (Haass, 2005, p. 187). Use of military force will not help the U.S. to make a better free trade deal. U.S. military preponderance does not help to address global warming in any way. Thus, although the U.S. has military preponderance, it does not grant the U.S. as much power and influence as the primacists would argue. The U.S. cannot solve global problems on its own, using military force. Instead, the U.S. must rely on non-military tools and soft power.

Liberal internationalists agree with primacists that U.S. is the strongest country in the international system, that the U.S. should remain engaged in the world, providing leadership. However, emphasizing military power creates a backlash against the U.S., so the U.S. should rely more on economic and diplomatic tools to solve global problems, involving allies and other partners in finding solutions to them (Martel, March 04, 2013). These non-military tools would be, for example, security-building measures, economic sanctions, arms control and non-proliferation (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30). Liberal internationalists also emphasize soft power. Bruce Jentleson and Steven Weber add to three levels of power of Joseph Nye another one. Jentleson does not agree that Fukuyama's End of History will mean the end of liberal ideologies. To the contrary, ideologies and soft power are also a source of power in the international system. As military force cannot be transferred to other issues easily, ideologies and soft power will be more important than pure force in the 21st century. "Sovereign democracy" in Russia and the Chinese model – economic development without political freedoms – offer an alternative model to a free-market economy and liberal political system promoted by the U.S. There exists competition between these and other models of governance and these and other sets of values in domestic and international politics. There exists competition between ideologies and soft powers of different countries that U.S. grand strategy should take into account (Jentleson, Weber, 2008, pp. 45, 47).

Liberal internationalists are also wary of regime change. The U.S. can use its military power to overthrow authoritarian regimes, but regime change does not lead to democracy. Democratization is another area where it is impossible to directly transfer military power to, thus, U.S. should be wary of such policies (Fukuyama, 2006, p. 4). However, liberal internationalists do not disavow the use of military force altogether. If rights of individuals are

violated on a large scale by a brutal dictatorship, if the society in question asks for international help, an external intervention could be viable (Doyle, 2012, 75). U.S. leadership and sometimes even military U.S. action is necessary to address such situations because U.S. partners on their own often are not capable or willing to bear the costs of the action. If necessary, force can be used and there can be cases when diplomacy and multilateral sanctions do not deliver and a military action can be needed (Haass, 2005, pp. 188-193). However, force should be used with the consent of international organizations and through multilateral mechanisms (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 22-30; Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). Furthermore, U.S. non-military power can gain from U.S. military power. Although military power is hard to transfer to other issues, there can be a spillover effect in some areas (Brooks, Ikenberry, Wohlforth, 2013, p. 141). However, there is a debate within liberal internationalists, if this is the case. Jentleson argues the opposite, that military power, which is embraced by primacists, is hard to transfer to non-military issues. (Jentleson, 2003, p. 10). Nonetheless, liberal internationalists put emphasis on non-military and soft power tools in foreign policy. For example, if aggressive challengers to U.S. unipolarity appear, U.S. must discourage challengers of U.S. power using not only military power but also non-military power and multilateral foreign policy (Haass, 2005, p. 21).

**Offshore balancing** grand strategy also disagrees with primacy about the use of military force in U.S. foreign policy. Supporters of this grand strategy describe primacy as “Wilsonianism with teeth” (Mearsheimer, 2005). As Kupchan writes, this primacist “assumption that illiberal regimes yield only when forced into submission also flies in the face of history. The most notable geopolitical breakthroughs of the twentieth century came not through coercion, but bold diplomacy” (Kupchan, 2002, p. 15). The militarized foreign policy does not work. Instead of active militarized foreign policy towards non-democratic governments, U.S. should acknowledge that authoritarian countries also have legitimate forms of governance and economic system as well as legitimate interests in the international system.

Furthermore, supporters of offshore balancing are critical of U.S. hegemony. Other states fear the power of a hegemon even if the hegemon has all the best intentions (Layne, 1998, p. 13). Mearsheimer describes primacist grand strategy as that which supports use of military force, unilateral foreign policy and spreading democracy to actively transform the world. This hegemonic strategy has created backlash towards U.S. foreign policy across the world. Not only in authoritarian states, but also from some of the U.S. democratic allies (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). Hegemonic foreign policy decreases U.S. power and capabilities, fosters U.S. decline. Mearsheimer describes liberal internationalists as supportive for use of American force, but also as multilateralists who want to work with allies and

international institutions (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 18-19). However, both liberal internationalists and primacists are mistaken in their assumption that all people across the world want to live in a democratic society like Americans do. Nationalism is far bigger motivation for people than liberty (Mearsheimer, 2005). Both primacy and liberal internationalism are based on mistaken premises about the international system.

Offshore balancing, which Mearsheimer supports, is based on the premise that it is not possible to maintain U.S. primacy. The goals of U.S. foreign policy should be minimal. The U.S. should not try to export democracy abroad; the U.S. should not attempt to lead the international system. Instead, the U.S. should upkeep regional balances of power and prevent the rise of a regional hegemon. Primarily in Europe, Northeast Asia and the Persian Gulf (Mearsheimer, 2011, p. 18). As Christopher Layne puts it, “offshore balancing would define U.S. interests narrowly in terms of defending the United States' territorial integrity and preventing the rise of a Eurasian hegemon” such policy would allow U.S. to “maximize its relative power position in the international system” and avoid global conflicts in which the U.S. has no direct interests (Layne, 1997, p. 113). There are two reasons why this policy is beneficial for the U.S. Firstly, global U.S. troop deployments and too active U.S. foreign policy creates resentment. Secondly, U.S. resources are not limitless. The U.S. has to prioritize where it spends its resources, it cannot be present everywhere (Ikenberry, 2007, p. 14). This is the only way how the U.S. can overcome free-rider problem. As long as the U.S. will maintain a military presence in Europe, Japan and elsewhere, these countries will not be motivated to spend on their own defense, although these rich and well-off states can easily afford it. If the U.S. steps down, its allies will have no choice but to think about their own security and spend more on it. If U.S. allies increase their military expenditures, U.S. can ensure security with a far smaller military presence abroad (Posen, 2013, p. 126). The resources saved on military deployments could be spent on domestic programs instead.

Thus, U.S. should decrease its global presence and military deployments. However, supporters of offshore balancing grand strategy disagree to what extent the U.S. should withdraw from the world. Mearsheimer argues that U.S. military presence should be welcome only in the regions that are vital for U.S. national interests. Elsewhere, states could and should solve their own problems without U.S. involvement (Mearsheimer, 2011, p. 18). The priority for U.S. defense spending should be air force and especially navy (Mearsheimer, 2011, pp. 31-34). Stephen Walt argues that the U.S. should withdraw its military forces and only maintain regional balances of power by supporting local allies that are self-interested to spend more on defense to ensure regional stability. The U.S. attempts to build democracies are futile, however, U.S. military should be used to punish aggression “intervening with ground

and air forces only when a single power threatens to dominate some critical region” (Walt, 2011, p. 13). Ikenberry agrees with Walt, but for him, U.S. military interventions should be only a last resort when the balance of power breaks down (Ikenberry, 2007, p. 14).

The role of U.S. military and political might should be to maintain the balance of power among players in different regions (Walt, 2011, p. 13). For example, offshore balancers argued that NATO expansion in Central-Eastern Europe would be harmful as it would obstruct the possibility of a cooperative relationship with Russia. (Rosenthal, 2009, p. 8). Russia would perceive this as NATO encroachment in territories that are vital for its security and interests. According to realist logic, all states want more power and security and Russia’s anxiety about rising U.S. influence in near abroad is only natural. Furthermore, U.S. led the expansion of the NATO to Georgia and Ukraine would be perceived even as a bigger provocation by Russia (Kupchan, 2002, p. 18). According to supporters of offshore balancing, U.S. should not pursue aggressive and dangerous policies that destroy the regional balance of power.

Posen and Ross call offshore balancing grand strategy selective engagement. However, this grand strategy is very similar to offshore balancing. It wants more active foreign policy compared with isolationists because U.S. isolation would destabilize the balance of power and in time create great power conflict that would create an existential threat to the U.S. Thus, selective engagement would have the U.S. actively counter the emergence of any great power. The U.S. should try to stay out of great power wars by keeping regional balances of power. Building on realist international relations theory, the balance of power is fragile. Regional nuclear deterrence might fail; politicians can make bad decisions. Left on its own regional balance of power could break down. However, U.S. should not spend many resources on foreign policy, it should not become a global policeman or hegemon. Thus, U.S. should manage competition within different regions vital to U.S. national interests: Eurasia-Europe, East Asia, the Middle East, especially the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia. U.S. should maintain its alliances, for example, NATO, but it should not expand its security commitments. Deterrence and extended deterrence, as well as non-proliferation, should be a priority because nuclear proliferation could upset regional balances of power. However selective engagement does not necessarily support preventive attacks on states that could acquire nuclear weapons. Humanitarian interventions should be done only if there is a realistic chance of success, not because they are the good and the moral thing to do. The nuclear deterrent is the key of this strategy, however, the U.S. needs to maintain a broad range of military capabilities in order to be able to fight two regional wars and even greater navy capabilities (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, pp. 17-21). However, less active U.S. foreign policy with fewer involvements abroad will

strengthen U.S. ability to choose when and where to get involved and thus give the U.S. more self-determination and power (Layne, 1998, p. 25).

Contrary to primacy and liberal internationalism, supporters of offshore balancing want less active U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. should have less military deployments; it should not use its economic power and diplomacy in the international arena as much as it is currently. Instead, the U.S. should rely on other states to solve their own and regional problems. The U.S. should use its power in foreign policy only to maintain regional balances of power, relying on its naval and air power. U.S. should use force only as last resort, when regional balances of power break down, instead of constantly taking part in global problems that do not affect U.S. national interests. This grand strategy would decrease backlash towards U.S. foreign policy, decrease costs of maintaining U.S. hegemony and will be in accord with realist international relations theory, which, according to supporters of offshore balancing, explains international system more precisely than any other international relations theory.

The four elements – leadership, values, cooperation, and power – make up three grand strategies used in this thesis – primacy, liberal internationalism and offshore balancing. These four elements serve as the tool for classifying NSS and speeches as belonging to one or another grand strategy. Different positions on each of these elements allow to classify NSS and speeches as belonging to specific grand strategy. Building on the description of these four elements that make up grand strategies, next chapter outlines specific criteria for coding text based on these four elements as well as describes methodological considerations and foundations of this thesis.



### 3. Methodology

This chapter sets out to describe the methodology used in this thesis by building on the grand strategy classification developed in the previous chapter. The goal of this thesis is to explore the role of grand strategies in U.S. foreign policy, particularly in the U.S.'s NSS and the speeches of U.S. leaders. This thesis is built upon the constructivist assumption that ideas matter in international relations. Ideas shape the world, not vice versa. The hypothesis of this research, in essence, tests this constructivist premise that ideas matter, and whether grand strategies and ideas about how foreign and domestic policies should be guided, play an important role in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. These broader methodological foundations for this thesis are described in this chapter first and then this chapter shifts its focus to the specific research methods used in this thesis with a focus on content analysis – the main tool used to code the NSS and speeches for analysis. The content analysis is built on the grand strategy classification framework. It is the main analytic tool used in this thesis and the criteria for coding are described in this chapter as well. Finally, this chapter concludes with considerations about the research limitations of the selected methodology.

Realist and liberal international relation theories argue that the actions of states are determined by external factors. For example, realists argue, that the actions of states which are rational actors, are shaped by the distribution of power in the anarchic international system. For liberals, it is the institutions and the domestic setup of states that influence foreign policy. It is possible to overcome anarchy in the international system with the right institutions. For example, democratic states have different drives for foreign policy compared to authoritarian states. In both cases “material circumstances – structures and power” and “distribution of power within them” “limit or shape the ideas that can be realized” (Tannenvald, 2005, p. 21). For realist and liberal international relations theories, individual level personal beliefs and ideas do not shape foreign policy. Ideas and individual beliefs are only rationalizations that reflect the underlying structures of the international system. “When material incentives or conditions change, ideas and preferences will change too (with some time lag to account for perceptions), as actors seek to maximize control over their environment” (Tannenvald, 2005, p. 22). For these theories, external structures shape the actions of rational actors.

Constructivists, as Wendt, one of the most significant constructivist international relations scholars puts it, argue that “anarchy is what states make of it” (Wendt, 1992, p. 391). For constructivists “normative and ideational structures are just as important as material structures” (Burchill et al., 2005, p. 196), because “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded”

(Wendt, 1995, p. 73). Essentially, constructivists argue that without the theories made by realists and liberal internationalists, the structures which both theories describe would not influence international politics. Wendt summarizes the core claims of constructivists: “(1) states are the principal units of analysis for international political theory; (2) the key structures in the state system are intersubjective rather than material; and (3) state identities and interests are an important part constructed by these social structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics” (Wendt, 1994, p. 385). While states are the main units of analysis, the actions of states are determined by ideas, being identities and interests that are socially constructed. External structures do not shape international relations. Instead, ideas about cause and effect can shape “the preferences, identities, and behavior of actors” as well as “structure and influence policy choices and decision-making” (Tannenvald, 2005, pp. 20-21).

Ideas, “intersubjective beliefs... conceptions... assumptions... principles and attitudes... ideologies or shared belief systems” are “mental constructs held by individuals... that provide broad orientations for behavior and policy” (Tannenvald, 2005, p. 15). Quentin Skinner, one of the founders of the Cambridge school of contextualism used for discourse analysis, also argues that ideas, rhetoric, and sets of principles matter. They establish parameters for action, rendering some possible courses of action viable and canceling out others, possibly starting a path dependency (Skinner, 2002, p. 155). Of course, all ideas are not equal. The more popular and widespread ideas are, the more significant they are. The most significant ideas come from ideologies and other “systematic sets of doctrines or beliefs that reflect the social needs and aspirations of a group, class, culture, or state” (Tannenvald, 2005, p. 15). Grand strategies are exactly that – systematic sets of beliefs about international relations that reflect the U.S. role in it. Grand strategies also offer policy prescriptions, which “are the specific programmatic ideas that derive from causal or principled beliefs or from ideologies. They are precise causal ideas that facilitate policymaking by specifying how to solve particular policy problems” (Tannenvald, 2005, p. 16). For constructivists, the world, international relations, and foreign policy is socially constructed, and grand strategies are the devices which construct this world. Grand strategies are ideas that guide specific action in domestic and foreign policy, ideas that individuals have and that shape broader policy-making debates and institutions (Brands, 2014, p. 3; Martel, February 25, 2013). Grand strategies are the language that shapes social reality for U.S. foreign policy.

Ideas about foreign policy, through the specific words and concepts used, shape identities and interests through the process of imagination, communication, and constraint (Burchill et al., 2005, p. 198). Presumably, different ideas about the nature of the international

system will lead to different policy prescriptions (Tannenvald, 2005, p. 16). This is the case with grand strategies. Each of the three grand strategies builds on different international relations theories and emphasizes different aspects of them (see table 2.2). Thus, each grand strategy offers different foreign policy prescriptions. Grand strategies show the extent of the imaginations of foreign policy experts and policymakers. In terms of communication, ideas described by grand strategies are used to communicate the chosen path in foreign policy to both domestic and foreign audiences. Each of these sets of ideas also puts on limits and constraints on what the U.S. can and should do in foreign policy. They shape the extent of possible foreign policy options.

The content analysis allows for the testing of theories about the real world by evaluating the coded text (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 178). Content analysis is the main tool for analyzing language and ideas and it can be used for analyzing grand strategies as well. Although the theory of discourse analysis does not specifically focus on the analysis of grand strategies, it does focus on the analysis of ideology, the sets of ideas defined by discourses, terms, images, and stereotypes that serve a specific purpose and are used by actors that are representative of specific sets of ideas. Ideologies like conservatism, Marxism, sexism, and even sets of ideas in international relations like the Truman Doctrine can be defined by “views and opinions...” as they “represent a particular bias characterizing specific social formations with specific interests” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 158). Grand strategies fit these criteria. Thus, the grand strategy classification developed in the previous sections of this paper can serve as an analytical tool for content analysis of the NSS and speeches.

According to traditions in political science, research is usually divided into four broad categories. These categories are case studies, comparative studies, experimental research and statistical research (Collier, 1971, pp. 7-31). This section explores the case study and comparative research typology and methods. Political science case study typology (see table 3.1) distinguishes three variables: the number of cases, the spatial, and the time differences. These three variables can be different in each research area and the research method for specific research depends on these variables. There can be one, a few or many cases that research covers. Spatial variation means that there are differences within research objects: multiple variables within one case, for example, how the Defense and Foreign ministries influence foreign policy. Time variations mean that different time periods are researched (Gerring, 2007a, pp. 21-33).

Table 3.1

**Case study typology in political science (Gerring, 2007a, p. 28)**

Number of cases	Spatial variation	Time variations	
		No	Yes
One	None	–	Diachronic case study
	Within case	Synchronic case study	Diachronic and synchronic case study
Few	Many cases and within a single case	Comparative method	Comparative historical
Many	Cross-case	Cross sectional	Time-series cross-sectional
	Within one or many cases	Hierarchical	Hierarchical time-series

This thesis uses a single case study with time and spatial variations, more specifically, the diachronic case study, focusing on changes within a single case over time using various objects of analysis. This thesis looks at how U.S. grand strategy towards Russia has changed over the course of the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies from 2001 to 2017, thus there is a time variation. There is spatial variation as well: this thesis compares the NSS and speeches in terms of how they have changed over time as well as how the NSS differs from speeches and vice versa, using grand strategy classification developed in the theoretical part. The main added value of the case study is the ability to transfer results from a single case to similar cases (Gerring, 2007b, p. 96). This inductive approach will allow for the making of conclusions about overall U.S. grand strategy during this period by focusing on the example of how U.S. grand strategy developed towards Russia. However, results from a single case study should be applied to all U.S. foreign policy or grand strategy with some caution. The inductive approach is problematic as individual case studies can produce results that are not generalizable (Blagden, p. 197).

In addition to case study typology, Arend Lijphart in his work *Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method* offers a comprehensive typology of research goals. These are non-theoretic, interpretive, hypothesis generating, hypothesis testing, theory testing, theory complimenting and deviant case studies (Lijphart, 1971, p. 691). Eckstein adds pilot studies, theory generating research, initial potential hypothesis testing research (plausibility probes) as well as research that adds to and refines theories, called heuristic studies to this typology (Gerring, 2007b, p. 98). The research goals of this thesis show that, according to Lijphart's

typology, the goal of the thesis is to test theories. This thesis will test theories about the role and usefulness of grand strategy in U.S. foreign policy described in the first chapter. Plus, this thesis tests whether the grand strategy classification framework developed in the theoretical part can be used to analyze U.S. foreign policy and specifically U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. If the results of the thesis show that grand strategy classification or theories about grand strategies are incomplete, this will also be research that complements theory.

The grand strategy coding framework will be used to classify the NSS and speeches, and, thus, this research has a classification aspect as well. Looking at the different goals of classificatory research, there can be 1) descriptive studies, which define attributes that define something as belonging to a specific category; 2) classification research, which divides cases into specific categories; 3) explanatory studies, which make prognosis or analysis, building on the given classification, or which test, whether classification correlates with real life in specific case studies (Bennet, Elman, 2006, p. 466). This thesis encompasses all three goals of classification research. Firstly, the theoretical part describes and defines elements and criteria that allow the classification of specific foreign policy as belonging to one or another grand strategy. Secondly, coding of the NSS and speeches during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations divides U.S. grand strategies during this period into specific stages, building on the grand strategy classification. Thirdly, the grand strategy classification framework is used to analyze the result of the coding process, testing whether classification correlates with real life. Taking these methodological considerations in mind, the next sections of this chapter focus on the design of the coding process used in this thesis.

### **3.1 Coding Design**

The purpose of this section is to describe the methodological and analytical framework of the thesis, building on the methodology and the grand strategy classification described in the previous sections of the thesis. This section builds on theories about content analysis and starts with the description of the data making phase with sampling, unitizing and coding sub-phases. The following section describes and explains the coding process using the grand strategy classification used for developing coding categories. This chapter ends with a discussion about the research limitations of the research methodology and design used.

Content analysis is the preferred method for social scientists to analyze textual, content-rich materials, such as official documents like the NSS and speeches of U.S. public officials. A concise definition of content analysis would be that it “is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18). It is a deductive method, which allows for making generalized conclusions about large

amounts of text. An important scientific advantage of content analysis is its replicability. The unified coding system of the content analysis allows other researchers to test research results. If another analyst were to make a content analysis based on the same coding categories, the results should be the same.

Content analysis requires well-planned research design consisting of two phases: a data making and an analytical phase. The data making phase consists of sampling, unitizing and coding. Sampling means choosing units of analysis that are representative of the larger population of possible analytical units. Unitizing means distinguishing segments of text that are of interest for analysis, for example, words, sentences or paragraphs. Coding means reducing data to manageable representations: summarizing and simplifying data. The second, analytical phase is about inferring the meaning of the text, relying on analytical constructs. Narrating or explaining results to answer the research question and hypothesis (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 83-85). Other sources for conducting quantitative content analysis prescribe similar steps for setting up a content analysis (Neuman, 2006, p. 14). This chapter describes the data making phase. The next two chapters contain the analytical phase of this research.

Content analysis requires sampling of units separated from one another by specific boundaries. Sampling of units means selecting units for analysis from a larger population. A concise definition would be: “Sampling units are units that are distinguished for selective inclusion in analysis” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 105). Sampling is meant to be used as a plan by which to narrow down the selection of the relevant analytical units. Various methods of sampling include random, stratified, cluster sampling and others. One way of defining analytical units for content analysis is by using categorical distinctions. Categorical distinctions “define units by their membership in a class or category—by their having something in common” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 105), for example, all documents about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. After the selection of analytical units, it is necessary to narrow down the specific samples to be analyzed. To do so, this thesis uses relevance sampling, which means selecting textual units that contribute to answering given research questions, lowering the number of analytical units that could be considered for an analysis (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 118-119). After sampling, it is necessary to decide which specific units of text are of interest for analysis: words, sentences or paragraphs. After unitizing, the text must be coded. Coding means creating a set of rules for mapping textual units which will allow the simplification of otherwise rich and complex text analytical categories (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 132-135).

Regarding sampling, U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations is at the core of this research. Thus, in the data making

phase, all the U.S. government documents stating the official U.S. position towards Russia on various issues could be of interest. Speeches by government officials of both administrations working on Russia related issues as well as press statements, interviews and even autobiographies about their time in office could be a valuable source to analyze this issue. There is a wide array of potential sources that can be analyzed to uncover various aspects of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, and thus, sampling is necessary. As the topic of this research is specific, and not U.S foreign policy in general, but rather U.S. grand strategies towards Russia, this research uses relevance sampling. Relevance sampling means selecting textual units that are representative of a larger population of possible analytical units in the following ways: firstly, units that have the most comprehensive outline of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia; secondly, units that have the highest rank in terms of their source and thus the highest significance (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 118-119).

There are two documents that contain the most comprehensive outline of U.S. foreign policy priorities and goals. One of them is *The National Security Strategy* (NSS). The other is *The Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR). The NSS are regular publications, established by the Goldwater–Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of October 4, 1986, with aim to “create internal consensus on foreign and defense policies” within the executive branch and to show the “strategic vision” and “agenda” of the executive branch to Congress, foreign governments and domestic audiences (Snider, 1995, pp. 5-6) as well as “to coordinate all aspects of national security” (Dobson, Marsh, 2006, p. 12). However, “in the adversarial environment that prevails, this report can only provide a beginning point for the dialogue necessary to reach such a "common" understanding” (Snider, 1995, p. 4)

As the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) defines it, *The Quadrennial Defense Review* “is a legislatively-mandated review of Department of Defense strategy and priorities. The QDR will set a long-term course for DOD as it assesses the threats and challenges that the nation faces and re-balances DOD's strategies, capabilities, and forces to address today's conflicts and tomorrow's threats” (“Quadrennial Defense Review,” n.d.). *The Quadrennial Defense Review* is a more specific document than the NSS. While the NSS outlines both defense and foreign policies, touching upon domestic policies as well, the *Quadrennial Defense Review* focuses only on defense. As covered in the first chapter, grand strategies are above specific military strategies. They encompass economic and diplomatic aspects as well (Murray, 2010, p. 77). Thus, the much broader and overarching NSS is used for analysis of the U.S. grand strategies instead of the QDR. The NSS includes documents that embody the grand strategy of the particular U.S. administration. They offer the most extensive summary

on U.S. foreign policy goals and priorities by the current administration, including an outline of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

In terms of statements about Russia by U.S. government officials, the most comprehensive and significant ones are statements by the people in top government positions. Top U.S. foreign policy officials are the President of the U.S., the Vice President, National Security Advisor, State Secretary as well as specific people working on Russia. Autobiographies also could be a useful source. Although neither George W. Bush nor Barack Obama have written autobiographies of their time in office, Bush's former National Security Advisor and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (2011) and Barack Obama's Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton (2015) have written autobiographies, which include many references to Russia. From all these possible sources, statements by the presidents were chosen as the units of analysis because they are the highest-level sources on where the U.S. stands on different foreign policy issues. In the case of the Barack Obama administration, five statements by the Vice President on Russia are analyzed as well because he played an important role in relations with Russia and was delegated to give major speeches on U.S. foreign policy on Russia.

According to the U.S. Constitution, the President is the head of executive power. The President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy and has the authority to make treaties with other countries, with the consent of the Senate (U.S. Constitution, Article 2, Section 2). This puts the President in the central role in U.S. foreign policy decision making. Historic developments have consolidated this power in the office of the U.S. President (Campbel, 1986). During the Cold War and even recently, for example, as George W. Bush did with the Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq, 2 October 2002, U.S. presidents have attempted to concentrate foreign policy decision making power in the White House (Dobson, Marsh, 2006, p. 15-17). Statements by U.S. presidents have the most significance in determining and shaping U.S. foreign policy. U.S. government institutions, policy makers and people working on implementing U.S. foreign policy take guidance from both the NSS and the speeches of the U.S. president.

The scope of this research covers two NSS's from each administration, being the George W. Bush administration's NSS's from 2002 and 2006, as well as the Barack Obama administration's NSS's from 2010 and 2015. In addition, speeches were selected from the White House archive of the George W. Bush presidency (<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov>) and the Barack Obama presidency (<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov>) by searching the speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. The criterion used in the search engine was the keyword "Russia." Of



all the speeches with references to Russia in them, only those with at least five mentions of “Russia” in them were selected, because the term Russia appears in quite a lot of statements in relation to broad concepts, for example, the necessity to cooperate with other states. These very general statements about cooperation with other states and Russia do not indicate a nuanced foreign policy strategy towards Russia. This source was selected because the publication of these speeches in the official White House home page shows their significance, an important criterion for the relevance sampling. Compared to other possible sources like interviews and autobiographies, speeches published on the official White House home page offer official U.S. policy, while the personal views of the author could be represented in interviews and especially autobiographies. The Annual State of the Union speech of a U.S. President could also be considered to be one of the most significant speeches about U.S. foreign policy. However, there are very few references to Russia in these speeches, so they are useless for content analysis.

Altogether, 12 speeches and 4 short statements by George W. Bush on the Russia-Georgia War during August 2008 (used as a single unit of analysis) were used for analyzing grand strategies towards Russia during the George W. Bush administration. During Barack Obama presidency, a total of 22 speeches and 4 short statements during Russia’s aggression in Ukraine (used as a single unit of analysis) are used to analyze grand strategies towards Russia. Five of these speeches were by Vice President Joe Biden. Speeches and statements by Vice President Joe Biden are included in the analysis as well because they appear in the White House Archive and Biden played a prominent role in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

After sampling, being the selection of specific documents and speeches that will be used in the analysis, it is necessary to distinguish segments of text that are of interest for analysis and coding. Basic elements of coding need to be unitized: to determine whether words or sentences or parts of sentences will be used as coding units. When analyzing the NSS and speeches of U.S. presidents, a purely quantitative approach like counting keywords does not work well in such rich documents covering various aspects of both the global and domestic activities of the U.S. for three reasons. Firstly, when analyzing such complicated and well-crafted documents like the NSS, the number of specific keywords used in the document often do not represent the real picture. There are many terms that are used to substitute the term “allies”, for example: partners, supporting countries, a coalition of the willing, democracies and others, which could be used to determine support for a multilateralist grand strategy. It is impossible to predict all the possible synonyms for the term “ally” as well as other equally substitutable terms that could be counted. Secondly, for example, the term “multilateral” has

been used approximately the same amount of times in both George W. Bush’s NSS’s and Barack Obama’s NSS of 2015 (see Table 3.2). However, there are many other terms and indirect ways of indicating support for multilateralism. Counting keywords reveals a very limited and inaccurate picture.

Table 3.2

**Number of words that indicate support for multilateralism**

	Bush NSS 2002	Bush NSS 2006	Obama NSS 2010	Obama NSS 2015
Multilateral / multilaterally	10	8	19	8
Cooperation	18	21	84	19
Ally (-ies) (-ied) / alliance (-s)	49	35	66	43

Thirdly, a number of times, the specific words that have been used do not show the context. For example, George W. Bush’s NSS from 2002 talks about the “*cooperation* of the public and the private sector” (NSS 2002, p. 6), which has nothing to do with cooperation supported by multilateralism. If we were counting the word “lead” to measure U.S. leadership, the following form of “lead” would count as well: “The United States is now the world leader in oil and gas production” (NSS 2015, p. 16), although this has nothing to do with U.S. leadership in the world. Even the rather specific term “balance of power” is used in different ways throughout the NSS’s. George W. Bush’s NSS from 2002 talks about “The great strength of this nation must be used to promote a balance of power that favors freedom” (NSS 2002, p. 1). This use of the term “balance of power” has nothing to do with how offshore balancing grand strategy uses the term. Not only are these terms used in contexts other than foreign policy, they are also sometimes used to critique the ideas behind them. Thus, purely quantitative coding cannot be used to analyze which grand strategies are supported by the NSS and the speeches of U.S. presidents. A more in-depth textual analysis is necessary, such as a qualitative content analysis that analyzes the context of full sentences and in some cases the context in the whole paragraph, to determine and code the meaning of the ideas and concepts in the text of these documents and speeches. Thus, single words are not used as the elements of analysis, but full sentences and sets of sentences are.

### **3.2 Grand Strategy Coding Framework**

The grand strategy classification developed in the theoretical part of this paper is used in coding in order to reduce the vast number of concepts and summarize ideas in the NSS and the speeches of U.S. presidents. Reducing data to manageable representations allows the analysis of these documents and speeches using quantitative methods: counting words in sentences that support one or another grand strategy element. The grand strategy coding framework is displayed in Table 3.3. Building on the grand strategy classification framework, each grand strategy is operationalized as a sum of different ideas about U.S. foreign policy, the sum of four different elements that make up foreign policy: 1) the role that the U.S. should take globally, 2) the role values should play in foreign policy, 3) the role cooperation should play in foreign policy and 4) what the key source of U.S. power is in international relations. There are various definitions and interpretations of these grand strategies, but these elements, according to the overview of grand strategies in the theoretical part, show, in Table 3.3, the minimal number of characteristics that are necessary to consider any set of ideas as belonging to one or another element of grand strategy, as well as one or another grand strategy. These are minimal definitions (Sartori, 1970, p. 65) with only the minimum necessary characteristics to give a complete description of these grand strategies. These four elements allow for the definition of the specific statement, idea or policy, as belonging to one or another specific grand strategy. These keywords and concepts are based on the theoretical part, with additions made during the coding process. They were used to code and analyze the NSS and speeches. However, this table serves as a summary of Section 2.2 of this thesis, which offered a detailed explanation of each of the grand strategy elements, which was consulted when this table was not enough to put a specific statement in a specific category. The rest of this section describes the coding criteria and the coding process of this thesis.

Grand strategy coding framework<sup>2</sup>

<b>Grand Strategy Element</b>	<b>Description / Operationalization</b>	<b>Keywords / Concepts</b>
Leadership (P, LI)	The U.S. should lead, take a dominant position in the world.	Leadership, lead.
Balancing (OB)	Other states should play a bigger role, solve their own problems.	Relying more on allies / partners / other states.
Idealism (P, LI)	Idealist values are an important asset in foreign policy. Values need to be protected.	Democracy, rule of law, responsibility to protect, exceptionalism, American (“our”) values, the common good, global good, fight against tyranny, authoritarian regimes.
Pragmatism (OB)	Solving problems and cooperating is more important than values.	The necessity to work pragmatically with authoritarian governments, criticism of democratic ideals in foreign policy.
Unilateralism (P)	The U.S. should act alone if other countries and international organizations are not acting.	Indispensable, unilateral, primacy, dominance, preemption, coalitions of willing, not relying on other states or international organizations.
Multilateralism (LI)	The U.S. should work with other states and with the support of international organizations.	Multilateral, cooperation, allies, support to international organizations, collective action, pursuing global interests.
Burden shifting (OB)	Other states should play a bigger role in the international system.	The necessity to rely on allies, other states should play a bigger role.
Military power (P)	The U.S. should put emphasis on and widely use military force.	Military force (use of), domination, maintaining primacy, global posture, boasts of unparalleled military strength.
Non-military / Soft power (LI)	Use of military force destroys U.S. soft power. The U.S. should rely on non-military tools in foreign policy.	Criticism of military force, support to soft power, smart power, emphasis on diplomacy, economic sanctions and other non-military tools in foreign policy and non-military aspects of U.S. international strength.
Burden sharing (OB)	The U.S. should focus on narrow national interests and rely more on others to solve problems.	Maximizing power at home, maintaining the balance of power, not getting involved in problems of other states, focusing on national interests.

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<sup>2</sup> P = primacy. LI = liberal internationalism. OB = offshore balancing.

This grand strategy coding framework operationalizes different elements of each grand strategy and gives keywords or concepts which indicate support to one or another element. The keywords described in the grand strategy coding framework (Table 3.3) are used only as the possible indicators of a specific grand strategy. The context of the whole sentence and paragraph is taken into account to determine to which specific grand strategy a sentence or a part of the text belongs, unless the sentence contains multiple topics. Where there are two separate themes within one sentence, each is coded as a separate unit. For example, in the sentence: “We led international efforts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, including by building an unprecedented international sanctions regime to hold Iran responsible for failing to meet its international obligations, while pursuing a diplomatic effort that has already stopped the progress of Iran’s nuclear program and rolled it back in key respects,” (NSS 2015, p. i) only “We led international efforts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons,” is coded as belonging to the Barack Obama administration’s support to leadership, while the rest of it is coded as belonging to soft power or non-military grand strategy element, as it puts the emphasis on “sanctions regime” and “diplomatic effort.”

There are some considerations about the coding process that are not visible from Table 3.3. Firstly, in addition to the classification outlined in this framework, it is important to note that support to primacist military power is indicated if a special emphasis is put on military power, before talking about other tools available in foreign policy. For example, starting with “We must maintain a military without peer – yet our strength is not founded on force of arms alone” (NSS 2006. p. ii) which is followed by statements about non-military tools, is coded as belonging to primacy, military power. As opposed to liberal internationalism, where the emphasis is on all tools available in foreign policy, for example: “To succeed, we must balance and integrate all elements of American power and update our national security capacity for the 21st century” (NSS 2010. p. 5) where military tools are listed as only one of the available instruments in the foreign policy toolbox. Secondly, statements about bilateral cooperation were not coded as multilateralism. Overall, the bilateral issues discussed and policies towards one specific country in the documents were not included in the coding, except where it had a broader strategic implication (e.g. *multilateral* sanctions against Iran) and in the cases when Russia is mentioned. This was done like this because a specific policy towards a specific country does not necessarily mean that it will apply to the broader grand strategy.

### **3.2 Research Limitations**

The research design and research methods used in this thesis have certain limitations. The goals of this research are limited too. The main goal of this research is to describe the existing situation. This thesis is not about foreign policy change or the causes of changes in grand strategy. While these are important questions, this research tests only the usefulness of grand strategies as an analytical concept and practical tool. The methodology described in this chapter allows to describe the existing situation, not to determine causality. There are also other research limitations such as limited availability of data, limits of the analytical framework, limits of the coding process of NSS and speeches as well as limits of classification framework.

Limited availability of data. NSS and speeches of President George W. Bush and Barack Obama might not include a comprehensive overview of U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. There could be classified documents which offer a better description. However, there are no publicly available documents that would meet the criteria of relevance sampling better than NSS and speeches. No other sources are higher in their status and contain a more comprehensive outline of the U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. NSS and statements by presidents are the most significant sources from which not only scientists, who analyze U.S. foreign policy, but the whole U.S. government and state institutions take guidance on U.S. foreign policy direction. Another limit is the lack of interviews with top U.S. policymakers. Such interviews could have given better insight compared to analysis of only documents and speeches, however getting such interviews was not possible. Furthermore, U.S. foreign policy-making process and discussions about grand strategy compared to many states are relatively more public, thus more accessible to researchers compared to other cases. This partially offsets the aforementioned limitations.

Limits of the analytical framework. There are elements that show up in speeches of U.S. presidents and NSS that grand strategies do not discuss in depth. One aspect is, for example, international economy. There are some grand strategists who talk about the international economy, mainly the freedom of trade. However, this is an element, which has not been analyzed in the theoretical part and, thus, ideas about the economy of NSS and both George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's speeches were not analyzed. There are two reasons for this: firstly, grand strategists often do not specify where they stand on the economy; secondly, when talking about the economy, all grand strategies, except isolationism, support freedom of trade and free market capitalism. Thus, as there are no major differences between mainstream grand strategies. As isolationism does not play any role in NSS and speeches of Barack Obama and George W. Bush, it would be impossible or very complex to classify where

remarks about the economy in NSS and speeches stand in terms of support to one or another grand strategy.

Furthermore, although the coding allows to code statements that openly reject an element of a grand strategy, they are analyzed only qualitatively. Although rare, there are cases when NSS or speeches analyzed reject a grand strategy element. The negative attitude towards a specific element of a grand strategy is coded as well, however, adding these few cases to the graphs summarizing contents of NSS and speeches would overcomplicate them. Subtracting words from the total supporting other grand strategies does not work as well, because a rejection of one grand strategy does not indicate a support for another. Making another separate graph about these statements would serve no purpose as well. These statements are rare, so they are included in the qualitative analysis only.

Limits of the coding process. Coding NSS and speeches of U.S. presidents has limits as a tool for classification of grand strategies. There are problems with generalizations. Always when trying to put diverse events and ideas of the real world in analytical categories some elements are lost due to necessary generalization. However, the process of coding NSS's and speeches of both presidents allows to analyze them in depth with both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Qualitative research methods allow to double check the qualitative analysis and vice versa. It is possible that only qualitative or only quantitative methods would not give the full picture. Furthermore, to overcome these limitations, a detailed, unified coding system was used, which is described in the previous section.

Regarding limitations of coding, his research focuses on documents and speeches. The implicit assumption of this choice is, that the foreign policy implemented follows the speeches of U.S. presidents and NSS. There is no in-depth analysis of actions the U.S. has taken in foreign policy actions towards Russia, based on grand strategy classification because this classification framework was developed in order to analyze speeches and documents, not policies. However, while it is not the main focus of this thesis, the context of relations between the two states and foreign policy towards Russia implemented by the U.S. is described in the following chapters. The context of U.S. actions towards Russia and the implementation of NSS and speeches covered in this thesis gives no indication that speeches or NSS would be devoid of real-life actions of the U.S. government.

Limits of the classification framework. The main difference between Rathbun's classification and classification used in this thesis is that the latter does not display this logic behind the use of idealist values in U.S. foreign policy. However, classification used in this thesis offers a more concrete analytical framework that can be applied to the real world much easier. This classification starts out with real-world variables: e.g. active U.S. leadership vs.

decreased involvement from the world, not theoretical variables realism vs. liberalism, which are hard to detect and code. However, starting classification from realism and liberalism, as Rathbun does, shows a crucial difference between grand strategies and does show a weakness of the classification used in this thesis. Another limitation of the classification framework is that coding cooperation in multilateralism is complicated. There is multilateral cooperation with Russia and multilateral cooperation against Russia – both indicate support for the multilateral foreign policy, but the relevance in relations with Russia is entirely different for each meaning of the term. This significant difference is addressed in the qualitative analysis of NSS and speeches.

Taking into account these research limitations, the analytical phase in the following sections of this thesis describes and analyzes the coding results of four NSS as well as speeches. Two NSS for each George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations are coded and analyzed. Then specific statements about Russia in these NSS are analyzed, followed by George W. Bush and Barack Obama speech analysis. Each of these sections, firstly, describes the findings of the coding process, inferring the meaning of these documents and speeches using grand strategy classification as the analytical construct of this research. At the end of each section, a summary of these findings and analysis of them is offered.



## **4. U.S. Grand Strategies Towards Russia, 2001–2017**

According to the grand strategists covered in the theoretical part, grand strategies should offer clear and coherent guidelines on how the U.S. can better achieve a preferred end with the available means in the international system using the diplomatic, economic, military and other foreign policy tools at its disposal. They are long-term strategies that should survive change of U.S. presidents as well as changes in the international system (Brands, 2014, p. 9; Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62; Murray, 2010, p. 77). The main goal of this thesis is to analyze, whether these claims are true in the case of U.S. foreign policy from 2001 until 2017. Whether the four NSS's from both the George W. Bush and the Barack Obama administrations offer a unified grand strategy for the U.S. and whether the specific U.S. strategy towards Russia as outlined in the NSS is based on the overall grand strategy of the NSS.

Building on the analytical grand strategy classification framework, this section of the thesis describes and analyzes the results of the coding process of four NSS's. Firstly, the overall grand strategies as outlined in the NSS's from both the George W. Bush and the Barack Obama administrations are described and analyzed. This is followed by an analysis of specific statements about Russia in the four NSS's. This allows for the testing of the H1, whether NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during both presidencies, as well as the H2, whether the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's.

As William Martel writes, the grand strategy consists of two elements: the articulation of strategy and implementation (Martel, 2015, p. 158). This chapter focuses on the articulation phase of grand strategies offering an in-depth analysis of the NSS – the highest-level documents that articulate U.S. foreign policy and grand strategy. The next chapter looks at the implementation phase of grand strategies and analyzes the speeches about Russia by George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Joe Biden, to test the H3: whether the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies.

### **4.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of the NSS's**

The National Security Strategies are the key documents in which U.S. foreign policy priorities, goals and the preferred means to achieve them for the administration in power, are defined. They are the result of the presidential administration in power's attempt to articulate the grand strategy for the U.S. The NSS's are developed by the National Security Council, which is in charge of developing and coordinating the foreign policy of the U.S. President, so

the NSS has the highest rank in terms of its source and thus the highest significance of all documents discussing U.S. grand strategy and foreign policy. Thus, NSS's were used to analyze the articulation phase of grand strategies: which grand strategy a specific U.S. administration offers in the document that is meant for the articulation of grand strategy. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of four NSS's will allow an analysis of whether the grand strategy has or has not changed from 2001 until 2017, as well as whether the specific grand strategy towards Russia as outlined in the NSS has been coherent and unchanging and whether the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS.

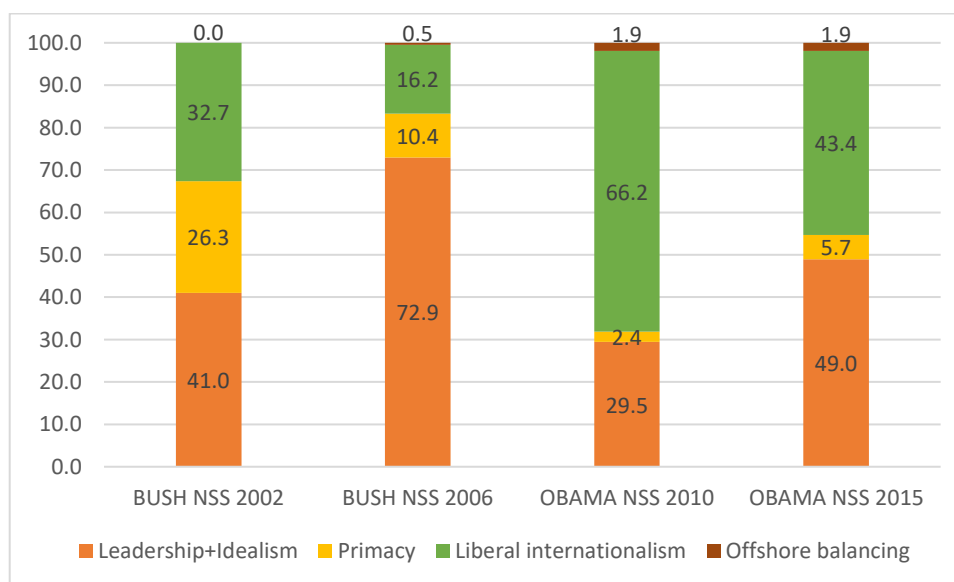
This section describes the coding results of NSS's. Four NSS's, two for each administration were coded according to the methodology described in the previous chapter using the grand strategy classification developed in the theoretical part of this thesis. Table 4.1 shows the total number of words used in each grand strategy, the number of words used to talk about grand strategies as well as the percentage of words within each NSS referring to all elements of grand strategies. George W. Bush's administration published its first NSS in 2002, one year after the start of his presidency. It had 12,501 words altogether. The second NSS under George W. Bush with 18,933 words was published in 2006. Barack Obama published his first NSS in 2010, also after one year in office. This was the lengthiest of all NSS's with 28,080 words. Barack Obama's second NSS was published a year later than George W. Bush's second one. It was published in 2015 and contained 14,786 words. All four NSS's contain a similar level of percentage of references to grand strategy elements. 31.7% of George W. Bush's first NSS from 2002 and 29% of his second NSS from 2006, contain references to grand strategies. Similarly, 34% of Barack Obama's NSS in 2010 and 30.7% from the NSS in 2015, talks about elements of grand strategies in U.S. foreign policy. These similar percentages mean that these documents are quite similarly composed and thus comparable.

Table 4.1

**References to grand strategies in NSS's**

	Total word count	Words referring to grand strategies	Percentage <sup>3</sup>
Bush's NSS 2002	12,501	3,967	31.7
Bush's NSS 2006	18,933	5,489	29.0
Obama's NSS 2010	28,080	9,559	34.0
Obama's NSS 2015	14,786	4,542	30.7

Figure 4.1 shows the result of the coding process of four NSS's: the percentage of words within each NSS referring to specific grand strategy. As the leadership and idealism element is characteristic to both primacy and liberal internationalism, it is singled out separately in orange. The cooperation and power elements are different in the primacy (yellow) and liberal international (green) grand strategies. Primacy supports unilateralism and hard power in foreign policy, while liberal internationalism supports multilateralism and non-military power. The percentage of words in NSS's indicating support to the offshore balancing grand strategy (support to pragmatism and burden sharing in foreign policy) is in purple.



**Figure 4.1 Emphasis on specific grand strategy in each NSS (%)**

<sup>3</sup> Note: Numbers have been rounded here and throughout the thesis.

Five conclusions about the content of these four NSS can be made. Firstly, none of the NSS's support offshore balancing grand strategy. Secondly, idealist and leadership elements play a role across all NSS's with the second NSS's of both administrations emphasizing idealism and leadership in U.S. foreign policy more than the first. Thirdly, although both George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's NSS's use elements of both primacy and liberal internationalism, George W. Bush's NSS put a far greater emphasis on primacy than Barack Obama's. Fourthly, Barack Obama's NSS's are liberal internationalist. Fifth, all NSS's reject isolationism. Each of these conclusions is described in depth further in this section, adding more quantitative and qualitative analysis of different grand strategy elements for each NSS.

#### 4.1.1 Offshore Balancing does not Matter

Firstly, none of the NSS support offshore balancing grand strategy (see figure 4.1). Ideas supported by offshore balancing plays a comparatively minimal role in all four NSS. Although there are far more statements in Barack Obama's NSS that are supportive to offshore balancing than in George W. Bush's, they are few compared to statements supporting primacy and liberal internationalism. In both NSS 2010 and 2015, 1.9% of all references to grand strategies are about offshore balancing. George W. Bush's NSS 2006 refers to offshore balancing only 0.5% times, while NSS 2002 does not invoke offshore balancing not even once. Looking at specific elements of offshore balancing grand strategy (see table 4.2), while George W. Bush's NSS 2002 does not talk about any elements of offshore balancing. NSS 2006 mentions pragmatism a little (0.5% of all references to grand strategies). Barack Obama's NSS 2002 invokes some elements of pragmatism (1.3%), emphasizing it the most compared to other NSS, and burden sharing (0.6%) as well. Barack Obama's NSS 2015 invokes only burden sharing (1.9%) and emphasizes it the most compared to other NSS.

*Table 4.2*

**Breakdown of the role of pragmatism and burden shifting in NSS's (%)**

	Pragmatism	Burden sharing	Total references to offshore balancing
Bush NSS 2002	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bush NSS 2006	0.5	0.0	0.5
Obama NSS 2010	1.3	0.6	1.9
Obama NSS 2015	0.0	1.9	1.9

While George W. Bush's NSS 2002 has no references to offshore balancing, Bush's NSS 2006 has two statements about "realistic means" (NSS 2006. p. ii, 49) without going into details what they would be. Nonetheless, they can be classified as hints about the pragmatism of offshore balancing grand strategy. Once, a pragmatic necessity for democratization to go in hand with economic development, characteristic of offshore balancing, is mentioned too: "Yet political progress can be jeopardized if economic progress does not keep pace" (NSS 2006. p. 4). This is a small step towards offshore balancing compared to the previous NSS of 2002 which didn't include any caveats about the promotion of democracy.

Barack Obama's NSS 2010 already has a bit more references to offshore balancing (1.9%), and far more specific ideas that are in accord with offshore balancing grand strategy. There are pragmatic overtones in NSS of 2010 about the necessity to work with non-democratic governments: "we will pursue engagement with hostile nations to test their intentions" (NSS 2010. p. 3). Highly important in relations to Russia, discussed in depth in section 4.3 which analyses statements about Russia in NSS, is the separation of the pragmatic cooperation with non-democratic states from issues of democracy and human rights. NSS 2010 calls it the "dual-track" engagement: focusing on common interests, such as "counterterrorism, nonproliferation, or enhancing economic ties," improving "government-to-government relations and use this dialogue to advance human rights, while engaging civil society and peaceful political opposition, and encouraging U.S. nongovernmental actors to do the same" (NSS 2010. p. 38). Once this NSS mentions the burden sharing element of offshore balancing when talking about promotion of "the international order... that can resolve the challenges of our times" (NSS 2010. p. ii). Essentially international order, that can fix problems on its own without the U.S. leadership.

NSS of 2015 talks far less about the pragmatic necessity of offshore balancing to engage non-democratic governments, however it puts even bigger emphasis on the burden sharing with other states even explicitly using these words: "we will seek to mobilize allies and partners to share the burden and achieve lasting outcomes" (NSS 2015. p. 8) and "These partnerships can deliver essential capacity to share the burdens of maintaining global security and prosperity and to uphold the norms that govern responsible international behavior" (NSS 2015. p. 3). Furthermore, this NSS even mentions the necessity for regional organizations to play a bigger role in military operations in the times of crisis: "We will strengthen the operational capacity of regional organizations like the African Union (AU) and broaden the ranks of capable troop-contributing countries, including through the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership, which will help African countries rapidly deploy to emerging

crises” (NSS 2015. p. 11). Although Barack Obama’s NSS use somewhat more references to offshore balancing, this grand strategy plays a minuscule role across the four NSS.

#### **4.1.2 Leadership and Idealism are Always Present**

Secondly, leadership and idealism – elements similar for both primacy and liberal internationalism grand strategies – are prevalent in all NSS (see figure 4.1). Focus on leadership and idealism plays a significant role in all NSS. In three out of four NSS they are the dominant and most invoked elements. Out of all references to grand strategies idealism and leadership is referenced the most in NSS 2002 (41%), NSS 2006 (72.9%) and NSS 2015 (49%). In NSS 2010 leadership and idealism plays a smaller role (29.5%) while other liberal internationalist ideas dominate (66.2%).

George W. Bush’s NSS of 2006 is dominated by references to leadership and idealism. The first 5 pages of Bush’s 2006 NSS contain references to democracy and idealistic values almost in every sentence. They make up 72.9% of all references to grand strategies. In turn, the role of other primacist and liberal internationalist elements has decreased from NSS 2002 to NSS 2006. One explanation for this could be that unilateralist policies, reliance on military force and preemption before the Iraq war in 2003 created a widespread criticism of U.S. foreign policy. Thus, this NSS emphasizes a more positive agenda: promotion of democracy and necessity of U.S. leadership, at the same time putting smaller emphasis on widely criticized primacist elements. However, the qualitative analysis further in this section will show that, although the number of references to primacy has decreased, the content of these references has not.

Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 is dominated by other liberal internationalist ideas (66.2%) while leadership and idealism play the smallest role compared to all other NSS, only 29.5%. This NSS goes at great lengths to distance itself from Bush’s administration, even openly denouncing various aspects of Bush’s foreign policy, especially elements of primacy (discussed in the next section). Most likely this indicates the necessity for the Barack Obama administration to clearly show the break from previous foreign policies of George Bush. Policies that not only emphasized primacy (16.2% in NSS 2006 and 32.7% in 2002) but also were dominated by leadership and idealism (72.9% in NSS 2006), as discussed previously. Thus, in response to the previous NSS and policies of the George W. Bush administration, this NSS makes a clear break putting a far smaller emphasis on these elements.

An interesting trend that must be noted here is that second NSS of both administrations tends to gravitate towards emphasizing idealism and leadership in U.S. foreign policy (see figure 4.1). 72.9% of all references to grand strategies in Bush’s second NSS are about

leadership and ideals in U.S. foreign policy, compared to only 41% in NSS 2002. The same trend can be seen in the Barack Obama administration too. Second NSS of 2015 contains 49% of references to leadership and idealism, while the first NSS of 2010 contained only 29.5%. In both cases, the emphasis on leadership and idealism has almost doubled. The qualitative analysis of these NSS describing changes from the first and second NSS of both administrations done further in this section clearly confirms this trend too. Comparison of only two presidents who have served two terms is not enough to confirm a clear trend. However, this might indicate trend that a when a new president takes office, he might hold strong beliefs about one or another grand strategy, yet time and, perhaps, inability of any grand strategy to fix complex global issues and other factors, make these administrations to shift somewhat away from initially selected grand strategy, focusing on elements shared by both liberal internationalism and primacy.

*Table 4.3*

**Breakdown of the role of leadership and idealism in NSS's (%)**

	Leadership	Idealism	Total references to leadership and idealism <sup>4</sup>
Bush NSS 2002	3.3	37.8	41.0
Bush NSS 2006	7.7	65.3	72.9
Obama NSS 2010	10.7	18.8	29.5
Obama NSS 2015	22.5	26.4	49.0

Breaking down these two elements – leadership and idealism – in two separate categories and adding qualitative analysis gives a deeper layer to an examination of the NSS. The idealist values discussed across all four NSS are similar, however, the emphasis each NSS puts on this element is different. There is a major difference between emphasis on these elements in George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's NSS. Emphasis on idealism is characteristic to George W. Bush administration. NSS 2002 devotes 37.8% of references (table 4.3) to grand strategies to idealism, to discussing the role values should play in foreign policy. NSS 2006 is idealist NSS. 65.3% of all references to grand strategies are about the role of idealism. George W. Bush emphasizes the role of idealism in U.S. foreign policy, while the Barack Obama administration puts an increasingly more significant role on the U.S.

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<sup>4</sup> Note: As numbers have been rounded up, small (0.1%) inconsistencies in percentages are normal when adding up percentages here and in other tables throughout the thesis.

leadership, talking about idealist values comparatively less. References to idealism have been dramatically reduced in Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 and both Obama’s NSS overall devote less attention to idealism: only 18.8% in NSS 2010 and 26.4% in NSS 2015. Altogether (see table 4.4) both Barack Obama’s NSS make up only one third (32%) of all references to idealism across these four NSS, while Bush’s NSS 2006 makes 41.7% and NSS 2002 26.4%.

*Table 4.4*

**Relative support to leadership and idealism in NSS’s (%)**

	Leadership	Idealism
Bush NSS 2002	7.5	26.4
Bush NSS 2006	16.1	41.7
Obama NSS 2010	26.3	14.1
Obama NSS 2015	50.1	17.9
Total	100.0	100.0

Quantitative analysis allows to analyze the emphasis each NSS puts on idealist and leadership grand strategy elements. Qualitative analysis gives a deeper insight. The emphasis on U.S. leadership has not only been gradually increasing, but the language has changed as well. In Bush’s NSS 2002 it made only 3.3% out of all references to grand strategies. In this document, U.S. leadership is implicitly assumed. Only in rare occasions NSS 2002 explicitly states that the U.S. must lead the world. There are a few statements about how the U.S. has “led the way,” about necessity to “seize the global initiative,” (NSS 2002. p. 18) and how the U.S. has been “exercising our leadership” (NSS 2002. p. 31), but mostly U.S. leadership is implicitly inferred throughout in this NSS. In Bush’s NSS 2006 emphasis on leadership increased to 7.7% out of all references to grand strategies. This NSS immediately in the introduction explicitly talks about “leading a growing community of democracies. ...only when we do our part will others do theirs. ... America must continue to lead” (NSS 2006. p. ii). References to leadership grand strategy element are emphasized more throughout the NSS 2006 compared to the NSS 2002.

In Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 references to leadership increased even more – to 10.7% out of all references to grand strategies. These statements are very similar to statements in previous NSS, for example: “America is ready to lead once more” (NSS 2010. p. iii) and “no nation should be better positioned to lead in an era of globalization than America” (NSS 2010.



p. ii). However, this NSS supports U.S. leadership and engagement with a caveat: “engagement is no end in itself” (NSS 2010. p. ii). This caveat, set forward already in the introduction, is in stark contrast with the statement of George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 “even if the United States does not have a direct stake in a particular conflict, our interests are likely to be affected over time” (NSS 2006. p. 14), which cast the net of U.S. interests across all conflicts in the globe. Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 in contrast with George W. Bush’s 2006 limits the necessity for the U.S. to engage in hotspots across all the world.

In NSS 2015 references to leadership already made up 22.5% of all references to grand strategies. This NSS contains half (50.1%) of all the references to U.S. leadership across all four NSS (see table 4.4). This NSS has not only the most statements about U.S. leadership, but these statements also use the strongest words: “America must lead” (NSS 2015. p. i), “Strong and sustained American leadership is essential” (NSS 2015. p. i), “On all these fronts, America leads from a position of strength” (NSS 2015. p. ii), “American global leadership remains indispensable” (NSS 2015. p. ii). These statements about U.S. leadership are the boldest and strongest compared to the other three NSS.

Growing emphasis on U.S. leadership is an interesting trend. It might indicate growing fears within U.S. political elite about U.S. decline, that prompts the administrations even more and more articulate and emphasize necessity and benefits of U.S. leadership. For example, in George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 U.S. leadership is inferred throughout the document, although it is not expressively stated much. It is evident, that authors of further NSS’s have felt the necessity to articulate explicitly the necessity and benefits for U.S. global leadership.

Analysis of the NSS shows a clear trend about idealism in U.S. foreign policy that shows up across all NSS. George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 and 2006, as well as Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 and 2015, supports the promotion of idealist values for three similar reasons that reverberate throughout all NSS. Starting with NSS 2002, promotion of idealist values is supported by three reasons. Firstly, because it is the right thing to do: “People everywhere want to be able to speak freely; choose who will govern them; worship as they please; educate their children—male and female; own property; and enjoy the benefits of their labor” (NSS 2002. p. i). Secondly, promotion of idealist values is in the interests of U.S.: “In pursuit of our goals, our first imperative is to clarify what we stand for: the United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right and true for all people everywhere” (NSS 2002. p. 3). Thirdly, U.S. support to idealist values benefits everyone: “In the twenty-first century, only nations that share a commitment to protecting basic human rights and guaranteeing political and economic freedom will be able to unleash the potential of their people and assure their future prosperity” (NSS 2002. p. i).

Throughout NSS 2006, the same emphasis is put on promoting idealist values. This NSS also argues that support to idealist values is the right thing to do: “The United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right and true for all people everywhere” (NSS 2006. p. 2). Idealist foreign policy is in the interests of U.S.: “And because free nations tend toward peace, the advance of liberty will make America more secure” (NSS 2006. p. i). Idealism in U.S. foreign policy benefits everyone: “Peace and international stability are most reliably built on a foundation of freedom” (NSS 2006. p. ii).

Although both Barack Obama’s NSS decrease the emphasis on idealism, compared to previous George W. Bush’s NSS, even Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 explicitly supports idealist values for the same reasons as the previous George W. Bush’s NSS. NSS 2010 talks about the necessity to “promote democracy and human rights abroad” using three arguments identical to previous NSS and adds another one. Firstly, defense of idealist values in foreign policy is the right thing to do: “The United States supports the expansion of democracy and human rights abroad because governments that respect these values are more just, peaceful, and legitimate” (NSS 2010. p. 37). Secondly, it is in the interests of U.S.: “We also do so because their success abroad fosters an environment that supports America’s national interests” (NSS 2010. p. 37). Thirdly, idealist U.S. foreign policy benefits everyone: “Political systems that protect universal rights are ultimately more stable, successful, and secure” (NSS 2010. p. 37). However, this NSS adds another, soft power and multilateral rationale for supporting democracy abroad. Idealist foreign policy makes it easier for U.S. to achieve its foreign policy goals, as democracies are more open to cooperation with the U.S.: “As our history shows, the United States can more effectively forge consensus to tackle shared challenges when working with governments that reflect the will and respect the rights of their people, rather than just the narrow interests of those in power” (NSS 2010. p. 37). On the other hand, the main difference between this NSS 2010 and other NSS’s is that only in one paragraph the Barack Obama administration talks explicitly about the necessity to promote democracy and human rights. The rest of the references are about “values,” which is a far vaguer term than specific references to democracy and human rights that are used in the other three NSS.

NSS 2015 again uses the same three reasons why the U.S. should promote idealist values in foreign policy. Firstly, defense of liberal and democratic values is the right thing to do: “Our focus is on supporting countries that are moving in the right direction” (NSS 2015. p. 20). Secondly, it is also in the national interests of U.S.: “The United States is safer and stronger when fewer people face destitution, when our trading partners are flourishing, and when societies are freer” (NSS 2015. p. 3). Thirdly, such foreign policy benefits everyone: “no society will succeed if it does not draw on the potential of all its people” (NSS 2015. p.

20). This NSS does not use the multilateral reasoning of NSS 2010 why idealist values should be supported and does not make the claim that democracies are more open to cooperation with the U.S. which in turn helps the U.S. to achieve its foreign policy goals. Although all NSS support use of idealism in foreign policy because it is the right thing to do, it is both in the interests of U.S. and the world, there is one major difference that appears only in the qualitative analysis of these documents. The major difference between George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's NSS is the far less aggressive tone about supporting these values. While George W. Bush is talking about fighting tyranny: "We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants" (NSS 2002. p. i), "...tyranny must not be tolerated – it is a crime of man, not a fact of nature" (NSS 2006. p. 4) Barack Obama's NSS make no such claims. The rhetoric of Barack Obama's NSS is far more peaceful when compared to George W. Bush's.

To sum up the analysis of idealist and leadership elements in four NSS, firstly, they are present in all NSS. Secondly, the second NSS of both administrations emphasizes idealism and leadership in U.S. foreign policy more than the first. This might indicate that initial support to a specific grand strategy of the first NSS of a new administration tends to be replaced in the second NSS by more general statements that are supported by both liberal internationalism and primacy. Thirdly, with each new NSS, there has been a growing emphasis on U.S. leadership, which might indicate the necessity for U.S. political elites to talk about the benefits of U.S. leadership because of rising fears of U.S. decline. Finally, although the emphasis on idealism varies across NSS with George W. Bush's NSS 2006 emphasizing this grand strategy element the most, all NSS support promotion of idealist values for three identical reasons: because it is the right thing to do, it is in the interests of U.S. and U.S. support to idealist values benefits everyone.

#### **4.1.3 George W. Bush Emphasizes Primacy**

Thirdly, although both George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's NSS's use elements of both primacy and liberal internationalism, George W. Bush's NSS put a far greater emphasis on primacy than Barack Obama's (see figure 4.1). Leadership and idealism elements in U.S. foreign policy are supported by both primacy and liberal internationalism, thus they cannot be used to determine support for one or another grand strategy. Role of cooperation in U.S. foreign policy and promotion of different types of power are elements that can be used to classify policy proposals belonging to primacy or liberal internationalism. NSS of 2002 had the highest number of words discussing unilateralism (15%) and use of military power (11.3%) across all NSS. In total 26.3% of references to grand strategies in NSS 2002 were about these primacist grand strategy elements (see table 4.5). Second NSS of George W. Bush

administration also invoked these primacy elements far more than NSS of Barack Obama too. 10.4% of references to grand strategies in NSS 2006 were about two aforementioned primacist grand strategy elements. While Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 almost does not use these elements of primacy grand strategy (2.4%) and NSS of 2015 uses relatively few references (5.7%) of these elements.

*Table 4.5*

**Breakdown of the role of unilateralism and military power in NSS’s (%)**

	Unilateralism	Military power	Total references to the primacy
Bush NSS 2002	15.0	11.3	26.3
Bush NSS 2006	7.2	3.2	10.4
Obama NSS 2010	0.6	1.8	2.4
Obama NSS 2015	0.9	4.8	5.7

George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 contains the biggest emphasis on both unilateralist and military power aspects of primacist grand strategy out of all NSS. In this NSS 15% of statements are used for promotion of unilateralist ideas. 11.3% for promotion of military power in foreign policy (see table 4.5). Out of all references to primacy across four NSS, this NSS contains 64.8% references to unilateralism and 54.3% of references to the use of military power in foreign policy (see table 4.6). George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 tunes down unilateralist rhetoric and emphasis on military power. 7.2% of all statements about grand strategies in this NSS is about unilateralism and 3.2% about the use of military power (table 4.5). This is the second biggest emphasis (28.4%) on unilateralism across all four NSS. This is the third biggest (14%) emphasis on the use of military power (table 4.6).

*Table 4.6*

**Relative support to unilateralism and military power in NSS’s (%)**

	Unilateralism	Military power
Bush NSS 2002	64.8	54.3
Bush NSS 2006	28.4	14.0
Obama NSS 2010	2.9	9.3
Obama NSS 2015	3.9	22.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Both Barack Obama's NSS of 2010 and 2015 almost do not talk about unilateralism. Former has only 0.6% of all content devoted to unilateralism. Latter has 0.9% (table 4.5). In all four NSS in both Barack Obama's NSS, references to unilateralism make up only 6.8% (table 4.6) out of all references to it. Compared to George W. Bush, Barack Obama does not embrace unilateralism. The situation with support to military power in Barack Obama's NSS is different. Barack Obama's NSS 2010 supports the use of military power the least. Only 1.8% of statements about grand strategies (table 4.5) in this NSS is about the use of military power, which places this NSS in the last place (9.3%) in support to this primacist grand strategy element (table 4.6). Second Barack Obama's NSS 2015, on the other hand, does support military power even more than Bush's NSS 2006. NSS 2015 has 4.8% of references to grand strategies devoted to military power, while NSS 2006 has only 3.2% (table 4.5). Out of four NSS Barack Obama's NSS 2015 makes up 22.4% of references to the use of military power in foreign policy, while George W. Bush's 2006 only 14% (table 4.6). This quantitative analysis shows an interesting tendency. There exists some degree of similarity between Barack Obama's NSS 2015 and George W. Bush's NSS 2006. Although Barack Obama does not support unilateralism, Barack Obama's second NSS does embrace the use of military power in foreign policy. The qualitative analysis offers deeper insight into this phenomenon.

George W. Bush's NSS 2002 starts with statements that "in keeping with our heritage and principles, we do not use our strength to press for unilateral advantage" and that "We are also guided by the conviction that no nation can build a safer, better world alone" (NSS 2002. p. i). However, despite these two statements, this NSS heavily supports a unilateral foreign policy that relies on military power as primacy grand strategy would have it. This NSS strongly supports use of military power in foreign policy by statements about necessity to oppose non-democracies and terrorists alike: "We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants" (NSS 2002. p. i); statements about benefits of deployments of U.S. armed forces "the unparalleled strength of the United States armed forces, and their forward presence, have maintained the peace in some of the world's most strategically vital regions" (NSS 2002. p. 29) and even statements like this: "our best defense is a good offense" (NSS 2002. p. 6). Throughout the document emphasis is not on multilateral action, but on unilateral action, on what America will do, for example: "America will hold to account nations that are compromised by terror, including those who harbor terrorists" (NSS 2002. p. ii).

The inherently unilateral doctrine of preemption is embraced in this NSS five times. Twice indirectly: "And, as a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed" (NSS 2002. p. ii) and "We must deter and defend against the threat before it is unleashed" (NSS 2002. p. 14). This call for

unilateral preemptive action is articulated explicitly in three cases: “Legal scholars and international jurists often conditioned the legitimacy of preemption on the existence of an imminent threat—most often a visible mobilization of armies, navies, and air forces preparing to attack” (NSS 2002. p. 15). Thus, “to forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively” (NSS 2002. p. 15). This NSS claims that this is nothing new: “The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security” (NSS 2002. p. 15). Not only this NSS emphasizes preemption far more than other three, this NSS also mentions coalitions of the willing seven times, for example, “Forming coalitions of the willing and cooperative security arrangements are key to confronting these emerging transnational threats” (NSS 2002. p. 11). The idea that coalitions of the willing should solve international problems lies somewhere in between multilateralism and unilateralism. However, coalitions of the willing are closer to primacist emphasis on unilateralism, because it essentially means working with nations that are willing to follow U.S. leadership in foreign policy. Thus, this was coded as a unilateral idea.

George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 talks about unilateralism in a similar way compared to NSS 2002: the U.S. “must be prepared to act alone if necessary, while recognizing that there is little of lasting consequence that we can accomplish in the world without the sustained cooperation of our allies and partners” (NSS 2006. p. 37). NSS 2006 adds a new element to unilateralism. This NSS diminishes the role of international organizations and talks about the necessity to reform international institutions. Coalitions of willing are necessary where international organizations are unable to provide: “Existing international institutions have a role to play, but in many cases coalitions of the willing may be able to respond more quickly and creatively, at least in the short term” (NSS 2006. p. 48). This is a stark contrast from previous multilateral ideas about reliance on international organizations of NSS 2002. Even more, “Where existing institutions can be reformed to meet new challenges, we, along with our partners, must reform them” (NSS 2006. p. 36). Although this idea contains a reference to working with partners, this necessity to reform international institutions is a unilateral idea, as unilateralists believe that international organizations are hindering U.S. foreign policy (Kagan, 2012, p. 59; Krauthammer, 2002/2003, p. 1; Rathbun, 2008, p. 273, 285). Although the quantity of references to unilateralism in NSS 2006 is lower, for example, this NSS contains only one reference to coalitions of willing, compared to seven references in NSS 2002, the contents of references to unilateralism are stronger than in NSS 2006.

NSS 2006 embraces the military power and unilateralist preemption with similar statements to NSS 2002. For example, “we must maintain a military without peer” (NSS

2006. p. ii) and “both offenses and defenses are necessary to deter state and non-state actors, through denial of the objectives of their attacks and, if necessary, responding with overwhelming force” (NSS 2006. p. 22). The emphasis is on military force and then on other non-military instruments: “In the short run, the fight [against terrorism] involves using military force and other instruments of national power...” (NSS 2006. p. 9). Preemption still holds a prominent role in NSS 2006. This NSS even explicitly confirms this by stating: “The place of preemption in our national security strategy remains the same” (NSS 2006. p. 23). There are 12 sentences about preemption. Two of these sentences explicitly mentions preemption. For example: “To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively in exercising our inherent right of self-defense” (NSS 2006. p. 18). This NSS uses various ways how to emphasize the doctrine of preemption. “We must maintain and expand our national strength so we can deal with threats and challenges before they can damage our people or our interests” (NSS 2006. p. ii). It goes as far as to recommend: “If necessary, however, under long-standing principles of self-defense, we do not rule out the use of force before attacks occur, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack” (NSS 2006. p. 18).

This NSS explains the necessity for preemption with two reasons. Firstly, preemption is necessary because of the inability to deter terrorists: “The United States can no longer simply rely on deterrence to keep the terrorists at bay or defensive measures to thwart them at the last moment” (NSS 2006. p. 8). This includes the use of military force, “Where perpetrators of mass killing defy all attempts at peaceful intervention, armed intervention may be required” (NSS 2006. p. 17), necessity to “fight our enemies abroad instead of waiting for them to arrive in our country” (NSS 2006. p. ii) and “the fight must be taken to the enemy, to keep them on the run” (NSS 2006. p. 8). Secondly, preemption is necessary because of the potential destructive capability of WMD attack: “When the consequences of an attack with WMD are potentially so devastating, we cannot afford to stand idly by as grave dangers materialize. This is the principle and logic of preemption” (NSS 2006. p. 23). Preemptive actions should include “proactive counterproliferation efforts to defend against and defeat WMD and missile threats before they are unleashed...” (NSS 2006. p. 18). The logic of preemption against WMD is summarized: “The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack” (NSS 2006. p. 18). Although quantitatively there are fewer references to unilateralism, this NSS still strongly embraces unilateralism and preemption. These ideas of this NSS described above resonate with Krauthammer’s article *The Unipolar Moment*, which already in 1991 supported

unilateral and preemptive use of U.S. military force to stop spreading of WMD (Krauthammer, 1990/91. pp. 24, 28, 30).

NSS 2010 is a clear break from George W. Bush's NSS. Barack Obama's NSS of 2010 almost does not talk about unilateralism and use of military power at all. Only 2.4% of the words referring to grand strategies in this NSS are about these two primacist grand strategy elements (see table 4.5). Unilateral use of force is mentioned once: "The United States must reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend our nation and our interests," however it is followed immediately by a caveat: "yet we will also seek to adhere to standards that govern the use of force." There is also one rather weak reference to preemption. "Prevent the Emergence of Conflict: Our strategy goes beyond meeting the challenges of today, and includes preventing the challenges and seizing the opportunities of tomorrow" (NSS 2010. p. 27). There are six cases with emphasis on military power that could be coded as belonging to primacy. These statements emphasize the role of armed forces and force in U.S. security, for example: "we will maintain the military superiority that has secured our country, and underpinned global security, for decades" (NSS 2010, p. i) and "Force will sometimes be necessary to confront threats" (NSS 2010, p. 36). However, this is nowhere close to the emphasis on unilateralism and preemption in George W. Bush's NSS.

Even more, Barack Obama's NSS 2010 has the most cases it rejects some grand strategy elements. And the elements NSS 2010 explicitly rejects is unilateralism and use of military power. Unilateralism is rejected in four sentences, thrice indirectly. The most specific criticism against unilateralism is the disregard of international organizations: "In recent years America's frustration with international institutions has led us at times to engage the United Nations (U.N.) system on an ad hoc basis" (NSS 2010. p. 13). Other three statements only hint towards criticism against unilateralism:

"Yet over the years, some methods employed in pursuit of our security have compromised our fidelity to the values that we promote, and our leadership on their behalf. This undercuts our ability to support democratic movements abroad, challenge nations that violate international human rights norms, and apply our broader leadership for good in the world." (NSS 2010. p. 10).

Furthermore, "overreacting in a way that creates fissures between America and certain regions or religions will undercut our leadership and make us less safe" (NSS 2010. p. 22). Neither of these statements directly invoke unilateralism, but from the context of more unilateralist policies of George W. Bush and multilateral emphasis of this NSS, it is clear that unilateralism is amongst the targets of this criticism.

This NSS contains 12 sentences critical of over extensive use of military power. Once rejection of the use of force is articulated explicitly: "In keeping with the focus on the foundation of our strength and influence, we are promoting universal values abroad by living



them at home, and will not seek to impose these values through force” (NSS 2010. p. 36). Another rejection of the use of force is more implicit, but the idea is the same as in the previous statement: “Our moral leadership is grounded principally in the power of our example—not through an effort to impose our system on other peoples” (NSS 2010. p. 36). Other statements against the use of military power are more indirect. They are about the rejection of torture by U.S. armed forces in interrogation tactics. This rejection of torture indicates a decreased emphasis on military methods in the fight against international terrorism without checks from the legal system. This NSS emphasizes rejection of torture in 10 sentences, for example:

“Brutal methods of interrogation are inconsistent with our values, undermine the rule of law, and are not effective means of obtaining information. They alienate the United States from the world. They serve as a recruitment and propaganda tool for terrorists. They increase the will of our enemies to fight against us, and endanger our troops when they are captured. The United States will not use or support these methods” (NSS 2010. p. 36).

Barack Obama’s NSS 2015 has more references and more explicit references to unilateralism and use of military power compared to NSS 2010. This NSS states twice that the U.S. “will act alone, if necessary” (NSS 2015, p. 23) and “will use military force, unilaterally if necessary, when our enduring interests demand it: when our people are threatened; when our livelihoods are at stake; and when the security of our allies is in danger” (NSS 2015, p. 8). While NSS 2010 almost does not talk about military power and rejects its use explicitly, this NSS makes a clear emphasis on military power 9 times. Two of the strongest statements in accordance with primacy were: “If deterrence fails, U.S. forces will be ready to project power globally to defeat and deny aggression in multiple theaters” (NSS 2015, p. 8) and “although our military will be smaller, it must remain dominant in every domain” (NSS 2015, p. 8). In addition to that, deterring “Russian aggression” (NSS 2015, p. 2, 19, 25) and to “help our allies and partners” (NSS 2015, p. 25) is explicitly mentioned in this NSS. This confirms the quantitative analyses that NSS 2015 contains more emphasis on military power than NSS 2010.

Although unlike NSS 2010, second Barack Obama’s NSS 2015 is not explicitly critical towards unilateralism, it is explicitly critical to the use of military power. Twice NSS 2015 boasts of a decrease in troop numbers deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan: “Compared to the nearly 180,000 troops we had in Iraq and Afghanistan when I took office, we now have fewer than 15,000 deployed in those countries” (NSS 2015. p. i). This NSS is critical about the use of military force in foreign policy, critical about “fighting costly, large-scale ground wars” (NSS 2015. p. 9). Such a strategy based on smaller military deployments is good as it “dramatically reduced U.S. casualties” (NSS 2015. p. 7).

To sum up, both NSS of George W. Bush are leaning towards primacy, while Barack Obama's NSS doesn't embrace primacist grand strategy elements in foreign policy. Out of all 4 NSS, NSS 2002 contains the most references to primacist elements of unilateralism and military power. Although quantitatively NSS 2006 has fewer references to primacy, the text of this document keeps the same language of NSS 2002 and still maintains emphasis on unilateralism and military power in foreign policy, specifically emphasizing preemption. Compared to George W. Bush's NSS, Barack Obama's do not ever talk about preemption and very rarely invokes unilateralist ideas. However, Barack Obama's NSS 2015 puts a bigger emphasis on military power compared to NSS 2006. NSS 2010 explicitly rejects the use of military power in foreign policy and talks about it rarely. NSS 2015 makes a clear emphasis on military power 9 times, often in relation to Russia, but not only. At the same time, this NSS in some cases is critical about the use of military power the same as NSS 2010. Nonetheless, NSS 2015 does not come close to an emphasis on the primacy of George W. Bush's NSS 2006 and especially NSS 2002.

#### **4.1.4 Barack Obama Embraces Liberal Internationalism**

Fourth, Barack Obama's NSS are liberal internationalist. Liberal internationalist ideas dominate NSS 2010. 66.2% of all references to grand strategies are about multilateralism and non-military power in foreign policy (see figure 4.1). 29.5% are about idealism and leadership, which are supported by both primacy and liberal internationalist grand strategies. Primacist elements of military power and unilateralism are supported only rarely (2.4%) and offshore balancing even less (1.9%). Thus, this NSS clearly embraces liberal internationalism. NSS 2015 offers a similar picture, but the emphasis on multilateralist and non-military power elements of liberal internationalism is decreased. They make up 43.4% of all references to grand strategies. Idealism and leadership play a bigger role (49%), but other grand strategy ideas play a minuscule role. Offshore balancing makes up 1.9% and primacist ideas about unilateralism and military power only 5.7%. Liberal internationalism dominates both Barack Obama's NSS.

Multilateralism is supported in all four NSS, but the level of support varies. Barack Obama's NSS 2010 is distinctively multilateral as 45.5% of all references to grand strategies are about multilateralism (see table 4.7). This NSS makes up 39.8% out of all references to multilateralism across four NSS (see table 4.8). George W. Bush's NSS 2006 is the least multilateral as only 16% of references to grand strategies are about multilateralism (see table 4.7). This makes up only 11.9 out of all references to multilateralism across four NSS (see table 4.8). Interestingly, Barack Obama's NSS 2015 supports multilateralism roughly to the

same level as George W. Bush’s NSS 2002. 31.2% of references to grand strategies are about multilateralism in NSS 2015 while 29% are about multilateralism in NSS 2002 (see table 4.7). While support to primacist elements is radically different between NSS of George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations, multilateralism is supported across all NSS.

*Table 4.7*

**Breakdown of the role of multilateralism and non-military power in NSS’s (%)**

	Multilateralism	Non-military power	Total references to liberal internationalism
Bush NSS 2002	29.0	3.7	32.7
Bush NSS 2006	16.0	0.2	16.2
Obama NSS 2010	45.5	20.7	66.2
Obama NSS 2015	31.2	12.2	43.4

Meanwhile, statements that put emphasis on non-military power are lacking in George W. Bush’s NSS and play a significant role in both Barack Obama’s NSS. Out of all statements about non-military power across four NSS, both George W. Bush’s NSS contain only 10.1% of statements with emphasis on non-military power. Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 contains the most (58.7%) and NSS 2015 contains 31.2% (see table 4.8). In proportion with the rest of the text of each NSS (see table 4.7), non-military power takes only 3.7% of all references to grand strategy in NSS 2002. Next NSS 2006 contains even less, only 0.2%. Both Barack Obama’s NSS are critical of military power and reject unilateralism and preemption explicitly, especially in the NSS 2010, as covered previously. Instead, both of them put emphasis on soft power. 20.7% of all references to grand strategies in NSS 2010 indicate support to non-military power. NSS 2015 somewhat decreases the role of non-military power. References to it make up only 12.2% of all references to grand strategies, however, this is far more compared to each of George W. Bush’s NSS.

**Relative support to multilateralism and non-military power in NSS's (%)**

	Multilateralism	Non-military power
Bush NSS 2002	23.7	9.6
Bush NSS 2006	11.9	0.5
Obama NSS 2010	39.8	58.7
Obama NSS 2015	24.6	31.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Leadership and idealism are elements of both primacy and liberal internationalism. However, if we add these elements to references to multilateralism and non-military power (66.2%), Barack Obama's NSS of 2010 is 95.7% about liberal internationalism (figure 4.1). References to multilateralism and non-military power make up most of NSS 2010 and this NSS gives both of these grand strategy elements the biggest emphasis out of all four NSS. At the same time, this NSS has only 2.4% of its grand strategy related content devoted to clear primacist ideas of unilateralism and support to military power. The essence of multilateralist liberal internationalism in this NSS is summarized in these two quotes: "When force is necessary, we will continue to do so in a way that reflects our values and strengthens our legitimacy, and we will seek broad international support, working with such institutions as NATO and the U.N. Security Council" (NSS 2010, p. 22), "Alliances are force multipliers: through multinational cooperation and coordination, the sum of our actions is always greater than if we act alone" (NSS 2010, p. 41). When talking about foreign policy tools at U.S. disposal, this NSS talks about the military, but almost always emphasizes non-military tools and a wide range of available instruments, for example: "Our security also depends upon diplomats...; development experts...; and intelligence and law enforcement..." (NSS 2010, p. i-ii).

Barack Obama's NSS 2015 adds a bit more emphasis on primacist ideas but remains mostly liberal internationalist. Emphasis on the primacy has increased more than two times. From 2.4% in NSS 2010 to 5.7% in 2015. However, liberal internationalist ideas of multilateralism and non-military power still dominate this NSS. They make 43.3% of the references to grand strategies in this document. References to leadership and idealism that are elements to both primacy and liberal internationalism make up the rest 49%. Contrary to emphasis on cooperation with non-democratic governments of the previous NSS, this one is

far more cautious: “But, even where our strategic interests require us to engage governments that do not share all our values, we will continue to speak out clearly for human rights and human dignity in our public and private diplomacy” (NSS 2015, p. 19). This increased emphasis on idealist values is in stark contrast with the pragmatic multilateral cooperation of the previous Barack Obama’s NSS that wanted “engagement with hostile nations to test their intentions, give their governments the opportunity to change course” (NSS 2010, p. 3). However, multilateralism, working with allies and international organizations still holds a prominent place in this NSS: “we will continuously expand the scope of cooperation to encompass other state partners, non-state and private actors, and international institutions—particularly the United Nations (U.N.), international financial institutions, and key regional organizations” (NSS 2015, p. 3). Despite more mentions of military power, soft power and non-military tools are embraced strongly in this NSS again even explicitly stating: “Moreover, we must recognize that a smart national security strategy does not rely solely on military power” (NSS 2015, p. ii). Altogether this is a continuation of the previous NSS which embraced liberal internationalism, but with a bigger emphasis on idealistic values.

Out of four NSS analyzed, Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 is the most liberal internationalist NSS. Roughly 40% of all references to multilateralism and roughly 60% of all references to non-military power across all four NSS can be found in this NSS. This NSS explicitly rejects primacy and strongly supports multilateralism as well as non-military and soft power. Compared to other NSS, Barack Obama’s NSS 2015 decreases emphasis on multilateralism but keeps the emphasis on non-military power. Both Barack Obama’s NSS, compared to George W. Bush’s NSS put emphasis on non-military power. While George W. Bush talks about non-military power rarely, Barack Obama’s NSS are riddled with references to it. Both Barack Obama’s NSS embrace the liberal internationalist grand strategy.

#### **4.1.5 Isolationism is Rejected**

Fifth, all NSS reject isolationism. The idea of U.S. leadership is such an inseparable part of NSS 2002 is so deep that this NSS does not even explicitly reject the idea of isolationism, while other three NSS do so explicitly. George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 criticizes “protectionist impulses” (NSS 2006. p. 27) and other ideas of isolationism: “There was a time when two oceans seemed to provide protection from problems in other lands, leaving America to lead by example alone. That time has long since passed. America cannot know peace, security, and prosperity by retreating from the world” (NSS 2006. p. 49). According to this NSS, “isolationism and protectionism, retreat and retrenchment” is “the path of fear” (NSS 2006. p. ii). Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 rejects isolationism by arguing that “it would be destructive to

both American national security and global security if the United States used the emergence of new challenges and the shortcomings of the international system as a reason to walk away from it” (NSS 2010. p. 3) and that “America has never succeeded through isolationism” (NSS 2010. p. 11). NSS 2015 does not talk about isolationism at all, similarly to George W. Bush’s NSS 2002.

These open rejections of isolationism rise an interesting question, why does an administration consider it is necessary to put emphasis on rejecting the ideas of isolationism? Perhaps it is to remind again that the U.S. should not be doing less, but more in the world to emphasize the necessity for U.S. leadership. This would make sense as U.S. leadership is emphasized in George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 far more than in 2002. An alternative explanation would be quite the opposite, that although NSS 2010 is trying to make a break from the previous administration, it will not go as far as isolationism would have it. This trend must be noted, but isolationism, however, is not the focus of this research and is an issue that could be explored in depth elsewhere. As all NSS openly reject isolationism, it is not considered as a viable U.S. grand strategy in these documents. Thus, this thesis does not cover isolationist grand strategy in its theoretical part and does not focus on this phenomenon in detail.

#### **4.2 Quantitative Analysis of NSS’s**

Quantitative measurements of four NSS’s confirm the trends described above. It is possible to use quantitative methods to classify each NSS as belonging to one or another grand strategy. One way is to use mean as the measurement of central tendency of each NSS (see figure 4.2). As offshore balancing is invoked rarely, for simplicity, this measurement will leave it out. Thus, there are two grand strategies which dominate all four NSS’s: primacy and liberal internationalism. Each grand strategy is given a quantifiable code 1 or 2. Liberal internationalism is coded as 1, primacy as 2. Every word that is used in the NSS to support one or another grand strategy is converted to the appropriate code number, and thus a mean value can be calculated. The statements supporting leadership and idealism, that are elements of both primacy and liberal internationalist grand strategies were left out because they could indicate support to both primacy and liberal internationalism. Statements against certain elements of grand strategies are not used in this analysis as they do not indicate support for any particular grand strategy.

This allows to see clearly, towards which grand strategy each NSS is leaning to. NSS 2002 and NSS 2006 were the closest to primacy with respective mean values of 1.45 and 1.39. Out of all four NSS, George W. Bush’s NSS are leaning the most towards primacy grand strategy. Barack Obama’s NSS of 2010 with the mean 1.03 is the closest to liberal

internationalism out of these four. Barack Obama's NSS 2015 slides a little towards primacy and with the mean value of 1.12 is in between NSS of 2010 and both George W. Bush's NSS, but still very close to pure liberal internationalism. This quantitative analysis shows a clear difference between NSS of both administrations and a small difference between the first and the second NSS of both George W. Bush as well as Barack Obama.

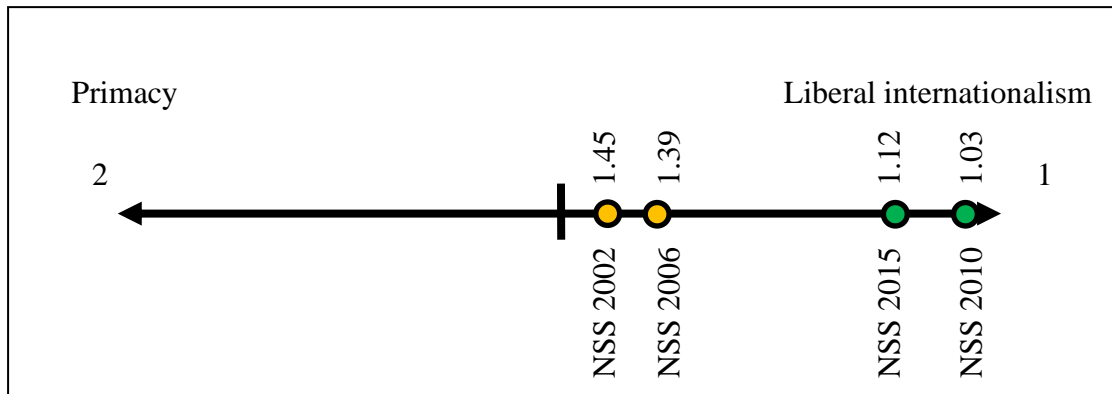


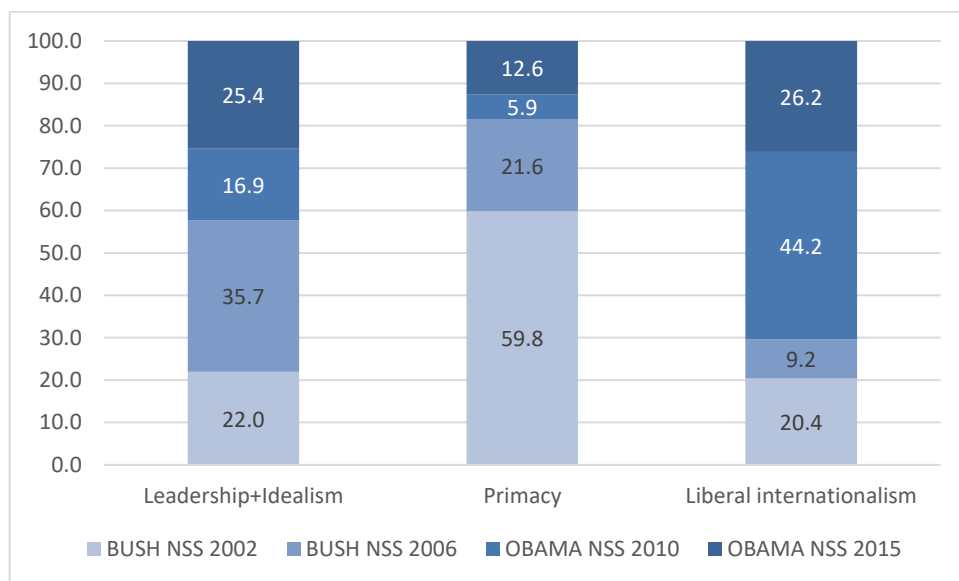
Figure 4.2 Mean measurement of central tendencies in NSS's

Both George W. Bush's NSS are leaning towards primacy, but at the same time, both are quite far from being pure primacist grand strategies. This can be explained by two arguments. Firstly, primacists are not against multilateralism, primacist support for unilateralism is often overstated. Kagan argues that this is an exaggeration about primacist grand strategy its critics use to discredit it. Historically very rarely the U.S. has pursued its foreign policy goals entirely alone. In most international conflicts the U.S. has tried to involve its allies. Even in Iraq war thirty-eight states helped the U.S. during the war or post-war stabilization. Even Iraq war was not purely unilateralist foreign policy, as its critics often describe it (Kagan, 2012, pp. 54-55). Thus, primacists are not supporting unilateralism exclusively but can talk about multilateralist grand strategy element too.

Secondly, although primacists emphasize unilateralism and military power, primacists do not denounce the use of multilateralism and non-military tools in foreign policy. Nonetheless, even if the U.S. uses multilateral rhetoric, according to primacists, U.S. is in fact still the country that leads the free world and organizes international coalitions, support to one or another solution for the international problem. Even if the U.S. uses the rhetoric of cooperation, the reality is, that U.S. dominates international system and thus, in essence, pursues unilateral foreign policy other states have to a degree acquiescence to, because the U.S. is the strongest state in the international system (Kagan, 2012, p. 60). Primacist emphasis on unilateralism and military power does not mean the abandonment of multilateralism and non-military power.

Primacists do not reject multilateralism and non-military tools, but they do emphasize unilateralism and use of military power more than liberal internationalists. This nuance is significant and shows that there is a small difference between primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategies. Considering this, **some emphasis on multilateralism is to be expected in a primacist grand strategy. Thus, overall George W. Bush’s NSS can be characterised as leaning towards primacist grand strategy.** The fact that George W. Bush’s NSS are leaning towards primacist grand strategy far more than Barack Obama’s NSS indicates support for this grand strategy. Although quantitative analysis shows that this NSS is in between pure primacist and pure liberal internationalist grand strategies, the considerations above and qualitative analysis shows the primacist nature of George W. Bush’s NSS.

Calculating mean out of all instances NSS talk about grand strategy is one way how to look at the coding results of the NSS. Another is to compare NSS in relation to one another, to see which NSS puts the most emphasis on one or another grand strategy. To do so, figure 4.3 compares all instances each grand strategy is referenced across all four NSS showing percentage value, how big role each strategy plays in each NSS. George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 dominates in references to unilateralism and military power that are characteristic to primacy. Almost two thirds (59.8%) out of all references to primacy across these four NSS are in NSS 2002. NSS 2006 uses one fifth (21.6%) of all references to primacy, while Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 only 5.9% and NSS of 2015 uses 12.6%. This clearly confirms the emphasis on primacy in the George W. Bush’s NSS and comparative lack of it in Barack Obama’s.



**Figure 4.3 Support for a specific grand strategy across NSS’s (%)**



In relative categories, liberal internationalism dominates in the Barack Obama's NSS of 2010. 44.2% of all references to liberal internationalism are in this NSS (see figure 4.3). NSS 2015 contains far less, 26.2% of all references to liberal internationalism, followed by George W. Bush's NSS of 2002 (20.4%). George W. Bush's NSS 2006 contains comparatively the least amount of references to multilateralist and non-military, soft power elements of liberal internationalism. Leadership and idealism – the two elements that are characteristic to both primacy and liberal internationalism – play a role in all NSS. 35.7% of all references to these two elements across four NSS are in George W. Bush's NSS of 2006. These elements are relatively equally distributed amongst the other three NSS with Barack Obama's NSS 2010 has the least (16.9%) emphasis on leadership and idealism in U.S. foreign policy. There are only a few sentences devoted to ideas of offshore balancing in each NSS. Less than 2% of all references to grand strategies each NSS are about offshore balancing (see figure 4.1). Thus, the data about offshore balancing is not comparable to references to primacy, liberal internationalism as well as leadership and idealism. Offshore balancing ideas played a small, but equal role in each NSS of Barack Obama, while George W. Bush's NSS almost completely ignored ideas of offshore balancing.

This in-depth analysis of quantitative measurements of NSS reaffirm the previous conclusions. Leadership and idealism are prevalent across all four NSS and second NSS of each administration emphasize these grand strategy elements more than the first. George W. Bush's NSS are leaning towards primacy, in fact, both of them have the most references to primacist grand strategy across all four NSS. Both Barack Obama's NSS are liberal internationalist. They have the most references to liberal internationalism compared to two other George W. Bush's NSS.

### **4.3 Summary of NSS Content Analysis**

To sum up both quantitative and qualitative analysis of two NSS of George W. Bush and two of Barack Obama, none of the NSS embrace only one set of ideas from a single grand strategy. However, the emphasis on particular grand strategy in each NSS can be clearly seen. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis of four NSS of the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations lead to the same conclusions. Both George W. Bush's NSS 2002 and 2006 lean towards primacy grand strategy, yet they contain liberal internationalist elements as well. Nonetheless, qualitative analysis of statements in these NSS show that both of them support core primacist premises about the international system and U.S. role in it. NSS 2002 embraces primacist grand strategy the most, compared to other NSS. NSS 2006 still embraces primacy but puts emphasis on idealist and leadership elements. Barack Obama's NSS 2010

goes fully liberal internationalist. NSS 2015 is still liberal internationalist, but with an increased support to leadership, idealism ideas and somewhat increased support to primacy grand strategy military power element.

Looking at other characteristics of these NSS, firstly, offshore balancing plays minuscule role across these NSS while isolationism plays no role and is explicitly rejected in three NSS. Secondly, emphasis on the role of global U.S. leadership has been steadily increasing, NSS 2002 only implied U.S. leadership and explicitly referred to it only a few times. Every following NSS talks more about the necessity for U.S. global leadership. 22.5% of all references to grand strategies in NSS 2015 were about the necessity for the U.S. to lead. The increasing need to emphasize necessity and benefits of U.S. leadership might indicate growing fears within the U.S. about U.S. decline. Thirdly, there are similarities between George W. Bush's 2006 and Barack Obama's 2015 NSS. These second NSS of both administrations double the emphasis on idealism and leadership in U.S. foreign policy. It might be the case that second NSS show a tendency for U.S. presidents to gravitate away from initially chosen grand strategy to more broader statements about values and leadership, which are similar in both primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategies. In addition to this trend, emphasis on military power in Barack Obama's NSS 2015 is similar to and George W. Bush's NSS 2006. The difference is that NSS 2015 does not support unilateralism.

These results show that from 2001 until 2017 U.S. has not adopted a single grand strategy. Grand strategy has changed from primacy during the George W. Bush administration to liberal internationalism during Barack Obama's. This goes against the supposed long-term nature of grand strategies, ability of grand strategies to withstand changes in international system as well as changes of presidential administrations that many authors argue grand strategies should have (Brands, 2014, p. 9; Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62; Murray, 2010, p. 77). Four NSS of George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations do not offer a unified grand strategy for U.S. Next section looks specifically at statements about Russia in these four NSS to test hypothesis one and two, whether during George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia and whether the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's.

#### **4.4 Analysis of Statements about Russia in NSS's**

Although there are comparatively few statements about Russia in each NSS, quantitative statistical analysis of statements about Russia can offer an insight about which grand strategy element dominates in approach towards Russia each NSS proposes. Emphasis

on proportion each NSS devotes to Russia grows with every NSS. In NSS 2002 only 89 words or 0.7% of all text was devoted to talking specifically about grand strategies towards Russia. In NSS 2006 already 1.1% of all text was about grand strategies towards Russia and Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 increased this proportion to 1.2%. In NSS 2015 whole 2% of all text was devoted to discussion U.S. foreign policy towards Russia (see table 4.9). These percentages include only statements about Russia with grand strategy elements in them.

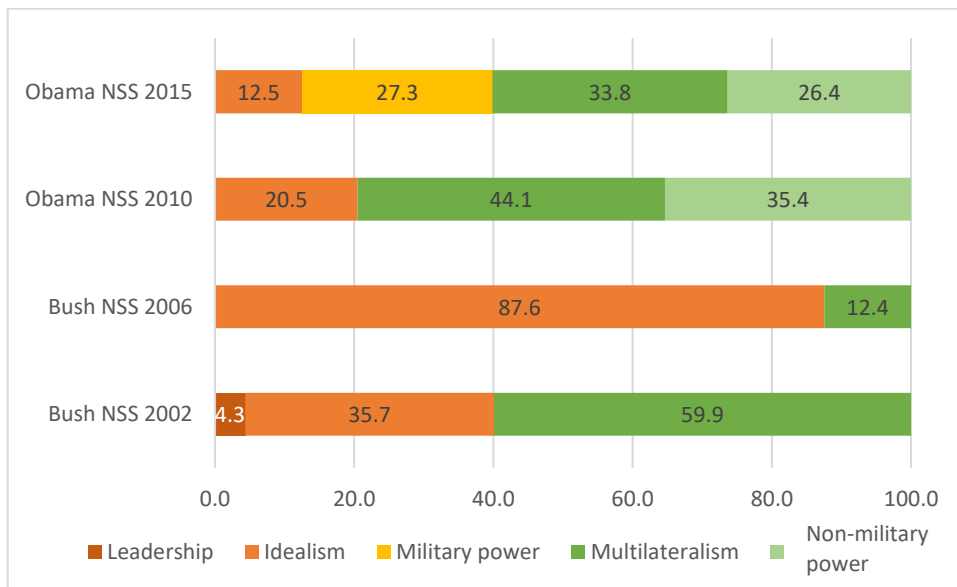
*Table 4.9*

**Statements about grand strategy towards Russia in NSS’s**

	Total words	Words about grand strategy specifically towards Russia	%
Bush NSS 2002	12501	89	0.7
Bush NSS 2006	18933	201	1.1
Obama NSS 2010	28080	330	1.2
Obama NSS 2015	14786	300	2.0

Statements about Russia with grand strategy elements in them differ from overall grand strategy. Although George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 and 2006 compared to Barack Obama’s NSS emphasized primacy, primacist elements are missing from statements about Russia in George W. Bush’s NSS. Instead liberal internationalist, particularly multilateralist elements play a bigger role compared to the overall NSS (see figure 4.4). Respectively 59.9% of all references to Russia in NSS 2002. Statements about Russia with references to leadership (4.3%) and idealism (35.7%) make up the rest of the grand strategy references about Russia in NSS 2002. Latter is comparable to the overall content of NSS 2002 in which references to idealism made up 37.8% out of all references to grand strategies (see figure 4.3). In NSS 2006 there was an overall increase of idealist elements to 65.3%. Idealism also dominates George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 regarding Russia. It makes whole 87.6% of all grand strategy references to Russia. Liberal internationalist multilateralism makes up only 12.4% of references to Russia in NSS 2006. Regarding primacist elements in NSS, 15% of all references to grand strategies in the overall NSS 2002 are about unilateralism and 11.3 are about the use of military power in foreign policy. 7.2% of references to grand strategies in NSS 2006 are about unilateralism and 3.2% about military power (see table 4.5). However, while both NSS 2002

and 2006 contain references to unilateralism and military power, these are not reflected in statements about Russia. There are no references to these grand strategy elements in regard to Russia. Thus, the quantitative analysis of George W. Bush’s NSS shows a liberal internationalist strategy towards Russia with emphasis on idealist values, which is in contrary to the overall NSS 2002 and 2006 that emphasized primacy. The approach towards Russia lacks primacist elements which were emphasized in both NSS.



*Figure 4.4. Grand strategy elements in NSS statements on Russia*

The strategy towards Russia in Barack Obama’s NSS corresponds to the overall grand strategy of the both NSS. Grand strategy references to Russia in NSS 2010 contain 20.5% ideas of idealism, 44.1% to multilateralist ideas, and 35.4% refers to non-military, soft power grand strategy elements (see figure 4.4). Latter two belong to liberal internationalist grand strategy. This is in accord with the overall grand strategy which also puts emphasis on liberal internationalism grand strategy elements. 18.8% of references in NSS 2010 went to idealism (see table 4.3), 45.5% to multilateralism and 20.7% to non-military power (see table 4.7). Grand strategy references about Russia in NSS 2015 also correlates with overall NSS. Statements about Russia consist 12.5% from idealism, 27.3% military power, 33.8% multilateralist and 26.4% non-military power elements of grand strategies (see figure 4.4). The increased emphasis on primacist military power element corresponds with increased emphasis on military power across whole NSS 2015 compared to NSS 2010. 4.8% of references to grand strategy in NSS 2015 were references to military power, which was an increase from 1.8% of NSS 2010 (see table 4.5). The decrease in liberal internationalist elements (multilateralism and non-military power) towards Russia also corresponds to the

decrease of support for these elements in both NSS overall. One thing that differs is the emphasis on leadership and idealism. NSS 2015 increases emphasis on these elements compared to NSS 2010 from 29.5% to 49% (see figure 4.1), while specific statements on Russia (figure 4.4) contain no references to U.S. leadership and there is a decline in references to idealism (20.5% to 12.5%). Except for this one difference, overall references to grand strategy in NSS and specific strategy towards Russia in both Barack Obama's NSS are in accord. The strategy towards Russia reflects the same grand strategy elements as overall NSS.

Looking in depth at the statements about Russia in NSS, the qualitative analysis shows a similar picture as quantitative. George W. Bush's NSS 2002 contains three references to multilateralism in relations with Russia. Specifically, the necessity to cooperate with Russia, for example: "Having moved from confrontation to cooperation as the hallmark of our relationship with Russia, the dividends are evident" (NSS 2002. p. 13). There is only one rather vague reference to U.S. leadership about assisting Russia to join the WTO (NSS 2002. p. 18). Idealism is referenced twice. Russia is described as being "in the midst of a hopeful transition, reaching for its democratic future" (NSS 2002. p. ii). However, "Russia's uneven commitment to the basic values of free-market democracy... remain matters of great concern" (NSS 2002. p. 27). Thus, "advancement of democracy" (NSS 2002. p. ii) is the proposed strategy the U.S. should use towards Russia. This is in accordance to the overall theme about promoting idealist values this NSS supports.

There are also various statements about Russia in this NSS that do not belong to any grand strategy and were not coded in quantitative analysis. These are references to "common interests and challenges" (NSS 2002. p. 27) while acknowledging that there is "lingering distrust" (NSS 2002. p. 27). NSS 2002 talks about the necessity to be "realistic about the differences that still divide us from Russia and about the time and effort it will take to build an enduring strategic partnership" (NSS 2002. p. 27). In relations with Russia, this NSS talks about the rejection of "great power competition" (NSS 2002. p. 26) and declares that "United States and Russia are no longer strategic adversaries" (NSS 2002. p. 26). Both of these statements are vague, but they might indicate rejection of primacist military power as an element in relations with Russia. This is highly likely as in the quantitative analysis of references to Russia in NSS 2002 there are no mentions of primacist elements in relation to Russia.

Emphasis on multilateralism in relations with Russia discussed in both NSS is in stark contrast with grand strategy primacists prescribe for relations with Russia. Although primacists do not reject multilateral cooperation in foreign policy (Kagan, 2012, pp. 54-55, 60), they are critical about cooperation with authoritarian states. Primacists argue that the U.S.

should act alone, if necessary, but primacists are not against multilateralism and multilateral cooperation with allies. However, for example, Kagan writes that while he is not against multilateral cooperation with allies, U.S. should not and even cannot cooperate with authoritarian states, because they act against U.S. interests in the international system. Authoritarian states and this includes Russia, support opposite values compared to the U.S.: they are against and work against the U.S. attempts to promote democracy, human rights, and liberal values. Authoritarian Russia promotes its undemocratic model of governance – “power vertical” and “managed democracy” – in the international arena, thus providing a role model, helping and strengthening other authoritarian governments, which is against U.S. national interest. Not only Russia rallies other authoritarian regimes to resist U.S. foreign policy, Russia also uses international organizations, such as United Nations, to hinder and obstruct U.S. foreign policy, to make it harder for the U.S. to promote its interests in the international arena (Kagan, 2007, 33, 35). All aforementioned arguments show that there is not only lack of common values, lack of common interests, lack of agreement on core issues, but Russia is actively working against U.S. national interests. A truly multipolar world where the U.S. would fully have to take into account undemocratic and illiberal interests of authoritarian states would be conflictual, unstable and “unlikely to succeed” (Kagan, 2007, p. 35). Thus, in relations with authoritarian states, including Russia, primacists are against the use of multilateral cooperation. Cooperation with authoritarian states is counterproductive and should not be pursued in relations with Russia.

The NSS of 2006, developed in the second term of George W. Bush’s presidency, supports idealist values in foreign policy specifically focusing on Russia. George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 in relations to Russia uses mainly idealist statements. Only once this NSS contains a reference to multilateral cooperation with Russia working “closely with Russia on strategic issues of common interest” (NSS 2006. p. 39). In eight cases democracy, freedom and other ideals are invoked in reference to Russia. For example: “We must encourage Russia to respect the values of freedom and democracy at home and not to impede the cause of freedom and democracy...” (NSS 2006. p. 39). This NSS regrets that “recent trends regrettably point toward a diminishing commitment to democratic freedoms and institutions” (NSS 2006. p. 39) and pledges to “work to try to persuade the Russian Government to move forward, not backward, along freedom’s path” (NSS 2006. p. 39). Furthermore, this NSS stresses that relations between the two countries are directly linked to democracy in Russia: “democratic progress in Russia and its region... improves relationships with” the U.S., while Russia’s “efforts to prevent democratic development at home and abroad will hamper the development of Russia’s relations with the United States” (NSS 2006. p. 39). NSS 2006 emphasizes that

idealist values are main elements in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia as was the emphasis of this NSS overall. This NSS is highly critical of the deteriorating situation with democracy and human rights in Russia and links U.S. relations with Russia to democracy in this country.

Barack Obama's NSS 2010 refers to Russia as one of the "key centers of influence" (NSS 2010. p. 3) with which it is critical for the U.S. to build "broader cooperation on areas of mutual interest" (NSS 2010. p. 43), "on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect" (NSS 2010. p. 10), as "no one nation can meet the challenges of the 21st century on its own, nor dictate its terms to the world" (NSS 2010. p. 40). There are three references to liberal internationalist non-military power element which are about leading the nonproliferation efforts together with Russia by example: "working together to advance nonproliferation, both by reducing our nuclear arsenals... to ensure that other countries meet their international commitments to reducing the spread of nuclear weapons around the world" (NSS 2010. p. 44). However, this NSS has added a caveat after the Russia-Georgia war, that the U.S. "will support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia's neighbors" (NSS 2010. p. 44). This NSS also talks twice about idealist values in relation to Russia. Both times rather vaguely. Once it talks about supporting "efforts within Russia to promote the rule of law, accountable government, and universal values," (NSS 2010. p. 44) which is more vague term than the promotion of democracy, supported by both George W. Bush's NSS. The other case where idealist values are invoked in relation to Russia is a quote from Barack Obama's speech in Moscow, July 7, 2009: about support to international system "where the universal rights of human beings are respected, and violations of those rights are opposed" (NSS 2010. p. 40). There are no direct references to democracy regarding Russia. This NSS when referring to Russia tunes down idealist rhetoric of previous NSS, emphasizing cooperation, which was also the general topic of overall NSS 2010.

Statements about Russia Barack Obama's NSS 2015 are the most different from other NSS as they invoke elements from primacy, namely emphasis on military power. All primacist statements are about deterring Russia from using military force. Firstly, U.S. "will deter Russian aggression, remain alert to its strategic capabilities, and help our allies and partners resist Russian coercion over the long term, if necessary" (NSS 2015. p. 25). Secondly, U.S. is "reassuring our allies by backing our security commitments and increasing responsiveness through training and exercises, as well as a dynamic presence in Central and Eastern Europe to deter further Russian aggression" (NSS 2015. p. 25). Thirdly, U.S. "will support partners such as Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine so they can better work alongside the United States and NATO, as well as provide for their own defense" (NSS 2015. p. 25). Russia's aggression in Ukraine in the spring 2014 changed U.S. grand strategy. This was a

unique new tone in relations to Russia uncharacteristic to any other NSS. This characterizes a new period in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia with emphasis on primacist grand strategy. Such a change did not occur after Russia – Georgia war and was not evident in statements about Russia in George W. Bush’s NSS, which overall leaned towards primacist grand strategy.

Interestingly, there is only one reference about idealism regarding Russia in this NSS. But it is a very strong and direct one: “Many of the threats to our security in recent years arose from efforts by authoritarian states to oppose democratic forces—from the crisis caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine...” (NSS 2015. p. 19). Russia is clearly mentioned as a threat to U.S. security and as an authoritarian state. This also invokes competition between authoritarian states and democratic forces. This is something that sounds like statements about the conflict between democracy and tyranny from both George W. Bush’s NSS.

Overall liberal internationalist elements play a major role in references to Russia in this NSS. Necessity for multilateralism in regard to Russia is invoked four times, however now it is about the need to work with partners against Russia: “In lockstep with our European allies, we are enforcing tough sanctions on Russia to impose costs and deter future aggression” (NSS 2015. p. i) and “working with Europe to improve its energy security in both the short and long term” (NSS 2015. p. 25). Russia’s aggression in Ukraine promoted not only emphasis on military power, but also non-military power: “And we will continue to impose significant costs on Russia through sanctions and other means while countering Moscow’s deceptive propaganda with the unvarnished truth” (NSS 2015. p. 25), meanwhile keeping “the door open to greater collaboration with Russia in areas of common interests, should it choose a different path” (NSS 2015. p. 25) and keeping U.S. commitments: “For our part, we are reducing the role and number of nuclear weapons through New START and our own strategy” (NSS 2015. p. 11).

Other statements about Russia, that are not using any elements of grand strategies are mostly about Russia’s aggression, for example: “In the realm of inter-state conflict, Russia’s violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity—as well as its belligerent stance toward other neighboring countries—endangers international norms that have largely been taken for granted since the end of the Cold War” (NSS 2015. p. 10). Other statements are about various threats from Russia to Europe, especially, “energy security concerns have been exacerbated by European dependence on Russian natural gas and the willingness of Russia to use energy for political ends” (NSS 2015. p. 5). These and other vague terms could not be coded and were not included in quantitative analysis.



To sum up, in George W. Bush's NSS overall support to grand strategy is different than strategy outlined towards Russia. In both Barack Obama's NSS strategy towards Russia is in accord with the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS. Looking at the case of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's NSS are different. George W. Bush's NSS does not offer an overarching grand strategy applied to all issues, as the strategy prosed towards Russia differs from overall grand strategy this NSS supports. Barack Obama's grand strategy is consistent across overall NSS and specific strategy towards Russia.

#### **4.5 Summary of Statements about Russia in NSS's**

The quantitative and qualitative analysis of four NSS's shows a difference between the overall tone of NSS's and specific references to Russia in both of George W. Bush's NSS's. Although both NSS's gravitate towards primacy, when it comes to Russia, the NSS of 2002 and 2006 adopt elements of liberal internationalist grand strategy and none of the primacist elements. Both NSS's discuss cooperation with Russia, but cooperation with Russia goes against the primacist idea that the U.S. should not cooperate with authoritarian states that are working against U.S. interests in the international system (Kagan, 2007, pp. 33, 35). References to Russia in the NSS form 2006 correlate with the overall tone of this NSS: idealist values dominate both NSS's overall (65.3%, see Table 4.3) and specific references to Russia (87.6%, see Figure 4.4). The NSS from 2002 supports the "advancement of democracy" (NSS 2002. p. ii) in Russia in accordance with the overall theme of this NSS, but it also supports cooperation. The NSS from 2006 emphasizes idealist values as the main elements in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia as was the emphasis of this NSS overall. This NSS criticizes the deterioration of democracy in Russia and links U.S. relations with Russia to democracy and human rights in this country. Nonetheless, the approach towards Russia outlined in both NSS's lacks primacist elements – an emphasis on unilateralism and military power – that played a major role in both NSS's.

Contrary to George W. George W. Bush's NSS's, references to Russia in both of Barack Obama's NSS's reflect the general tone of overall NSS's. Overall the NSS from 2010 uses 29.5% of references to grand strategies about leadership and idealism and 66.2% to multilateralism and non-military power (see Figure 4.1). Statements about Russia use the same elements. 20.5% of the references to grand strategies about Russia are about idealism and 79.5% are about multilateralism and non-military power (see Figure 4.4). This NSS almost abandons the specific language about democracy in Russia used by George W. Bush's NSS from 2002 and 2006. However, it puts emphasis on cooperation the same as the NSS

from 2002 did. Similar to the previous NSS, the NSS from 2010 embraces the liberal internationalist approach to Russia that was in accord with the overall tone of this NSS.

The NSS of 2015 was published after Russia's aggression in Ukraine, which started in spring 2014. This NSS offers a different grand strategy towards Russia compared to the previous NSS. In relations with Russia, this NSS uses the military power element from primacy, namely, the necessity to deter Russia. This is a unique new tone in relations with Russia uncharacteristic to any other NSS. Although the relative proportion of references to idealism with regard to Russia drops in the NSS of 2015 compared to the NSS from 2010, from 20.5% to 12.5% (see Figure 4.4), the rhetoric about Russia in this NSS sounds like the statements about the conflict between democracy and tyranny from both of George W. Bush's NSS's. Russia is described as a threat to U.S. security and as an authoritarian state, invoking competition between authoritarian states and democratic forces. References to Russia in the NSS from 2015, contrary to the overall tone of the NSS, decrease in the use of idealism. This NSS emphasizes multilateralism and non-military power in relations with Russia (60.2%, Figure 4.4), a bit more than the overall NSS (43.4%, Figure 4.1) and puts a strong emphasis on the primacist element of military force in relations with Russia. Military power makes up 27.3% of references to grand strategies about Russia (see Figure 4.4), while in the overall NSS, primacist references made up only 5.7%. Although the NSS, overall, was leaning towards primacy, it was not as supportive of primacy as the NSS from 2002 and 2006. However, regarding strategy towards Russia, the NSS from 2015 embraces grand strategy leaning towards primacy.

Thus, the H1 that the NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies is not confirmed. Although grand strategists (Brands, 2014, p. 9; Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62; Murray, 2010, p. 77) argue that their strategies should be able to endure changes in the international system, both the overall tone of the NSS's and specific references about Russia have changed. The overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's changed between the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. While both of George W. Bush's NSS's emphasized primacy, they also retained liberal internationalist elements. Barack Obama supported liberal internationalism in the NSS from 2010, while the NSS from 2015, while still liberal internationalist, moved a bit closer to primacy. The approach to Russia outlined in George W. Bush's NSS from 2002 was entirely different to the approach in Barack Obama's NSS from 2015. Both of George W. Bush's NSS outlined a liberal internationalist strategy for relations with Russia. Barack Obama's NSS 2010 outlined a liberal internationalist approach towards Russia, but NSS 2015 changed it more towards primacist.

While overall George W. Bush's NSS were leaning towards primacy, strategy towards Russia during George W. Bush administration outlined in NSS was liberal internationalist. Cooperation with Russia both NSS discussed was in stark difference from primacist argument that the U.S. should not cooperate with authoritarian states (Kagan, 2007, pp. 33, 35). Russia-Georgia war did not change U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. Barack Obama's NSS were more consistent. First NSS of Barack Obama administration also outlined a liberal internationalist strategy both overall and towards Russia. However, after Russian aggression in Ukraine and support to Assad in Syria second Barack Obama's NSS in 2015 changed U.S. grand strategy towards Russia towards primacy. It still retained liberal internationalist elements but emphasized primacist elements in relations with Russia to the same level primacist elements were emphasized in overall George W. Bush's NSS 2002, which had the most references to primacy. Thus, the H2: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies is not confirmed as well.

The critics of grand strategies are correct, grand strategies are not as monolith and enduring as their supporters describe them. Not only U.S. grand strategy in relations with Russia has changed during Barack Obama presidency, strategy towards Russia outlined in NSS differed from overall NSS during George W. Bush's administration. Critics of grand strategies argue that it is impossible to predict future as well as to take into account all different variables and potential changes of the international system (Brands, 2014, p. 14; Murray, 2010, p. 79). The world is far too complex for one overarching grand strategy to address all of the variable aspects of international relations (Goldgeier, November 5, 2009). The analysis of overall U.S. grand strategy outlined in NSS and specific strategy towards Russia show that the critics of grand strategies are correct.

## 5. Analysis of Grand Strategy Elements in Speeches

Analysis of four NSS of both George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations done in the previous chapter indicated that overall grand strategy outlined in these documents does not correlate with a strategy proposed for a specific state – Russia. Thus, disproving the second hypothesis. Furthermore, analysis of NSS showed that in relations with Russia, U.S. did not articulate a single, coherent grand strategy. Liberal internationalist approach to Russia, characteristic of George W. Bush’s NSS 2002, 2006 and Barack Obama NSS 2010, changed to more primacist approach in Barack Obama’s NSS 2015. This shows that the first hypothesis is disproved as well. Although grand strategists argue that these grand strategies should be long-term, comprehensive strategies that can survive changes and crisis in the international system as well as offer comprehensive solutions for multitude of challenges in foreign policy (Brands, 2014, p. 9; Drezner, 2011, pp. 60-62; Murray, 2010, p. 77), the analysis of U.S. grand strategy towards Russia as outlined in the NSS shows that this is not the case. However, references in NSS about what U.S. foreign policy towards Russia should be were rather few, so it is necessary to look also at speeches about U.S. relations with Russia during both Barack Obama and George W. Bush administrations.

While the previous chapter focused on the articulation phase of grand strategy, looking at how grand strategies were articulated in the NSS, this chapter analyzes the implementation phase in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Both of these phases are crucial because it is not enough to articulate a grand strategy, it is necessary also to implement it in real life (Martel, 2015, p. 158). This chapter analyzes speeches about Russia by President George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Vice President Joe Biden to test the third hypothesis: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS’s corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies.

To evaluate the implementation phase of grand strategy this thesis looks at speeches during George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidency to analyze how the U.S.’s grand strategy used towards Russia has changed over time and whether these changes correspond to the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS. For the analysis of grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush presidency, 13 units of analysis are used. For the analysis of grand strategy towards Russia during the Barack Obama presidency, 23 units of analysis are used. The speeches of U.S. presidents and in the case of the Barack Obama administration, 5 speeches by Vice President Joe Biden as well, who played a major role in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia were used. Statements by U.S. presidents and Vice President Joe Biden were chosen as the units of analysis because they are the highest-level

sources on where the U.S. stands on different foreign policy issues and offered the most comprehensive outline of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, as U.S. presidents have the central role in the U.S. foreign policy decision-making process and have the most significance in determining and shaping U.S. foreign policy.

This chapter starts with an analysis of George W. Bush's speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, building on the grand strategy classification developed in the theoretical part of this thesis. According to this analysis, George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia can be divided into five stages, based on how grand strategy elements were arranged in these speeches. The next section offers an overview of five stages in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia, putting them into the context of grand strategies described in NSS's as well as in context with what other scholars have written about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during George W. Bush's administration. Four stages of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during Barack Obama's administration are then analyzed and summarized in a similar way.

### **5.1 Stages in George W. Bush's Foreign Policy Towards Russia**

There are 12 speeches and 4 short statements (used as a single unit of analysis) on the Russia-Georgia War during August 2008 with at least five references to Russia in them in the White House archive of George W. Bush's presidency from January 2001 to January 2009. These speeches were coded according to the grand strategy classification framework developed throughout the theoretical part. Figure 5.1 offers an analysis of these speeches and statements, offering the percentage of support for each grand strategy element in each speech. This section and the following sub-sections offer analysis of different stages of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia that can be seen in these speeches, comparing them with overall grand strategy and specific grand strategy towards Russia that was articulated in George W. Bush's NSS's from 2002 and 2006.

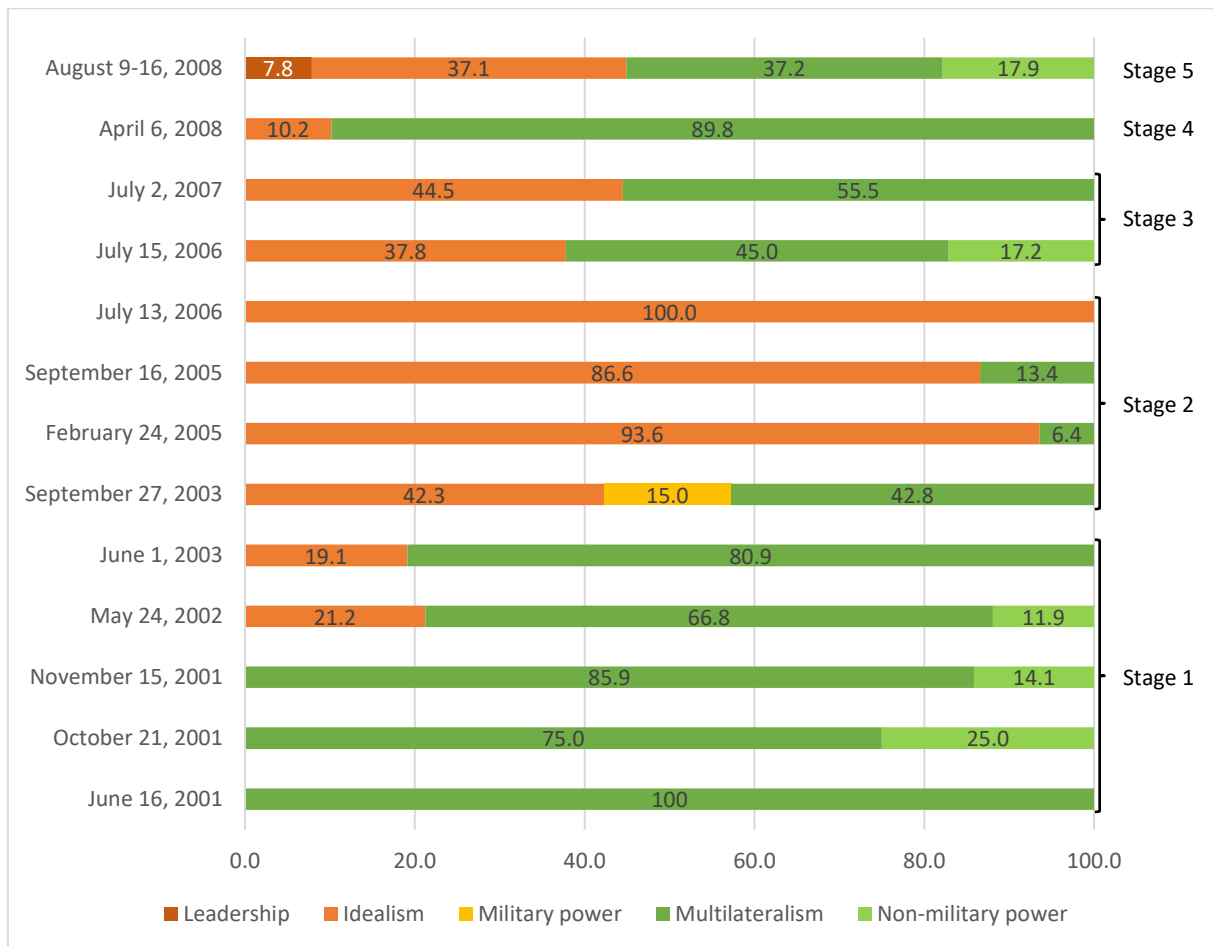


Figure 5.1 Analysis of statements on Russia during the Bush administration (%)

There were five different stages in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia from 2001 until 2009 in the speeches of President George W. Bush. The first stage in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia lasted from George W. Bush’s inauguration until mid-2003. The emphasis here was on multilateralism, on cooperation with Russia to solve problems in the international system. The second stage started from mid-2003 and lasted until July 13, 2006. This stage was characterized by an emphasis on idealist values, particularly democracy promotion in foreign policy towards Russia. Contrary to the first stage, cooperation played a minuscule role in this stage. The third stage started from July 15, 2006 and lasted until the beginning of 2008. This stage consisted of short, vague statements about Russia which lacked specific detail and can be described as a drift in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Bush’s reset was a new stage started in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia from April 2008 until the Russia-Georgia war which started August 7, 2008. George W. Bush offered a more specific agenda in relations with Russia, compared to the previous stage and placed emphasis on multilateral cooperation, putting almost no emphasis on idealist values. However, this stage lasted only until August 2008, when after Russian aggression in Georgia, George W. Bush

started talking about Russia using idealist, multilateralist and non-military power grand strategy elements.

Throughout these five stages, George W. Bush used a liberal internationalist grand strategy towards Russia. This is consistent with George W. Bush's NSS's from 2002 and 2006. While the overall strategy of George W. Bush's NSS was leaning towards primacist grand strategy, specific strategy towards Russia, as outlined in the NSS, was liberal internationalism. This is also evident in the speeches of George W. Bush. Each of these five stages which became evident after coding George W. Bush's speeches according to the grand strategy classification, are described in depth in the following five sections.

### **5.1.1 Cooperation**

The first stage in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia had an emphasis on multilateralism and cooperation with Russia in order to address various global problems. This period lasted from George W. Bush's inauguration in January 2001 until mid-2003. Initially, in 2001 the emphasis in Bush's speeches on Russia was on multilateralism and some non-military power grand strategy elements. In three speeches on Russia during 2001, there is no mention of idealist ideas (see figure 5.1). The grand strategy references in these speeches are mostly (at least 75%) about cooperation with Russia. October 21 and November 15 speeches contain some references to non-military power elements (25% and 14.1% accordingly). The first extensive Bush's speech on Russia was in a press conference after meeting with Vladimir Putin, June 16, 2001. There Bush talked only about possible cooperation between the two countries. "When Russia and the United States work together in a constructive way, we can make the world a safer and more prosperous place." Thus, it is necessary to "begin constructive, real dialogue" with Russia in order to "build a relationship of mutual respect and candor" and to "work together to address the world as it is" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, June 16, 2001). Similar language dominates George W. Bush's speeches throughout this first stage of George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia.

For the U.S. after 9/11 cooperation with Russia was a "critical element in the global effort against terrorism" and needed for a "post-conflict settlement in Afghanistan" as well "to stem the export and proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological materials, related technologies, and delivery systems" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, October 21, 2001). Cooperation was emphasized in "anti-terrorism and anti-proliferation" efforts multiple times as well as in broader sense in "other areas where to cooperate" and working "together to make the world more peaceful" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, November 15, 2001). Another element that was emphasized was a necessity for "nations must

make use of diplomatic, political, law enforcement, financial, intelligence, and military means to root out terrorists and their sponsors and bring them to justice” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, October 21, 2001). The emphasis was on the use of soft power, non-military tools, leaving military force just as one of the instruments in foreign policy arsenal. These speeches on a few occasions contain ideas about the necessity to “reduce the amount of nuclear weapons, offensive weapons” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, November 15, 2001), which can be classified as a rhetoric supporting soft power, emphasizing non-military elements in foreign policy.

Some idealist elements appeared in George W. Bush’s speeches in 2002. May 24, 2002, in an appearance before the press after signing Nuclear Arms Treaty George W. Bush welcomed “the dramatic improvement in freedoms in Russia since Soviet days” and “discussed with President Putin the important role of free press in building a working democracy” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2002). References to idealist elements make up 21.2% of all references to grand strategies in this speech (see figure 5.1). Some non-military power elements (11.9%) about the reduction of “our nuclear – strategic nuclear warhead arsenals” remain in this speech (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2002). However, the main emphasis still is on multilateralism (66.8%): about necessity “to work in a spirit of cooperation and a spirit of trust” and about “new strategic relationship.” Cooperation in the “war against global terror” is expanded to “rebuilding Afghanistan,” “work to improve security in Georgia,” cooperation to “end fighting and achieve a political settlement in Chechnya,” as well as “working closely” on Iran. Cooperation with Russia is extended even to working with NATO by establishing the new NATO-Russia Council (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2002).

In a speech made on June 1, 2003, in Moscow, out of all statements relating to U.S. grand strategy towards Russia, 19.1% went to references idealism: “President Putin committed to working for a sustainable democracy in Russia where human, political, and civil rights will be fully ensured.” If he will follow through, he will “have the friendship of the United States” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 1, 2003). This is the first time, George W. Bush tied together democratic reforms in Russia as a pre-requisite for successful cooperation with the U.S. This later became the central element of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia of Bush administration. Nonetheless, the rest of this speech was again about multilateral cooperation in the “war on terror,” on “missile defense,” building “a better future for the people of Iraq,” in “energy sector” and the economy as well as general “work together for the good of the world.” Furthermore, both countries should cooperate even more by attempting to “expand and strengthen high-level contacts and communications between our



two governments” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 1, 2003). This was the last speech of George W. Bush about Russia where multilateral cooperation dominated. Further speeches indicate a new period in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia in which emphasis was on idealist values, linking democracy in Russia with the U.S.-Russia relations.

The first stage in Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia was all about cooperating with Russia to multilaterally address complex global problems. This is in line with the specific liberal internationalist strategy towards Russia that was articulated in NSS 2002. George W. Bush’s speeches about Russia were in line with specific liberal internationalist statements about Russia of this NSS, not with the general emphasis on primacist grand strategy of this NSS. However, in 2003 this grand strategy started to change. Emphasis on idealist values in the June 1 speech increased and George W. Bush linked democracy in Russia with positive relations with the U.S., which dominated the next stage in U.S. relations with Russia.

### **5.1.2 Democracy, not Cooperation**

The next speech George W. Bush gave on September 27, 2003, when he met with Russian President Putin at Camp David was a sharp change in rhetoric. It started the second stage in foreign policy towards Russia under George W. Bush’s administration with an overwhelming emphasis on idealist values, particularly democracy and a small role left to cooperation. This stage lasted from mid-2003 until July 13, 2006. References to idealist values (42.3%) have the same proportion in this speech as references to the necessity to cooperate, which make up 42.8% of all references to grand strategies (see figure 5.1). As previously, this speech restated, that “Russia and the United States are allies in the war on terror” and talked about cooperation in economy, e.g. lowering trade barriers and in “energy sector,” “expanding our cooperation in Iraq and in Afghanistan” and working “together to convince Iran to abandon her ambitions” with the hope to bring “U.S.-Russian relationship to a new level of partnership” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 27, 2003). This rhetoric was present in previous speeches, but this speech added emphasis on democracy in Russia.

This speech started a new stage in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia where the emphasis was put on the necessity for democratic reforms in Russia: “I respect President Putin's vision for Russia: ...a country in which democracy and freedom and rule of law thrive. Because of the President's vision and his desires, I'm confident that we'll have a strong relationship which will improve the lives of our fellow citizens, as well as help make the world more peaceful.” This speech again clearly establishes democratic reforms in Russia as a pre-requisite for successful cooperation with the U.S. However, this speech went much

further. Even in Chechnya “a lasting solution to that conflict will require an end to terror, respect for human rights and a political settlement that leads to free and fair elections.” Even the U.S. attempts to promote democracy in the Middle East is good for Russia: “Russia and the entire world will benefit from the advance of stability and freedom in these nations, because free and stable nations do not breed ideologies of murder or threaten people of other lands” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 27, 2003). The latter statement tied in Russia into a larger democracy promotion agenda of the George W. Bush administration. George W. Bush argued that this democracy promotion the U.S. is advocating in the Middle East is good not only for the U.S. but also for Russia.

This speech is unique as it contains elements that can be classified as an emphasis on military power (15%). This speech talked about broadening “Russian-American military cooperation” and intensifying “our missile defense cooperation.” Improving “our joint ability to fight terror, to keep peace in troubled regions and stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 27, 2003). This can be and was coded as an emphasis on military power in foreign policy, however, in relations to Russia, this is more of an indication of a multilateralist strategy, with emphasis on cooperation. So, although coded as support to military power grand strategy element, this statement could also indicate support to multilateral cooperation with Russia.

Idealism dominates next three George W. Bush’s speeches on Russia. Also telling is the fact that in 2004 there were no extensive speeches on Russia delivered by U.S. President George Bush. A possible explanation for this could be the U.S. preoccupation with Iraq campaign. However, by February 24, 2005, in a joint statement by presidents of both U.S. and Russia George W. Bush has absolutely changed his rhetoric towards Russia. Talk of cooperation is over. The only issue where Bush talks about multilateral cooperation with Russia is of the fact that both presidents had “agreed to cooperate in the field of energy” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. February 24, 2005). This makes only 6.4% of all references to grand strategies in this statement. Rest of it 93.6% were about idealist values (see figure 5.1). With 562 words, this statement is the second biggest in number of words used to discuss grand strategies towards Russia. Almost all of these words (93.6%) are about democracy, human rights and rule of law. The specific idealist values in relation to Russia this speech emphasizes were: “rule of law and protection of minorities, a free press and a viable political opposition” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. February 24, 2005).

It is important to note similarities between NSS 2002 and this speech. This speech has the same arguments why democracy promotion in Russia is good for U.S. foreign policy as George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 does. Support to democracy in U.S. foreign policy towards

Russia, firstly, is the right thing to do: “I think it's very important that all nations understand the great values inherent in democracy – rule of law and protection of minorities, viable political debate.” Secondly, it is in the interests of U.S.: it is “democracy and freedom that bring true security and prosperity in every land.” Thirdly, it benefits everyone: “in the 21st century, strong countries are built by developing strong democracies” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. February 24, 2005). In 2005 Russia has moved to a center of George W. Bush’s democracy promotion agenda as the contents of this speech shows.

September 16, 2005, President George W. Bush gave a speech welcoming Russian President Putin to the White House. Here again, there was a brief mention of multilateral cooperation (13.4%): Russia as an “ally ... in fighting the war on terror,” but the rest of the statement is about idealist values, which make up 86.6% of all references to grand strategies (see figure 5.1). Similar to previous speech, democratization is a precondition for increased cooperation between two states: Russia “will be an even stronger partner as the reforms that President Vladimir Putin has talked about are implemented – rule of law, and the ability for people to express themselves in an open way in Russia” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 16, 2005). Here George W. Bush acknowledges argument often used by Russian elite’s that Russia is unique: “democracy tends to reflect the cultures and histories of each different country,” however George W. Bush emphasizes that even if it is so, democracies are “bound by some common principles – one that governments that are elected by the people tend to respond to the people; that they've got minority rights and rule of law” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 16, 2005). This speech continued the emphasis on idealist values in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

July 13, 2006, at a joint press conference with German Chancellor Merkel, George W. Bush made lengthy remarks about Russia emphasizing idealist values. Russia

“ought to share common values with us. ...that's exactly how I'm going to continue my relations with President Putin. I'll be firm about my belief in certain democratic institutions; I'll be firm in my belief about the need for there to be an active civil society and NGOs should be allowed to function in Russia without intimidation. ... I hope he continues to understand that it's in his country's interest to implement the values that Germany and Russia -- Germany and the United States share” (Bush. July 13, 2006).

In this statement 100%, all references to grand strategies are about idealism (see figure 5.1). This increased emphasis on idealism grand strategy element of this stage of George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia corresponds to George W. Bush’s NSS 2006 which also emphasized idealism both in overall grand strategy and in U.S foreign policy towards Russia far more than NSS 2002. However, this emphasis on idealism is in line also with both overall NSS 2002 and specific statements about Russia in this NSS, which also talked about the idealist grand strategy element (see figure 4.4).

### 5.1.3 The Drift

While speech George W. Bush gave together with German Chancellor Merkel July 13, 2006, was all about idealist grand strategy element in relations with Russia, the next speech Bush gave standing next to Vladimir Putin July 15, 2006, was very different and indicated a new stage in relations with Russia. This period from July 15, 2006, until the beginning of 2008 was characterized by lack of speeches or statements about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia by Bush. Two speeches that were made were short, vague and lacked specific details, compared to previous and following statements by George W. Bush. Lack of statements and two short and vague statements indicate a drift in relations between U.S. and Russia.

After meeting with President Putin, George W. Bush in a statement to press on July 15, 2006, offered a more nuanced foreign policy towards Russia compared to a previous speech where he talked only about idealism. The idealist grand strategy element was there, but the emphasis on multilateral cooperation was increased too. In this speech references to multilateral cooperation made up 45% of all references to grand strategies (see figure 5.1). However, here George W. Bush used two different words: “working” with Russia on some issues and “talking” about cooperation on other issues. For example, U.S. is “working with Russia and our partners” on U.N. Security Council resolutions to contain Iranian nuclear program,” but only “talking” about cooperation on nonproliferation and counter-terrorism (Bush. July 15, 2006). It is debatable, whether this is a purposeful downgrade of the level of cooperation both countries have, or a meaningful indication, that there is no cooperation with Russia on some specific issues currently, only discussions about it.

In this speech, Bush also emphasized diplomacy as the means to achieve goals in foreign policy: “Diplomacy is two countries agreeing to work together with other countries, in this case, to come up with common language that we can live with that sends the same message, and that is, no nuclear weapons programs” (Bush. July 15, 2006). This indicates support for non-military power element, which makes up 17.9% in this statement (see figure 5.1). In this speech, Bush uses references to idealism as well (37.8% of all references to grand strategies). He does talk about “Russian-style democracy” without giving much depth to this concept, only that he does not “expect Russia to look like the United States,” but he does talk about how Russia should promote “free press and free religion” in “parts of the world like Iraq” (Bush. July 15, 2006). These statements about support to idealistic values were far more ambiguous, compared to previous statements starting from May 24, 2003.

July 2007 after meeting President Putin George W. Bush gave a speech in which he talked mostly about catching fish with Vladimir Putin, not about foreign policy towards Russia. However, he did throw in two references on multilateralism, which made up 55.5% of

all references to grand strategies (see figure 5.1). Necessity “to work together bilaterally, as well as work through the Russia-NATO Council” and “to keep close relations with Russia,” because “when it comes to confronting real threats, such as nuclear proliferation or the threat of radicalism and extremism, Russia is a good, solid partner” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 2, 2007). These statements on cooperation were the vaguest statements compared to all other George W. Bush’s speeches about Russia. George W. Bush made also one very vague reference to democracy in Russia, which made up 44.5% of all references to grand strategies (see figure 5.1).

Although these last two statements decreased the role of idealism grand strategy element, these were amongst the three shortest statements of Russia from 2001 until April 2008. The statement made on July 15, 2006, uses only 275 words to describe grand strategies. July 2, 2007 statement used only 173 words. These statements were vague and lacked specific details, compared to previous and following statements by George W. Bush. This period can be called a drift in relations between U.S. and Russia. “Drift” was a term that was later used by the Obama administration to describe relations between U.S. and Russia during the second Bush administration (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 18, 2010).

This drift could be explained by U.S. preoccupation with other issues. The U.S. was engaged in what George W. Bush called the war on terror in two campaigns: Afghanistan and Iraq. Thus, cooperation with Russia was not a priority for the U.S. In addition to that, relations with Russia deteriorated for three reasons described by Mattox (2011, p. 105). Firstly, the idealist element of George W. Bush’s grand strategy, linking cooperation with Russia with democracy in Russia. Emphasis on idealism in relations with Russia was evident in the analysis of George W. Bush’s speeches. Secondly, as Mattox argues, U.S. support to democracy and invasion of Iraq was also against Russia’s interests. In analysis of these speeches, Iraq was not linked to U.S. foreign policy towards Russia by George W. Bush, however, this issue is linked into overall democracy promotion agenda of George W. Bush, that was evident in the analysis of Bush’s speeches. Thirdly, military power aspect of George W. Bush’s grand strategy envisioned missile defense plans for Europe, which were against Russia’s interests as well. This third aspect was not reflected in these speeches at all.

#### **5.1.4 Bush’s Reset**

Between the drift stage and Russia-Georgia war, the George W. Bush administration attempted to reset relationships with Russia. This was a short period from April 2008 until the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008 which stopped this George W. Bush’s attempt to reset relations with Russia. April 6, 2008, in a joint statement with Putin, vague statements of the

drift ended. Cooperation and engagement were at the center of this speech. 89.8% of statements related to grand strategies are about multilateral cooperation, while only 10.2% are reserved to talking about idealist values (see figure 5.1). In his speech, George W. Bush refers to the U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration that both presidents signed. This document, as well as this speech, is all about cooperation with Russia on “common interests” (Office of the Press Secretary. April 6, 2008). Although this speech and the document “speaks of the respect of rule of law, international law, human rights, the tolerance of diversity, political freedom and a free market approach to economic policy and practices,” it mentions all of these issues in regards to fighting terrorism. The emphasis here again is on pragmatic multilateral cooperation with Russia (89.8%). This speech again talks about cooperation “in missile defense,” “to stop the spread of dangerous weapons,” to “meet the threat of nuclear terrorism” as well as other issues: “when you work hard, you can find areas where you can figure out how to cooperate” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. April 6, 2008).

This was a major change from the previous drift phase in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia and offered far more specific foreign policy towards Russia as well as a positive agenda. It was different from the second, idealist phase in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia. It emphasized cooperation with Russia and talked about “common interests” (Office of the Press Secretary. April 6, 2008), which was a very pragmatic foreign policy compared to the second stage. This stage was similar to the first stage in Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia, which too emphasized multilateral cooperation. Possibly, given time this phase could have developed into something similar as Obama’s reset. However, this sharp change in George W. Bush’s rhetoric was stopped with the start of Russia-Georgia war, which also started a new stage in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia.

Not only this was a break from second and third stages in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia, emphasis on cooperation with Russia with few references to the idealism of the fourth stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia was in stark difference from overall NSS 2006 and specific statements about Russia in this NSS. The overall emphasis of the NSS 2006 was on leadership and idealist elements (72.9%) with only 16.2% of references to grand strategies about liberal internationalism (figure 4.1). Specific statements about Russia in NSS 2006 were 87.6% about idealism and only 12.4% about multilateralism (figure 4.4). The contents of this speech were still within liberal internationalist grand strategy NSS 2006 proposed for U.S. relations with Russia. However, the emphasis on the idealism of NSS 2006 had been replaced by an emphasis on multilateral cooperation in April 2008 speech. This speech, switched emphasis from multilateral cooperation to idealism and thus was in disagreement with NSS 2006.

### **5.1.5 Idealism, Multilateralism and Non-military Power against Russia**

A new stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia started after the Russia-Georgia war which took place from August 7 – 12. This period lasted until the end of the second term of George W. Bush's presidency, January 2009. The statements by George W. Bush during and immediately after Russia-Georgia war that appeared in White House homepage are taken together as a single unit in the analysis, because all of them are comparatively short and all of them describe a single issue: Russia's invasion of Georgia and U.S. reaction towards it. A single, short statement on, for example, the necessity for multilateral cooperation to solve Georgia issue in a multilateral way, during the first days of this crisis, does not indicate overall U.S. perspective on the issue. These statements taken together show the full picture.

George W. Bush's response to Russia's aggression in Georgia abandoned ideas about new level of potential cooperation with Russia present in previous April 6 speech and for the first time since 2001 invoked necessity of U.S. leadership (7.8%) as well as talked about multilateral international cooperation to solve the situation in Georgia and expressed hopes that Russia would understand the merits of cooperation (37.2%). This speech invoked much more idealist values (37.1%) than in April's speech with the goal to show support to Georgia and condemn Russia's actions (see figure 5.1). George W. Bush's preferred method of supporting Georgia fell short of using military tools. It involved only non-military tools. 17.9% of statements out of all references to grand strategies were discussing the use of non-military tools and soft power. The emphasis of initial George W. Bush's reaction to this crisis was along the ideas of liberal internationalism grand strategy.

The immediate response of George W. Bush on August 9 was about the necessity to solve the situation multilaterally, to work with "European partners to launch international mediation, and with the parties to restart their dialogue. Russia needs to support these efforts so that peace can be restored as quickly as possible" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 9, 2008). August 13, in a more elaborate statement, George W. Bush emphasized the necessity to support democracy in Georgia with a mix of statements about U.S. leadership and idealist values: the U.S. will "continue our efforts to rally the free world in the defense of a free Georgia." This sounds a lot like the rhetoric George W. Bush used about the war on terror. Meanwhile George W. Bush does not talk about military support to Georgia or use of U.S. military forces in this conflict. George W. Bush talks about necessity "to begin a humanitarian mission to the people of Georgia... to deliver humanitarian and medical supplies" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 13, 2008).

On August 15, in another speech on the Georgia issue, George W. Bush reiterated already established idealist, non-military power, and multilateral narratives. George W. Bush

talked about idealism: “support for Georgia's democracy,” non-military tools in foreign policy: “humanitarian assistance to the people of Georgia” and multilateralism “working closely with our partners in Europe and other members of the G7 to bring a resolution to this crisis” as well as “hope Russia's leaders will recognize that a future of cooperation and peace will benefit all parties.” However, this speech emphasized the importance of democracy. “Georgia has become a courageous democracy. ... Since the Rose Revolution in 2003, the Georgian people have held free elections, opened up their economy, and built the foundations of a successful democracy,” but “Unfortunately, Russia has tended to view the expansion of freedom and democracy as a threat to its interests.” George W. Bush insisted, that “the opposite is true: Free and prosperous societies on Russia's borders will advance Russia's interests by serving as sources of stability and economic opportunity” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 15, 2008). Idealist element played a major role in Bush’s reaction to Russia-Georgia war. Idealism was at the center of NSS 2006, so the statements in the reaction in this crisis were along the lines of Bush’s NSS 2006.

August 16, 2008 speech also reiterated previously established narratives. Necessity “to rally the free world in the defense of a free Georgia,” to “stand behind Georgia's democracy,” to start a “humanitarian mission to help the Georgian people recover from the trauma they have suffered.” However, this speech emphasized the role of the United Nations in order to solve the crisis: South Ossetia and Abkhazia “are a part of Georgia, and the international community has repeatedly made clear that they will remain so. Georgia is a member of the United Nations, and South Ossetia and Abkhazia lie within its internationally recognized borders” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 16, 2008). This clearly shows multilateral nature of George W. Bush’s approach to Russian aggression in Georgia.

These were the last major statements on Russia of George W. Bush’s presidency that were displayed in the White House homepage. As Georgian crisis subsided, the attention of George W. Bush’s administration shifted elsewhere. No new, major developments in foreign policy or rhetoric towards Russia followed after the end of Russia-Georgia war. Idealist element was used widely in these statements and it is supported by both liberal internationalism and primacy grand strategies. However, rest of the emphasis of these statements was on multilateral cooperation and use of non-military foreign policy tools to solve the conflict between Russia and Georgia. Even this international crisis did not change George W. Bush’s emphasis on liberal internationalism in George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia.



## **5.2 Summary of George W. Bush's Grand Strategy Towards Russia**

According to the analysis, in George W. Bush's speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, there were five stages. From 2001 until mid-2003 in the first stage emphasis was on multilateral cooperation. The second stage lasted until mid-2006 and idealist values had replaced multilateralism. The third stage continued until the beginning of 2008 and it can be characterised as a drift period in relations between two states. It contained short and vague statements about U.S. relations with Russia. The drift was replaced by Bush's reset in April 2008. This fourth stage was an attempt to abandon idealist rhetoric and emphasize cooperation between the two states. However, this stage ended quickly because Russia-Georgia war in August 2008 started the last stage in which George W. Bush used idealist, multilateralist and non-military power grand strategy elements against Russia. These five stages contained liberal internationalist grand strategy elements and were consistent with George W. Bush's NSS of 2002 and 2006.

The first stage in the foreign policy of George W. Bush administration towards Russia had an emphasis on multilateral cooperation with Russia in order to address various global problems. This stage lasted until mid-2003. Scholars who have analyzed George W. Bush's pre-election rhetoric and foreign policy goals argue that in foreign policy George W. Bush initially wanted to break from democracy promotion of Bill Clinton administration (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 10, 26). Martel argues that before the September 11 terrorist attacks George W. Bush wanted to decrease U.S. foreign policy activities. He was against peacekeeping operations and rejected interventionist ideology. However, George W. Bush did not go as far as isolationism, he still wanted the U.S. to use its influence to support democracy, he supported nuclear non-proliferation as well. Martel describes George W. Bush's initial foreign policy as a realist, pragmatic offshore balancing (Martel, 2015, p. 316-317). The analysis of Bush's speeches shows that initial stage of Bush's foreign policy towards Russia did not show any leanings towards offshore balancing, as Martell argues, but Bush's speeches did lack idealist element. The emphasis in the first stage in Bush's foreign policy towards Russia was about engaging and working with Russia. Bush's speeches about U.S. foreign policy emphasized elements of liberal internationalist grand strategy, but did not talk about idealist values much. The first stage in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia was characterized by cooperation in combating international terrorism, especially cooperation in Afghanistan. Both countries had new presidents and in 2001-2002 it was unclear, whether Putin would move Russia towards democracy or authoritarianism. Emphasis on liberal internationalist grand strategy towards Russia was maintained throughout George W. Bush's speeches, however, the role of idealist values changed throughout the years.

Various authors argue that after September 11 terrorist attacks George W. Bush embraced strategy of democracy promotion: support to democratic movements and ideas across the world using unilateralism and preemption (Cox, Lynch, Bouchet, 2013, p. 10, 26; Martel, 2015, p. 321, 323). This is reflected in NSS 2002, which put a major emphasis on all of these primacist grand strategy elements. However, in Bush's foreign policy towards Russia, only idealist element of Bush's overall foreign policy was reflected, not unilateralism and military power. In addition to that, Bush started talking about democracy in Russia later than NSS 2002 was published and later than he started talking about democracy in the Middle East. Only in June 2003, Bush linked democracy in Russia with positive relations with U.S. However, cooperation still was the main emphasis of this George W. Bush's speech.

In the next stage in relations with Russia starting with September 27, 2003, George W. Bush changed the tone to an emphasis on deteriorating democracy in Russia, not cooperation. This was a sharp change in rhetoric compared to the first period. The second stage in relations to Russia with emphasis on democracy promotion lasted until mid-2006. NSS 2006 also reflected the increased emphasis on idealist values in U.S. foreign policy. This change of rhetoric coincided with deteriorating democracy in Russia as well as various disagreements between both states. Freedom House Freedom in the World index characterized Russia as a partially free country from 2001 to 2004, but there was a constant consolidation of power and erosion of democratic freedoms taking place in Russia. In 2005 Freedom House characterized Russia as a "not free" state (Freedom House, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005). The analysis of George W. Bush's speeches also corresponds to what various authors have written about this period in U.S. relations with Russia. James Goldgeier argues that George W. Bush in foreign policy towards Russia used a "linkage" strategy. A foreign policy which connected democracy and human rights situation in Russia with cooperation between the two states on other issues (Goldgeier, 2009, p. 23). Jeffrey Mankoff too argues that the Bush administration perceived democratization as the key in relations with Russia. If Russia democratized, it would get increased cooperation from the U.S. (Mankoff, 2012, p. 115). All of this was evident in the content analysis of George W. Bush's speeches. Ruth Dayermond agrees to previous authors and emphasizes trend that was also evident in qualitative analysis: George W. Bush administration argued there are similar values which both countries support and that cooperation should be built on these values (Dayermond, 2013, p. 510). She also argues that George W. Bush's rhetoric towards Russia was just one aspect of George W. Bush's global democracy promotion strategy. As democracy and human rights situation in Russia deteriorated, George W. Bush responded with an increasing use of idealist criticism on Russia, which led to gradual deterioration of U.S.-Russia bilateral relationship (Dayermond,

2013, p. 506). Both quantitative and qualitative analysis of George W. Bush's speeches confirms what the aforementioned authors have written about this period.

Mankoff even describes this period with emphasis on idealism as the period that set “the United States and Russia on opposite sides of a major political and ideological struggle taking place throughout the former Soviet Union,” because in 2003 and 2004 democratic, pro-western government change took place in Georgia and Ukraine. These countries started moving towards the West, contemplating to join NATO and received U.S. support and encouragement to do so. This was unacceptable to Russia and these opposing interests put both countries on a course of collision (Mankoff, 2012, p. 110). Furthermore, as Russia became increasingly authoritarian, Russia's rationale for domestic and foreign policy changed. Authoritarian governments create legitimacy through nationalism, uninterrupted economic growth and resource re-distribution towards political elites. This increasingly was the case of Russia (Kagan, 2007, p. 39). George W. Bush's rhetoric about democracy and human rights was perceived as a threat for the political regime in Russia, as U.S. intervention in Russian domestic politics. NATO expansion was perceived as a threat too. Kremlin started accusing dissidents as well as liberal, pro-democracy and human rights NGO's as U.S. agents (Schadlow, 2013, p. 506). Nonetheless, this did not change U.S. strategy towards Russia. George W. Bush emphasized idealist values more but did not abandon rhetoric about cooperation. This was still a liberal internationalist approach towards Russia because primacists argue that cooperation with authoritarian states, which have opposed interests to the U.S. should not take place (Kagan, 2007, pp. 33, 35).

Relations between the two countries were deteriorating throughout the second stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Russia was becoming more authoritarian. The U.S. was increasing emphasis on democracy promotion in foreign policy more and more. Cooperation was replaced by disagreements. However, as reflected in George W. Bush's rhetoric, the democracy promotion phase in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia in mid-2006 was replaced by a third stage: a drift in relations between U.S. and Russia. In this stage, George W. Bush's statements about Russia were the shortest, compared to others from 2001 to 2009. George W. Bush did not talk about grand strategy much. According to the qualitative analysis of these speeches, references to idealist values were vague and George W. Bush did not talk about specific issues, only about the vague necessity for “working” and “talking” with Russia. This represented a drift in relations between U.S. and Russia. Obama administration used the term “drift” to describe relations between U.S. and Russia during the second Bush administration (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 18, 2010). This drift in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia lasted until April 2008.

The fourth stage in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia was Bush's reset. Similarly, as Barack Obama tried to restart stagnating relations with Russia, so did Bush in early 2008. In a joint statement with Putin April 2008, cooperation returned to the forefront of his rhetoric. Not only this stage was different from the second and third stage, it was also different from NSS 2006 because these speeches emphasized multilateralism, not idealism, which was the focus of both overall NSS 2006 and specific policies towards Russia of this NSS. This stage is often missing in the analysis of Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. However, this stage was short, because Russia-Georgia in August 2008 war stopped this reset and the fifth phase in U.S. rhetoric towards Russia set in. George W. Bush returned to talking about idealist values and he invoked multilateralist ideas as well. However, not ideas about multilateral cooperation with Russia, but cooperation with U.S. allies multilaterally against Russia. Nonetheless, both of these stages were in accord with the liberal internationalist strategy.

Although there were different stages in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia, grand strategy George W. Bush used towards Russia, according to both quantitative and qualitative analysis was liberal internationalism. Emphasis on multilateral cooperation grand strategy element throughout his presidency is the main proof of this conclusion because primacists argue that cooperation with authoritarian states should not be part of U.S. foreign policy (Kagan, 2007. p. 33, 35). Support to idealism is also part of the liberal internationalist grand strategy. Some liberal internationalists, for example, Haass, argue that liberal internationalists should support idealist values less than primacists. Democracy promotion should not dominate the foreign policy agenda hampering other priorities (Haass, 2005, p. 204), because the emphasis on idealism decreases U.S. capability to cooperate with and integrate non-democratic states, like Russia. (Haass, 2005, p. 28). Nonetheless, most liberal internationalists similar to the primacists are concerned with the lack of democracy in Russia. For example, Martel argues that authoritarian Russia tries to obstruct U.S. foreign policy as well as attempts to decrease American soft power (Martel, February 25, 2013). Liberal internationalists agree with primacists, that Russia, as well as other authoritarian states, are creating an alternative domestic political and economic model to liberal free-market democracy, which is promoted by the U.S. Russia calls this model "sovereign democracy" (Sontag, 2013). This increases Russia's soft power and ability to compete with the U.S. in the international arena. Liberal internationalists also agree with primacists that Russia supports friendly authoritarian regimes in order to further its foreign policy goals which often are against U.S. interests (Martel, February 25, 2013; Schadlow, 2013, p. 505).

Thus, both liberal internationalists and primacists emphasize democracy promotion in foreign policy towards Russia. Plurality, human rights, and liberal values are at the core of

what makes the U.S. morally superior over authoritarian governments and gives U.S. foreign policy an edge over them. If Russia was democratic, its interests would align with the interests of U.S. and it would no longer work against U.S. interests on the global stage. Democratic Russia would not see U.S. and NATO as a threat, it would not have to try to establish a sphere of influence and satellite states between Russia and NATO states. According to primacists and liberal internationalists, the U.S. should support pro-democracy political and economic reforms to stop Russia's authoritarian and expansionist tendencies (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, p. 32). Support to idealist values in relations with Russia would work because authoritarian Russia still uses elections and pretends it is a democracy, because this gives legitimacy authoritarian leaders are desperate to get. People in authoritarian states do support democracy and other liberal values despite attempts of autocrats to discredit these values. In a globalized world ideas about democracy and liberal values spread with ease and Russia is susceptible to them (Kagan, 2007, p. 39). Criticism about lack of democracy and human rights violations decreases the legitimacy of the authoritarian regime in Russia, creates support for democracy in society and helps the opposition. The U.S. should expose Russia's illiberal nature. Active promotion of idealist values should be at the core of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

Comparing George W. Bush's speeches with NSS's, there is a correlation between them. Although the first purely multilateral stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia in 2001 was different from contents of NSS 2002, in speeches during 2002 and 2003 idealist element seen also appears in Bush's speeches. The second stage in Bush's rhetoric about Russia starting in mid-2003 and lasting until mid-2006 is also reflected in NSS 2006. Both speeches and this NSS put emphasis on idealism. The third stage, the drift, and fourth stage, Bush's reset as well as fifth stage about multilateral cooperation against Russia decreased emphasis on idealism, compared to NSS 2006, but were in accord with liberal internationalist strategy this NSS supported. Thus, the H3: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Obama presidencies is confirmed for George W. Bush's presidency. NSS are documents that do describe U.S. grand strategy and ideas in these documents are used in U.S. foreign policy, at least in the case of Russia, which is the focus of this thesis.

### **5.3 Stages in Barack Obama's Foreign Policy towards Russia**

Previous two sections looked at George W. Bush's speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. This section offers analysis of Barack Obama's and Biden's speeches on the same issue. This chapter continues testing the third hypothesis: the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy

towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Obama presidencies. This chapter focuses on grand strategy implementation phase analyzing speeches to see if U.S. grand strategy towards Russia as outlined in speeches correlates with U.S. grand strategy outlined in NSS.

During the presidency of Barack Obama, the number of speeches devoted to Russia increased, initially because Obama attempted to reset relations with Russia and later because U.S. and Russia were on the opposite side in multiple conflicts. For example, in Syria and Ukraine and Russian interference in U.S. presidential election during 2016. Thus, for analysis of Obama’s grand strategies towards Russia 23 units of analysis were used. 17 speeches and 4 short statements during Russia’s aggression in Ukraine (used as a single unit of analysis) by Barack Obama and 5 speeches by Vice President Joe Biden. Biden’s speeches are used because he played a significant role in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia as well. Figure 5.2 offers an analysis of these speeches. Support to various elements of grand strategies is given in a percentage value for each speech. Throughout this and following sections, these speeches are analyzed in-depth in order to compare them with overall grand strategy and specific grand strategy towards Russia that was articulated in Barack Obama’s NSS 2010 and 2015.

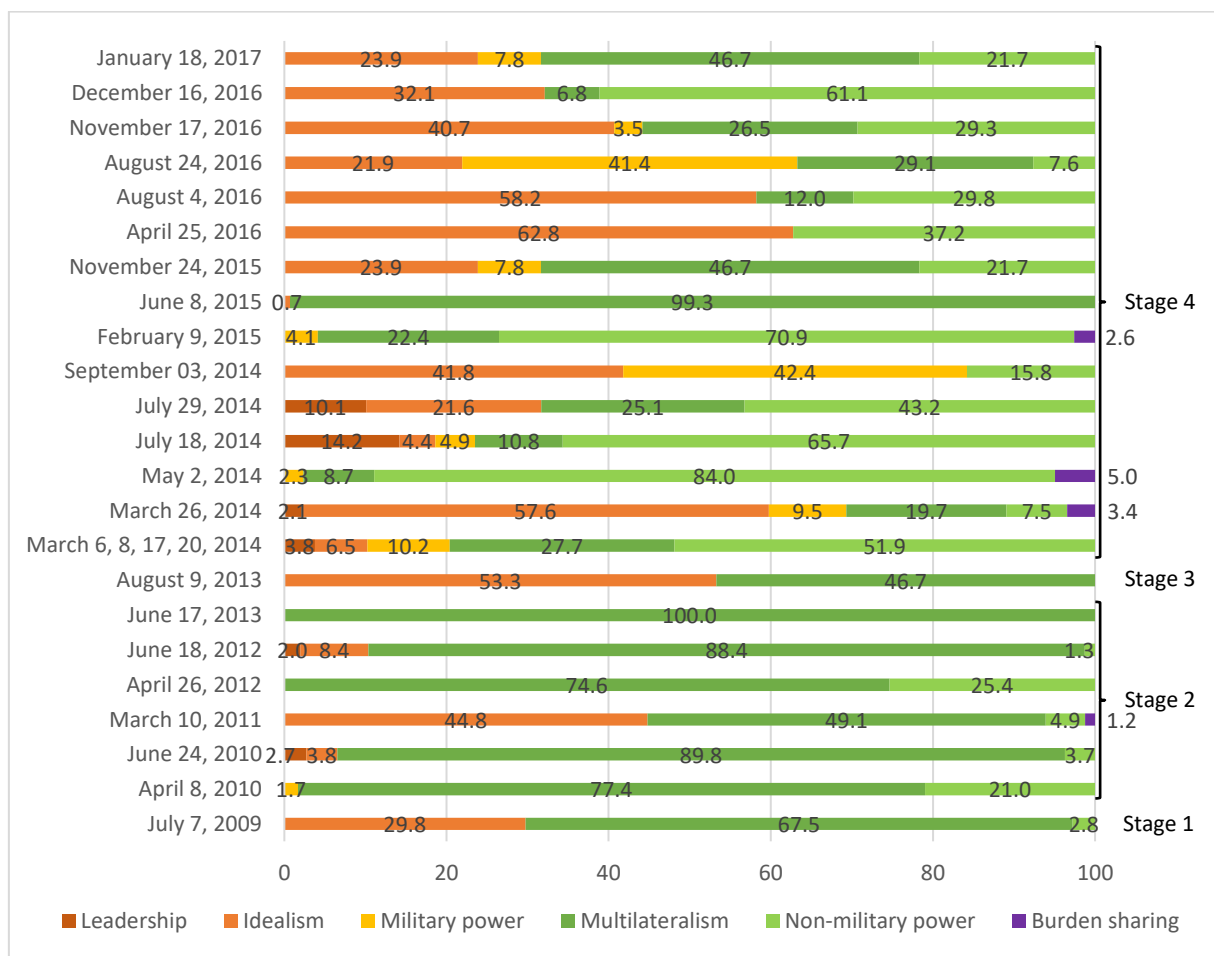


Figure 5.2 Analysis of statements on Russia during Obama administration (%)

Analyzing the speeches of President Barack Obama and his Vice President Joe Biden, four different stages in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia from 2009 until 2017 can be seen. The first stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia started with Barack Obama's inauguration and lasted until the end of 2009. Barack Obama in his foreign policy towards Russia was cautious. He talked about potential cooperation in areas where interests of both countries aligned, a possibility of a "reset" in U.S.-Russia relations. At the same time, Barack Obama kept supporting idealist values and criticism about deteriorating democracy in Russia, similar to the second stage of George W. Bush's foreign policy. This initial caution was abandoned in early 2010 when the second stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia started.

This stage lasted until mid-2013. Barack Obama abandoned initial caution, reset relations with Russia and fully embraced multilateral cooperation with Russia in areas of similar interests. However, occasionally speeches of this period contained some idealist statements. For example, March 10, 2011, Biden's speech criticizing Magnitsky case even contained more references to idealism than Barack Obama's July 7, 2009 speech. However, idealist rhetoric in this speech was different from George W. Bush's idealist rhetoric. While in first stage Barack Obama used similar arguments why democracy is good as George W. Bush used, in this stage, Joe Biden supported idealist values in U.S. foreign policy for the pragmatic self-interest of Russia "you don't get industrial modernization without political modernization" (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). This stage was different also from George W. Bush's first stage in his foreign policy towards Russia, which was all about multilateral cooperation without any criticisms.

Next, the third stage started in August 2013 and lasted until Russia's aggression in Ukraine, March 2014. Relations between U.S. and Russia already deteriorated. Already before the conflict in Ukraine Barack Obama had returned back to idealist critique about lack of democracy in Russia. This period was similar to the second stage in George W. Bush's foreign policy. This emphasis on idealism was short because as the crisis in Ukraine unfolded in March 2014, fourth and last stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia started. In response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine and breakdown in relations between U.S. and Russia, Barack Obama responded with a full spectrum of grand strategy instruments, except unilateralism. Barack Obama emphasized tools of liberal internationalism – use of non-military power to solve this crisis as well as multilateral cooperation, not with Russia, but against Russia. Barack Obama also talked about idealist values and even military power in speeches about Russia. Speeches in the first three stages of Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia were discussing almost exclusively liberal internationalist grand strategy

elements. The fourth stage after Russia's aggression in Ukraine started a major change in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. For the first time since 2001 U.S. president was discussing the use of military power in relations towards Russia.

All of these stages were consistent with Barack Obama's NSS of 2010 and 2015. NSS 2010 supported liberal internationalist grand strategy and this was also embraced in speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. NSS 2015 reflected the new reality and both overall contents of the NSS, as well as specific strategy towards Russia, contained an increased emphasis on military power grand strategy element. Next four sections offer in-depth analysis according to grand strategy classification of these four stages in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia.

### **5.3.1 Hopes of Multilateral Cooperation with some Idealism**

The first stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia was from his inauguration in January 2009 until the end of 2009. It consisted only of one extensive speech. Barack Obama set the tone in his foreign policy approach towards Russia cautiously. He expressed hope of multilateral cooperation in areas of similar interests, possible "reset" of U.S.-Russia relations, but he remained cautious and used the Bush-like support of idealist values as well. July 7, 2009, Barack Obama's speech in Moscow at the New Economic School Graduation described a potential new era in U.S. relations with Russia. A potential break from policies of George W. Bush's second term emphasizing multilateral cooperation (80.3%) with Russia. However, idealist elements played also a role in this speech (19.7%) in a similar way as during most of the George W. Bush presidency (see figure 5.2). It is possible to draw parallels between these statements by Barack Obama and statements by George W. Bush in 2001. Barack Obama, similar to George W. Bush in 2001 talked about potential cooperation on many international issues: "security from nuclear weapons and extremism; access to markets and opportunity; health and the environment; an international system that protects the sovereignty and human rights, while promoting stability and prosperity. These challenges demand global partnership, and that partnership will be stronger if Russia occupies its rightful place as a great power" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 7, 2009). Both new administrations were willing to engage Russia and attempt to establish positive, cooperative relationships with Russia.

Barack Obama in his first speech about foreign policy towards Russia explicitly rejected both primacy and offshore balancing. He rejected unilateralism by saying that "In 2009, a great power does not show strength by dominating or demonizing other countries." "America cannot and should not seek to impose any system of government on any other country, nor



would we presume to choose which party or individual should run a country.” Furthermore, Barack Obama was critical towards his predecessor and his emphasis on exporting democracy in foreign policy: “we haven't always done what we should have on that front.” Barack Obama also declines to use military power in relations with Russia by disagreeing with the view that “the United States and Russia are destined to be antagonists.” Instead “America seeks an international system that lets nations pursue their interests peacefully... where we hold ourselves to the same standards that we apply to other nations, with clear rights and responsibilities for all.” At the same time, Barack Obama rejected offshore balancing idea that states should engage in balance sharing and take care of their own backyard. He disagreed with the “19th century view that we are destined to vie for spheres of influence, and that great powers must forge competing blocs to balance one another” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 7, 2009). Barack Obama was clear in his first major speech on U.S. foreign policy towards Russia that he favors a liberal internationalist approach and rejects others.

In this speech, Barack Obama talked about multilateralism, about “interdependence” and equality with Russia, because “any world order that tries to elevate one nation or one group of people over another will inevitably fail.” Barack Obama discussed necessity to avoid “pursuing power” by perceiving the world as a “zero-sum game.” Instead “progress must be shared” mutually. To do so, Barack Obama talked about a possible “reset” in relations between the United States and Russia: “...a sustained effort among the American and Russian people to identify mutual interests, and expand dialogue and cooperation that can pave the way to progress.” The necessity to cooperate in areas where “common interests” exist was repeated throughout the statement. Cooperating on enforcing Non-proliferation Treaty and international law, working together on “missile defense architecture that makes us all safer,” addressing “the threat from Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile program,” cooperating in Pakistan and Afghanistan, for example, by allowing the U.S. to “supply our coalition forces” in Afghanistan through Russia, as well as cooperation on economy and energy. Even “NATO should be seeking collaboration with Russia, not confrontation” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 7, 2009). This cooperative rhetoric is reminiscent of George W. Bush’s speeches in the beginning of his presidency where he also emphasized potential areas of cooperation and mutual interests.

Although Barack Obama, emphasized potential cooperation, this speech was different from George W. Bush’s first stage and Barack Obama's speeches in the second stage of his foreign policy towards Russia. In this speech, Barack Obama talked about idealist values too, “America's interest in democratic governments that protect the rights of their people.” He

talked about “freedom of speech and assembly... the rule of law and equal administration of justice... independent media... competitive elections... democracy” and “universal values.” It is interesting, that this Barack Obama’s speech contained the same elements of democracy promotion as George W. Bush’s NSS 2002 and 2006 did. Support to democracy in U.S. foreign policy, firstly, is the right thing to do: “Governments that represent the will of their people are far less likely to descend into failed states, to terrorize their citizens, or to wage war on others.” Secondly, it is in the interests of U.S.: “around the world, America supports these values because they are moral, but also because they work” and “democracies have been America's most enduring allies.” Thirdly, democracy benefits everyone: “The arc of history shows that governments which serve their own people survive and thrive; governments which serve only their own power do not” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 7, 2009). This is interesting because it identifies continuity from George W. Bush’s foreign policy.

Overall this first, extensive speech on Russia that appears on White House homepage was a clear articulation of a liberal internationalist grand strategy towards Russia, with short, but clear rejections of primacy and offshore balancing. This stage was in the line of an overall emphasis on multilateralism, cooperation with smaller emphasis on the idealism of NSS 2010 (figure 4.1) and specific statements about Russia in this NSS (figure 4.4), which was published after this stage. In terms of value-based foreign policy, Barack Obama extended a multilateral hand to Russia, yet kept all the same idealist elements George W. Bush’s administration used in foreign policy towards Russia, probably, to have a safe fallback position in case Russia did not embrace Barack Obama’s idea of resetting the relations. Russia did embrace this diplomatic overture and U.S.-Russia relations, as well as U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, entered a new stage starting with 2010.

### **5.3.2 Multilateral Cooperation**

After the initial caution and references to idealism, the Barack Obama administration embraced multilateral cooperation with Russia in areas of similar interests. However, there still were some occasional idealist statements in this stage, unlike the first multilateral stage of George W. Bush’s foreign policy towards Russia. This stage started in the beginning of 2010 and lasted until mid-2013. The first speech in this stage was on April 8, 2010, when after signing the New START Treaty, limiting strategic offensive arms, Barack Obama described U.S. relationships with Russia under last years of George W. Bush administration as having “started to drift, making it difficult to cooperate on issues of common interest to our people.” Thus, it is necessary to stop “that drift” and “reset” relations between the United States and

Russia” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 18, 2010). This speech emphasized multilateral cooperation (77.4%), leaving 21% of references to non-military power and 1.7% to military power (see figure 5.2). Emphasis on multilateralism and non-military power was evident throughout speeches during this stage.

According to Barack Obama, cooperation between U.S. and Russia is not only “good for either of our nations,” but also “it is good for the world.” Barack Obama talked not only about “global leadership” of the U.S. but also about shared global leadership between U.S. and Russia. Barack Obama discussed leadership in cooperative, multilateral terms. Overall, “providing security and peace to their citizens will depend... on the capacity of the international community to resolve conflicts,” not on U.S. leadership. Similar to the previous speech, Barack Obama gave a list of areas where U.S. and Russia do and should cooperate. This list included the previously mentioned implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, missile defense, sanctioning Iran, working on economic growth in both countries. However, Barack Obama adds to this list cooperation to “secure all vulnerable nuclear materials around the world,” cooperation in sanctioning North Korea, cooperation on “issues of counterterrorism,” cooperation and work “together closely in the G20,” as well as expansion of cooperation in “trade and investment, as well as technological innovation” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. April 8, 2010). This broad list of areas U.S. can work with Russia looks similar to statements of the George W. Bush where in his first stage in U.S. policy towards Russia, he offered similar lists where the U.S. can cooperate with Russia.

Another major element of this speech was about embracing non-military instruments in foreign policy. Barack Obama argued that the U.S. together with Russia, both should be leading the world by example. By signing “the START treaty... the United States and Russia are following our own obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and that... sends a strong signal that all of us have an obligation, each country has an obligation to follow the rules of the road internationally,” thus motivating “Iran or North Korea or any other country following the NPT.” Barack Obama discussed sanctions and use of “diplomatic channels” against Iran and North Korea. While Barack Obama referred to U.S. military power in terms of “America’s unwavering commitment to the security of our European allies,” he rejected using military power, threatening others with “America’s nuclear arsenal” in foreign policy. Barack Obama explicitly stated that he did not want “to change the strategic balance between the United States and Russia” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. April 8, 2010). This speech clearly established the tone Barack Obama administration used throughout this stage in relations with Russia. Liberal internationalist multilateralist and non-

military power grand strategy elements dominated this speech and dominated this stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia.

June 24, 2010, in a joint statement with President Medvedev, Barack Obama gave another extensive speech on Russia. This speech was fully multilateralist (89.8%) with few references to U.S. leadership (2.7%), non-military power (3.7%) and idealism 3.8% (see figure 5.2). It contained one vague reference to idealism: "the United States will be your partner as you promote the transparency and accountability and rule of law." It had indirect hints at U.S. leadership to help Russia's accession to WTO: "our strong commitment to Russia's ascension to the World Trade Organization." Barack Obama also a hinted at the emphasis on non-military power and leading by example: "Together, we've strengthened the global nonproliferation regime so that as we meet our obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty." The rest of this speech was about multilateral cooperation with Russia similar to previous speeches, because "America's most significant national security interests and priorities could be advanced most effectively through cooperation, not an adversarial relationship, with Russia" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 24, 2010).

The core of Barack Obama's approach to Russia, which was later labeled "dual track" approach, was summarized in this statement by Barack Obama: "Our two countries continue to disagree on certain issues, such as Georgia, and we addressed those differences candidly. But by moving forward in areas where we do agree, we have succeeding in resetting our relationship, which benefits regional and global security." It is not about "simply resetting our relationship, but also broadening it." Barack Obama separated issues, where both countries disagree, such as democracy and human rights, from issues where both countries can cooperate. Mostly in this stage speeches of Barack Obama and Joe Biden focused on cooperation. List of issues where Russia and U.S. should cooperate in this speech was even more expensive than in previous two Barack Obama's speeches and even more extensive than what George W. Bush described in his speeches. Barack Obama again talked about cooperation in nuclear non-proliferation, sanctioning Iran and North Korea, counterterrorism, Afghanistan, working together in G20, energy sector and economy. Barack Obama added to this list working together to complete Russia's accession to the WTO as well as cooperation to "coordinate our diplomatic and humanitarian efforts following the tragic outbreak of ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 24, 2010). These extensive lists of areas where both countries do cooperate and can start working together are characteristic of the first and second stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia.

March 10, 2011, Vice President Biden gave a speech at Moscow State University in which he explicitly referred to U.S. policy towards Russia as a “dual-track engagement.” In spite of disagreements, Russia and U.S. should be working “together where our interests coincide” (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). This speech contained 49.1% references to multilateralism out of all references to grand strategy ideas. 4.9% of references to non-military power and 44.8% of references to idealism. This speech was unique because 1.2% of references to grand strategies go to offshore balancing burden sharing element (see figure 5.2). This was the first case since 2001 when an element of this grand strategy was mentioned in speeches about U.S. relations with Russia.

In this speech, there was the only case when U.S. leaders discussed offshore balancing balance sharing element when talking about relations with Russia. Biden acknowledged that “Russia is also providing badly needed military equipment and training to the Afghan National Security Forces.” This was the first case in NSS and speeches analyzed since 2001 when U.S. leader acknowledged that Russia was helping to address important issues without cooperation from the U.S, thus is sharing burdens with the U.S. However, this speech twice rejected “spheres of influence” (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011), which means that the U.S. is against the burden sharing element of offshore balancing even if it acknowledges that Russia is helping in some areas.

Biden used similar rhetoric about cooperation as Barack Obama did previously. Again, the rhetoric was about “Russia and the United States... leading” various efforts globally. As previously, this speech contained many aspects on which U.S. and Russia does and should cooperate on “outcomes that serve both countries’ interests, as President Barack Obama puts it, “win-win,” situations.” Biden discussed soft power this speech. The New START Treaty would allow the U.S. to lead by example: “that gave us even more credibility to deal with the most egregious violators of their international commitments” (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). Again, this speech contained a list of areas where U.S. and Russia should cooperate, including, energy sector, trade, commerce, arms control, missile defense, sanctioning Iran and North Korea, cooperating in Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan. However, this speech went even further. Biden discussed necessity to establish “Bilateral Presidential Commission with working groups on key issues like arms control and energy, broadening the contacts between our two governments.” Working together and through “P5 plus 1,” U.N. and U.N. Security Council, even resetting “relations between Russia and NATO during last year’s Lisbon Summit” and “combating drug traffickers, eradicating polio” (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). This was the one element of

Barack Obama's dual-track approach – the broad range of issues where both states can cooperate.

At the same time, this speech touched upon the other track – democracy in Russia – as well. Regarding idealism, this speech put a major emphasis on idealist values, because of events that took place in Russia. Biden characterized Russia as a country where a company “can be seized, or an owner imprisoned on a politician’s whim... in which a lawyer like Sergei Magnitsky... can be arrested after accusing the police of fraud and then die in detention before being tried.” Biden criticized Russia about the “misconduct in the trial of... Khodorkovsky... and of the beating and detention of “Strategy 31” demonstrators.” However, Biden’s rhetoric was different from George W. Bush’s rhetoric about idealist values. George W. Bush believed these values are good for everyone, good for the U.S. and promoting idealist values was simply the right thing to do. Biden here argued that “For us, these are matters of principle, but I would argue they’re also matters of pragmatism. History shows that in industrialized societies, economic modernization and political modernization go hand-in-hand. You don't get one without the other. Or put it this way, you don't get industrial modernization without political modernization” (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). This was a far bigger emphasis on pragmatic considerations why democracy is good for Russia, compared to George W. Bush’s rhetoric. This was also different than speech in Barack Obama’s first stage in foreign policy towards Russia where he used the same arguments as George W. Bush why idealist values are good for U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Nonetheless, this rhetoric still remained idealist at its core and represented the second track in Barack Obama’s approach to Russia.

In this speech list of areas of cooperation which was characteristic of this stage was also accompanied with a list of democratic reforms Russia should take. Biden recommended to Russia to “strengthen their democratic institutions. Courts must be empowered to uphold the rule of law and protect those playing by the rules. ... Non-governmental watchdogs should be applauded as patriots, not traitors. ... Journalists must be able to publish without fear of retribution.” There should be a “viable opposition -- and public parties that are able to compete... Political competition means better candidates, better politics and most importantly, governments that better represent the will of their people.” Russians “want to be able to assemble freely, and they want a media to be independent of the state. And they want to live in a country that fights corruption. ... That’s democracy. ... Don't compromise on the basic elements of democracy” (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). This emphasis on idealism was the first case in this stage when idealism was used.

However, it did not start a new stage in relations with Russia. Next speeches returned to multilateral cooperation and non-military foreign policy tools.

On April 26, 2012, Vice President Joe Biden gave remarks on foreign policy at a presidential election campaign event, in which he devoted a lot of time to Russia. The emphasis here again was on multilateral cooperation (74.6%) and non-military power, which made 25.4% of all references to grand strategy (see figure 5.2). Biden emphasized that the U.S. under the Barack Obama administration has “forged a new relationship based on mutual interest with emerging powers like China, Russia, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa.” Multilateral cooperation was the key element of U.S. foreign policy for this administration and relations with Russia is just one example of this. Cooperation with Russia, “reset” with Russia has allowed the U.S. to achieve “major arms control agreements with Russia and brought the world together to secure nuclear materials from getting into the hands of terrorists” as well as “reduced our reliance on nuclear weapons.” Cooperation with Russia allowed “to cancel the sale of Russia’s very sophisticated S300 cutting edge, air defense radar system, to Iran” and has led to Russia supporting in U.N. and joining “the toughest ever sanctions against Iran.” Russia is allowing “transit Russian territory and airspace with weapons and supplies for American troops in Afghanistan” – all of which shows how beneficial mutual cooperation is (The White House Office of the Vice President. April 26, 2012). Not only this speech supported multilateralism, it also criticized military power in foreign policy. Biden argued that the New START nuclear arms control treaty decreases U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons. Even more, Biden rejected talking about Russia in military mindset. He criticized Governor Romney, who called Russia “without question our number one geopolitical foe” and referred to Russia as “Soviets.” (The White House Office of the Vice President. April 26, 2012). As this is an election campaign event, thus these statements on Russia have to be taken into account cautiously. Nonetheless, in this statement, Biden offered a strong defense of Barack Obama’s multilateral foreign policy and especially cooperation with Russia.

On June 18, 2012, in a joint statement by Barack Obama after a bilateral meeting with Vladimir Putin, the emphasis again was on multilateral cooperation (88.4%) with some references to idealism (8.4%), leadership (2%) and 1.3% to non-military power (see figure 5.2). Reference to U.S. leadership here was rather indirect, about U.S. offering “support to Russia’s pursuit of membership in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).” Reference to non-military power was about working on “early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.” Idealist values were discussed more in-depth, mainly about Syria discussing the civil war that started in 2011. However, there was a strong statement that bilateral interactions with Russia should be “guided by the

principles of the rule of law, respect for human rights, equality, and mutual respect.” Although idealist statements were few in number, the language of Barack Obama’s administration had started to change. In Syria too U.S. supported “moving forward on political transition to a democratic, pluralistic political system that would be implemented by the Syrians themselves” and idea that “the Syrian people should have the opportunity to independently and democratically choose their own future” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 18, 2012). These ideas are added to idealism in relations with Russia as Russia supports Assad’s regime in Syria, not democratic ideas.

Multilateralism and cooperation again in this statement played a prominent and extensive role again. This statement contains the most comprehensive list of areas in which the U.S. is cooperating and should cooperate with Russia out of all speeches and statements of both the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. Usual talk of cooperation implementing START and working on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear material was added with cooperation on “removal and elimination of nuclear materials... bilateral efforts to improve nuclear security, counter nuclear smuggling, and combat nuclear terrorism.” Barack Obama talked about cooperation against Iran and North Korea, against terrorism, especially in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, another aspect of cooperation was the necessity to “strengthen the Northern Distribution Network” was mentioned. New additions to areas of cooperation were cooperating to solve “world drug problem,” cooperation in “global fight against malaria,” as well as mutual goal “to strengthen the Palestinian Authority.” This statement even discussed necessity to work together in the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the NATO-Russia Council as well as through The Presidential Commission, created in July 2009. This organization was emphasized here, as it “coordinates our bilateral cooperation on the widest range of issues from strategic stability, energy, and space, fighting terrorism and illegal drug trafficking and consumption– to public health, agriculture, the environment, civil society, and cultural and educational exchanges. ...Military-Technical Cooperation.” Even more, this statement agreed “to cooperate bilaterally and multilaterally to solve regional conflicts” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 18, 2012).

Specific remarks by President Barack Obama in a speech after bilateral meeting with President Putin June 17, 2013, were also all, 100% about multilateral cooperation between both states (see figure 5.2). Cooperation on “countering terrorist violence,” cooperation to “deepen our economic and commercial relationships,” cooperation to “lead the world in both nuclear security issues and proliferation issues,” because by “working together, we not only increase security and prosperity for the Russian and American people but also help lead the world to a better place” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 17, 2013).



These extensive lists of multilateral cooperation between the two countries were the highest point in the second stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia.

The second stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia emphasized multilateral cooperation and to lesser extent no-military tools in foreign policy. After the initial caution, the Barack Obama administration embraced multilateral cooperation with Russia in areas of similar interests. However, there still were some idealist statements in this stage, but they were different from idealist statements in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. They were vaguer and even when Barack Obama or Biden was talking about democracy, as on June 24, 2010, and March 10, 2011 speeches, idealism did not dominate in relations with Russia. Because of the dual-track approach when the Barack Obama administration talked about both problems with democracy in Russia, it talked about cooperation at the same time. Pragmatic cooperation where the interests of both countries went hand in hand was perceived as possible, without linking it to democracy in Russia like in George W. Bush's NSS and speeches. This period in Barack Obama's strategy towards Russia reflected the contents of NSS 2010 (figure 4.1 and 4.4). Ideas of liberal internationalism – multilateralism and non-military power in foreign policy – also dominated in speeches. Idealist element that was present in the NSS 2010 was evident in some speeches about Russia too.

### **5.3.3 Back to Idealism**

The third stage started in August 2013 and lasted until Russia's aggression in Ukraine, March 2014. After the onset of the Syrian civil war in 2011 Russia had supported the Assad regime in this conflict. The U.S. on the other hand since 2012 supported some anti-Assad rebel groups, which set both countries at odds in this conflict. Furthermore, in June 2013 Russia gave asylum to Edward Snowden who leaked classified information about the National Security Agency in 2013. These issues and others prompted a change in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia turning back to idealism. On August 9, 2013 speech (see figure 5.2) Barack Obama talked about multilateral cooperation (46.7%) and idealist values (53.3%). In this speech, Barack Obama even discussed his decision not to boycott the Winter Olympics in Sochi. Debates about boycotting these Olympic games in Russia were due to deteriorating homosexual rights in Russia. In this speech Barack Obama acknowledged that a new situation that exists in relations with Russia, partially related to values: "number of emerging differences that we've seen over the last several months around Syria, around human rights issues, where it is probably appropriate for us to take a pause, reassess where it is that Russia is going, what our core interests are, and calibrate the relationship." Specifically, about

values, “Nobody is more offended than me by some of the anti-gay and lesbian legislation that you've been seeing in Russia” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 9, 2013). Although idealism was back on agenda in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, cooperation still was discussed in this stage.

For example, cooperation “together on Iran sanctions. They [Russia] provided us help in terms of supplying our troops in Afghanistan. We were able to get Russia into the WTO,” and the U.S. has been working with Russia on “joint concerns around counterterrorism.” However, these statements are framed as “hope” of President Barack Obama, that Putin will understand the benefits of such cooperation: “my hope is, is that over time, Mr. Putin and Russia recognize that rather than a zero-sum competition, in fact, if the two countries are working together we can probably advance the betterment of both peoples. ... If issues are framed as if the U.S. is for it then Russia should be against it, or we're going to be finding ways where we can poke each other at every opportunity, then probably we don't get as much stuff done” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 9, 2013). Although Barack Obama talked about cooperation, the tone was more about *potential* cooperation, not about areas where both countries are working together.

In this short stage, the hope of multilateral cooperation was still maintained, but idealism started to dominate far more than in previous speeches. Nonetheless, this shift back to idealism ties together with the first stage of Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia. In the first stage, Barack Obama offered cooperation, but also talked about idealist values, if this cooperation fails. As the cooperative relationship between both countries deteriorated, Barack Obama returned to the topic of human rights that was present in his first speech about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 7, 2009). Both stages are similar as they both discussed potential cooperation but talked about values that set U.S. and Russia apart. Both of these stages were in line with overall NSS 2010 (figure 4.1) as well as specific statements about Russia in this NSS (figure 4.4.), which emphasized cooperation (44.1%) and non-military power (35.4%), but did not abandon idealist values (20.5%). Both stages were talking about liberal internationalist grand strategy elements in relations with Russia. However, there was only one speech in this stage, because Russia's aggression in Ukraine changed U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

#### **5.3.4 Full Spectrum of Grand Strategy Elements**

This stage started in March 2014 and lasted until the end of Barack Obama's presidency in January 2017. Although relations between U.S. and Russia started deteriorating already in the third stage from mid-2013, Russian aggression in Ukraine created the most significant

change in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia since at least 2001. When Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich was ousted from his office after months of Euromaidan protests, Russia used instability in Ukraine to annex Crimea in March 2014 and to incite an uprising in Eastern Ukraine in April with the involvement of Russian armed forces.

In response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, speeches regarding Russia by Barack Obama turned mostly to use of U.S. non-military power to solve this crisis, however, in his speeches Barack Obama talked about all other liberal internationalist and primacist grand strategy elements, except unilateralism. Barack Obama invoked idealism, multilateral cooperation against Russia and military power in terms of bolstering NATO and deterring Russia. Even burden sharing of offshore balancing was occasionally invoked in this stage. These speeches showed a trend which was not present in statements about Russia both in speeches and NSS 2010 previously. Military power element appeared and played a consistent role in these Barack Obama's statements about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

March 7, 8, 17 and 20, 2014 speeches on the situation in Ukraine were taken as a single unit of analysis, because they all were about one issue – Russia's aggression in Ukraine – and complemented one another as the situation in Ukraine developed. These speeches (see figure 5.2) emphasized non-military power (51.9%) tools and diplomacy as means to solve the situation in Ukraine. Barack Obama talked about multilateralism (27.7%) – international cooperation to pressurize Russia and support Ukraine. Barack Obama talked about primacist military power element (10.2%) in terms that U.S. will support its NATO allies militarily in Central and Eastern Europe against Russia. These speeches involved references to idealism (6.5%) and U.S. leadership (3.8%) as well. All elements of U.S. primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategy, except unilateralism, were discussed in Barack Obama's immediate response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine. These elements with different emphasis in different contexts continued to play a role throughout this stage of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

In these statements, Barack Obama twice spoke about U.S. leadership, which “has mobilized the international community in support of Ukraine to isolate Russia for its actions and to reassure our allies and partners (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 17, 2014).” The U.S. had been “mobilizing the international community to condemn this violation of international law and to support the people and government of Ukraine” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 06, 2014). However, contrary to George W. Bush's first response to the similar crisis in Georgia, Barack Obama did not put a big emphasis on idealist values. In the first days of the crisis, he talked only once about support for “the Ukrainian people to determine their own destiny” and did not talk about democracy in

Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 20, 2014). Instead, Barack Obama emphasized U.S. non-military tools and multilateral cooperation against Russia as a solution to this crisis.

According to these speeches, non-military tools should lead to conflict resolution in Ukraine. Barack Obama outlined three-step strategy for the U.S. Firstly, diplomacy: “Diplomacy between the United States and Russia continues. We’ve emphasized that Russia still has a different path available -- one that de-escalates the situation, and one that involves Russia pursuing a diplomatic solution with the government in Kyiv.” Secondly, “providing assistance to the government of Ukraine.” Thirdly, sanctioning Russia. Both “senior officials of the Russian government” and “individuals with substantial resources and influence who provide material support to the Russian leadership, as well as a bank that provides material support to these individuals” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 20, 2014). The goal of these sanctions was to “increase the cost on Russia and on those responsible for what is happening in Ukraine” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 17, 2014). Clearly, the emphasis in quantitative and qualitative terms of Barack Obama’s response to Russia’s aggression in Ukraine was to use non-military tools.

In addition to non-military tools, Barack Obama in each speech was talking about multilateral cooperation against Russia in “close coordination with our European allies” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 06, 2014). The U.S. multilaterally “has been working closely with our European partners to develop more severe actions that could be taken if Russia continues to escalate the situation” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 20, 2014). This change from multilateral cooperation with Russia to multilateral cooperation against Russia continued throughout this stage. A similar shift to cooperation against Russia was also a trend in George W. Bush’s speeches after similar Russia’s aggression in Georgia in 2008.

However, although the emphasis of these speeches was on non-military power, military power played a role too. Regarding military power, events in Ukraine lead to an increased role for this primacist foreign policy element in Barack Obama’s speeches towards Russia from now on. Right after the crisis in Ukraine started, Barack Obama gave security assurances to U.S. NATO allies:

“In Europe, I’ll also be reinforcing a message that Vice President Biden carried to Poland and the Baltic states this week: America’s support for our NATO allies is unwavering. We’re bound together by our profound Article 5 commitment to defend one another, and by a set of shared values that so many generations sacrificed for. We’ve already increased our support for our Eastern European allies, and we will continue to strengthen NATO’s collective defense, and we will step up our cooperation with Europe on economic and energy issues as well” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 20, 2014).

This was a major shift in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Previously George W. Bush and Barack Obama varied on their emphasis on cooperation or idealist values in their foreign policy towards Russia. Never before primacist military power element was discussed regarding Russia. Barack Obama previously talked about NATO-Russia cooperation, but now Barack Obama talked about NATO in terms of reassuring military security of U.S. NATO allies, collective defense and Article 5.

March 26, 2014, Barack Obama gave a more extensive speech on events in Ukraine with emphasis on idealism (57.6%). In this speech multilateralism (19.7%) as well as non-military power (7.5%) played a smaller role. Military power (9.5%) still played a role as well as U.S. leadership (2.1%). Burden sharing (3.4%) came back as well (see figure 5.2). This speech outlined U.S. support for democracy in Ukraine at great length. Barack Obama was talking about “the young people of Ukraine who were determined to take back their future from a government rotted by corruption... Their voices echo calls for human dignity that rang out in European streets and squares for generations. ... These Ukrainians rejected a government that was stealing from the people instead of serving them and are reaching for the same ideals that allow us to be here today” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). These were detailed and lengthy descriptions why the U.S. should support pro-democratic movement in Ukraine.

Overall Barack Obama’s statements about support to idealist values were more extensive than previously, focusing not only on human rights, rule of law, and democracy but also on “human dignity, that every person is created equal,” “policies that benefit the many, not just the few,” as well as “instead of fearing the immigrant, we can welcome him” and “instead of targeting our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters, we can use our laws to protect their rights.” Latter two were issues George W. Bush did not address in his speeches on idealist values. Barack Obama also differed from George W. Bush by talking about leading by example in the field of values: “In the end, the success of our ideals comes down to us -- including the example of our own lives, our own societies” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). This rhetoric was similar to George W. Bush’s and Barack Obama offered an even more extensive list of values and ideals the U.S. should promote in relations with Russia.

Barack Obama's rhetoric about democratic values mirrored George W. Bush's: “I believe that over the long haul, as nations that are free, as free people, the future is ours. ... I believe this not because I’m naïve, and I believe this not because of the strength of our arms or the size of our economies, I believe this because these ideals that we affirm are true; these ideals are universal.” Democracy as a universal ideal was also one of the arguments George

W. Bush used to support democracy promotion in his foreign policy. In this speech Barack Obama supported various elements of democracy: “the ability of nations and peoples to make their own choices;” as well as “elections that are free and fair; and independent judiciaries and opposition parties; civil society and uncensored information so that individuals can make their own choices” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). In his speeches George W. Bush, again and again, emphasized three arguments why democracy promotion is good: it is the right, moral thing to do, it is in the interests of U.S. and it benefits everyone. In this speech, Barack Obama used only one of George W. Bush’s arguments – the universal nature of democratic ideals.

In this speech multilateralism was mentioned in relation to Ukraine – “the United States and our allies will continue to support the government of Ukraine” – as well as support to international system: “our enduring strength is also reflected in our respect for an international system that protects the rights of both nations and people -- a United Nations and a Universal Declaration of Human Rights; international law and the means to enforce those laws.” Barack Obama wished for cooperation even with Russia: “Since the end of the Cold War, we have worked with Russia... we believe the world has benefited when Russia chooses to cooperate on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). Although the emphasis of this speech was on idealism and multilateral cooperation against Russia, Barack Obama kept the option to pragmatically cooperate with Russia open.

Non-military tools played a smaller role in this statement. Again, Barack Obama was talking about “imposing costs through sanctions that have left a mark on Russia and those accountable for its actions. And if the Russian leadership stays on its current course, together we will ensure that this isolation deepens. Sanctions will expand.” Barack Obama talked about “monitors who can ensure that the rights of all Ukrainians are protected; a process of constitutional reform within Ukraine; and free and fair elections this spring” as well as “a significant package of assistance that can help stabilize the Ukrainian economy and meet the basic needs of the people” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). Barack Obama’s strategy for addressing the crisis in Ukraine was through non-military means. However, his strategy towards NATO members worried about Russia contained a military component as well.

Regarding military power, Barack Obama’s statements were about “our solemn obligation, our Article 5 duty to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our allies. And in that promise we will never waver; NATO nations never stand alone” referring to: “NATO planes patrol the skies over the Baltics, and we’ve reinforced our presence in

Poland.” However, while Barack Obama wanted only to deter Russia with military power, he did not want to use military power in Ukraine: “We have sent no troops there.” “The United States and NATO do not seek any conflict with Russia.” Use of military power to solve conflict in Ukraine would be a mistake: “Now is not the time for bluster. The situation in Ukraine, like crises in many parts of the world, does not have easy answers nor a military solution” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). This shows a mixed approach towards Russia. On the one hand, Barack Obama emphasized the use of non-military support to Ukraine and non-military actions against Russia, on the other Barack Obama offered military assistance and reassured U.S. security commitments to U.S. allies in the Eastern flank of NATO alliance.

Barack Obama’s speech included one mention of offshore balancing burden sharing: “in a world of challenges that are increasingly global, all of us have an interest in nations stepping forward to play their part -- to bear their share of the burden and to uphold international norms” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). Everyone should participate to ensure peace in the international system. However, Obama rejected pragmatism and lack of U.S. leadership that is characteristic of offshore balancing:

“if we applied a cold-hearted calculus, we might decide to look the other way. Our economy is not deeply integrated with Ukraine’s. Our people and our homeland face no direct threat from the invasion of Crimea. Our own borders are not threatened by Russia’s annexation. But that kind of casual indifference would ignore the lessons that are written in the cemeteries of this continent. It would allow the old way of doing things to regain a foothold in this young century. And that message would be heard not just in Europe, but in Asia and the Americas, in Africa and the Middle East” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014).

This statement rejected pragmatist element of offshore balancing grand strategy and established necessity for value-based U.S. foreign policy towards Russia and Ukraine. According to Barack Obama, the abandonment of the idealist U.S. foreign policy element would strengthen non-democracies across the world.

On May 2, 2014 speech on Ukraine together with German Chancellor Merkel Barack Obama put the main emphasis (see figure 5.2) on non-military power (84%). Multilateralism made up 8.7% of references to grand strategies: there would be “extensive consultations” with EU member states about imposing sanctions on Russia. Burden sharing (5%) also played a role as Barack Obama thanked “Chancellor Merkel’s leadership”: “She has been extraordinarily helpful not only in facilitating European unity, but she’s also been very important in helping to shape a possible diplomatic resolution and reaching out to the Russians to encourage them to take that door while it’s still open.” There was one line related to military power (2.3%): “We’re united in our unwavering Article 5 commitment to the

security of our NATO allies, including German aircraft joining NATO patrols over the Baltics” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. May 2, 2014).

The rest of the statement was about the use of non-military tools to solve Ukrainian conflict with “support for Ukraine” “economically, diplomatically, and politically” and “determination to impose costs on Russia for its actions, including through coordinated sanctions.” U.S. “preference is a diplomatic resolution to this issue.” The proposed goal of these sanctions and diplomatic actions is the isolation of Russia: “if the Russian leadership does not change course, it will face increasing costs as well as growing isolation -- diplomatic and economic” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. May 2, 2014). Although primacist military power element was invoked again and again throughout this stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, the emphasis in this speech was on the use of non-military tools in U.S. foreign policy. As it will be seen in other speeches, Barack Obama administration emphasized different grand strategy elements for different audiences: non-military power was emphasized in speeches given in Germany and in speeches about Ukraine and Syria, while military power in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia was discussed when talking about security of NATO allies, for example, in the Baltic states.

As fighting between the Ukrainian government and Russia backed and supported separatist forces intensified, Russian BUK air defense missile system shot down of a Malaysian airliner over Eastern Ukraine on July 18, 2014. Response by Barack Obama to this incident emphasized non-military power (65.7%) again (see figure 5.2). Most of the statements again were about non-military power, mainly economic sanctions. U.S. “preferred path is to resolve this [conflict in Ukraine] diplomatically” by ratcheting “up sanctions against Russia.” The U.S.

“will continue to make clear that as Russia engages in efforts that are supporting the separatists, that we have the capacity to increase the costs that we impose on them. And we will do so. Not because we’re interested in hurting Russia for the sake of hurting Russia, but because we believe in standing up for the basic principle that a country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity has to be respected” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 18, 2014).

Barack Obama continued to emphasize the use of non-military tools – sanctions – in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Support to ideals was not used in this statement much. U.S. should support Ukraine because the U.S. should to support principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. U.S. support for democratic values was not mentioned extensively. Regarding idealism (4.4%), Barack Obama only stated that the U.S. is ready “to support the people of Ukraine as they courageously work to strengthen their democracy and make their own decisions about how they should move forward.”

In terms of U.S. leadership (14.2%) Barack Obama stated that “United States is going to continue to lead efforts within the world community to de-escalate the situation; to stand up



for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.” “The United States stands ready to provide any assistance that is necessary.” Regarding military power (4.9%), Barack Obama supported “working with our NATO partners and some of the Baltic States, giving them reassurances that we are prepared to do whatever is required to meet our alliance obligations,” but he did not “see a U.S. military role beyond what we’ve already been doing” in Ukraine. About multilateralism (10.8%) Barack Obama said that “growing costs on Russia” are imposed “together with our allies” and he supported an investigation on Malaysian airline endorsed by the “U.N. Security Council” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 18, 2014). This speech contained all primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategy elements except unilateralism. Non-military tools in foreign policy dominated this speech again.

July 29, 2014, Barack Obama gave a statement on Ukraine and in this statement (see figure 5.2) the emphasis again was on non-military power (43.2%) as the means to solving Russia’s aggression in Ukraine. The role of multilateralism (25.1%) was to cooperate against Russia: “strong international coalition to support Ukraine, its sovereignty, its territorial integrity, its right to determine its own destiny, and to increase the pressure on Russia for actions that have undermined Ukraine’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, and ability to make its own decisions” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 29, 2014). The necessity of U.S. leadership (10.1%) and idealist values (21.6%) played a more significant role again. The U.S. was “going to continue to lead the international community in our support for the Ukrainian people” and “will rally the international community” multilaterally “in standing up for the rights and freedom of people around the world.” The latter part of the statement was pure idealism which sounded like George W. Bush’s rhetoric on democracy promotion across the world. Other two references on idealism in this speech were more subtle: “we will continue to support the people of Ukraine, who have elected a new President” and support Ukrainian people “for the peace, the security, and the freedom that they very richly deserve” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 29, 2014).

Barack Obama’s preferred method of achieving these goals was non-military power: “combination of stronger U.S. and European sanctions is going to have a greater impact on the Russian economy than we’ve seen so far.” These were “sanctions in key sectors of the Russian economy: energy, arms, and finance. We’re blocking the exports of specific goods and technologies to the Russian energy sector. We’re expanding our sanctions to more Russian banks and defense companies.” These sanctions were especially targeting “the cronies and companies that are supporting Russia’s illegal actions in Ukraine.” The goal of U.S. foreign policy was “a diplomatic solution” for the conflict in Ukraine (The White House

Office of the Press Secretary. July 29, 2014). Some speeches of this period in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia offered pragmatic reasoning, some idealist reasoning why the U.S. should get involved in Ukraine and sanction Russia. But almost all emphasized non-military tools as the preferred foreign policy instruments.

September 03, 2014 in a speech to the people of Estonia (see figure 5.2) Barack Obama referred to idealist values (41.8%) a lot in this speech: “We have to uphold a free press and freedom of speech... embrace open and inclusive societies... support for those who reach for their freedom.” Barack Obama’s statements were similar to George W. Bush’s support for democracy: “The currents of history ebb and flow, but over time they flow toward freedom -- more people, in every corner of the Earth, standing up and reaching to claim those rights that are universal. ... that’s why, in the end, our ideals will win.” Regarding Ukraine, U.S. will “help Ukraine reform -- to escape a legacy of corruption and build democratic institutions.” Barack Obama talked about “Dignity... every human being is born equal, with free will and inalienable rights... justice... might does not make right... democracy... a government’s legitimacy can only come from citizens... freedom... it’s inevitable, not because it is ordained, but because these basic human yearnings for dignity and justice and democracy do not go away” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 03, 2014).

What made this speech different from previous, Barack Obama emphasized the necessity to strengthen NATO with emphasis on military power (42.4%). The U.S. “will defend the territorial integrity of every single Ally. ... American forces are on the ground training and rotating through each of the Baltic states. ... Article 5 is crystal clear: An attack on one is an attack on all.” In addition to that, “the United States is working to bolster the security of our NATO Allies and further increase America’s military presence in Europe. ... NATO forces need the ability to deploy even faster in times of crisis.” Even in Ukraine, “NATO needs to make concrete commitments to help Ukraine modernize and strengthen its security forces.” Next, to military power, this speech contained references to non-military power (15.8%), although fewer: “the United States, the European Union, our partners around the world have all said we prefer a diplomatic solution... we have come together to impose major sanctions on Russia for its actions.” But, “it doesn’t have to be this way. We have no interest in weakening Russia. ... We welcome a Russia that is strong and growing and contributes to international security and peace, and that resolves disputes peacefully, with diplomacy” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. September 03, 2014). In this period Barack Obama gave different speeches to different audiences. When talking to U.S. NATO allies threatened by Russia – Baltic states – Barack Obama discussed military aspects

of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia far more than in most speeches addressed to other audiences.

In a statement after meeting German Chancellor Merkel February 9, 2015, Barack Obama used entirely different grand strategy elements. He emphasized non-military power (70.9%). 22.4% of references to grand strategies were about multilateralism. Only 4.1% went to military power and 2.6% to burden sharing (see figure 5.2). Barack Obama talked about “the unity of the United States and Germany and our allies and partners around the world” after “Russian aggression” in Ukraine, about multilateral, “strong, unified response between the United States and Europe. However, he also invoked offshore balancing balance sharing by again thanking Angela Merkel for German leadership (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. February 9, 2015) similar to what he did in his May 2, 2014 speech.

Primacist support to military power was invoked when talking about “bolstering our presence in Central and Eastern Europe -- part of our unwavering Article 5 obligation to our collective defense.” However, Barack Obama rejected military solution in Ukraine: “the prospect for a military solution to this problem has always been low.” Instead, Barack Obama emphasized non-military power, “a diplomatic resolution to this issue” that includes “work with the IMF and other partners to provide Ukraine with critical financial support” and “sanctions on Russia” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. February 9, 2015). Previous two statements clearly showed how different audiences received different statements with different emphasis. Barack Obama’s approach to the Baltic states emphasized military power more, while overall Barack Obama’s approach to Russia and European allies against Russia emphasized multilateral cooperation and non-military tools.

In remarks after G7 Summit June 8, 2015, Barack Obama emphasized non-military power (99.3%) leaving only 0.7% of references to grand strategy to idealism (see figure 5.2). The only idealist reference was about the necessity to “strengthen its [Ukraine’s] democracy.” Rest of the speech similarly to previous was about “economic support and technical assistance” to Ukraine and use of non-military tools against Russia: seeking diplomatic solution, imposing sanctions, leaving Russia out of G7, “pushing Russia to abide by the terms of the Minsk agreement” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 8, 2015).

Last two statements as well as May 2, 2014 statement differed from the overall tone in rest of the statements in this stage. They lacked references to the idealism that were prevalent in the rest of the statements from this period. However, these differences can be explained by looking at the audiences and events in which Barack Obama gave these speeches. June 8, 2015 statement was given during G7 Summit and thus, it is only logical that it emphasized multilateral cooperation of G7 states to counter resurgent Russia. The idealism that was used

to criticize Russia in other speeches was not used in this speech as the primary audience is not Russia, but other G7 states, U.S. partners. May 2, 2014, and February 5, 2015 speeches were given after meeting German Chancellor Merkel, thus the emphasis was on non-military power tools – diplomacy and non-military support to Ukraine – as the key to fixing the crisis in Ukraine. In addition, these two speeches referred to military power as well as Germany is a strong NATO partner and it is necessary to deter Russia as well. Idealism was not used here, because these speeches are not aimed at Russian, but at a German audience. Nonetheless, idealism played a role in other speeches throughout this stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

On November 24, 2015, in a joint press conference with President Hollande of France another issue came to the forefront of U.S. rhetoric about Russia: Russia's airstrikes in Syria and Turkey – a NATO ally for the U.S. – had shot down Russian fighter plane after it entered Turkish airspace. Syrian civil war had lasted four years since 2011. But only in September 2015, Russia started an active intervention in this conflict. Russia deployed military advisors and started airstrikes against targets in north-west Syria. This set Russia at odds with the U.S. as Russia supported Assad regime and the U.S. supported Kurdish fighters and various anti-Assad rebel groups. Starting with this speech Syria played an increasingly more significant role in U.S. relations with Russia.

In this speech, only 21.7% of references to grand strategies were about the use of non-military power. The majority, 46.7% were about multilateralism. 23.9% were about idealism and 7.8% about military power (see figure 5.2). Reference to military power in this speech was rather vague. After Turkey shot down a Russian fighter plane Barack Obama emphasized that "Turkey, like every country, has a right to defend its territory and its airspace." Support to idealism was about "a political transition away from Assad to a democratically elected government that can unite the Syrian people against terrorism." Reference to non-military power was about encouraging diplomacy between Russia and Turkey. Reference to multilateralism was about multilateral cooperation as means for solving the crisis in Syria: "Russia is welcome to be part of this broad-based coalition that we've set up" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 24, 2015). Although a new issue had come up in U.S.-Russia relations, to address this issue Barack Obama used similar narratives and the same grand strategy elements he discussed throughout this stage of U.S. relations with Russia.

In 2016 there were at least 5 phone calls between Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin. Regrettably, only readouts, short summaries of these calls one or two paragraphs long are available and thus they were not useful in the analysis as they are too short and often too general. The next extensive speech on Russia in 2016 was given April 25, 2016, during

Barack Obama's visit to Europe. It contained references (see figure 5.2) to idealism (62.8%) and non-military power (37.2%). References to idealism were about Russian aggression in Ukraine and necessity for the U.S. "to uphold our most basic principles of our international order, and that's a principle that nations like Ukraine have the right to choose their own destiny. ...we should keep helping Ukraine with its reforms to improve its economy and consolidate its democracy and modernize its forces to protect its independence." Non-military power references were about using sanctions to pressurize Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. April 25, 2016). In this speech, Barack Obama reiterated narratives he usually used in this stage.

August 4, 2016, in a press conference by President Barack Obama after his meeting with national security officials Barack Obama talked about Russia again with emphasis (see figure 5.2) on idealism (58.2%). Some references to multilateralism (12%) and non-military power (29.7%). However, this time the emphasis on idealism was in the context of Syria, which Barack Obama connected with Russian foreign policy in the region:

"The [Syrian] regime and its allies continue to violate the Cessation of Hostilities, including with vicious attacks on defenseless civilians, medieval sieges against cities like Aleppo, and blocking food from reaching families that are starving. It is deplorable. ... I'm not confident that we can trust the Russians and Vladimir Putin... We're very clear that Russia has been willing to support a murderous regime and an individual, in Assad, who has destroyed his country just to cling on to power. ...if we are able to get a genuine Cessation of Hostilities that prevents indiscriminate bombing, that protects civilians, that allows humanitarian access and creates some sort of pathway to begin the hard work of political negotiations inside of Syria, then we have to try -- because the alternative is a perpetuation of civil war" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 4, 2016).

However, Barack Obama in this speech still talked about possible multilateral cooperation with Russia "The U.S. remains prepared to work with Russia to try to reduce the violence and strengthen our efforts against ISIL and al Qaeda in Syria." Yet at the same time, he acknowledged that cooperation is not likely: "Russia's direct involvement in these actions over the last several weeks raises very serious questions about their commitment to pulling the situation back from the brink." To solve the crisis in Syria, not U.S. military force, but diplomacy and goodwill of the parties involved will pave the way. All sides should adhere to "Cessation of Hostilities" agreement and Russia should use its "sufficient influence over Assad" to stop "a murderous regime." If Russia fails to do so, it "will have to answer to that on the international stage" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 4, 2016). Although Barack Obama still talked about possible cooperation, his rhetoric was becoming increasingly critical of Russia.

August 24, 2016, Vice President Joe Biden visited Latvia and gave a speech at the National Library of Latvia. This speech contained a lot of references to Russia (see figure 5.2). Military power again was the emphasis of the speech in Baltics and made up 41.4% of

references to grand strategies. Idealism made up 21.9%. Rest of the speech was about multilateralism (29.1%) and non-military power (7.6%). In his speech, Biden talked about military power extensively. He described the NATO alliance as “the cornerstone of global stability” and re-emphasized “America’s Article 5 commitment is rock-solid and unwavering.” Biden put military security in forefront of relations with Russia: “And with Russia once more taking aggressive actions and threatening the sovereign rights of its neighbors, NATO remains as vital today as it ever has been. ... An attack on one is an attack on all. Period. ...we want Moscow to know, that we mean what we say.” This primacist rhetoric supportive of NATO and military defense of U.S. allies was also combined with an emphasis on actual troop deployments in the region: “the United States will send a full armored brigade combat team -- 4,200 combat-ready American troops -- to provide an on-the-ground deterrent force not only in Poland but for the region.” Biden argued that increased U.S. troop presence, “plus prepositioned equipment for another armored brigade combat team, and together with NATO’s enhanced forward presence, represents the greatest allied commitment capability deployed in the region since the end of the Cold War.” In addition, “security and defense cooperation” is augmented with additional “\$100 million in new assistance to help bolster your [Baltic] capabilities, build resilience, and deter aggression” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 24, 2016). As Vice President Biden pointed out himself, this was a new, more militarized approach to the Eastern flank of NATO alliance and Russia that was not used since the end of the Cold War.

In this speech, idealism was invoked referring to support to democracies in the Baltic states as well as Ukraine, opposed to lack of democracy in Russia. “As the Ukrainian people fight bravely to defend their democracy and independence, the Baltic States offer a powerful example and inspiration. You are living proof that it is possible to break free and build strong, independent, vibrant democracies and to become full members of the European community.” Russia, on the other hand, uses a lack of democracy in its foreign policy. Russia “seeks to use corruption as a tool of coercion and influence around the globe, rooting out corruption is essential to preserve your national sovereignty” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 24, 2016). Idealist values still played a prominent role in this speech.

Regarding soft and non-military power, Biden congratulated Lithuania with “the inauguration of Lithuania’s liquefied natural gas terminal... a huge leap forward to end the Baltic region’s energy reliance on Russia” and talked about the necessity for Europe to diversify sources of gas deliveries. Regarding multilateralism, here Biden talked about multilateral cooperation against Russia. About “collective defense,” particularly enhanced “NATO’s forward presence in the Baltic States and in Poland” with Canadian, German,

British and other troops (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. August 24, 2016). This emphasis on military power and idealism put this speech and September 03, 2014 speech, very close to primacist grand strategy. Multilateralism in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia in the context of the Baltic states was put in terms of cooperation within NATO alliance against Russian threats.

November 17, 2016, in a press conference after meeting with Chancellor Merkel of Germany (see figure 5.2) Barack Obama emphasized idealism (40.7%), referred a little to military power (3.5%) and talked about multilateralism (26.5%) and non-military power (29.3%). Barack Obama reiterates his wish to cooperate with Russia, possibility of “finding areas where we can cooperate with Russia where our values and interests align,” at the same time he talked about cooperating with allies to “to come to a peaceful settlement” in Ukraine (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 17, 2016). In this phase in speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia a different emphasis on various grand strategy elements was put on for different recipients, however, these speeches maintained the same ideas about preferred U.S. foreign policy.

Discussing both Ukraine and Syria Barack Obama emphasized idealist values: “We continued to stand with the people of Ukraine and for the basic principle that nations have a right to determine their own destiny” and “On Syria, it's clear that the indiscriminate attacks on civilians by the Assad regime and Russia will only worsen the humanitarian catastrophe...” Barack Obama singled out “the values of democracy, and free speech, and international norms, and rule of law, respecting the ability of other countries to determine their own destiny and preserve their sovereignty and territorial integrity -- those things are not something that we can set aside.” Usually Barack Obama talked about these idealist values and only inferred that Russia is opposed to them, but here he singled out Russia, as it was necessary to “stand up to Russia where they are deviating from our values and international norms” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 17, 2016). This speech put Russia on the opposite spectrum of values both countries support and discussed necessity to oppose Russian foreign policy aims where these values diverged.

Regarding non-military power, Barack Obama reminded that sanctions were the key instrument against Russia. There had to be “a comprehensive and humane response to the devastating humanitarian crisis in Syria and for the influx of migrants and refugees from around the world.” In the context of 2016 presidential election in the U.S. another issue had come up: Russia’s cyber-attacks in the U.S. Regarding this issue, Barack Obama talked also about non-military power: “we’re monitoring it [cyber-attacks] carefully and we will respond appropriately if and when we see this happening.” A short reference to military power was

about the fact that for the U.S. “NATO is a commitment that does not change” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. November 17, 2016). Although speeches in this period had different emphasis on different grand strategy elements, Barack Obama kept talking about the same approach to Russia, often invoking primacist military power grand element when talking about security guarantees against Russia for NATO member states.

On December 16, 2016, Barack Obama’s speech (see figure 5.2) he talked about idealism (31.1%), multilateralism (6.8%), but the main emphasis was again on non-military power (61.1%). Regarding non-military power, he talked about Syria, about “an impartial international observer force in Aleppo that can help coordinate an orderly evacuation through safe corridors. ...there needs to be a broader ceasefire that can serve as the basis for a political rather than a military solution.” Barack Obama’s preferred means to achieve this were non-military, through international organizations. “...pressing the Security Council to help improve the delivery of humanitarian aid to those who are in such desperate need, and to ensure accountability, including continuing to monitor any potential use of chemical weapons in Syria” was the way U.S. wanted to approach this problem as well as “work in the U.N. General Assembly.” Another issue Barack Obama talked about was Russian cyber-attacks: “the Russians were responsible for hacking the DNC... it is important for us... preventing that kind of interference through cyber attacks in the future.” Barack Obama wanted “to prevent some sort of cyber arms race...” Thus, “Our goal continues to be to send a clear message to Russia or others not to do this to us because we can do stuff to you.” Barack Obama also reminded of “enormous numbers of sanctions against the Russians.” About multilateralism, in Syria “the United States is going to continue to push for [a diplomatic solution], both with our partners and through multilateral institutions like the U.N.” He again restated, that he had been willing to engage with Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. December 16, 2016). Although in last three speeches a different element of grand strategies – military power, idealism and non-military power – were emphasized, these speeches were meant for different audiences and the narratives used in this stage remained unchanged.

Regarding idealism, Barack Obama talked about “horror at the savage assault by the Syrian regime and its Russian and Iranian allies on the city of Aleppo,” with “a deliberate strategy of surrounding, besieging, and starving innocent civilians. ...relentless targeting of humanitarian workers and medical personnel; entire neighborhoods reduced to rubble and dust. ...civilians being executed. These are all horrific violations of international law.” The solution to Syrian crises Barack Obama proposed again was not military, but non-military: “a transition to a more representative government” (The White House Office of the Press



Secretary. December 16, 2016). This speech focused on Syria and thus, military grand strategy element was lacking here. Again, in different contexts, different emphasis in approach to Russia were used.

In his final press conference before the end of his second term as the president of the United States, January 18, 2017, Barack Obama talked about Russia as well. Out of all references to grand strategies in his speech idealism made up 23.9%, military power 7.8%, multilateralism 46.7% and non-military power 21.7% (see figure 5.2). In terms of idealism, Barack Obama talked about Ukraine, about “the independence and sovereignty of a country, Ukraine,” that “had been encroached upon, by force, by Russia. And Russia continues to occupy Ukrainian territory and meddle in Ukrainian affairs and support military surrogates who have violated the basic international law and international norms.” He also added that “it is important for the United States to stand up for the basic principle that big countries don’t go around and invade and bully smaller countries.” When talking about values, Barack Obama singled out advocating “human rights, advocating on behalf of women’s rights, advocating on behalf of freedom of the press.” Support to these values was an example of the necessity for U.S. leadership: “this is a good example of the vital role that America has to continue to play around the world” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. January 18, 2017). Idealist component Barack Obama used in his rhetoric in his first approach to Russia came back and played an important role throughout third and fourth stages in Barack Obama’s foreign policy towards Russia.

Multilateralism in this speech showed up again as Barack Obama talked about the necessity to cooperate with Russia: to “have a constructive relationship with Russia. That’s been my approach throughout my presidency. Where our interests have overlapped, we’ve worked together.” Regarding non-military power, Barack Obama talked again about sanctions to pressurize Russia for its actions in Ukraine. If Russia stopped supporting separatists, “the sanctions will be removed.” Barack Obama also talked about the START II treaty, which “has substantially reduced our nuclear stockpiles, both Russia and the United States” as one of his foreign policy accomplishments. In this speech, Barack Obama talked about all grand strategy instruments that he had used in his foreign policy towards Russia that were characteristic of this fourth stage in Barack Obama’s foreign policy towards Russia.

To sum up this period in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, after Russia’s aggression in Ukraine, Barack Obama embraced a new element in foreign policy towards Russia – military power, which is supported by primacist grand strategy. Mostly military power grand strategy element was used when talking about the necessity to deter Russia as well as to defend and support U.S. NATO allies. This element was not invoked to such an extent

previously neither by Barack Obama, nor George W. Bush administrations. This indicates the slide towards primacist grand strategy in this stage. However, Barack Obama also embraced other grand strategy elements. He put emphasis on non-military power but talked also about multilateralism, necessity to cooperate against Russia, idealism and U.S. leadership. Even offshore balancing idea about sharing burdens with Germany occasionally appeared in his speeches.

This emphasis on primacist military power and various liberal internationalist grand strategy elements in this stage corresponds with Barack Obama NSS 2015 that was published after the change in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia had occurred in 2014. NSS 2015 regarding U.S. foreign policy towards Russia (see figure 4.4.) talked about idealism (12.5%), military power (27.3%), multilateralism (33.8%) and non-military power (26.4%) and all of these grand strategy elements were reflected also throughout this stage of U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Barack Obama referred to the full spectrum of primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategy elements, except unilateralism. Unilateralism was lacking in NSS 2015 as well, instead, multilateralism played a prominent role in most speeches. Regarding military power or non-military power, Barack Obama emphasized different foreign policy tools for different audiences and different issues. For example, in Germany Barack Obama emphasized non-military foreign policy tools and in the Baltic states, he emphasized military power while at the same time always talking about non-military tools, mainly sanctions that he used against Russia. This stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia can be characterized as following liberal internationalist grand strategy, but at the same time, there were influences from primacy as well.

#### **5.4 A Summary of Barack Obama's Grand Strategy Towards Russia**

An analysis of Barack Obama's speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia shows that there were four stages in his approach to Russia. First, multilateral cooperation with references to idealism in 2009. Second, multilateral cooperation with Russia in areas of similar interests. Third, a return to idealism starting from August 2013. Fourth, after Russian aggression in Ukraine in March 2014, Barack Obama talked about all of the liberal internationalist and primacist grand strategy elements, except for unilateralism. The first three stages were pure liberal internationalist grand strategy, while the last was a mix of liberal internationalist and primacist ideas. The last stage was a unique period in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia with elements not present during George W. Bush's presidency and the first three stages of Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia. All four stages were consistent

with ideas about grand strategies outlined in both Barack Obama's NSS from 2010 and from 2015.

The first stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia during 2009 can be symbolically described as extending a hand to Russia, which, according to Martel, was characteristic of Barack Obama's overall foreign policy after assuming office. The Barack Obama administration wanted to decrease U.S. involvement in the world, cooperating more multilaterally with other states to solve their own regional problems (Martel, 2015, p. 326-327, 328, 332). In this stage of the U.S.'s relations with Russia, Barack Obama talked about the hope for multilateral cooperation in multiple areas where the interests of the U.S. and Russia overlapped. He floated the idea of a potential reset in relations with Russia, while cautiously maintaining idealist rhetoric similar to George W. Bush's speeches, even using similar reasoning as to why democracy should play a role in relations with Russia. However, Barack Obama clearly rejected primacy and an offshore balancing grand strategy in relations with Russia. This stage was brief, as Russia was willing to cooperate with the new Barack Obama administration and a more multilateral stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia began.

The second stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia, from 2009 until June 2013, decoupled democracy and human rights in Russia from U.S.-Russia cooperation. The dual track approach used by Barack Obama's administration offered Russia pragmatic cooperation where the interests of both countries aligned while leaving democracy and human rights issues on a separate track. During this stage, the U.S. and Russia signed the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty on April 8, 2010. Both countries agreed to decrease the number of long-range missiles armed with nuclear weapons to about 1,500. Both states cooperated in imposing sanctions on Iran for its nuclear program. Starting with 2009, Russia allowed NATO to supply its troops in Afghanistan via Russia through the Northern Distribution Network. The U.S. supported Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization, which Russia joined on 22 August 2012. Although Barack Obama signed the Magnitsky Act in 2012 and imposed travel and financial restrictions on people linked with human rights violations in Russia, it did not change the overall tone of this stage. Idealism did not dominate relations with Russia as it did in the later stages of George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. Nonetheless, this stage retained some vague references to idealism, which was not the case with the first stage in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia, which did not use idealism at all.

This stage corresponds with what many authors have written about Obama's reset with Russia. Indyk, Lieberthal, and O'Hanlon (2012, p. 91) have characterized Barack Obama's

foreign policy as “pragmatist when necessary.” Cox, Lynch, and Bouchet (2013, pp. 10, 27-30) argue that Barack Obama was less keen about democracy promotion than the previous George W. Bush administration, however, Barack Obama did not abandon idealism in U.S. foreign policy. Dayermond and Mankoff, on the other hand, argue that Barack Obama administration differed from George W. Bush’s because it acknowledged different values at the core of each country and “accepted Russia as it is”: unique and different from the Western political model and values (Mankoff, 2012, p. 91). This acknowledgment allowed Barack Obama to engage in more cooperative relations with Russia (Dayermond, 2013, p. 510) as was clearly indicated by an analysis of speeches from this stage. According to Mankoff, while George W. Bush hoped that democratization in Russia would lead to cooperation, the Barack Obama administration hoped that cooperation would lead to exchanges and ties between both governments. The benefits of deepened cooperation and these ties would create incentives for Russia to improve its democracy and human rights record (Mankoff, 2012, p. 115).

Mankoff’s characterization of the reasons why George W. Bush and Barack Obama used idealist foreign policy is spot on. Both George W. Bush’s NSS and Barack Obama’s NSS from 2010 discussed liberal internationalist grand strategy elements – cooperation and idealism – in foreign policy towards Russia, but each arranged these elements differently for U.S. foreign policy. For George W. Bush, democracy was a precondition for cooperation. For example: “democratic progress in Russia and its region... improves relationships with” the U.S., while Russia’s “efforts to prevent democratic development at home and abroad will hamper the development of Russia’s relations with the United States” (NSS 2006. p. 39). For the Barack Obama administration, the thinking was along liberal internationalist ideas. Cooperation would lead to democratization.

Liberal internationalists want the U.S. to engage with Russia and other authoritarian states, because the U.S. would be able to integrate authoritarian states in the liberal world order through trade, diplomacy, cooperation, and integration in international institutions. Cooperation with Russia would not only help the U.S. to solve global challenges, it would also help to integrate Russia into the liberal world order, making Russia into a responsible stakeholder. If Russia was integrated into Western international organizations, as well as legal norms, it would have fewer incentives to pursue revisionist policies (Deudney, Ikenberry, 2012, pp. 19-20; Haass, 2005, p. 29). According to Haass, the U.S. should both cooperate with authoritarian states to solve international problems with them in an established normative framework, as well as use idealist norms and values – increase physical security, economic opportunity, and political freedom - in order to integrate them (Haass, 2005, p. 24). Liberal internationalists support cooperation, even with authoritarian Russia, not only because

cooperation with authoritarian states is necessary to solve international challenges, but also because cooperation with Russia will lead to its integration into the West and economic as well as political reforms.

Barack Obama's emphasis on both cooperation and idealist values follows this liberal internationalist logic. Although Barack Obama used a dual-track approach towards Russia and attempted to pragmatically cooperate, he also retained the second, idealist track in his relations with Russia. As U.S. Vice President Joe Biden put it, the idea behind cooperation with Russia was to make Russia more like the West: "History shows that in industrialized societies, economic modernization and political modernization go hand-in-hand. You don't get one without the other. Or put it this way, you don't get industrial modernization without political modernization" (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). This indicates that pragmatic cooperation with Russia was motivated by the liberal internationalist idea that the U.S. should integrate non-democratic states in the U.S. led international system (Haass, 2005, p. 19, 25). While George W. Bush thought that democratization would lead to cooperation, the Barack Obama administration thought that cooperation would lead to democratization. Both were wrong. This did not happen. This stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia started breaking down even before Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

In the third stage of foreign policy towards Russia, as problems arose in relations between the two countries, the tone that Barack Obama used about Russia changed in August 2013, returning to the idealist grand strategy element. The causes of this change were the deteriorating human rights situation in Russia, increasing disagreements on Syria as well as Russia's provision of asylum to Edward Snowden. Barack Obama still talked about *potential* cooperation, but idealism dominated far more than in previous speeches. Even before Russia's aggression in Ukraine, relations between the two states deteriorated and Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia had begun to change. The reset of relations between both states was over even before Russian aggression in Ukraine.

The fourth stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia commenced after Russia's aggression in Ukraine in March 2014. In response to this crisis, Barack Obama talked about using the full spectrum of grand strategy instruments, except unilateralism. Barack Obama emphasized non-military power and he also invoked idealism as well as multilateral cooperation against Russia. The three speeches from this period where idealism did not play any role were not directed at Russia but at U.S. allies. The May 2, 2014, February 5, 2015, and June 8, 2015 statements stand out from this trend of talking about idealism, because they were aimed not at Russia, but at U.S. allies, encouraging them to act in the face

of Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Even burden sharing in offshore balancing was occasionally invoked in this stage. Support to military power in foreign policy towards Russia which is supported by primacists, constantly appears in Barack Obama's speeches as well. This is a unique change compared to all previous statements. Such change did not occur after the Russia – Georgia war. This indicates that Barack Obama was leaning towards primacist grand strategy towards Russia in this period.

Comparing grand strategy towards Russia as outlined in the NSS (see figure 4.4) with the speeches by President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden (see figure 5.2), the composition of both NSS's clearly correlate with the speeches. The NSS from 2010 talked about idealism, multilateralism and non-military power in relations with Russia. These were the elements that made up speeches in the first, second and third stages of foreign policy towards Russia until 2014. However, the emphasis in the speeches was on multilateral cooperation, with a smaller role for non-military power, compared to the NSS from 2010. There is a correlation between the speeches of the fourth stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia and the NSS from 2015 too. This NSS supported idealism, military power, multilateralism and non-military power as did the speeches in this period. Compared to the NSS from 2015, the emphasis in speeches was on idealism and non-military power, not multilateralism. Yet both the NSS from 2015 and the speeches of this period with their embrace of military power, showed a shift towards a primacy grand strategy towards Russia. Thus, the third hypothesis, the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies has been proven. The NSS's are documents that do reflect the thinking of the U.S. president and influence the foreign policy-making process. Analysis of this case shows that the criticism of the NSS's, for example, that the NSS's are "either quickly forgotten or never implemented in any meaningful way in the first place" and that "nobody consults the NSS along the way" of foreign policy-making process (Zenko, 2017) is not correct.

While George W. Bush's grand strategy towards Russia as outlined in his NSS's and speeches was along the lines of liberal internationalist grand strategy, Barack Obama's grand strategy towards Russia changed after the March 2014 Russian aggression in Ukraine. In response to these events, Barack Obama started discussing a primacist military power element in his speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. In 2015, his NSS reflected this change in strategy towards Russia too. Thus, this analysis of U.S. grand strategy in the specific case of Russia shows that the claims about grand strategies that grand strategists make are not correct. Although grand strategists claim the long-term durability of grand

strategies, the ability to adapt to changes and new developments in the international system and the pure liberal internationalist approach used by George W. Bush and Barack Obama from 2001 until 2014, was not able to withstand Russian aggression in Ukraine and the U.S.'s grand strategy changed towards a mix of liberal internationalism and primacy. This conclusion adds to the already disproven first hypothesis. Not only did the NSS's not maintain a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies, but the speeches of the presidents also changed.

Although Barack Obama discussed military power, a primacist grand strategy element, he did not support unilateral foreign policy. Barack Obama's emphasis on multilateral cooperation with Russia is exactly what liberal internationalists support. Liberal internationalists are critical of primacist unilateralism, the idea that the U.S. can solve international problems by working alone or with coalitions of the willing. Not only does it diminish U.S. power, but it is also perceived as arrogant by other states (Nye, 2002). Contemporary global challenges are complex and often cannot be solved by the U.S. working alone or together with only its closest democratic allies. Solutions to complex global problem require help from authoritarian states (Brooks, Ikenberry, Wohlforth, 2013, p. 141; Finnemore, M. 1996, p. 158). Although in his fourth stage, Barack Obama's speeches on relations towards Russia, as well as the NSS from 2015, embraced the primacist military power element, they were not at all close to George W. Bush's NSS's, which emphasized unilateralism.

An interesting trend that can be seen from analyzing the speeches by both George W. Bush and Barack Obama, which is not relevant to the hypothesis, is that in the speeches with references to Russia, NATO and NATO expansion did not play a major role up until Russia's aggression in Ukraine. The deployment of NATO's anti-ballistic missile system in Europe was not discussed and NATO expansion was not linked to Russia in these speeches. Thus, the conclusion is that neither the George W. Bush nor the Barack Obama administration saw NATO expansion and U.S. foreign policy towards Russia as connected issues, or that both administrations made an effort not to connect these issues. However, after Russia's aggression in Ukraine in March 2014, NATO started to play an important role in the speeches about Russia as a tool in the U.S.'s foreign policy arsenal helping to contain Russia. This change is clearly in accord with primacist thinking on Russia. Primacists argue that the U.S.'s military presence in various hot spots around the world is important for peace and stability in these regions. Already in the 1990s, primacists were arguing that Russia continued to be a threat to its neighboring states, because Russia, even if diminished, still "possesses tremendous inherent strategic reach, considerable material reserves; and the largest single homogeneous

ethnic-cultural population in Europe” (Posen, Ross, 1996/97, p. 37). Thus, to primacists, NATO has always been the key pillar of European security, providing a stabilizing effect. Increased U.S. and NATO military presence in Central and Eastern Europe would make conflicts less likely, and vice versa, if the U.S. decreased its military and political involvement in the region (Kagan, 2007, p. 34). Thus, Barack Obama’s discussions about the use of military power are a significant shift towards primacy even if Barack Obama did not discuss the unilateralist element of primacist grand strategy.

While primacists want NATO and U.S. military power to contain Russia, liberal internationalists emphasize the soft power aspect of the NATO alliance, which gives the U.S. a diplomatic edge in the region. Grand strategists who support liberal internationalism talk about soft power and the promotion of democracy and see NATO not only as a military alliance but as a core element of U.S. soft power in Europe. As an alliance based on democratic and liberal values, NATO has a positive effect on democratic values in the member states of the Alliance, and also serves as an incentive for democratic and liberal reform to prospective NATO member states, offering a positive agenda for Central-Eastern Europe (Ratti, 2013, pp. 148-198; Martel, March 04, 2013). Martel adds to this argument, stating that NATO is an instrument in the U.S.’s foreign policy toolbox that enhances U.S. soft power (Martel, February 25, 2013). He characterizes NATO expansion in Central and Eastern Europe as leading to “peace and prosperity, democracy and free markets, shared responsibility among nations, and the will to tackle pressing problems” (Martel, March 04, 2013). Other liberal internationalists argue that NATO is important for multilateral solutions to modern threats (Brooks, Ikenberry, Wohlforth, 2013, p. 141). However, although both George W. Bush and Barack Obama emphasized a liberal internationalist approach towards Russia until 2014, this liberal internationalist soft power argument about NATO did not appear in either George W. Bush’s or Barack Obama’s speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Only the multilateral cooperation element was there. The NATO-Russia Council was supposed to work on cooperation between NATO and Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. June 18, 2012). Barack Obama talked about the need to reset “relations between Russia and NATO,” to cooperate where interests align (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). As Barack Obama put it: “NATO should be seeking collaboration with Russia, not confrontation” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. July 7, 2009). This lack of discussion about the soft power of the NATO alliance with respect to Russia that is used by liberal internationalists, is an interesting trend.

Another interesting trend that appears in Barack Obama’s speeches are references to offshore balancing burden sharing. These references were unique to this fourth stage in



Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia and they need to be discussed as well. Compared to George W. Bush's speeches, it is unique for a U.S. president to ask for other countries to play a bigger role in the international system, but Barack Obama does that, by thanking European allies, particularly Germany, for doing more with regard to Russia (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. February 9, 2015). This is especially so in his March 26, 2014 speech when he openly supports burden sharing: "all of us have an interest in nations stepping forward to play their part -- to bear their share of the burden and to uphold international norms" (The White House Office of the Press Secretary. March 26, 2014). Such rhetoric is exactly what the supporters of offshore balancing support. It is not enough to adapt multilateralism and to decrease the emphasis on military power in U.S. foreign policy as liberal internationalists would argue. Offshore balancers would argue that U.S. hegemony and primacist unipolarity rallies states against the U.S. and makes it harder for the U.S. to achieve its foreign policy goals (Layne, 1997, p. 113). Thus the U.S. should start shifting its burden to other states (Layne, 2012).

These quotes by Barak Barack Obama flow directly from the logic of offshore balancing. The U.S. should decrease its security commitments and rely more on U.S. allies and regional partners in the regions where states are wealthy and strong enough. Although Barack Obama does not talk about that, these statements most likely stem from ideas of offshore balancing, that if other states work together to find solutions for their own problems in their neighborhood, it will save U.S. resources and help the U.S. to focus on issues more pressing for U.S. national security. These undertones from offshore balancing, that European NATO allies should play a larger role, are characteristic of the overall grand strategy of Barack Obama. When NATO established no-fly zones over Libya in 2011, one of the president's advisers described Barack Obama's actions in Libya as "leading from behind" (Lizza, 2011). The influence of offshore balancing ideas can also be seen in Barack Obama's broader foreign policy towards Russia, particularly in the pragmatic aspect of Barack Obama's dual-track engagement with Russia. This is what supporters of offshore balancing like Kramer, for example, have proposed that U.S. foreign policy towards Russia should be like.

For offshore balancing grand strategy, support to democracy in Russia and democracy as a pre-requisite for cooperation with Russia, violates Russia's sovereignty and destroys any possibility of pragmatically cooperating with Russia. Supporters of offshore balancing argue that there are issues, like stability in Afghanistan and an end to the nuclear program in Iran, where U.S. and Russia have similar interests and should cooperate, but it is impossible if idealist values define relations with Russia. Without an emphasis on democracy in relations

with Russia and more pragmatic cooperation, Russia would be less willing to obstruct U.S. foreign policy (Kramer, January 2010, pp. 69-71). Supporters of offshore balancing would argue that if the U.S. abandons the idealist element in relations with Russia, Russia would be more willing to cooperate with the U.S. in creating a more stable Middle East and Central Asia. Although Barack Obama does not go as far as supporters of offshore balancing would have him go, he retained the second track in his approach to Russia and still talked about democracy, while pragmatically cooperating. Nonetheless, there was influence from ideas of offshore balancing in Barack Obama's approach to Russia.

On the other hand, all the other aspects of offshore balancing were missing in Barack Obama's speeches. As opposed to primacy and liberal internationalism, offshore balancing argues that the U.S. should not differentiate between authoritarian and democratic regimes. The rise of different political regimes, which have different sources of legitimacy, different economic systems, interests and different interpretations of the international system is inevitable and normal in the anarchic international system. Furthermore, as Charles Kupchan argues, states "want to recast the international system in ways that advantage their interests and ideological preferences." According to the logic of offshore balancing, attempts to integrate Russia in the liberal international order created by the U.S. is "a futile undertaking" (Kupchan, 2002, p. 15). As described previously, the goal of Barack Obama's administration was to integrate Russia into the West and provide incentives for Russia to democratize through cooperation (The White House Office of the Vice President. March 10, 2011). Barack Obama's approach was the opposite approach to the idea of offshore balancing that the U.S. should work with non-democratic states and acknowledge them as they are.

Supporters of offshore balancing would critique Barack Obama, that his liberal internationalist approach did not allow meaningful cooperation with Russia – a country that is vital to U.S. interests and various international issues, such as a global economy, nuclear non-proliferation, fighting terrorism and others (Kupchan, 2002, p. 15). Rosenthal argues that Russian external behavior is more important than "domestic makeup." He argues that Russia would be interested in meaningful cooperation with the U.S. only if the U.S. takes Russian interests and opinion into account, not secretly hoping to transform Russia. If Russia is willing to address global problems, cooperation should be more important for the U.S. than Russian domestic developments (Rosenthal, 2009, pp. 7-8). This was not the case during the Barack Obama administration. Although Barack Obama embraced pragmatism in relations with Russia and even talked about offshore balancing grand strategy elements, he was definitely not a supporter of offshore balancing grand strategy in relations with Russia, as his approach lacked key elements of this grand strategy.

To conclude, the analysis of Barack Obama's speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia showed that the third hypothesis, that the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies is correct. The case of Russia shows that the NSS can be used to understand U.S. foreign policy. On the other hand, the first hypothesis was disproven by the analysis of the NSS's, and the speeches about Russia also did not maintain a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and the Barack Obama presidencies. The pure liberal internationalist grand strategy of George W. Bush and Barack Obama until March 2014 was replaced by a mix of liberal internationalism and a primacist military power element after the Russian aggression in Ukraine.

## Conclusions

By focusing on U.S. grand strategy towards Russia, this thesis has added to a growing body of research about U.S. foreign policy, particularly on how to classify and analyze it. After overviewing existing grand strategies, this study developed a grand strategy classification framework and used it to code and classify statements in U.S. NSS's and the speeches of U.S. presidents and vice-president. The results of this classification allowed for the evaluation of which grand strategy or strategies the U.S. used towards Russia from 2001 to 2017, in order to test various claims about grand strategies put forward by supporters and critics of grand strategy, both as a practical tool for guiding foreign policy, as well as an analytical concept.

Scholars and practitioners of international relations have been discussing grand strategy starting from the period after the First World War. John Fuller, Basil Liddell Hart and Edward Mead Earle were the first who expanded the term *strategy* to describe not only military strategy, but to also encompass political, diplomatic and economic means to achieve victory over the enemy – the grand strategy. Contemporary definitions of grand strategies describe this concept as a set of ideas about how a state can best achieve its foreign policy goals with the available means. These ideas should be both articulated as well as implemented in a logically consistent, closely similar or almost exactly overlapping way, across all of government both in foreign and domestic policies. Grand strategy should endure in the long-term and exist longer than a doctrine put forward by a single president. A single grand strategy should offer a coherent approach to a wide range of issues and regions as well as withstand domestic changes and changes in the international system. However, this comprehensive scope and the long-term nature of grand strategy are highly contested claims. Critics of grand strategies dispute both of these assumptions – the foreign policy making process is far too ad hoc and a single set of ideas cannot solve all global problems in an increasingly complex world.

The overarching aim of this thesis was to contribute to these debates and to evaluate these claims by grand strategists and their critics. The overview of the academic debate about the role of grand strategy in Chapter 1 resulted in the research question which is at the core of this thesis: **Is U.S. grand strategy as comprehensive, enduring and overarching as grand strategists argue?** To research this issue, NSS's and speeches of U.S. presidents and vice-president were selected as units of analysis for the thesis, because both of these sources are the most significant and comprehensive sources which outline U.S. grand strategy. Both list U.S. priorities and describe both the domestic and foreign policy actions to achieve them. To

answer this research question, three aspects of this issue were tested using three hypotheses. During the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies:

**H1:** NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia.

**H2:** the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's.

**H3:** the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.

All three hypotheses in this thesis are about measuring whether statements in documents or speeches belong to a specific grand strategy and whether there is “coherence” and “correspondence” within NSS's and between NSS's and the speeches. To test these hypotheses, the theoretical part of this thesis in Chapter 2 overviewed existing grand strategy classifications and built its own grand strategy classification framework. Three major grand strategies that are relevant in U.S. foreign policy and in foreign policy particularly towards Russia, are primacy, liberal internationalism, and offshore balancing. These three strategies were operationalized as a sum of four different elements describing various aspects of U.S. foreign policy: the role that U.S. should play in the international system; the role of democracy, human rights and other liberal values in U.S. foreign policy; the role of cooperation with others for U.S. foreign policy as well as the role U.S. power should play in the international arena. Each grand strategy supports a different combination of these foreign policy elements.

**Primacists** support U.S. leadership in foreign policy, which is grounded in idealist values. According to primacists, the U.S. should cooperate with other states, but it should also be ready to act unilaterally and preemptively. Military power is an important tool in the foreign policy arsenal for primacists. **Liberal internationalists** also support U.S. leadership and idealist foreign policy. However, liberal internationalists believe that the U.S. should act multilaterally and cooperate with other states and international organizations, as it leads to better results. Furthermore, liberal internationalists think that the use of military power decreases U.S. power, because it alienates other states and reduces U.S. soft power. Thus, non-military power is the preferred foreign policy tool for liberal internationalists. The **Offshore balancing** grand strategy offers a very different perspective on U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. should not lead the international system of states but allow others to play a bigger role and take care of their problems. The role the U.S. should play should only be to engage the world as a balancer, maintaining regional balances of power. The U.S. should not promote

idealist values in its foreign policy but implement pragmatic foreign policy, built only on U.S. national interests. Not only should the U.S. cooperate multilaterally with other states, it should also play a smaller role in the international system and shift burdens to other states. In terms of power, according to offshore balancing, neither active use of military power nor non-military power will lead to the best results in foreign policy. Instead, the U.S. should abstain from using its power and resources and focus on maintaining the status quo between regional power centers, maintaining regional balances of power.

This grand strategy classification framework and the specific criteria for coding statements as supporting one or other element of grand strategies was finalized in the methodology section in Chapter 3. This framework was used to code and analyze NSS's and the speeches of U.S. presidents and vice-president. This classification framework permitted the attribution of specific statements to a specific grand strategy element and, thus, classify each statement as belonging to one or another grand strategy. The results of this coding process were depicted as a percentage value to show how much emphasis the specific document or speech put on the specific element of grand strategy. If these documents and speeches were logically consistent, closely similar or almost exactly overlapping, they were "coherent" and "corresponding." The results of this research design below, firstly, review the results of NSS analysis and H1 and H2 discussed in Chapter 4, secondly, summarize the comparison between NSS and speeches which was done to test H3 in Chapter 5 and, thirdly, discuss other results and further research areas.

### **Results of NSS Analysis**

The coding process of NSS 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2015 using the grand strategy classification framework, allowed for the classification and analysis of U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. The analysis of George W. Bush NSS's led to the conclusion that George W. Bush's overall grand strategy in NSS 2002 and 2006 was leaning towards primacy. Both documents contained the multilateralist element of liberal internationalism, but they emphasized unilateralism and military power far more than Barack Obama's NSS's. Both of Barack Obama's NSS's were liberal internationalist. The NSS 2010 was almost explicitly liberal internationalist. The NSS 2015 was liberal internationalist, but it contained somewhat more references to the primacist military power grand strategy element. Overall U.S. grand strategy changed after the change in U.S. administrations.

While George W. Bush's NSS's were primacist overall and Barack Obama's liberal internationalist, the approach to Russia did not follow the overall grand strategy outlined in these documents. Overall NSS 2002 and 2006 emphasized primacy, but in references to

Russia there were no unilateralist and military power primacist elements. The NSS 2002 emphasized the role of idealist values in foreign policy overall, but the specific approach towards Russia emphasized pragmatic cooperation, contrary to the primacist approach, not to cooperate with authoritarian states which are working against U.S. interests. On the other hand, as the democracy and human rights situation in Russia deteriorated, the NSS 2006 almost completely abandoned multilateral cooperation with Russia and emphasized idealism, more in accord with the primacist idea that the U.S. should not work with authoritarian governments. The role of idealism was similar in both the NSS 2006 and statements overall towards Russia in this period. Nonetheless, this isn't enough to classify this approach to Russia as primacy, because it lacked unilateralist and military power primacist grand strategy elements which the NSS 2006 supported overall. Thus, this was still a liberal internationalist grand strategy approach towards Russia.

Barack Obama's NSS's were more coherent than George W. Bush's. Barack Obama's NSS 2010 was liberal internationalist and specific references to Russia were also liberal internationalist. Barack Obama's NSS 2015 was also liberal internationalist, but it did include an increase in emphasis on the primacist military power grand strategy element. In references towards Russia, the emphasis on the primacist military power grand strategy element was even bigger in this NSS which discussed the necessity to deter Russia. Thus, Russia's aggression in Ukraine, which started in spring 2014, changed U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. This change was reflected in NSS 2015. This was a unique new tone which the U.S. used in foreign policy towards Russia, uncharacteristic of any other NSS.

These results lead to conclusion that **H1, NSS's have maintained a single, coherent U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies, was not confirmed.** Both George W. Bush and Barack Obama used liberal internationalist grand strategy in relations with Russia until 2014. A change of U.S. presidents in 2009 and Barack Obama's subsequent reset in relations with Russia did not lead to a change in grand strategy towards Russia. However, after Russia's aggression in Ukraine, Barack Obama's grand strategy towards Russia changed to a more primacist strategy, while liberal internationalist elements remained as well. The approach to Russia outlined in George W. Bush's NSS 2002 was entirely different to the approach in Barack Obama's NSS 2015. This change took place in both Barack Obama's NSS 2015 and in speeches. Thus, the grand strategist claim that grand strategies should be able to endure changes in the international system was not confirmed. **H2, the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the overall grand strategy outlined in the NSS's during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies was not confirmed.** While overall, the NSS of the

Barack Obama administration correlated with specific statements about Russia, it was not the case of George W. Bush's NSS 2002 and to a lesser extent NSS 2006 as well.

This means that the role grand strategies play in U.S. foreign policy is somewhat smaller than what grand strategists envision. Grand strategies outlined in a NSS do not give a single, overarching strategy to address all problems. While NSS 2002 and 2006 supported primacy, the specific strategy towards Russia lacked primacist elements. Furthermore, the grand strategy towards Russia was unable to endure in the long term. The overall grand strategy of the U.S. changed from primacy to liberal internationalism as the administrations changed from the George W. Bush to the Barack Obama presidency. The specific grand strategy towards Russia endured the Russia-Georgia war and the change in U.S. administrations, but did not endure Russia's aggression in Ukraine, after which the U.S. changed its grand strategy towards Russia. Thus, the critics of grand strategies are correct. Grand strategies are not as monolithic and enduring as their supporters describe them. The world is far too complex for a single grand strategy, a single document to prescribe a coherent course of action for U.S. foreign policy, that would be able to guide U.S. foreign policy in the long term in a rapidly changing international system and across a wide range of global issues.

### **Results of the Speech Analysis**

Although the first two hypotheses were not confirmed and U.S. grand strategy is not as comprehensive and coherent as grand strategists would like it to be, grand strategies should not be dismissed out of hand because of these findings. The NSS's analyzed were inconsistent – overall grand strategy differed from the strategy towards Russia. U.S. grand strategy towards Russia changed as well in 2014 – from liberal internationalism towards primacy. Nonetheless, NSS's do matter and do influence foreign policy. **H3, the grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's corresponds to the main speeches outlining U.S. foreign policy towards Russia during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama presidencies was confirmed.** Although there were different stages in George W. George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia, all of them were within the confines of liberal internationalist grand strategy, which was what NSS 2002 and 2006 also prescribed for Russia. The main proof of this conclusion is the lack of a unilateralist and military power grand strategy element as well as the presence of the multilateral cooperation element which went through all the stages of George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. This goes against primacist grand strategy, which is critical of cooperation with authoritarian states. The first three stages of Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia and the NSS 2010 also contained this liberal internationalist approach towards Russia. This approach in speeches



changed towards primacy only in 2014, after the Russian aggression in Ukraine. This change was also reflected in the NSS 2015.

Coding NSS's and statements of U.S. presidents according to this classification allows for the classification and quantifying of different stages of foreign policy easily. The analysis of 12 speeches and four short statements during the Russia-Georgia War indicated five stages in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. **The first stage in the foreign policy of the George W. Bush administration towards Russia** was from 2001 until mid-2003. It emphasized multilateral cooperation with Russia in order to address various global problems. Of unilateralism, preemption and democracy promotion which characterized George W. Bush's NSS 2002 and his overall foreign policy, only idealism played some role in these speeches. An emphasis on liberal internationalist grand strategy towards Russia was maintained throughout George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. However, the role of idealist values changed throughout the years.

**The second stage** was from June 2003 until mid-2006 and in his speeches in this stage George W. Bush connected democracy and the human rights situation in Russia with cooperation between the U.S. and Russia, increasingly criticizing Russia. The second stage in relations with Russia also corresponds to what various authors have described as the *linkage strategy*. This strategy promised increased cooperation if Russia democratized. However, the logic of this strategy proved to be false. The promise of cooperation, if Russia were to democratize, did not deliver. George W. Bush criticized the lack of democracy in Russia increasingly and relations between both states deteriorated. Nonetheless, this was still a liberal internationalist approach in line with statements about Russia in the NSS. George W. Bush used idealist and multilateral liberal internationalist grand strategy elements, while primacists argued that the U.S. should not cooperate with authoritarian states.

Starting with mid-2006, **the third stage – the drift** – in relations between U.S. and Russia started. George W. Bush's speeches about Russia became short, vague and contained less grand strategy elements than the speeches before and after this period. This drift ended in early 2008 when the fourth stage in George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia started. **This fourth stage was Bush's reset.** George W. Bush returned to a positive, multilateral agenda of cooperation with Russia, abandoning idealist values. This stage is often missing in the analysis of George W. Bush's foreign policy towards Russia. However, the Russia-Georgia War in August 2008 stopped this brief period of positive rhetoric. After this war, **the fifth stage** started, where George W. Bush returned to idealist values and talked about multilateral cooperation, however, this time not with Russia, but against Russia. All of these

stages were in accord with NSS 2002 and 2006. They used the liberal internationalist approach towards Russia and lacked primacist grand strategy elements.

To analyze the grand strategy towards Russia during the Barack Obama administration, 23 units of analysis – speeches and statements – were used. **The first stage in Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia** during 2009 was a proposal to cooperate multilaterally with Russia on issues where both states had similar interests. Barack Obama also rejected primacy explicitly. This was in accord with Barack Obama's support overall for multilateral cooperation with other states so that they can solve their regional problems on their own. However, in this stage, Barack Obama still retained cautious idealist rhetoric similar to George W. Bush's speeches.

**The second stage** started in 2009 and lasted until June 2013 and can be called a reset of relations between the two states. In this stage, Barack Obama emphasized multilateral cooperation and used a *dual-track approach* towards Russia. This approach separated pragmatic cooperation where the interests of both countries aligned, from idealist values and problems with democracy and human rights in Russia. The logic of this stage was contrary to the logic of George W. Bush's administration. If Russia cooperated, it would see the benefits of increased cooperation with the U.S. that would become possible if Russia democratized. This follows the liberal internationalist logic that authoritarian states should be integrated in the liberal world order using cooperation and creating interdependence, so that these states have incentives to become responsible stakeholders in the international community of states.

However, unlike George W. Bush's first stage, which talked only about multilateral cooperation, this stage kept some occasional vague references to idealism. Nonetheless, this approach did not deliver either. Mid-2013, before Russia's aggression in Ukraine, the U.S. strategy towards Russia already began to change and **the third stage** started. The deteriorating human rights situation in Russia, Russia's decision to give asylum to NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden and increasing disagreements in Syria led to an increased emphasis on idealism in Barack Obama's speeches. The rhetoric on cooperation changed too. Barack Obama talked more about *potential* cooperation. Nonetheless, this and the other two initial stages of Barack Obama's foreign policy towards Russia were in accord with the liberal internationalist approach described in the NSS 2010 which also supported both a multilateral and idealist approach towards Russia.

Russia's aggression in Ukraine in March 2014 marked not only **the fourth stage** in foreign policy towards Russia, but also an end to the liberal internationalist grand strategy which the U.S. had used towards Russia so far. After these events, Barack Obama started invoking the primacist military power grand strategy element in relations with Russia.

Previously it had appeared on rare occasions, but now it played a prominent role. Since the 1990's, primacists had been critical about Russia and they had discussed deterrence and the role of the NATO as the pillar of military security in Europe. Now, these primacist arguments appeared in speeches and Barack Obama's NSS 2015. However, Barack Obama talked not only about military power, but also about all other grand strategy elements, except unilateralism. Barack Obama emphasized non-military power and an idealist approach in relations with Russia, as well as multilateral cooperation against Russia. Even the burden sharing element of offshore balancing was occasionally invoked in this stage. Nonetheless, increased support to the military power grand strategy element indicated that Barack Obama was leaning towards a primacist grand strategy towards Russia in this period. This was a unique change compared to all previous statements. Such a change did not occur after the Russia – Georgia War or after the change in U.S. administrations.

To sum up, according to the analysis of the speeches of George George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Joe Biden, until March 2014, the grand strategy that George W. Bush and Barack Obama implemented in relations with Russia was liberal internationalism. This was the U.S. grand strategy towards Russia which was also articulated in NSS 2002, 2006 and 2010. As the speeches changed after Russia's aggression in Ukraine, the NSS 2015 changed its rhetoric towards Russia as well. The new approach Barack Obama used was a mix of primacist and liberal internationalist grand strategies. Although he supported military power, he did not support unilateralism in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia. Liberal internationalists are especially critical about primacist unilateralism because it is perceived as U.S. arrogance and weakens U.S. foreign policy. Although Barack Obama's fourth stage in relations with Russia and the NSS 2015 embraced the military power grand strategy element, it was nowhere close to the support to primacy visible in George W. Bush NSS's.

The grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the U.S.'s NSS's changed (H1). A single set of ideas about U.S. grand strategy was not used in NSS's to describe the overall U.S. position and actions in the international system, as well as the strategy specifically towards Russia (H2). Nonetheless, there is a correlation between the everyday policy-making process and the overall grand strategy towards Russia in the NSS's (H3). Statements and speeches about U.S. foreign policy towards Russia have been consistent with grand strategy towards Russia outlined in the NSS's. These NSS's are documents that do reflect the thinking of the U.S. president and influence the foreign policy-making process. An analysis of this case shows that the harshest criticisms about the uselessness of the NSS are not correct.

## **Other Results and Prospects for Further Research**

Equally important as describing the main findings of the research, is to also put them in a broader perspective and give recommendations. To discuss further research possibilities and to identify the weaknesses and strengths of this research design, to evaluate the methodology of this thesis and to discuss other conclusions that have arisen from this case study as well as to offer an interpretation for these conclusions. This final sub-section overviews these broader implications for this thesis.

The main aims of this thesis were to evaluate the usefulness of grand strategies in U.S. foreign policy as well as to evaluate the usefulness of grand strategies as an analytical tool. Both questions have been analyzed by other scholars too. However, this analysis is often based on anecdotal evidence and cherry-picked quotes to characterize one or another policy or individual as supporting a specific grand strategy. This lack of clear methodology on how to apply the grand strategy concept to international relations analysis is the main challenge for the scholars of grand strategy. Thus, the focus of this thesis was to develop a grand strategy classification framework, which was also the main innovation offered by this thesis. The grand strategy classification framework offers a systematic coding process which allows for the transformation of speeches and documents into quantitative data which can be measured, to determine the support for each grand strategy element within any source. An analysis of NSS's and speeches through the prism of four specific grand strategy elements enriches the research of the U.S. foreign policy making process by providing a clear approach to measuring support for a specific grand strategy.

In addition to the empirical findings from the analysis of NSS's and speeches of U.S. presidents and the vice-president, the weaknesses and strengths of the grand strategy classification were also evaluated. The grand strategy classification framework offers a good tool for analyzing U.S. foreign policy. Although, according to this case study, grand strategies do not offer an unchanging, long-term vision for U.S. policymakers, they do offer a valuable tool for analyzing, classifying and identifying different foreign policy stages. It allows for the classification and structuring of documents and speeches into coded, clear and comparable quantitative data. Nonetheless, it is also important to indicate the weaknesses of this framework, to discuss necessary future research topics, as well as problematic issues that have arisen during this study.

This analytical framework is an addition to the set of tools and instruments for studying and predicting U.S. foreign policy. However, this is an innovative approach that is still in a process of development. As the major scientific benefit of content analysis is its replicability, the next logical step for this grand strategy classification framework should be repeated

studies using this framework by other scholars on the U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, trying to replicate the results of this thesis. If they are able to replicate the findings, this grand strategy coding framework will be a valid research instrument. Another potential step for analyzing the effectiveness of this grand strategy classification, would be to use it in a content analysis of articles and books of self-proclaimed supporters of a specific grand strategy. If this classification is correct, supporters of primacy, liberal internationalism and offshore balancing should mostly be coded as supportive of their respective grand strategy.

The grand strategy classification framework is easily adaptable and usable by other researchers on U.S. grand strategy towards other states. The detailed, yet overarching coding strategy allows for the adaptation of this grand strategy framework to other states and regions to test similar hypotheses about U.S. grand strategy in similar case studies. This step would be important, because the results of case studies can be transferred to similar cases. However transferring results from a single case study about U.S. grand strategy towards Russia could be a premature step, because an individual case study can produce results that are not generalizable. U.S. grand strategy towards Russia may, perhaps be a unique case in U.S. foreign policy. Similar case studies would strengthen (or dispute) the conclusion of this thesis that the grand strategy classification framework offers a good tool for classifying and analyzing U.S. foreign policy.

The grand strategy classification framework is a tool that can be easily applied to other sources. In the methodology section of the thesis, it was made clear that NSS's and speeches are not the only possible units of analysis that can be analyzed. Coding and analyzing different sources, for example, autobiographies of the key policy makers from the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations, might lead to different results. The identification of a grand strategy supported by a specific individual has always been a problem, because often presidents or political candidates do not want to be labeled as supporters of one or another set of ideas. This framework allows for this to be done. It allows other researchers to follow up and expand the scope of this thesis.

In addition to other applications of the analytical framework, the data created in the coding process is an asset too. The result of the coding process is a sizable source of empirical data about grand strategy elements in NSS's and speeches. This thesis has overviewed the most significant official statements by U.S. presidents and vice-president on U.S. foreign policy towards Russia, aggregating and classifying everything said about cooperation and other grand strategy elements. This data could be used in further research for other types of analysis too. For example, linguistic analysis about how the language used to describe cooperation between the two states has changed.

The main problem with grand strategy classification is the similarity between the primacy and liberal internationalist grand strategy in their support of idealist values and U.S. leadership. This makes it difficult sometimes to pin down a specific strategy. For example, the NSS 2006 contains mostly references to leadership and idealism, which does not tell us anything about the preferred grand strategy as both primacy and liberal internationalists support these foreign policy elements. One solution would be to find criteria by which to differentiate primacist and liberal internationalists' support for idealism. For example, some liberal internationalists even argue that idealist values should not dominate and should not define U.S. foreign policy. If we assume that an emphasis on idealist values indicates primacy, then a different set of conclusions would have to be made in this analysis. However, most liberal internationalists are concerned about the lack of democracy in authoritarian states as well as challenges which authoritarian governments create for the U.S. and support idealist foreign policy. An easily operationalizable difference between primacy and liberal internationalism about the idealist element was not identified in this thesis. However, there could be future research that could outline such differences and, thus, improve this grand strategy classification framework.

The analysis of the data from NSS's and speeches led to interesting conclusions, which raised more research questions. For example, another challenge that should be addressed in further research could be about the classification of offshore balancing. According to the coding results, this grand strategy played a miniscule role in U.S. grand strategy towards Russia. Either offshore balance truly was not present in U.S. grand strategy, or it is hard to identify and reveals a weakness in this classification framework. Further studies should explore this issue in depth. One option would be to use alternative classification. Some scholars, for example, Mearsheimer, argues that there are two grand strategies: offshore balancing and selective engagement. The latter is closer to liberal internationalism than offshore balancing. This thesis did not add selective engagement as a separate grand strategy, because the main difference between selective engagement and offshore balancing is only about the extent of the decrease in the U.S.'s global presence. Nonetheless, perhaps a further analysis could identify better ways for how to operationalize and code offshore balancing or find arguments why selective engagement could be better operationalizable than offshore balancing.

The analysis of U.S. grand strategy towards Russia case study, using the grand strategy classification framework, provides a contribution to a body of research on U.S.-Russia relations. These findings are described in depth in the summary sections of Chapter 4 and especially in Chapter 5. An interesting finding is that while George W. Bush positioned

democracy promotion as a central element in his grand strategy starting with 2002, in relations with Russia this idealist grand strategy element appeared only in June 2003, when George W. Bush linked democracy in Russia with positive relations with the U.S. This content analysis allowed for the specific pinning down of the moment when this element in U.S. grand strategy towards Russia changed. The grand strategy classification allowed for the clear identification of the *linkage* strategy used by George W. Bush and the *drift* in bilateral relations. Both of these periods have also been discussed by other scholars. However, the grand strategy classification framework also identifies a period which is often neglected in the descriptions of U.S.-Russia relations – Bush’s reset. In a similar way to to Barack Obama later, right before the Russia-Georgia War in 2008, George W. Bush tried to restart stagnating relations with Russia, ending the drift and discussing cooperation with Russia again. As to the Barack Obama presidency, the analytical framework clearly identified the *dual track approach* which Barack Obama used towards Russia. He decoupled cooperation from democracy and human rights in Russia. A significant addition from this content analysis to descriptions of U.S. grand strategy towards Russia during the Barack Obama presidency was the identification of the clear rejection of the primacist grand strategy in the first years. Even after the Russia-Ukraine War in 2014, Barack Obama did not discuss a primacist unilateral approach towards Russia, while he did embrace the military power element.

An interesting trend that appeared in the analysis of speeches by both George W. Bush and Barack Obama, was the decoupling of NATO from strategy towards Russia until 2014. Up until 2014, NATO was relatively rarely discussed by both George W. Bush and Barack Obama. This seems to have been a conscious decision. As the grand strategy used towards Russia until 2014 was liberal internationalism, this lack of discussion about the soft power of the NATO alliance with respect to Russia, which liberal internationalist supporters are recommending, is an interesting trend that should be explored further. Furthermore, the increased emphasis on NATO in speeches after 2014 is a significant indication that the grand strategy is shifting towards primacy, because primacists have always discussed the military security dimension of NATO in relations with Russia.

Currently, there are disagreements between scholars about the classification of George W. Bush’s and Barack Obama’s overall grand strategy. However, the historical overview of U.S. grand strategy indicated similar disagreements about U.S. grand strategy during the Cold War. For some scholars, containment was a single, adaptive grand strategy, based on the same core elements, albeit with different stages. Others argued that containment really was a series of multiple grand strategies with crucial differences between one another. This thesis argues that George W. Bush’s grand strategy was leaning towards primacy and Barack Obama’s was

liberal internationalist. The change of administrations was followed by a sharp change in U.S. grand strategy. A counter argument would be that George W. Bush used a liberal internationalist grand strategy, with some primacist emphasis in some areas (not towards Russia, for example). The main proof of this would be the presence of a multilateral grand strategy element in George W. Bush's NSS's and speeches. In a similar way, as militarized phases during the containment, George W. Bush used a militarized liberal internationalist grand strategy. However, the author would argue that George W. Bush and Barack Obama did have a different grand strategy because support for a key primacist element – support to unilateralism – was different in George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's NSS's. Barack Obama had almost no references to unilateralism in his NSS's and speeches, making his and George W. Bush's grand strategy significantly different. Furthermore, primacist grand strategy is not against the use of multilateralism, thus some multilateralism would be expected in a primacist grand strategy. A case can even be made that George W. Bush's grand strategy in the NSS 2002 was pure primacy, not a mix of liberal internationalism and primacy.

The lessons for Latvia and other states in Central-Eastern Europe directly affected by U.S. grand strategy towards Russia are complex. Firstly, these states should closely follow U.S. NSS, especially what it says about Russia, because the U.S. administration follows this document in its foreign policy towards Russia. Secondly, although the containment grand strategy towards the Soviet Union during the Cold War can hardly be compared to the current U.S. strategy towards Russia, there are some similarities. During containment (outlined in Chapter 1), there were periods of more pragmatic cooperation with Soviet Union and periods with a different emphasis on using idealist rhetoric against Soviet Union. There were similar patterns during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. The emphasis on idealism and cooperation with Russia has fluctuated as well and probably will continue to do so in the future. The relations between both states have always been in flux.

Thirdly, current U.S. grand strategy – liberal internationalism with an increasing primacist military power element towards Russia, correlates with some stages of containment as well. As to the military element of U.S. grand strategy, the U.S. used a spectrum of approaches to deter the Soviet threat. The least militarized stage was with an emphasis on an asymmetric approach – focusing mainly on nuclear deterrence. There was also flexible response, with various tools and instruments to deter the Soviet Union. On the more aggressive spectrum of containment, there were arms races when the U.S. tried to match Soviet capabilities in all aspects. Finally, there were militarized containment periods when the U.S. actively used its military to roll back Soviet influence. Building on the analysis of this thesis, the first, purely liberal internationalist stage in U.S. foreign policy towards Russia fits



the containment stage, which emphasized mainly nuclear deterrence. There was only a very limited and occasional U.S. military presence in the new NATO member states. The U.S. grand strategy towards Russia starting with 2014 fits the flexible response period of containment. Enhanced Forward Presence multinational battalion battle groups in the Eastern flank of NATO member states, as well as the increased U.S. presence in the region through various aspects of the European Deterrence Initiative, fits the flexible response period of containment. This is a historical period that should be the focus of analysis to understand current U.S. grand strategy towards Russia and the role of Latvia and other states affected by it.

To conclude, the NSS is a useful document for explaining and predicting U.S. action in the international arena (H3). However, this case study shows that they must be used carefully on a case by case basis, because the strategy towards Russia differed from the overall grand strategy during the George W. Bush administration (H2). Plus, the overall grand strategy, as well as U.S. grand strategy towards Russia changed (H1). Thus, the NSS can explain current events, but long-term predictions based on NSS analysis are problematic. Furthermore, although the grand strategy concept has developed over time, it has left academic research and become a widely misleadingly used, poorly defined term in media discourse. This thesis, as well as publications and conferences about this topic in which the author has participated, reveal that grand strategy is not just a term thrown around by journalists and political commentators without any clear criteria. Grand strategy can be a clear, well defined, analytical concept. Using four elements – leadership, values, cooperation, and power – the grand strategy coding framework makes grand strategy applicable for empirical analysis and allows for the precise measurement of support for different grand strategies.

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