

**Debates on Economic Policies towards Japan (1985-1995)
and China (1995-2008) in the United States**

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Maria Nicola Nymalm**

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Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Dirk Nabers

Zweitgutachter: Prof. Dr. Patrick Köllner

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List of Abbreviations

AE	American Exceptionalism
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
BIT	Bilateral Investment Treaty
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CRS	Congressional Research Service
EC	European Community
FSX	Fighter Support Experimental fighter plane
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMD/KMT	Guo Min Dang/ Kuo Min Dang
G7	Group of Seven (major advanced economies)
HSS	Hegemony and Socialist Strategy
HST	Hegemonic Stability Theory
IR	International Relations
IPE	International Political Economy
ITA	Information Technology Agreement
LCE	Logics of Critical Explanation
LTH	Liberal Theory of History
MFN	Most Favoured Nation Status
MOSS	Market Oriented Sector Specific talks
NAFTA	North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement
NR	New Reflections on the Revolution of our Time
ODI	Overseas Direct Investment
PDT	Political/Poststructuralist Discourse Theory

PRC	People's Republic of China
PNTR	Permanent Normal Trade Relations
RPA	Rhetorical Political Analysis
RTAA	Reciprocal Tariff Act
S II	Structural Impediments Initiative
TPA	Trade Promotion Authority
UN	United Nations
Unocal	Union Oil Company of California
US	United States
USTR	United States Trade Representative
VERs	Voluntary Export Restrictions
WST	World Systems Theory
WTO	World Trade Organization
WW	World War

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INTRODUCTION

“Many of the arguments that one hears today about the problems created by the rise of the Chinese economy have a familiar ring to anyone knowledgeable about this earlier Japanese story. By looking at this historical Japanese experience, we can see these issues stripped of the emotions and politics of the present.” (Perkins 2008, xii)

Since the 1970s the United States has been engaged in a domestic debate on its growing bilateral trade deficit and indebtedness vis-à-vis its main economic competitor, a role that shifted from Japan to China in the mid-1990s (cf. Destler 1998, 103). In the 1980s this debate became a central feature and trigger of the discourse on the ‘Rise of Japan’ as possible challenge to a liberal world order with the U.S. as its major proponent. What became to be treated as “Japan Problem” (cf. Van Wolferen 1986) until the mid-1990s – at that time ensuing in a severe crisis in the U.S.-Japanese relationship – bears significant resemblance to the discourse on the ‘Rise of China’ and a possible ‘China threat’ since the mid/late 1990s. The main line of argument in both cases amounts to reproaching Japan and China for their ‘unfair practices’ – in the form of ‘closed markets’ and ‘currency manipulation’ (Curtis 2000; Evenett 2010; Ge 2013; cf. Hummel 1997b, 38; Keidel 2011; Otte and Grimes 1993, 121) – allegedly resulting in their competitive advantage through a distortion of the ‘level playing field’ (Congressional Record 2010a, H597, e.g. 2010b, H1159; Nanto 1992, 1). The most remarkable feature of the past and present discourses relates to the similarities in the language used to label first Japan, then China as ‘different’ and ‘unfair’, and in consequence adversarial and threatening, despite of fundamental differences between ‘liberal’ Japan and ‘communist’ China themselves, as well as in their bilateral relationship with the U.S. This aspect is one of the main points of focus of this dissertation, as I will lay out in what follows.

Both, Japan and China were at first applauded and admired for their economic development, both being ascribed with the status of an ‘economic miracle’¹. Eventually however,

¹ There are probably not too many developments which – while still taking place – were considered as ‘historical’ in the way the ‘Rise of Asia’ and in particular the ‘Rise of China’ is categorized already. For instance, it is commonly predicted to bring about a significant transformation of the world (cf. Mahbubani 2008, 1) while already being named “the big story of our age” and equated to the rise and fall of Rome, the Ottoman Empire, the British Raj or the Soviet Union (cf. Leonard 2008, 5). China is called the global power of tomorrow (cf. Schmidt-Glintzer 2009, 9) and the 21st century is foresaid to be the ‘Chinese century’ as we were “living through the biggest shift in wealth, power and prestige since the industrial revolution catapulted Western Europe to global dominance 200 years ago” (I. Morris 2010). Equally, what is written on this topic is already termed to belong to “the most frequently read chapters in any future book of international politics and world history” (Zhu 2006, 1). Cf. Nymalm (2012). Japan in the 1970s and 80s

with Japan since the 1970s and 1980s, and China since the 1990s, issues of economic (first and foremost trade and monetary) policies turned out to be among the most contentious topics in the bilateral relationship.² Since the 1980s with respect to Japan and since the early/mid 1990s with respect to China, the U.S. Congress, the media and public opinion are exerting a high pressure on the executive to 'get tough' with Japan and China respectively, while the president and his cabinet are generally speaking more concerned about the implications for the overall character and consequences for the bilateral relationship (Curtis 2000, 29; Otte and Grimes 1993, 110)³, and prospects for cooperation on a global scale (cf. Sewell Chan 2010, 1; Morrison 2014, 37).⁴

In this context, a significant debate has emerged on one of the central premises of U.S. foreign economic policy: the transformative impact of liberal free trade policy – with the U.S. as its major proponent – on the economic and political system of the trading partner. With respect to China, this was a key issue for the supporters of China's contested entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 (cf. Clinton in: *New York Times* 2000). At that time President Clinton's central argument, besides considering benefits for the American economy, was that opening China's markets would undermine the control of the Communist Party (Sanger 2000, 1). Contrastingly, later on these premises and policies have to a large extent been articulated as having significantly contributed to the trade imbalance with China, that is widely considered "a symbol of American decline [that] poisoned many Americans' view of free trade" (Lightizer 2010, 1) not only in Congress, but also by the media and public opinion (cf. Conconi, Facchini, and Zanardi 2011; Nymalm 2011b). Whereas the most alarmist voices picture an economically more and more powerful but still 'illiberal' China as an overall (economic and security) threat not only to the United States (cf. *Congressional Record* 2005, H3104), but to the future of the whole 'free world', even more moderate voices predict at least a coming currency or trade war between China and the United States (N. C. Hughes 2005; cf. Samuelson 2010, 1). The omnipresent

was hailed as 'economic superpower' that had 'miraculously emerged' (cf. Dower 2001, 314, 316), the new 'Number One' (Vogel 1979) and as a technological power that for instance Marie Thorsten in her study summarizes as image of a "Superhuman Japan" (Thorsten 2012).

² For the case of China even prior to other sensitive subjects during the time frame under research, such as Taiwan, Tibet or human rights on the one hand, and the build-up of the Chinese military on the other hand (cf. Bumiller 2011,

³ In the case of Japan the U.S.-executive over time was mostly concerned with trying to prevent the economic conflicts from spilling over into the fields of military and political affairs, but instead tried to further increase the U.S. influence in the latter ones (cf. Schoppa 1999, 319). However, this became different under the Clinton administration, see in what follows.

⁴ Although chastising the White House for being 'soft on China' has been a recurrent practice in Congress and in presidential campaigns ever since President Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972 (E. Friedman and McCormick 2000, 11; cf. Xie 2009, 1) – especially since after Tiananmen in 1989 (Kolkmann 2005, 63; cf. Shirk 2003, 151) – the question on proper tactics and strategies to shape U.S.-China economic relations became the most prominent disputed issue since China entered a phase of ongoing rapid economic growth (cf. Hufbauer, Wong, and Sheth 2006, 1). An example are the debates on the Chinese currency and trade policies, in which Congress is pushing for a hard line and aims at tough measures through officially labelling China a country that manipulates its currency (*New York Times* 2010; Nymalm 2010; Nymalm 2013).

discourse on China's economic growth at a time when the U.S. faces domestic economic problems connects to the debate phrased in terms of 'global power shifts' (cf. for example T. Dunne, Flockhart, and Koivisto 2013, 5) as decline or crisis of the United States, 'the West' or the 'liberal order' in general – alternatively voiced as question, diagnosis or prognosis (M. Cox 2012; cf. Flockhart 2013, 74ff.; Hagström and Jerdén 2014; G. J. Ikenberry 2013; Kupchan 2014; Schweller and Pu 2011) – that has been even more prominent in politics, the media and academic circles since the global financial and economic crisis of the late 2000s.⁵

With regard to Japan, by the 1990s it was not only pictured as a 'threat' to the economic, but subsequently to the entire liberal world order led by the U.S., as promoter of a 'Pax Nipponica/Japonica' – understood as an authoritarian order – which resembles the 'Beijing Consensus' and the debates on 'authoritarian', 'illiberal' or 'state'-capitalism articulated in relation to China (Etzioni 2011; see also E. Friedman and McCormick 2000; Gat 2007; Halper 2010; Leaver 1989; N. Morris 2010, 24f.; Rachman 2008; Vogel 1986; cf. Van Wolferen 1986; Wooldridge 2012). In the late 1980s and early 1990s the American public considered (liberal) Japan to be a greater threat than the (communist) Soviet Union, and mostly thought that Japan actually already was a bigger economic power than the U.S. (Gilpin 1989, 331; Hummel and Menzel 2001, 62; see also Kennedy 1988, 465 for this kind of assessment being made by observers already in the early and mid 1980s; Mastanduno 1991, 74).⁶

Like those who question the success of the 'free trade agenda' with respect to China since the 1990s, in the Japanese case the so-called revisionists did not believe in the transforming impact of it (Hummel 1997b, 35 f.). While having advocated their understanding on how to deal with the 'Japan problem' since the mid 1980s, they gained significant influence during the late Bush- and the early years of the Clinton-administration (Curtis 2000, 30; Gilpin 2003, 299).⁷ The

⁵ On earlier debates on a possible drifting apart of 'the West' see for example Hummel (2000). In general it is important to differentiate between studies that engage in the debate as such (such as for instance the examples of Charles Kupchan, John Ikenberry, Randall Schweller and Xiaoyu Pu mentioned here), and those that scrutinize the constitution and character of the debates themselves (i.e. some of the contributions in the edited volume by Tim Dunne, Trine Flockhart and Marjo Koivisto, as well as Linus Hagström and Björn Jerdén, and Michael Cox).

For more recent debates spurred by 9/11 see for instance the edited volume by Browning and Lehti (2010b). According to their assessment, in this dissertation 'the West' is not understood as "imbued with a fixed essence", but as politically contested concept (Browning and Lehti 2010a, 1). See also Patrick T. Jackson (2010).

⁶ However, for instance Narrelle Morris, citing other polls, points out that a negative view of Japan among the general public was far less significant than among prominent governmental, academic and media commentators (N. Morris 2010, 32f.).

⁷ The main proponents of the revisionist line were James Fallows, Chalmers Johnson, Clyde Prestowitz and Karel van Wolferen, also known at that time as 'the Gang of Four'. For a self-assessment and presentation of their main arguments see (Fallows et al. 1990). For a summary of their positions see (Hummel 1997b, 25 ff. Otte and Grimes 1993, 119 ff.) and chapter 1.1. The label "revisionists" was coined by Robert Neff in the magazine *BusinessWeek* in 1989 (cf. Lindsey and Lukas 1998). Chalmers Johnson argued in 1989 that the U.S. should recognize that Japan had "replaced the USSR as America's most important foreign policy problem" (quoted in Mastanduno 1991, 77). For further details on revisionism see also chapter 1.1.

revisionists argued that Japan and its trade policies were different, closed and adversary to the U.S. and that in consequence Japan would not pursue the path of market liberalization as envisaged by the U.S. (Uriu 2000, 214), but that it even constituted a distinctive kind of capitalism (Gilpin 2003, 299). This assessment differed from the previous decades, when Japan was generally still regarded to have very successfully internalized the rules of the (Western) liberal international economic order, and when its success as a market economy was seen as an important example in ‘validating’ the U.S. economic model (Campbell 1994; Nanto 1992, 2; Uriu 2000). By the end of the 1980s however, it was even argued that ‘Japanese culture’ might actually be incompatible with ‘the West’, as Japan in this view became considered a “non-Western and non-liberal society” (i.e. Gilpin 1987, 391) that could not participate in the western liberal economic order without losing its ‘Japanese character’ (Búzás 2012, 241). The revisionist arguments finally contributed to the so-called ‘results-oriented’ policy⁸ in trade negotiations with Japan under President Clinton (cf. Curtis 2000, 31), that ultimately turned out to be unsuccessful. After the failure of a presidential summit in 1994 the U.S. government basically backed away again from this approach (cf. Hummel 1997b, 23; Schoppa 1999, 328f.).⁹ By then revisionism had contributed to what was the most bitter confrontation between the U.S. and Japan in the post-war period (Curtis 2000, 19; cf. Otte and Grimes 1993, 138) and it had been attributed with the potential of slowly undermining the conceptual basis of U.S.-Japanese relations.¹⁰ The ‘Japan problem’ then seemingly vanished in the context of the ensuing Asian financial crisis and the difficulties of the Japanese stock- and real estate market, as well as with the commencing economic growth of China, when U.S. attention in the mid 1990s shifted from Tokyo to Beijing

⁸ In a nutshell this meant that the U.S. demanded for concrete measurable indicators, like certain percentages for foreign imports to Japan in certain sectors. What mattered were the results, not the way they were to be achieved. For example, in 1992 a bill introduced in the House of Representatives (H.R. 4100) required that Japan reduced its bilateral trade deficit by 20 per cent per year over a period of five years until it reached either \$5 billion or five percent of the total imports and exports of merchandise between the U.S. and Japan. The decision on how the deficit was to be reduced was to be left to the Japanese government (Nanto 1992, 19). See in more details in what follows on ‘managed trade’ in the analysis.

⁹ Both sides interpreted a partial agreement reached later in 1994 in different ways. In 1995 the Clinton administration issued an ultimatum announcing retaliatory sanctions unless the Japanese market was opened for U.S.-made autos and auto parts, that was met with an announcement by Japan to file a case against the U.S. at the WTO. After reaching a last minute agreement, both sides claimed to have achieved their interests (Cohen, Paul, and Blecker 1996, 191–192).

¹⁰ The U.S. strategy provoked a strongly negative reaction especially in Asia, with the respective Japanese Prime ministers being credited for their ‘standing up for Japan’, and their ability to ‘say no’ to the U.S. (Curtis 2000, 32). The revisionist debates in the U.S. had resulted in, or at least triggered, their counterpart in Japan, that also articulated Japan as ‘different’ albeit in a positive sense (Hummel 1997a, 2000, Chapter 7; Otte and Grimes 1993, 117ff.; see also Wampler 2001, 257f.), as well as in a heated domestic debate between those advocating a further-reaching internationalization of Japan, versus those speaking for a greater national and regional independence (cf. Otte and Grimes 1993, 137). A report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) on trade policy toward Japan in 1992 states that “according to polls taken before the Soviet Union collapsed, young Japanese considered war with the United States more likely than with the Soviet Union [...]” (Nanto 1992, 13). One of the most prominent albeit controversial Japanese responses became the publication *The Japan that can say No* by Shintaro Ishihara in 1989.

(Bob 2001, 95; cf. Curtis 2000, 32; Friedberg 2011, 49; Kirshner 2008, 247; N. Morris 2010, 137f.; Stone 1999, 265; see also Y. E. Yang and Liu 2012, 707).¹¹

While so far there seems to be no ‘sorting itself out’ of this kind in sight or predictable in the ongoing Sino-American monetary and trade conflicts in the early 2000s – and at least no one seriously hopes for a fundamental crisis of the Chinese economy – one cannot but ask what the historical case of Japan can possibly tell us about the United States and its China policies since the 1990s, a question that is almost completely neglected in previous and contemporary research.¹²

In this dissertation I contend that U.S. foreign economic policy towards Japan and China exceeds matters of monetary, trade, and economic policy in a narrow sense, but implicates processes of how collective and national identities in political and economic terms are constructed (cf. Nymalm 2013). Hence, the past and contemporary debates in their constitution of U.S. economic policies towards Japan and China cannot be sufficiently understood without considering them in terms of identity constructions relying on self/other articulations. This assessment originates in poststructuralist theories that understand every identity as non-essential and differential, thus in permanent need of an excluded outside. Political Discourse Theory (PDT) is put forward as a framework for the study of foreign (economic) policy, while also addressing what (even) its proponents have called the ‘methodological deficit’ (cf. Howarth 2005, 316)¹³ of PDT, and proposing a method for its application in research, by conducting a discourse analysis that draws from the ‘Logics of Critical Explanation’ (LCE) (Glynos and Howarth 2007) and Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA) (cf. Finlayson 2007).

¹¹ Robert Uriu diagnoses a ‘Japan fatigue’ within the Clinton administration – resulting in many officials wanting to have as little to do with Japan as possible – that was perceived as a ‘Japan passing’, thus a shifting of the U.S. interests towards China, by Japan itself (Uriu 2009, 240). See also in what follows on ‘emotions’ in the analysis.

In his study on Congressional trade policy with respect to China, Michael Kolkmann notes that China had earlier lost its importance for political discussions in the U.S. under President Reagan, who registered potential conflicts with China and preferred not to address them straight ahead (Kolkmann 2005, 62). However, Kolkmann is not mentioning that in the 1980s Congress and the executive were full hands dealing with Japan.

¹² In his short passage where he reflects on U.S.-Japan economic disputes in the 1980s as a “precedent” to U.S.-China economic issues, Aaron Friedberg for instance argues that in the Japanese case the political foundations encompassing “a sense of shared democratic values” prevented the relationship from collapsing in consequence of the trade disputes. As in the case with China he sees trade as having “helped hold the United States and China together” in the past, he thus classifies the ensuing trade disputes with China as potential catalyst for an unravelling of the entire relationship (Friedberg 2011, 49).

¹³ David Howarth and also Jacob Torfing (Torfing 2005, 27) used the term ‘methodological’ deficit before Jason Glynos and David Howarth developed the ‘Logics of Critical Explanation’ to deal with this question. Meanwhile, a more adequate attribution might be ‘methodical deficit’ (I am grateful to Dirk Nabers for highlighting this aspect), methodology being understood as the articulation of conceptual linkages between theory and its potential ‘application’ in a consistent way, while the method is the concrete ‘tool’ or ‘putting into practice’ of the methodological approach.

RESEARCH GOALS, QUESTIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

In his study on Clinton's Japan policy Robert Uriu speaks of having a sense of *déjà-vu* in watching the development of U.S. attitudes and rhetoric toward economic competition with China.¹⁴ Still, he points out that for a replay of the U.S.-Japan tensions of the 1990s three factors in U.S.-Chinese economic relations would have to change: Chinese investment in the U.S. would have to increase (see e.g. *The Economist* 2013), China would have to be perceived as a threat to American high-tech industries, and there would have to be a unified 'theory', like revisionism (Uriu 2009, 244).¹⁵ Writing at an earlier point in time, John Kunkel – equally positing three differences – sees the industry-factor in the same way, but argues that there was no problem with market access to China as there was to Japan. Moreover, in his view “the different nature of the U.S.-China relationship may make U.S. policy makers think twice before embarking on an aggressive market access approach similar to President Clinton's results-oriented Japan policy” (Kunkel 2003, 197). In my view, 'the different nature' is no guarantee for a more cautious approach, but instead the overall bilateral character of the relationship between China and the U.S. – which of course does differ to a large extent from the Japanese-U.S. relations in the 1980s – adds to tensions over economic policies. After the Second World War (WWII) the U.S.-Japan alliance became viewed as “the most important pillar of security and political order in the Asia Pacific” (i.e. G. J. Ikenberry and Inoguchi 2003, 1)¹⁶, and Japan was quickly acknowledged as country that had successfully come to terms with establishing and integrating into the western liberal democratic political order. Although the expression “most important bilateral relationship of the world” attributed to Japan (cf. Otte and Grimes 1993, 110 on Japan) is often ascribed to the Sino-American relationship as well (cf. for instance Xie 2009, 1, as well as the analysis in chapters four to seven), this rarely is a reference to the quality of the relationship, but instead to the global political challenges confronting the two countries, that call for cooperation (cf. i.e. Morrison 2014, 38). In the U.S. a general 'ideological' mistrust towards 'communist China' persists (e.g. Friedberg 2011, 2, 42f.; cf. H. S. Yee and Storey 2002, 2–6), above all – in the political as well as in the academic community – it is argued that China's economic strength ultimately serves and contributes to its

¹⁴ An interesting question, that cannot be addressed in this project, would also be in how far this is also considered as a *déjà-vu* in China itself, as at least the consequences for Japan – after giving in to U.S. pressure and revaluing the Yen in 1985 – are very present in China as a negative example (cf. Kirshner 2008, 248). Robert Wampler for instance points to observers tracing the roots of Japan's 'economic bubble' that burst in the early 1990s to the Plaza Accords in 1985 (see introduction to the analysis) and the subsequent 'easy credit' policies of the Japanese government (Wampler 2001, 260f.).

¹⁵ Whether what is often termed “China Threat Theory” could account for this remains questionable, see chapter 1.2. and conclusion.

¹⁶ The Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone once referred to Japan as “unsinkable aircraft carrier in the Asia Pacific” (cf. Sanger 1995).

military buildup. And last but not least, looking at ‘brute material factors’, when it comes to China’s size, number of population and its weight and role in the Asia-Pacific region, China in the 2000s is commonly regarded as playing on a different level – economically as well as strategically – than Japan ever did (Nymalm 2011a).¹⁷

Thus, it should be clear that I am not anticipating the ‘cases’ of Japan and China to be similar. On the contrary, the similarities in the public discourses on Japan and China, the differences in the bilateral relationships with the U.S. notwithstanding, are one aspect that renders the whole issue worthwhile studying.

In this sense my objective is not to do a comparison in a classical sense, but rather to take a historical view by deciphering the meaning of and the approach to the economic rise of China by the United States, through taking into account that in the past the articulation of and dealing with the economic rise of Japan – in both cases the major economic competitor – bore tendencies of rendering an issue of economic competition into an ‘ideological struggle’. I am interested in the possible similarities and differences – or potential continuities and changes (cf. Hansen 2006, 79)– of the ‘logics’ that drive different discourses (cf. Doty 1993, 309).¹⁸ Albeit, the aim behind my inquiry is neither to predict the future, nor to judge the past in terms of the present or vice versa, but to consider it as ‘history of the present’ (cf. Foucault 1977a, 31, 1977b, 152), which means not trying to capture *the* meaning of the past, nor to try to get *a* complete picture of it, but to look at “how certain concepts have historically functioned within discourse” (Campbell 1998, 5; Flockhart 2013, 78f.). In the words of Quentin Skinner I do hope that:

“An understanding of the past can help us to appreciate how far the values embodied in our present way of life, and our present ways of thinking about those values, reflect a series of choices made at different times between different possible worlds. This awareness can help to liberate us from the grip of any one hegemonal account of those values and how they should be interpreted and understood. Equipped with a broader sense of possibility, we can stand back from the intellectual commitments we have inherited and ask ourselves in a new spirit of enquiry what we should think of them” (Skinner 2002, 6).

This leads me to set out a research agenda that departs from the more common view on U.S.-Chinese economic relations considering the economic perspective only in a narrow sense. I assume that the preponderance and intensity of the past and contemporary economic tensions are neither sufficiently taken account of, nor could they be sufficiently understood and explained

¹⁷ However, as will become clear in the course of this study, a crucial argument is that so called ‘brute material factors’ alone do not determine what this means for the U.S.-Chinese relationship, but instead one has to take the meaning attributed to these factors, and what it takes to render them ‘significant’, into account.

¹⁸ See in what follows on logics in chapter 3.2.

by the dominant rationalist, (neo-)positivist and policy focused approaches in the study of U.S.-Chinese economic relations (the research on U.S.-Japanese relations being more pluralistic) that posit an “inherent and unproblematic ‘reality’ of the situation” (cf. Campbell 1994, 157) where the facts would ‘speak for themselves’ in terms of ‘objective threat indicators’ (Blanchard 2012; and Steve Chan 2014 on the ‘power shift narrative; see also Hagström and Jerdén 2014; cf. Pan 2004, 2014; Turner 2013; in contrast to e.g. Y. E. Yang and Liu 2012, 710).

With my analysis I want to add to the picture by considering the topic from a poststructuralist and post-foundationalist perspective, as reflecting a challenge to concepts of political and economic order central to the U.S.’ own understanding of itself as “the global motor for democracy and progress” (ZEIT- Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius 2010, 1), thus in terms of “the entailments of U.S.-identity” (cf. Campbell 1994, 157).¹⁹ In particular I consider these entailments to figure in the concepts of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history²⁰ (cf. Nymalm 2013). The latter is characterized by the thought that the introduction of a liberal market economy will inevitably be followed by political liberalization, thus free trade and free markets leading to democracy and to peaceful relations (cf. Mandelbaum 2002, 6). With the special role American exceptionalism assigns to the U.S., they are to serve as a role model and promoter of this development (Krause 2008; McEvoy-Levy 2001, 23ff.; Nabers and Patman 2008). Japan and China were/are to different extents countering or taken to be countering the envisaged ‘universal path to progress’, and thus not only challenging the concepts themselves, but also U.S. identity as a vanguard and role model for the whole ‘liberal world order’ (Layne 2014; cf. N. Morris 2010, 2). This challenge is met with by what David Campbell has called a central feature of states and their foreign policies, the externalization of an internal problematic and its attribution to an external cause or ‘enemy’, in order to account for the inner deficiencies, mostly ensuing in a discourse on the threatening ‘adversarial’ other (cf. Campbell 1998, 62).²¹

In this context, in this dissertation-project I focus on the articulations of U.S.-identity in terms of foreign economic policy towards Japan and China²², and on what possible commonalities and/or differences between the Japanese and the Chinese case can reveal considering my assumptions of a challenge to U.S. identity. The main question to be addressed is if and how in both cases the

¹⁹ In terms of my theoretical framework and approach that I expand on in what follows: as manifestation of the dislocation of a meaning system conceived as a hegemonic discourse.

²⁰ Except by Michael Mandelbaum (2002) the term ‘liberal theory of history’ is not frequently used in the literature, see chapter 1.3.

²¹ While not being able to extensively address the arguments to the question whether ‘identity’ *requires* ‘enmity’ here, I come back to it in the chapters 1.3 and 2. See for instance Berenskoetter (2007). Many thanks to Astrid Nordin for pointing this aspect out to me at this point.

²² For an emphasis on the importance of ‘identity-questions’ when dealing with the ‘power shift discourse’ see for instance Hagström and Jerdén (2014) and the other contributions in their special issue.

discourses on economic issues converged in articulating Japan and China not only as main economic competitors but as threats in terms of ‘excluded others’²³, what this in turn tells us about U.S. identity, and how it connects to the debate of the possible crisis or decline of the U.S. or ‘the West’.

The focus on economic policies is chosen for mainly three reasons: first, the whole ‘rise-debate’ is mainly premised on the economic performances of Japan and China²⁴ (cf. e.g. Khong 2014, 157, 162; Nabers 2010, 932), especially on their growing share of global trade volumes (Gilpin 1989, 329f.; cf. e.g. Hilpert 2013). Second, economic issues connected to trade and monetary politics are among the most prevalent and disputed ones in the respective bilateral relationship. And last but not least, economic performance in terms of the success of liberal democratic capitalism has been a central feature of the U.S. and its understanding as preeminent economic and political role model, with respect to China especially since the 1990s.²⁵ In other words, the U.S.’ self-attribution as ‘economic power’ plays an important role in the ‘challenge’ or competition attributed to Japan and China (for a similar argument about Japan and its ‘identity’ in relation to China and South Korea see Gustafsson and Hagström 2015, 14). What role ‘identity’ plays in the debates on the economic rise is the main focus of this dissertation.

An inquiry into U.S.-China policies in light of the Japanese case as envisaged in this project has so far not been undertaken in previous research, except for a few articles and commentaries briefly alluding to certain similarities (Bhagwati 2002; Friedberg 2011, 49; see also Hagström and Jerdén 2014; Hale and Hale 2003; Hanke 2005, 2008; Layne 2012; N. Morris 2010, 141; e.g. Prestowitz 2010; Rachman 2011; Tsuchiyama 2010), as for instance treatments of specific economic aspects like the trade imbalances in light of the GATT/WTO trading system (Bown and McCulloch 2009), or Chinese investment in the U.S. (Milhaupt 2012). Furthermore, there are only few studies on U.S.-Chinese relations in general, or economic relations in particular, that would explicitly adopt a post-positivist (on this terminology see in what follows in the overview on the

²³ For the PDT terminology see in what follows in chapter two.

²⁴ On the problematic aspects of this premise in the Chinese case see Pan (2014, 395ff.). See also in what follows in chapter one on the critique of (economic) determinism in prevalent IR-theories. Many thanks also to Eric Blanchard for highlighting this aspect.

²⁵ In their study on the “China threat” argument in U.S. printmedia Yang and Liu (2012, 706) for instance come to the conclusion that over their time period studied (1992-2006) the economic/trade threat issue was the most persistent compared to the other two fields identified by them, i.e. military/strategic and political/ideological.

For studies on the print media and the U.S.-Japanese trade issues see for example Luther (2001) and Budner and Krauss (1995). See also Benjamin et al. for a content analysis of U.S. and Japanese media as part of a study on the issue of ‘the fairness debate’ in their trade relations (Benjamin et al. 1991). On the media in U.S.-Japan relations more generally see also Masayuki (2000).

chapters), or even a discourse focused and/or –analytical perspective.²⁶ This seems even more surprising, as within the field of studies on U.S.-Japanese (economic) relations, a few scholars have taken approaches that one could refer to and build on in this respect. I discuss them in the first chapter.

Whereas the topic relates to the fields of International Relations (IR) and International Political Economy (IPE), my questions, focus and approach depart from their mainstream, as they are premised on Poststructuralist/Political Discourse Theory (PDT) – broadly speaking a post-positivist approach – that has implications for conceptualizing the whole ‘research-design’ in general, and methodological and practical aspects in particular. I expand on these issues in chapters one to three. While PDT has become more present in IR and IPE over the recent years, it is still far from having been credited with its full potential for the study of global politics, and it has so far not been taken into account in the analysis of U.S.-Chinese relations. Moreover, most scholars confine themselves to drawing from certain concepts of PDT, but seldom take the ‘whole approach’ as social and political theory and its connections to other poststructuralist or discourse-oriented work in IR and IPE into account (but see Nabers 2015, forthcoming). I argue that in addition to contributing to existing research on the topic addressed, a PDT perspective augments the view by not just providing new insights on something considered as ‘pre-existing cases per se’ (cf. Doty 1993, 316), but by asking about and inquiring into what actually constitutes these ‘cases’ in the first place (Blanchard 2012; P. T. Jackson 2010; see also Ling 2013; cf. Pan 2004, 2012; Turner 2013, 2014). Hence, a (historical) PDT-approach towards a topic as politically overloaded as the ‘Rise of China’ also allows for an all too often neglected inquiry into our articulations and theorizing of ‘the Rise’ of China. Furthermore, the discursive understanding of the concepts of ‘identity’ and ‘ideas’ enables a critique of their treatment in most of the (constructivist) IR- and IPE-literature, where the attempt to find a ‘middle ground’ between rationalist and ‘postmodern’²⁷ approaches in most cases ultimately leads back into essentializing these phenomena in theory and practice.

²⁶ See for example the historical study by Evelyn Goh on the rapprochement between the U.S. and China from 1961 to 1974 (Goh 2005), an article and book by Chengxin Pan on *The "China Threat" in American self-imagination* (Pan 2004) and on *Western Representations of China's Rise* (Pan 2012), two articles by Blanchard (et al.) on the role of metaphor in the constitution of Sino-American relations (Blanchard 2012; Slingerland, Blanchard, and Boyd-Judson 2007), and an article and book by Oliver Turner on “threatening” China and U.S. security (Turner 2013) and, more broadly *American Images of China* (Turner 2014).

Whereas the small number of post-positivist approaches in this field is of course not ‘problematic’ per se, I still see a lack of diversity in approaches towards this widely studied and meaningful topic as disadvantage not only to the academic field, but also for policymaking. The dominance of rather rationalist and policy oriented approaches appears to have an impact on the tendency to view China as an ‘objective threat’ that then calls for certain ‘concrete’ responses on the ground. See in what follows in chapter one, and also for example Jerdén (2014).

²⁷ On differentiating between ‘postmodernism’ and poststructuralism see chapter one.

RESEARCH MATERIALS AND TIME FRAME

In this dissertation, that I consider as first part of an extended future project, I focus my analysis on the elite official/public discourse²⁸ on Japan and China, exemplified through a rhetorical analysis of congressional debates (i.e. the Congressional Record including testimonies, hearings, voting etc. in the Senate and the House, see the introduction to the analysis) on U.S.-Japan and U.S.-China economic policies from 1985 until 2008. I focus on the U.S. Congress as (first) example of elite public discourse on Japan and China for several reasons: Congress played and plays a central role when it comes to economic policies towards Japan and China, both in terms of its high public visibility/audibility, as well as in terms of its role and impact in economic policy making (N. Morris 2010, 56–63; cf. i.e. Xie 2009, 58). The U.S. constitution in Article I, Section 8 guarantees Congress the right and duty “to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises [...]; to borrow money on the credit of the United States; to regulate Commerce with Foreign Nations [...]”.²⁹ However, since the 1930s (i.e. first and foremost since the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, RTAA, of 1934) it has repeatedly delegated certain rights to the president, especially when it comes to trade agreements, as for example through the so-called Trade Promotion Authority³⁰ (Kunkel 2003, 28f.; cf. Scherrer 1999, 53). Nonetheless, the president has always had to be aware of congressional attitudes in order not to drive it to claim its constitutional primacy over trade issues, especially as broadly speaking the positions on trade liberalization and ‘free trade’ have always been more ‘reserved’ in Congress compared to the generally pro free trade orientation of the president (Schoppa 1997, 62f.).³¹ With respect to the trade relations with Japan, for instance

²⁸ Due to the limits of this dissertation I do not include for example public opinion or popular culture, but leave this for an expansion of this project in the future, while bearing in mind that “it cannot be naturally assumed that a “discursive fit” between the elite discourse and people’s traditional conception of the world exists all the time. Although the ruling group pursues the establishment of hegemony, there is always a possibility that common sense in civil society would resist and defeat the elite hegemonic project” (Cha 2015, 4). For example, as pointed out earlier, a negative view of Japan was apparently far more consistent among the elite than among the general public (N. Morris 2010, 32f.; Scherrer 1999, 244f.).

See also Hansen (2006) on different research designs that correspond to different analytical research goals.

²⁹ The authenticated text of the Constitution can be found on the website of the Government Printing Office: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CDOC-110hdoc50/pdf/CDOC-110hdoc50.pdf> (last accessed March 28, 2015).

³⁰ TPA, or “fast-track”, according to the Trade Act of 1974, see in what follows in the analysis and introduction to the analysis.

³¹ The executive’s free trade policy orientation or the ‘hegemonic’ status of free trade within the (foreign) policy elites more generally (cf. i.e. Kunkel 2003, 24), is mostly attributed to the experiences with the negative effects of the protectionist legislation (i.e. the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, see analysis) before the Great Depression, as well as to the positive effects of the reversal to the promotion and implementation of free trade policies since then, especially after WWII and until the end of the 1970s (see for instance J. Goldstein 1993, 247). Most authors classify the ‘free trade’ view as ‘hegemonic’ (i.e. Hummel 2000, 190) in guiding American trade policy since the Great Depression, i.e. in terms of being “orthodox” (Schoppa 1997, 70), a “shared belief system” (Kunkel 2003, 24), a “consensus” (J. Goldstein 1993, 247). It became contested however through revisionism, see in what follows.

Gerald Curtis characterized them as “to a considerable extent more a matter of relations between the administration and Congress than between the U.S. government and Japan” (Curtis 2000, 20).

Considering the time frame of the period under research, I take the 1980s as starting point, these years being generally considered a turning point in U.S.-Japanese relations, as they were marked by the most heated disputes in economic, namely trade and monetary issues (cf. i.e. Hummel 2000, 142, 188, 219; Mastanduno 1992, 240), with trade becoming a partisan issue in Congress (cf. Kunkel 2003, 52), disputed between Congress and the executive (Mastanduno 1992, 263), as well as a prominent topic in elections (cf. Hummel 2000, 140).³² Moreover, the 1980s are considered as the period when negative views and harsh rhetoric concerning Japan entered into public discourse especially in the U.S. (cf. N. Morris 2010, 23). Around the mid 1990s, the political attention started to shift from Japan to China, and this trend was also observable in scholarly interest in ‘the Rise of China’ (for an overview cf. i.e. A. Goldstein 1997, 3), while Congress came to play a central role regarding trade policy towards China mainly with respect to the question of granting Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to China prior to its accession to the WTO, as will be laid out in the introduction to the analysis.

Whereas there seems to exist hardly any literature explicitly focusing on U.S.-Japan congressional policy making (an exception is Bob 2001), except for the specific CRS-reports on these issues (cf. i.e. J.K. Jackson 1990 and Nanto 1992), but it is usually at least addressed in the cited works on U.S.-Japan (trade) relations, this is different in the Chinese case, where scholars emphasize the role and impact of Congress, especially when it comes to trade issues and legislation (cf. Gagliano 2014, 1f., 135ff.; Xie 2009, 1ff., 58, 60ff.; Yang 2000, 11f., 75ff., see also chapter one). Finally, as pointed out by Joseph Gagliano, Congress presents

“two faces [...], first, it serves as a single deliberative body that considers policy issues that face the nation-state, where the goal of the legislature is to pursue policies that maximize interests in the international arena. Second, Congress represents an assembly of ambassadors from each of the 50

³² For instance, in the year 1985 over 300 ‘protectionist’ bills were debated in Congress (cf. Kolkman 2005, 41; Schoppa 1997, 66). During the same year the U.S. started to shift its focus from ‘protecting’ the U.S. market from Japanese imports towards the goal of opening the Japanese market for U.S. companies and products (cf. Hummel 2000, 219). When it comes to Congress’ impact on the trade policy agenda, for instance the Reagan administration repeatedly acted in order to prevent harsh legislation from Congress. Leonard Schoppa gives the negotiations on the so-called Voluntary Export Restraints (VER) in 1981, as well as the Market-Oriented Sector Specific (MOSS) talks and the Plaza Accords in 1985, and several unfair trade and dumping cases in the following years as examples. The incoming Bush administration had to deal with the continuation of these issues, for instance the Super 301 provision of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (see the analysis itself for details on these agreements). Moreover, the revisionist views had already gained momentum in Congress and also in business circles (Schoppa 1997, 65ff.). According to Michael Mastanduno for instance, preventing congressional action that would have had the potential to even hinder multilateral trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) was one of the major reasons of the Bush administration to engage itself in the so-called Structural Impediments Initiative (SII) with Japan in 1989 (Mastanduno 1992, 238; see also Schoppa 1997, 71).

states and 435 districts, where each member pursues policies that tend to the interests of their constituents at the national level” (Gagliano 2014, 6).

By focusing on the congressional debates on U.S. economic Japan and China policies to pursue the question of how U.S. identity as global economic and political leader and role model is affected by the rise of potential competitors, these sources thus allow for taking into account broader global ('first face'), as well as domestic ('second face') issues that were brought up and considered as significant in the discussions during the time period analyzed in this study. Furthermore, while Congress as legislating body clearly forms part of the elite public discourse, its 'second face' not only to a certain extent accounts for its U.S. wide representativity, but it also serves as a link to the constituents and voters, hence to public opinion that cannot be treated within this dissertation. While the debates in form of the Congressional Record are publicly accessible (and most sessions are open to the public), they are not directed to an 'outside' audience in the sense of addressing it, like for example press statements by the executive, or the media more generally speaking.

As I understand 'discourse' in terms of meaning-structures and the 'horizon' that constitutes our 'reality' and that we cannot get outside of (see chapter two), I consider and am interested in the elite public discourse on the rise of Japan and China as one part of the bigger picture of how a 'normal' or 'hegemonic' perspective becomes challenged (or dislocated, see in what follows) by 'events' that can not be reconciled with it or integrated into it.³³ While looking at the U.S. Congress as an example, in this thesis I do not focus on specific legislation pursuing the question of how it came about or whether it was passed or not, but take the debates in Congress as example of the overall discourse on Japan's and China's economic rise. In the words of Jacob Torfing, the central question is "*how* the text argues, not *what* it says", or in this case also not *who* says something but *how* it is said³⁴ (cf. also Hagström and Gustafsson 2015, 13f.; Torfing 2005, 41). Importantly, as I will make clear chapters two and three, the decision to focus on (written) speech in the form of documents contained in the Congressional Record simply refers to the form and character of the sources, it does not imply a 'reduction of everything to language' as opposed to 'real action', which would make no sense within the concept of discourse I am endorsing (cf. Nonhoff 2011, 96). Furthermore, the distinction between and spotlight on one field of elite

³³ As will be addressed further in chapter two and the introduction to the analysis (and the analysis itself), the notion 'event' in this study is not understood as something exogenous in the sense of existing outside of meaning-making and meaning-giving activities and structures (i.e. outside of discourse), but it is precisely the question of meaning- and sense-making of and with respect to 'events' that is at stake in the case of a dislocation (cf. Nabers 2015, forthcoming). For a distinction between 'pure events' and 'historical events' in this sense see Lundborg (2009, 2012).

³⁴ While keeping in mind that ultimately these aspects can of course not be treated as strictly separate matters.

discourse and on economic matters is a purely pragmatic and analytical device that is internal to the concept of discourse (cf. Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 4).

In this dissertation, I focus on the discourses evolving during the years of major key events in the field of economic, especially trade policy (for more details see chapter 3.4 and introduction and overviews to the analysis): 1985 (Plaza Accords, first year since WWII that U.S. is a debtor country), 1989 (Structural Impediments Initiative, end of the Cold War), 1994/1995 (trade summits with Japan, debates on China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) status), 1997 (Asian financial crisis), 2000/2001 (China's accession to the WTO), 2005 (China announces end of exclusive dollar peg of its currency, debates on acquisition of a Californian oil company (Unocal) by a Chinese company (CNOOC), and finally 2008 (the 'outbreak' of the financial crisis, China becomes the U.S.' largest creditor). While the 1985, 1989, 1994/1995, 2000/2001 and 2005 events are more Japan and China specific (although with global implications), the end of the Cold War, the Asian financial crisis and the financial crisis account for global (economic) developments that however still allow for a particular focus on the relationship between the U.S. and the respective number two economy. My aim is thus not to study these 'events' (see introduction to the analysis) in particular, but taking them as reference points while aiming at identifying continuities and changes in U.S. identity-articulation over a longer time period.³⁵

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

The first chapter expands on the topic by providing a state of the art on the fields in IR and IPE that are touched upon by the questions posed in this dissertation. Thematically these are U.S.-Japanese and U.S.-Chinese relations with a focus on economic relations in particular. For their post-positivist approaches towards U.S.-Japanese relations, particularly important works for my study are for instance those by Hartwig Hummel (1997a, 1997b, 2000), Gearóid Ó Tuathail (1993), David Campbell (1994), Narrelle Morris (2010) and Masao Miyoshi (1991), as well as for their broad historical accounts especially the seminal 'classical' ones by Robert Uriu (2000, 2009), Gerald Curtis (2000) and Leonard Schoppa (1997, 1999). Whereas these examples of not only discourse focused approaches towards the study of U.S.-Japanese (economic) relations provide connecting points to my approach, this can only partly be said about the literature on

³⁵ A second step – which however cannot be pursued within the limits of this dissertation-project – would be to focus more closely on what role identity constructions played in particular policies towards Japan and China, i.e. in how far one mode of articulation constituted or enabled *the policy changes of the U.S. administration* in the Japanese case. On the other hand, as since the 1990s a viable part of Congress, the media and the academic community keeps pushing for a tougher China policy, the question then would be on the role of identity in the discursive strategies by which *policy changes* towards China might be aimed at.

U.S.-Chinese (economic) relations. For the latter I briefly address the prevalent (mostly rationalist and/or policy focused) literature, that is first and foremost inspired by power-transition theory (PTT). I then deal with the few discourse-oriented approaches (i.e. Goh, Pan and Turner, see earlier footnote) in more detail, while connecting them to the conceptualizations of 'discourse', 'identity' and 'ideas' in IR and IPE more broadly in chapter 1.4. In the section on American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history (1.3) I address the central literature with a focus on relating it to the study of U.S.-Japanese and U.S.-Chinese relations, concluding on a question that links up to a central problematic in PDT: how does/can liberal thinking deal with 'difference' without converting it into a potentially threatening otherness?

The second chapter on theory deals more explicitly with PDT, by first tracing its central premises to similar concerns voiced by scholars in IR and IPE (for instance by Jim George, Richard Ashley, James Der Derian, David Campbell, Roxanne Lynn Doty, Jutta Weldes and Diana Saco, Marieke de Goede), and by secondly expanding on the core theoretical concepts as developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Laclau and Mouffe 2001), with an emphasis on how their approach departs from and could take the IR agenda further.

Accordingly, the third chapter on methodology and methods connects to the debates on discourse analysis as method (in IR and IPE) more generally, and then picks up the trajectory opened up with the state of the art in the first chapter, and introduces the Logics of Critical Explanation (LCE) and Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA) as ways to deal with the questions raised and the criticisms advanced (chapters 3.2 and 3.3). In the method section I lay out the analytic categories for the analysis of my textual material based on the concepts of Laclau and Mouffe, and how to put them into practice through drawing from the politico-linguistic approach by Martin Reisigl (2007, 2008). Furthermore I address the gathering, selection and organization of the sources in more detail (chapter 3.4).

To briefly sum up my main trajectory of the first three chapters: the majority of approaches towards the topic (this is true above all for the literature on U.S.-Chinese relations) largely come down to a (conscious or unconscious) 'dualism' in terms of a 'material'/'ideational' split. Its implications for the study of discourse, ideas and identity in IR and IPE in my eyes can in most cases be pinned down to two crucial misapprehensions leading to some kind of 'lost in translation' in these discussions, and they are both connected to the neglect of ontological as well as methodological issues on the one hand, and a certain method-drivenness on the other hand, as recently problematized for instance by Jackson (2011) and Herborth (2011) for the field of IR (Chernoff 2013, 353, 361; Howarth 2013, Chapter 3; cf. also Michel 2013; Wight 2013, 328) and

already earlier for example by Samuels and Caldwell for economic methodology (Caldwell 1982; see also Krasner 1996, 109; Samuels 1996). In short, I would summarize their argument as that we think too little or not at all about why we study certain issues and ask certain questions and not others, and why in a particular way and not in another (cf. also Suganami 2013, 268). For the field of studies on U.S.-Chinese (economic) relations this means that the realms of the 'material' versus the 'non-material'/'ideational' and their meanings remain largely unquestioned or undefined. In my view this is the case mainly because of three reasons: their meaning is taken for granted, these kind of methodological considerations are dismissed as negligible 'meta-theory' too remote from 'empirical research'³⁶, and/or the scholars simply (want to) stay committed to methods 'established' by the neo-positivist majority in the field (cf. Hülse 2003, 214; P. T. Jackson 2011, 203).³⁷ 'Ideas', 'identities' and 'discourses' are thus commonly considered to pertain to an 'ideational realm', while still being treated as fixed 'variables' and 'causal factors' that potentially have an impact on the material (cf. Gofas and Hay 2010, 4ff.; P. H. Gries 2006, 311; Alastair Ian Johnston 2006, 349ff.; e.g. Kang 2007, 8f., 80ff.; Rousseau 2006; Wang 2000, 29ff.). This is of course not problematic per se, but it tends to become problematic on a broader scale in terms of consistency if – and this is more true for IR constructivism in general than for work on U.S.-Chinese relations that is seldom constructivist – one does not realize that the methods one uses might be at odds with key premises of (self-ascribed) social constructivism (cf. Gofas and Hay 2010, 47; Herschinger 2011, 25; Hynek and Teti 2010; cf. P. T. Jackson 2011, 203f.; Zehfuss 2006).³⁸ Thus one problem of this kind of 'ideas' related research is that it, because of its by and

³⁶ As problematized for instance by Dirk Nabers (2015, forthcoming), and in accordance with his position I do not subscribe to a rigid separation between an 'empirical' and a 'non-empirical' realm, where 'empirical' is understood as an 'unmediated' or directly detectable 'objective reality' (see also in what follows on the so called 'Cartesian anxiety'), as I do concur with post-foundationalist thinking that argues against conceiving the 'empirical' as situated outside of historically contingent concepts we use to make sense of it. In this sense, and in a poststructuralist understanding I also eschew a rigid separation between theory and practice, but rather conceive of theory *as* practice (see chapter two). In accordance with PDT scholars (for instance Jason Glynos and David Howarth) the usage of the term 'empirical research' in this thesis thus simply refers to an inquiry into social practices, without establishing or treating them as 'objective facts'.

³⁷ By neo-positivism I refer to the term as 'wager' used by Patrick Jackson, briefly and generally put as understanding of all knowledge-claims as inferences about the world 'out there as it is', aiming at but never perfectly mirroring it, resulting in research designs in which those inferences are articulated as hypotheses (statements positing causal relationships between independent and dependent variables) that are tested (comparatively across cases) in order to arrive at findings on causal relationships (cf. Howard 2010, 400; cf. P. T. Jackson 2011, 42ff., 198f.).

³⁸ To briefly summarize Patrick Jackson's argument on 'constructivism': the potential of social constructivism as what he terms "philosophical ontology" concerned with the relationship between the researcher and the object of research has been reduced to 'IR-constructivism' as what he correspondingly calls a "scientific ontology" about what kinds of things exist and should be studied (e.g. ideas, norms, culture), which in turn opened the door for constructivism's 'application' through neo-positivist methods at odds with the (omitted) philosophical premises (P. T. Jackson 2011, 141f., 202–204). Some scholars, for instance Hidemi Suganami, propose the term 'social constructionism' as to differentiate it from IR-constructivism (Suganami 2013, 260, FN 37). For differentiating between social constructivism as position in the philosophy of science and IR-constructivism as a theoretical tradition see also Monteiro and Ruby (2009, 17, FN 4).

large instrumental treatment of these topics, always risks falling short of dealing with – or providing a substantial answer – when confronted with the typical question on the impact or influence of these ‘non-material’ factors on actual policy or ‘reality’, as it often stays silent, maintains or does nothing to counter the alleged dichotomy between ‘material reality’ and ‘ideas’ (cf. Adcock 2006, 60; cf. Wæver 2005, 35; e.g. Wang 2000).

To just briefly address the broader context of this dichotomy, ultimately, it goes back at least to René Descartes and his “mind-body-dualism”, that in the philosophy of science became transformed into, or was treated as what Richard Bernstein has called “Cartesian anxiety”: the understanding that ‘mind’ and ‘matter’ are separate realms, and that there has to be an (mind)-external and secure (i.e. ‘objective’) foundation of knowledge³⁹, as its absence would lead into an abyss of “intellectual and moral chaos” (R. J. Bernstein 1983, 16; cf. also George and Campbell 1990, 289).⁴⁰ Without always referring to – or in some cases even without awareness of – the philosophical underpinnings, in IR (and IPE) these debates figure at the heart of the ‘either/or’ (cf. R. J. Bernstein 1976, 235) cleavages between (so called) positivists and post-positivists (i.e. but not only in the “great debates”)⁴¹, and the common dichotomies such as material vs. ideational, non-discursive vs. discursive, ideas vs. discourses, explaining vs. understanding,

While I find the distinction between ‘philosophical’ and ‘scientific’ ontologies problematic (see also in what follows), I agree with Jackson’s critique that IR-constructivism in many cases can be differentiated from neo-positivist approaches only with regard to its ‘objects’ of research.

³⁹ On problematic connotations of the term ‘knowledge’ from a poststructuralist perspective see in what follows in the footnote on Suganami and Jackson.

⁴⁰ For a critical philosophical discussion of this ‘problem’ see first and foremost Richard Rorty and his *Philosophy and the mirror of nature* (1979).

On how this ‘problem field’ was conceived and dealt with by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume, Immanuel Kant (i.e. his noumena and phenomena) and Max Weber, and the ‘consequences’ for IR see for instance Patomäki and Wight (Patomäki and Wight 2002, 219ff.) and Jackson (P. T. Jackson 2011, 44ff.).

⁴¹ While the distinction between positivists and post-positivists has become common in the discipline, it is actually not always used consistently, and not very ‘accurately’ either. To give a few examples here, Patrick Jackson for example distinguishes between positivism, logical positivism (i.e. the Vienna Circle) and neo-positivism, and argues for the post-logical positivists (i.e. Karl Popper, Imre Lakatos, Thomas Kuhn) to be called ‘post-positivists’ (P. T. Jackson 2008, 134f., 2011, 57). While for instance Ruby and Monteiro also point to the problem in terminology, they distinguish between positivism, anti-positivism and post-positivism with an understanding of the latter retaining “some of the core tenets of positivism, while encompassing some anti-positivist critiques”, giving scientific/critical realism as an example (and characterizing social constructivism as philosophy of science as anti-positivist). As positivism they characterize the commitment to a unified scientific method, a distinction between facts and values and the centrality of observation (Monteiro and Ruby 2009, 16f.). For yet different understandings and distinctions see for instance Patomäki and Wight and the references in Ruby and Monteiro (Monteiro and Ruby 2009, 16f.; Patomäki and Wight 2002).

The notion positivism according to PDT for Glynos and Howarth stands for ‘unity of method’ (especially the hypothetico-deductive), ‘value neutrality’, and ‘fact neutrality’, while for them post-positivism stands for “a somewhat disparate set of approaches”, that i.e. subscribe to the hermeneutical insight of the importance of the self-interpretation of actors for social-scientific explanation, but also for approaches drawing from poststructuralism, critical theory and critical realism. They also include what they call “certain reformed or sophisticated positivist approaches”, such as those focusing on causal mechanisms as central unit of analysis (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 216, 220, 2008, 7). In this dissertation thesis I continue to use the term ‘post-positivism’ in the sense of Glynos and Howarth. For differentiating between ‘anti’- and ‘post’-positivism (and -foundationalism, and -essentialism) see chapter two.

causal vs. constitutive, objectivist vs. relativist, rationalist vs. interpretivist, Kant's noumena and phenomena etc. (cf. also Landman 2008 and see chapter three). This kind of binary thinking as central line in Western philosophy was criticized as stemming from 'logocentrism' (i.e. assuming a fundamental essence, that can be mediated through linguistic representations, as ultimate foundation of truth) by Jacques Derrida, and problematized for the discipline of IR for instance by R.B.J. Walker (1995). What often lies behind the provision of these dichotomies is the strive for demarcating 'science' as 'founded knowledge' from 'non-science', and 'scientific methods' from 'non-(scientific) methods' as valid way to the 'founded knowledge' (cf. Monteiro and Ruby 2009). Although these cleavages and to some extent also their philosophical origins have not remained unaddressed in the wider IR-literature (see chapter two), an important contribution focusing on these issues and their significance and consequences for IR scholarship and the discipline – especially when it comes to the 'science' and 'scientific methods' question – was made by Patrick T. Jackson in his *Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*.⁴² In a discussion and critique of Jackson's book, Hidemi Suganami relocates the major cleavage from what Jackson calls mind-world-dualism versus mind-world monism as 'philosophical ontologies' (P. T. Jackson 2011, 35–36; 115–141)⁴³ to 'representational versus constructionist views on knowledge' (cf. also Humphreys 2013, 299; Suganami 2013, 258).⁴⁴ The latter characterization brings it back to

⁴² For criticisms of why this is not only a question about the 'bounderies' of science, but the boundaries of the discipline see for instance Michel (2013, 282) and Sylvester (2013, 310). For a broader critique see also Nabers (2015, forthcoming).

⁴³ Jackson addresses 'Cartesian anxiety' under what he calls 'mind-world dualism and mind-world monism' as 'philosophical ontologies'. In his definition, philosophical ontologies are concerned with the relationship between the researcher and his research objects and the question how to produce knowledge in the first place (in Jackson's terms the relationship between "the knower and the known" or the "hook-up" to the world vs. "what is there to be known"). Another understanding of ontology he terms "scientific ontology", that is concerned with what exists and how the existence might be determined.⁴³ Jackson refers to Patomäki and Wight (2002, 215) for the designation of these two types (P. T. Jackson 2011, 28), who in turn refer to Bunge (1996). As 'philosophical ontology' according to Jackson dualism presumes a "separation between researcher and world such that research has to be directed toward properly crossing that gap, and valid knowledge must in the end be related to some sort of accurate correspondence between empirical and theoretical propositions on the one hand and the actual character of a mind-independent world on the other". Monism on the other hand conceives of the "researcher ... [as] part of the world in such a way that speaking of 'the world' as divorced from the activities of making sense of the world is literally nonsensical: 'world' is endogenous to social practices of knowledge-production, including (but not limited to) scholarly practices, and hence scholarly knowledge-production is in no sense a simple description or recording of already-existing stable worldly objects" (P. T. Jackson 2011, 35–36; 115–141). From a PDT perspective however, the separation in philosophical and scientific ontologies is not feasible, see chapter two.

⁴⁴ For a criticism of Jackson's terms and typology see for instance Michel (Michel 2013, 283f.), who points out that 'mind' and 'world' already have different meanings for those ascribed as dualists and monists.

While Suganami himself points to a certain uneasiness when using the term 'to know', from a poststructuralist perspective the term 'knowledge' (that is not discussed or problematized by Jackson) is problematic as it commonly rests on an understanding of "a relationship between a given subject (the person that knows) and a given object (that which is known)" (Campbell 2010, 218). However, a post-positivist and post-empiricist understanding conceives of the subject/object relationship not as pre-given entities, but as mutually constitutive through discourse, and emphasizes that all knowledge claims involve a relationship with power in terms of their structuring of what we take as 'reality' (cf. Campbell 2010, 219). See also Nabers 2015 (forthcoming), who – in accordance with and referring to Bernstein but also Richard Rorty – argues that this goes hand in hand with a critique of 'epistemology' understood as separation between 'knowledge' and 'reality'.

what Bernstein termed as ‘Cartesian anxiety’ and in my view speaks slightly better to poststructuralist understandings of this issue in IR (see for instance Campbell who positions himself against what he criticizes as ‘the correspondence theory of truth’ (2010, 218)), that furthermore posit themselves against the foundationalist premises of a representational view, as I will lay out in chapter two.⁴⁵ While I agree with the assertion that the distinction between ‘dualism’ and ‘monism’ (and ‘the material’ and ‘the ideational’) is actually only possible if at least taking a dualist perspective – that separates between the two – into account (Michel 2013; Suganami 2013, 253; Wight 2013), and while I also maintain that this distinction does not make sense from a PDT-view⁴⁶, in this thesis I occasionally use these terms when characterizing the (dualist) IR and IPE debates in their difference from most poststructuralist understandings.⁴⁷

The problem, and this is where the second misunderstanding emerges, is that the differences in ontological or theoretical premises that lead to different ways of asking and answering questions are mostly not taken into account or even not realized to exist in the first place, leading to “paradigmatic clashes” between scholars, who aim at positing a specific analytical perspective (and specific methods ‘fitting’ that perspective) to the exclusion of all others (Friedberg 2005, 10; cf. P. T. Jackson 2011, 30). Thus, in the debates on ‘the ideational versus the material’, the crucial argument that for instance poststructuralists problematize the dichotomy between ‘ideational and material factors’ (and also: ideational versus discursive) as it is commonly understood, and hence do not engage in debates on which realm to privilege, goes largely unheard.⁴⁸

Eschewing this dichotomy, as PDT does as I will lay out in what follows, means to go ‘beyond’ this divide (cf. R. J. Bernstein 1983). In Laclau and Mouffe’s words:

For a critique of epistemology as post-Cartesian endeavor see however also Jackson (2011, 31).

⁴⁵ Poststructuralism seems to fall out of Jackson’s typology, see for instance Sylvester (2013, 312f.).

⁴⁶ As argued by Dirk Nabers (2015, forthcoming), from a poststructuralist perspective the distinction between monism and dualism can be replaced by a third alternative ‘beyond the mind’.

While in my understanding Jackson’s view of ‘monism’ (that does not equal ‘idealism’!), see Jackson 2011, 115ff.) actually points to the same direction, in the sense of his argument that for ‘monists’ the very distinction does not make sense in the first place, I agree with Nabers on the point that Jackson seems to remain attached to an emphasis on ‘the mind’ as rational capacity of an autonomous subject.

⁴⁷ Another problem with the debates on ‘monism’ and ‘dualism’ relates to apparently different understandings of these terms: while Jackson for instance maintains that ‘monism’ does not equal ‘idealism’, this allegation is frequently made by critical realists (cf. for instance Suganami 2013, 253), but in my reading for instance also by Nabers (2015, forthcoming).

⁴⁸ This is an important point that is constantly overlooked by those criticizing not only poststructuralists, but mostly post-positivists in general for their alleged ‘idealism’ and their ‘failure’ to subject their research to procedures that stem from thinking in different, i.e. positivist philosophical and theoretical traditions. I will expand on this misunderstanding in the following chapters, in a related way see also Jackson (Jackson 2011, S.31, 35f., 46) and Bernstein (1983, 19).

“The main consequence of a break with the discursive/extra-discursive dichotomy is the abandonment of the thought/reality opposition [...]. Rejection of the thought/reality dichotomy must go together with a rethinking and interpretation of the categories which have [...] been considered exclusive of one or the other” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 110).

Going beyond the dichotomy has important consequences not only for questions of methodology and methods, but one step beforehand also for ‘the object’ of research itself, as – as simple it may sound – post-positivists usually tend to ask different questions and subsequently seek to answer them in a way that is coherent with their philosophical premises (Chernoff 2013, 361; P. T. Jackson 2013, 373; cf. Michel 2013, 277). In the terms of PDT I illustrate this way, that could also be characterized as logics of reconstruction instead of a logics of subsumption (cf. Herboth 2011), in the chapters two and three on theory, methodology and method.⁴⁹ In this context my aim is to show that instead of bridging the displayed gap between ‘topic’ and ‘ideas’ related research by invoking (neo-positivist inspired) methods as a ‘middle ground’, one can actually ‘dissolve’ it. Thus I problematize the question of ‘reality’ versus ‘ideas’ – in my terms ‘discourse’ – respectively within the framework of PDT and RPA, to deal with what Jaqueline Best and Matthew Patterson summarize as legacy of “disembedding” economy and culture⁵⁰: locating the economy on the ‘reality-side’ and culture on the ‘ideas-side’ of the presumed divide. Consequently there is “ [...] a lack of politics in cultural economy debates, a lack of economy in culturally inflected international/political theory and a lack of culture in international political economy” (Best and Patterson 2010, 3).

Chapters four to seven encompass the discourse analysis conducted on the years around the selected events, addressing the major topics of the economic discourses on Japan and China, and structured along the analytical categories derived from RPA (i.e. nominations, predications, argumentations, perspectifications, intensifications and mitigations) read through the lens of the theoretical framework and connecting them to the key concepts of PDT. The two main topics discerned from the textual material are the trade deficits with Japan and China, and their

⁴⁹ To put it in a simple way one can point to the distinction that is commonly drawn between ‘positivist’ and ‘post-positivist’ research: positivists engage themselves in answering ‘why’-questions, whereas post-positivists are interested in ‘how possible’-questions (cf. Doty 1993, 298). For a critique of how these terms are used in the field of IR see (P. T. Jackson 2011, 36; Wight 2007, 24ff.). On ‘what’ and ‘how’- questions see also Ashley (1989, 281) and Doty (1996, 4). Furthermore and importantly, for instance Sylvester and Suganami point out that the ‘choice’ of question is not only linked to ones philosophical or theoretical view (which Jackson calls a matter of faith), but that it is also a matter of (political, ethical etc.) judgement and purpose (Humphreys 2013, 307f.; Suganami 2013, 268; Sylvester 2013, 314), which is a point Jackson misses or tends to bracket in line with his (Weberian) understanding of a separation between ‘facts’ and ‘values’ (cf. Jackson 2011, 145).

⁵⁰ “Culture” referring to the ‘cultural turn’, thus focusing on topics such as identity and difference, meaning, language etc. and questioning or problematizing dualism (cf. Best and Patterson 2010, 10).

potential consequences for the U.S. role as global political and economic leader and role model. The summary of the analysis focuses on the main findings from the chapters four to seven, while the conclusion brings them together with the approach situated in the field of IR and IPE, and picking up what was laid out in chapters one to three. Furthermore, the conclusion also addresses limitations of the present study and proposes trajectories for future research. Finally it provides an outlook on U.S.-Chinese (economic) relations in connection with the major findings of this dissertation.

1. STATE OF THE ART

In this chapter my aim is to provide an overview of existing scholarship on U.S.-Japanese economic relations (1.1), U.S.-Chinese economic relations (1.2), American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history (1.3), as well as the study of identity, ideas and discourse in IR and IPE (1.4), in connection to the main questions in this dissertation pertaining to U.S. identity and the Rise of Japan and the Rise of China. As pointed out earlier, while some literature on U.S.-Japanese economic relations provides connecting points to my research interests, questions and approach, for the case of U.S.-Chinese relations, if at all, this is rather the case with works laying their focus beyond the economic realm. When it comes in turn to American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, their role has been more directly addressed for U.S.-China policies (again, beyond the economic field), than for U.S.-Japan policies. In the last section of this chapter I discuss the concepts of identity, ideas and discourses in connection to the literature on U.S.-Japan and U.S.-China (economic) policies, but also going beyond those fields, as these concepts are then picked up from a PDT perspective in chapter two.

1.1. U.S.-Japanese Economic Relations

Scholarship on U.S.-Japanese economic relations, especially concerning trade, during the 1980s and 1990s is plentiful (for an overview see for example Uriu 2009, 35). In this context, there also exists a body of work dealing with the question of whether the trade frictions would evolve into a security/military competition (for overviews see for example Berger 1993; Gilpin 1989; Mastanduno 1991). In this sense Thomas Berger (1993, 122) for example criticizes the ‘inevitability’ ascribed to Japan seeking a greater military role following from its economic growth (see also the footnote on power-transition theory and China in chapter 1.2, as well as the

analysis in chapters four to seven). While however in general quite many, if not most scholars, take a rather ‘topic-oriented’ or policy-focused approach, there are a few studies already pointing towards the direction aimed at in this dissertation.

The central works in this respect are Hardtwig Hummel’s studies on what he calls a “revisionist discourse” on Japan in terms of ethnicity and identity in U.S.-Japanese trade relations (Hummel 1997b)⁵¹, and his study on the U.S.-Japanese trade conflicts and their meaning for and impact on understandings and conceptualizations of ‘the West’ and a liberal world order from the mid 1980s onwards (Hummel 2000). Hummel locates his study within critical IR-theory specifically referring to the works of Robert Cox and Stephen Gill, his stated aim being to relate their theory to discourse analysis (Hummel 2000, 70). While Hummel points out that Cox explicitly distanced himself from “postmodern deconstruction”, he himself does not take a crystal clear position in this respect, while referring to Michael Foucault’s archeological discourse analysis in what he calls his “interpretation according to the principles of the hermeneutic circle” (2000, 67–72).⁵² Hummel conducts a discourse analysis on the theoretical debates in the discipline of IR on the topic of “the Western (OECD) community”, as well as on U.S.-Japanese trade conflicts, by analyzing the influence of revisionist thinking on the elite-discourses in both countries, as they figured in the journals *Foreign Affairs* and *Kokusai Mondai* (2000, 27f.). His

⁵¹ For a concise review of the central literature (until 1997) see Hummel 1997a: 6ff. He also points out, that most of these studies lack a systematic treatment and contextualization of revisionism, as well as an analysis of its political significance.

⁵² To briefly at this point clarify the central differences in the terms ‘postmodernism’ and ‘poststructuralism’ as they are understood in this dissertation (I will further engage with poststructuralism in chapter two, see also in what follows on differentiating poststructuralism from ‘constructivism’ in chapter 1.4) in order to avoid their conflation as often happens in the literature: When discussing different approaches in IR literature, very often ‘poststructuralism’ is subsumed under ‘postmodern approaches’ and this is mostly accompanied by criticisms of the alleged ‘fluidity’ of poststructuralism leading to an ‘anything goes’ (cf. Howarth 2013, 57, 62), that ultimately has nothing to do with ‘science’ (see these allegations for instance by Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane and Stephen Krasner cited in Hansen (2006, 4) and Milliken (1999), see also Fierke (2003, 69f.) On the ‘science-question’ more broadly see P.T. Jackson (2011, 128, 135ff, 196, 3–23). In this understanding postmodernism is taken to assume a temporal break with ‘modernity’ and its ‘achievements’ such as technological and scientific innovation, in terms of constituting a new epoch. However, this was not the case from the perspective of its proponents (Der Derian 1988, 189; cf. Der Derian and Shapiro 1989, x). Rather, postmodernism in literature, art, architecture and music was an approach trying to make sense of and coming to terms with ‘modernism’ or modernist culture after the experiences of WWII, during the Cold War and in the wake of globalization. Poststructuralism in turn could be specified in relation to postmodernism as an ‘interpretive analytic’ that seeks to critically engage with the production and implications of these ‘postmodern’ cultural, economic, social and political transformations of modernity, by neither taking a clear stance *within or external to modernity*, as it attempts to comprehend *modernity in its historicity*, as a “historical attitude” (cf. Ashley 1989, 260, 271 emphasis added). Thus poststructuralism is no ‘anti-science’ (cf. Der Derian 1989, 7), but it questions the positivist account of science based on *epistemic realism*, the assumption of a universal scientific language *and method*, and the *correspondence theory of truth* (meaning that statements on the ‘facts of the world’ are *true* if they correspond to these ‘facts’). For poststructuralism in turn all inquiry “has to be concerned with the social constitution of meaning, the linguistic construction of reality, and the historicity of knowledge” (cf. Campbell 2010, 219–222 emphases added; see also Hansen 2006, 3–5). In this sense David Howarth “rejects the view that [poststructuralism] constitutes a specific paradigm in the social sciences [...]”, but he understands it as “a particular *style of theorizing*, and a specific *way of doing social and political theory*, which is informed by a distinctive ethos [...] that] is rooted in a particular set of ontological presuppositions [...] as well as a particular methodological orientation”(Howarth 2013, 6, 64).

main findings are that the idea of an “OECD-peace” and the West as community of liberal, capitalist, industrialized countries – the “hegemony of the liberal world order” – was destabilized above all through the debates on regionalism since the beginning of the 1990s. In line with the (historical materialist) premises of Cox and Gill, Hummel inquires into the question whether there were attempts at reconstructing this hegemony in the wake of “neoliberal globalization” (2000, 305–307). From his examples of IR-debates and of U.S.-Japanese trade conflicts – that he considers as an indicator for frictions at the “predetermined braking point [Sollbruchstelle]” of the Western community – he concludes that: “the hegemony of the liberal world order has been restored with no fragmentation of the OECD-region (as a region of peace) in sight”. Hummel argues that this was due to the “discursive construction of reality” in terms of making “neoliberal globalization a taken-for-granted point of reference in the debates on world order”. In line with the discourse on “open regionalism”, as developed in the context of the APEC-process, revisionist and geo-economic arguments were reinterpreted – and thus alleviated – through and in line with this modified liberal perspective (2000, 308–310).

Contrary to Hummel, Gearóid Ó Tuathail (writing on and at an earlier point in time though) argues that geo-economic discourses in the late 1980s with their “declinist view of the American system, [the] revisionist view of Japan and [the] neo-mercantilist view of economic activity” appear “to threaten the continued ideological hegemony of transnational liberalism into the 1990s”, as they already shaped trade policy with Japan at that time. However, he leaves the question open as to whether geo-economics would amount to a new “social philosophy” in the future (Tuathail 1993, 203–204). Tuathail, as well in line with critical theory⁵³, considers revisionism in this context as potential challenge to “transnational liberalism in American policy formulation”, by studying “arguments made by public intellectuals in American civil society between 1987 and 1991 on the USA-Japan relationship; in policy journals, [...] business books, [...] affairs magazines” in order to provide an overview of this set of discourses (1993, 182). He defines geo-economics “empirically as specific historical discourses about commerce, technology, capital, markets, resources and competitiveness in political and civil society that seek to provide a normative philosophy for state action” (1993, 183). Tuathail explicitly does not study “[t]he politics of writing identity in the public discourse of political economy”, although he considers it an important aspect (1993, 205 FN 3).

David Campbell in turn addresses the ‘politics of identity’ by examining “the discourse of danger surrounding Japan” by the 1990s, with a focus on “what the problematization of Japan as

⁵³ For disagreements between proponents of critical theory, critical geography and poststructuralism in IR see e.g. the exchange around Tuathail’s review essay on David Campbell (Dalby 1996; Tuathail 1996a, 1996b), see also Hummel (2000, 67).

a national security threat says about the United States". For that purpose he aims at reconceptualizing foreign policy in terms of meaning and identity, in other words shedding light on the "discursive economy of identity/difference to the formulation and interpretation of U.S. foreign policy" (Campbell 1994, 148). In the case of Japan, Campbell points to the central arguments pertaining to a 'Japanese threat': the bilateral trade deficit as result of unfair practices and closed Japanese markets, Japanese foreign investment in the U.S. as a 'buyout' while again keeping the Japanese markets closed, leading to the overall revisionist argument of Japan being 'different' (1994, 151ff.). Campbell takes these arguments not to be descriptions of an inherent and unproblematic "reality of the situation", but rather as driven by "the entailments of [U.S.] identity" (1994, 157). In general, he considers the major political challenge to reside not in addressing the specifics of the 'single case' of Japan as a threat, but "to address the process whereby the subjectivity of the United States is continually in hock to strategies of otherness" (1994, 166).⁵⁴ I come back to his work in what follows, and in the course of the analysis in chapter four to seven.

In a more extensive study Narrelle Morris inquires into what she calls the term or label, as well as practice of "Japan-bashing" and its connection to historical images of Japan within specific discourses in the West (i.e. in her study the U.S. and Australia) in the 1980s and the 1990s – among others the revisionist one. Referring to Campbell's article she also points out, that "contemporary anti-Japanese views were often shaped far more by Western thinking about the world than by developments in contemporary Japan itself", as well as (in the U.S.) by an attempt to preserve 'the self' as 'universal' (see chapter 1.4, as well as the analysis on the 'universality' of the self). In her view it were the Japanese responses to 'Japan bashing' though, which helped transform it into an international discourse (e.g. the Japanese 'America bashing' that in turn reinforced 'Japan bashing'). In line with Hummel she diagnoses a decline in 'Japan bashing' by the mid-1990ies, due to Japan's economic problems but also to the shifting of the focus to China (N. Morris 2010, 137f.). Furthermore, Morris emphasizes the proliferation of the concept (and

⁵⁴I also come back to this assessment in particular in the course of the discourse analysis, as well as in the conclusion, while also dealing with the question of 'necessary strategies of otherness' in the chapters 1.3, 1.4 and 2 (cf. also Herschinger 2011, 29ff.). On the U.S. and 'otherness' and implications for foreign policy see the edited volume by Cullinane and Ryan and their introduction to it (2015), and in particular the chapters cited in what follows.

Furthermore, for instance Benjamin Herboth (at a Master Class given at the GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies in November 2012) has criticized Campbell's work for what he termed "postmodern empiricism" of a single case study, as he is basically engaging in what could be characterized as a structuralist argument about the seemingly sedimented identity of the U.S., which does not change while it is encountering different 'others' (cf. also Milliken 1999, 246ff.). For these reasons it is important to also focus on the 'inner differences' within the U.S., as well as their evolution over time, as I will expand on in the analysis of the congressional debates.

practice) of 'bashing' beyond Japan, for instance 'France-bashing' in the U.S. during the Iraq war 2003/04, as well as the ongoing 'China-bashing' (2010, 140).

Finally, Masao Miyoshi in turn examines 'bashing' in the U.S. and in Japan "as a form of cultural criticism" by attempting "to link specific trade and industrial policy and development directly with cultural imaginaries" and "cross over, if not clear away, the boundaries that apparently lie between the economical and the cultural in many critics' minds" (Miyoshi 1991, 64). He argues for inscribing trade negotiations with a historical understanding of societal differences and how they came about (1991, 80), for instance the connection of the idea of free trade and open markets to the Enlightenment notions of universal citizenship, civil society "and the modernist ideology of democracy" (I come back to these aspects in the chapter 1.4), while in practice trade on behalf of 'the West' has actually never been totally 'fair and open' (1991, 94).

Furthermore, revisionism is treated in several works on U.S. economic policy towards Japan, Robert Uriu's one – in which he also reflects briefly on the shifting of the focus from Japan to China (Uriu 2009, 243f.) – probably providing one of the most detailed and comprehensive accounts of the 'revisionist turn' in U.S. Japan policy. He summarizes revisionism⁵⁵ into the following three major assumptions: (1) that the Japanese economy was inherently closed, meaning being protected by tariff-, and more importantly, non-tariff-barriers like state regulations and economic practices; (2) that the Japanese economy exemplified a unique form of capitalism, so that liberalizing market rules and processes would not lead to the goal of increased imports to Japan; (3) that the Japanese economic system was adversarial and a threat, as it was planned in order to gain industrial dominance by undermining its foreign competitors, as well as to maximize economic power as general 'source' of power. The revisionist policy prescriptions for the U.S. following from these assumptions were to first recognize Japan as 'different, closed and threatening', to meet the economic challenge by emulating Japanese institutions and

⁵⁵ The 'beginning' of the revisionist discourse in the U.S. is commonly attributed to the article *The Danger from Japan* by Theodore H. White (cf. Hummel and Menzel 2001, 58; T. H. White 1985), in which he recalls the defeat of Japan in WWII, but argues that because of Japan's "most brilliant commercial offensives" the U.S. could not know whether it had actually really won the war. The whole article is written in 'war rhetoric', as for example: "The Ministry of Finance provides the launching pad from which MITI directs the guided missiles of the trade offensive". Furthermore, Japan is called a "locked and closed civilization". The article closes with calling on Japan to remember what followed Pearl Harbor: their defeat in WWII.

For revisionist thinking outside of the U.S. see Gilpin (2003, 299). It should be noted, however, that although in his book-chapter Gilpin sets out to assess the "conflicting explanations of the American-Japanese trade conflict" – the explanations by the revisionists and those by neoclassical economists – he himself seems to adhere to the revisionist arguments in terms of an essentializing view about Japan as a people, a society and its economy. See for example the passage on "The Japanese System of Collective Capitalism" which ends with the sentences: "These fundamental goals undoubtedly reflect the fact that the Japanese are as much a race as a nation. However, the uniqueness of Japan increases the difficulties of integrating that dynamic and important nation into the larger world economy" (Gilpin 2003, 300, 306–308). See also Gilpin's assessment of Japan in his earlier writings, such as Gilpin (1987, i.e. 377ff.).

practices, and finally and more concretely, to pursue numerical targets for gaining access to the Japanese market (Uriu 2009, 17).⁵⁶

Uriu stresses his aim to analyze revisionism within a framework of conceptualizing the impact of “nonmaterial variables – new policy ideas – to explain changes in interests and policy choices”, and he argues that it was the “revisionist idea” of Japan being different, adversarial and closed that led to the significant change in Japan policy in the beginning of the Clinton administration (Uriu 2000, 214, 221, 2009). Uriu’s approach is quite characteristic of the way in which ‘ideas’ are most commonly treated in IR and IPE, I address this issue in more detail in what follows in this chapter under 1.4. In a nutshell, from a discourse theoretical perspective Uriu stops short of where it becomes ‘edgy’: in his treatment of revisionism as “policy assumption” – a ‘non-material variable’ – he traces its influence through attributing this policy assumption to certain actors whose central or crucial role then explains or accounts for the impact of revisionism within the Clinton-administration (Uriu 2009, 10).⁵⁷ Apart from regarding the treatment of ideas as ‘variable’ as conceptually too narrow from the point of view of my approach (cf. Howarth 2013, 233), in my eyes this explanation does not go far enough, as it lacks the component of how this assumption was actually brought forward/articulated in the sense of being articulated/practiced by its proponents in a way that rendered other ‘ideas’ less plausible and ultimately unthinkable, in other words how the ‘idea’ of revisionism became hegemonic in/through concrete practice. This is where a discourse analysis can shed light on.⁵⁸

Considering further seminal works on U.S.-Japanese (economic) relations, whereas Leonard Schoppa treats the question of the effect of U.S. negotiation strategies with Japan, and Gerald Curtis provides an overview of U.S. policy toward Japan from Nixon to Clinton, they both come close to Uriu’s assessments with respect to the role of revisionist influence on U.S. policy towards Japan (Curtis 2000, 1–39; Schoppa 1997, 69f.). In his study on “the rise and fall of

⁵⁶ For tracing the roots of revisionism into earlier periods see i.e. Uriu (2009, 24–59), N. Morris (2010, 35–45), Hummel (2000, 161–172). The ‘Gang of Four’ themselves, in an attempt to clarify their stance against what they perceived as a distorted view of their positions, especially in terms of a “visceral antagonism toward Japan”, pointed to six essential elements of revisionism: (1) the view of the unbalanced economic and industrial relationship between Japan and the rest of the world as a threat to the world trading system and the U.S.-Japan political relationship; (2) the Western misperception of Japan ultimately evolving toward a consumer-driven, individualist system like the U.S.; (3) the view of Japan being different from the Western model of democratic capitalism, without necessarily signifying unfairness; (4) this difference would not mean that Japan would never change, but most probably slower than generally expected by the U.S.; (5) against a U.S. ‘aversion’ towards “industrial policy” or “managed trade”, as technically all major countries engaged in these practices; (6) the U.S. bears itself the major responsibility for correcting these trends (Fallows et al. 1990).

⁵⁷ Uriu defines policy assumptions as “prior accepted beliefs about the nature of a policy issue and the interests involved in that issue”, thus “a more concrete, tangible, and visible manifestation of ideas or beliefs” (Uriu 2009, 10).

⁵⁸ Importantly, if speaking of ideas from a poststructuralist perspective (while in what follows it will become clear why I speak of discourse instead of ideas) they are not understood as ‘causing’ or forming behavior, but as “product of the discursive structure in which ‘agents’ are embedded” (Nabers 2015, forthcoming).

America's results-oriented market access policy towards Japan", John Kunkel in turn argues that its roots could be found in a crisis in "the institutions, laws and norms of American trade policy in the first half of the 1980ies", which was then leading to an aggressive policy after 1985 and in turn paving the ground for the revisionist arguments (Kunkel 2003, 4–7). Still, in the context of the study of revisionism there remain open questions, as for example on the differences between the economic arguments of the revisionists and the more general ones concerning the future 'world order', as well as the question since when economic relations were considered as an aspect relevant to national security issues (cf. Curtis 2000, 21), or in how far there was a convergence between economic and security matters (Otte and Grimes 1993, 131).⁵⁹ The shift of U.S. attention from Japan to China is commonly attributed to the rising Chinese and the declining Japanese economy (Bob 2001, 95; cf. Curtis 2000, 32; Kunkel 2003, 197f.) – only Uriu briefly considers other factors such as a 'Japan fatigue' within the Clinton administration (Uriu 2009, 240) – however without any attempt of a more thoroughgoing inquiry into this issue.⁶⁰

Whereas these examples of not only discourse analytical approaches towards the study of U.S.-Japanese (economic) relations provide connecting points to my approach – while remaining focused on their 'single cases' – this, with a few exceptions, can only partly be said about the literature on U.S.-Chinese (economic) relations themselves. Apparently at least the large majority of scholars have not gotten from analyzing 'the Rise of China' to taking a step back and inquiring into the/their ways of articulating and analyzing 'the Rise' of China (see also Khong 2014; cf. Pan 2012 and to some extent; Turner 2014 as a notable exceptions),⁶¹ let alone taking into account a broader historical perspective yet,⁶² although the 'phenomenon' itself is already credited as being 'historical' (Kristof 1993) and "one of the greatest economic success stories in modern times" (Morrison 2014, 1), which was also said about Japan in the 1970s and 1980s (see introduction). In what follows, I first briefly discuss the prevalent approaches and then proceed to the discourse-oriented ones, while linking them to the study of discourses, ideas and identity in IR and IPE more broadly, and then picking up these issues in chapter 1.4.

⁵⁹ These issues are partly addressed for example by Paulsen for the Clinton era (Paulsen 1999).

⁶⁰ The 1992 CRS report states that: "Negotiations are held under an atmosphere of coercion, and when an agreement is finally reached, both sides go away feeling exhausted and empty" (Nanto 1992, 24). See also the passages on 'emotions' and 'frustration' in the analysis in chapters four to seven.

⁶¹ For a more specific inquiry into the "Assertive China Narrative" in this regard see Jerdén (2014), especially pp. 76ff. He also points to the necessity "for the reflection on the role of our discipline in the production of social facts, which is a prerequisite for any rigorous social science practice". In this sense, see also Jones (2001) and for instance Ido Oren's chapter on "American Political Science as Ideology" that addresses the interrelatedness of "America's rivalries and the making of political science" (Oren 2003, 1–22).

⁶² Notable exceptions include Goldstein (1997) and again Pan (2012) and Turner (2014), but neither of them even mentions possible resemblances or connections to the earlier discourse on the "Rise of Japan" or Japan as a "threat".

1.2. U.S.-Chinese Economic Relations

The majority of IR-research on U.S.-Chinese relations since the 1990s is focusing on the question of a potential ‘power shift’ from the U.S. to China, and – as it is mostly taken for granted – whether in consequence there will be conflict or cooperation between the two, relating to issues of global and regional scale impact (R. Bernstein and Munro 1997; Betts 2010; Buzan and Cox 2013; Glaser 2011; J. G. Ikenberry and Moon 2008; Ross 1997; e.g. Shambaugh 2010; Yan and Qi 2012; Zhao 2008), and mostly premised on the evolvments of converging and/or conflicting interests and material capacities (e.g. Economy and Segal 2009; Zhu 2006).⁶³ The prevailing framework im- or explicitly underlying most scholars work is power-transition theory (PTT) (cf. Steve Chan 2008; Friedberg 2005; E. Friedman 2011; Jeffery 2009; Jerdén 2014; Alastair I Johnston and Ross 1999; Khong 2014, 158; Lemke and Tammen 2003; Levy 2008; Ross and Zhu 2008).⁶⁴ Whereas it comes to the role of economic growth, it is of course considered by power-transition theory as the basic factor enabling a challenge in the first place, but it is partly assigned different implications and consequences.⁶⁵ Steve Chan for example claimed in 2008 that

⁶³ For a critical assessment of the power shift narrative see the recent special issue and contributions of Linus Hagström and Björn Jerdén (2014), Chengxin Pan (2014) and Steve Chan (2014).

⁶⁴ In a nutshell, PTT presumes that conflict in the form of war is most likely when a dissatisfied challenger enters into approximate parity with the dominant power (cf. Organski and Kugler 1980). The other dominant strand of power-transition theory focuses less on the rising, but more on the declining power, that might engage in a preventive war to eliminate a possible threat by the challenger (cf. Gilpin 1981). Meanwhile, PTT is as contested as widely used, authors criticize it for instance for its empirical invalidity (Richrad Ned Lebow and Valentino 2009), its misuse of historical analogies (Jeffery 2009, 311), its theoretical limitations (Levy 2008) and the danger of becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy (Steve Chan 2008, 123). This connects also to criticisms of PTT’s limitations, that usually point to its shortcomings on defining and measuring the term ‘power’ beyond its reference to material capabilities, and argue for the inclusion of factors such as ‘perceptions’ of (Richrad Ned Lebow and Valentino 2009, 406) and perspectives on power (Steve Chan 2008, 123).

For PTT and the Rise of Japan see Gilpin (1989), which is one of the rare examples of trying to fit the Japanese case within this ‘framework’. A possible reason for this is given by Gilpin himself, as he states that “the Japanese challenge” was confined ‘only’ to the economic dimension and did not constitute “a wholesale attack on the foundations of the international economic and political order such as which occurred in Wilhelmian/Nazi Germany and pre-war Japan”. He compares the Japanese case to the rise of Great Britain and the U.S. to trading and financial powers, as he characterizes Japan’s challenge as stemming from its position in international trade as well as having become the world’s largest creditor (Gilpin 1989, 329f.). Although he asserts that Japan so far has not followed the same course (ibid., 335), he does not problematize PTT itself, but leaves the question where Japan might ‘fit in’ open on these terms.

⁶⁵ Thies and Nieman point to the rather deterministic general underlying assumption of structural theories like PTT and Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST), that changes in economic growth will inexorably lead to (domestic and international) political revisionism (cf. Thies and Nieman 2013, 4). In the context of Japan’s rise Richard Leaver criticizes HST and its use in IPE literature as “backward looking” theory (Leaver 1989, 430, 439). For criticisms of both PTT and interdependence theory for their “linear projection of the future” see Legro (2007, 515, 518ff.). On the “power-transition version of realism” in U.S.-China relations see Johnston (Alastair Iain Johnston 2003, 6) and Jerdén (2014, 81–82). See also Lampton for a criticism of viewing U.S.-Chinese relations through the lens of offensive realism (Lampton 2013, 55f.). For a differentiation between the views of offensive and classical realism in this context, as well as another criticism of the former in particular and structuralism in general see Kirshner (2012). On what he classifies as five perspectives on China’s rise (power relations, regime type, international institutions, economic interdependence, nuclear strategies) see Avery Goldstein (1997, 29ff.).

the U.S. economy was not in any imminent danger of being overtaken by the Chinese economy (Steve Chan 2008, 3), whereas most other studies adhere to the forecasting that China will overtake the U.S. in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) measured in purchasing power parity (PPP) in the near future (Art 2008, 260; Friedberg 2005, 17 f.). Regarding different assessments of economic factors according to the classical schools or paradigms of realist, liberal and constructivist scholars and their take on U.S.-Chinese relations in IR (cf. Rousseau 2006, 3–4), according to the realist paradigm the Chinese economy overtaking the U.S. fits into the challenger versus dominant power opposition of PTT (cf. Kirshner 2008), while liberal and constructivist scholars focus on the economy mostly as potentially pacifying effect in terms of economic interdependence, international institutions and cooperation (cf. Friedberg 2005, 12 ff. A. Goldstein 2008, 40; Kang 2007, 8; see also Khong 2014, 155; Rousseau 2006, 30f.; Weede 2010), although some studies also point to the potential for conflict through the U.S. acting like a ‘liberal crusader’ (cf. Friedberg 2005, 31 ff.).⁶⁶ The quite prominent literature on a ‘China threat’ or what is also called “China threat theory” is linked to both, assumptions of PTT, and to the centrality of economic growth when it comes to assessing ‘power’ (as well as Pan 2012; see also Turner 2014, 20, 134 on “China threat” and “China rising” literatures; cf. H. S. Yee and Storey 2002).⁶⁷ Herbert Yee and Ian Storey map the theoretical underpinnings of the ‘China threat’-literature as to be found in “the historical interpretation of the rise and fall of great powers, realist power transition theory, and the strategist’s cultural explanation of Chinese strategic behavior”.⁶⁸ In their assessment, due to nuclear capabilities, launching a war to challenge the dominant great power has given way to “political or economic means” (H. S. Yee and Storey 2002, 9). Furthermore they summarize the factors taken into account when assessing a ‘China threat’ to be in the first instance China’s rapid economic growth, followed by its authoritarian socialist political system (coupled with disappointment about the missing/slow political liberalization in China over time), its increasing military capabilities and their impact on regional security, the fear of political and

⁶⁶ Aaron Friedberg’s article in *International Security* provides a good overview of this literature. However, in his classifications considering e.g. “realist optimists” and “liberal pessimists” he does not always clearly distinguish between policymakers – or analysts involved in policymaking – and academic scholars. For example, with respect to the ‘liberal crusader’, the possible distinction between economic and political liberalism on the one hand and/or their connection on the other hand is not problematized. Furthermore, Friedberg’s characterization of IR-constructivism is rather superficial if not even misleading. He states that “constructivists tend to be optimists” [...] as “there is always the possibility that people can change the world by changing how they think” (Friedberg 2005, 35), which is a common misunderstanding or oversimplification of the ‘ideas’ vs. ‘materiality’ (i.e. here ‘thought’ vs. ‘action’) debate that I will expand on in what follows (for the same kind of misunderstanding see e.g. Wight (2013, 338)). Cf. also Campbell (1998, 219). On “realist pessimism” see also Kirshner (2012, 59ff.). For different theories and paradigms and their view on Japan’s rise see for example Berger (1993), and Gustafsson and Hagström (2015, 3).

⁶⁷ For an assessment of the ‘China threat’ argument in U.S. print media see Yang and Liu (2012).

⁶⁸ See also Johnston (Alastair Iain Johnston 2003, 25–26, 28–29).

economic collapse in China, and finally, rising Chinese nationalism (Jerdén 2014, 82; see also Alastair Iain Johnston 2003, 5; Khong 2014, 157; H. S. Yee and Storey 2002, 2–6).

The majority of studies explicitly focusing on economic questions related to trade and currency issues remain what I would call ‘topic-centered’, without explicit alignment to any particular (IR-) theory, but still focusing on the question of a power-transition in the economic realm (cf. Nymalm 2013). Arvind Subramanian for example speaks of the economic and currency dominance of China, which he defines according to the three determinants of overall resources in terms of GDP, trade and finance in the economic realm in general, and the potential for reserve currency status for currency dominance in particular (Subramanian 2011, 36–38). The most prominent scholars/experts on economic issues stay with the realm of policy analysis (e.g. Bergsten et al. 2008; Bergsten and Gagnon 2012; Hufbauer, Wong, and Sheth 2006; Morrison 2006, 2014). There seems to be no literature systematically addressing questions on the meaning of the trade and currency imbalances between China and the U.S. in terms that go beyond an economic perspective in a classical sense. Although there exists a growing strand of literature that advocates a different perspective on the economy – that could be summarized as ‘cultural (political) economy’ approach – it seems that in general the so called “cultural turn” in IR with its focus on identity and ‘ideas’ (cf. Best and Patterson 2010, 4–5) has not really affected the mainstream of IPE (Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010, 3 f. De Goede 2006, 1 ff.), at least the realm of foreign economic policy I focus on remains under theorized with respect to these aspects (cf. Christensen, Johnston, and Ross 2006, 390; cf. Hummel 1997b, 9). Within the vast amount of literature on U.S. (foreign) trade policy in a broader international context (cf. Kolkman 2005, 29–32) there are only few exceptions (Paulsen 1999; e.g. Scherrer 1999).⁶⁹ More specific work on U.S. congressional China (trade) policy – while very detailed when it comes to the issues treated – is largely topic and procedure oriented (Gagliano 2014; Kolkman 2005; e.g. Xie 2009; J. Yang 2000), thus, in other words, focusing on ‘*what* is being said and done’, but not on ‘*how*’ and what this might tell us beyond the economic issues at stake.⁷⁰ All of them treat trade as (one of) the most important topics in congressional policymaking, however, the questions of the

⁶⁹ Christoph Scherrer conducts an analysis on the implementation of liberal foreign economic policy in the U.S. after 1945, in spite of a widely disseminated domestic negative attitude towards it. His framework is based on neo-Gramscian theories of hegemony. Thomas Paulsen in turn focuses on the ‘economization’ of foreign policy under President Clinton.

⁷⁰ For overviews on earlier literature on Congress and U.S.-China policy see Gagliano (2014, 32–37), Xie (2009, 7–9), Yang (2000, 11–12, 46–73), for Congress and trade policy more generally see Kolkman (2005, 28–32). Joseph Gagliano focuses on congressional interests in the Sino-U.S. relationship, Tao Xie on what influences Congress’ China policy (exogenous and endogenous structures) and how this happens, and Jian Yang looks at the influence of domestic politics on congressional intervention in U.S. policy towards China. Michael Kolkman in turn focuses on the U.S. Congress in his analysis of the decision making process with regard to trade policy in the U.S. for the case of granting Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to China in 2000. I come back to their findings in the analysis in chapters four to seven.

discussed potential consequences for U.S. global leadership, or a possible U.S. decline through the rise of China, are not addressed by these accounts. I come back to their major findings in the analysis itself.

On the other hand, the literature addressing American exceptionalism (Holsti 2010; Nayak and Malone 2009; e.g. Onuf 2012; Patman 2006) or the liberal theory of history (Mandelbaum 2002) seldom more thoroughly examines these phenomena with reference to U.S. economic or U.S. China policy (for a notable exception see for instance Blanchard 2012 on the “Open Door Policy”; Dorogi 2001; cf. also Madsen 1995). They are addressed – though not systematically analyzed, as in most cases the focus lies on other questions – in this context for instance by David Lampton (2001), Michael Mandelbaum (2002), Stefan Halper (2010), Aaron Friedberg (2012) and L. J. Morris (2012), while Jie Chen (1992) deals with what he calls ‘democratic capitalism’ as an ‘ideological’ aspect of U.S. foreign policy. The gap between ‘topic-related’ research on the one hand, and what for the moment I term ‘ideas-related’ research on the other hand (cf. Hummel 1997b, 6; Miyoshi 1991, 62; Pan 2012, 86f.; see also Turner 2014, 16f., 32 on what he calls “imagery” and “policy” literature) is thus not often crossed.⁷¹ Another interesting exception – that I come back to in what follows – is an article by Yuen Foong Khong on *The American Tributary System* in which he seeks to “introduce a new vocabulary to view the way the United States relates to the ROW [rest of the world] [... by] introducing the (Chinese) tributary idea as a framework for analyzing U.S. foreign policy [...]” (Khong 2013, 42). With this exercise Khong claims to be able to better assess that “U.S. claims to hegemony are based in part on its overwhelming material power and in part on its identity as a liberal democracy” (Khong 2013, 8). Also, the recent work by Pan (2012) and Turner (2014) will be discussed in the section on ideas and identity.

What I am particularly focusing on in my analysis are three aspects of reasoning with respect to U.S. economic Japan- and China-policy: the taken for granted interconnectedness between economic and political order, liberal trade policy as a means for achieving (political) liberalization with the trading partner, and the special role of the U.S. in its promotion (cf. Nymalm 2013). Especially the first and the third aspect are generally addressed by the approaches of hegemonic stability theory (HST), world systems theory (WST), neo-Gramscian (historical-materialist) approaches (Krause 2008; Latham 1997; for concise overviews see e.g.

⁷¹ In this sense Jacob Torfing points out, that discourse approaches should not confine themselves to topics treated as “soft” by the discipline, like identity, culture etc., but also address “core topics”, such as security and economy (Torfing 2005, 25f.).

Saull 2010)⁷² and modernization/development theory (see also Jahn 2013, 108f.; for an overview e.g. Li and Reuveny 2003; López-Córdova and Meissner 2011),⁷³ albeit in a different sense and pursuing different questions that rest on quite different theoretical approaches, i.e. positivist versus post-positivist understandings (cf. also Krasner 1996, 108, 122ff.; Lake 1993, 461; Suganami 2013, 268). As I do expand on in the next chapter, while Laclau and Mouffe also refer to Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony, they take it further and in consequence clearly depart from what they call "the inner essentialist core [...]in Gramsci's thought" (Barrett 1991, 63; De Goede 2003, 90; cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 69f.; Scherrer 1999, 28f.).⁷⁴

The most prominent literature explicitly dealing with U.S. trade policy and 'ideas' sticks to the notion liberal as opposed to protectionist trade policy, thus focusing on economic liberalism and the history of economic theory, relating to the question of its institutionalization and the role of institutions in the U.S. (Bailey, Goldstein, and Weingast 1997; Friman 1993; J. Goldstein 1988, 1993; Irwin and Kroszner 1999). I will touch upon the conceptualization of 'ideas' by Judith Goldstein (and Robert Keohane) in what follows. Put briefly – and this is also true for the other authors mentioned here – it takes the same turn as in Uriu's work, thus becoming a "political sponsorship argument" (Jacobsen 2003, 48).⁷⁵

As to the literature on the liberal argument about trade interdependence leading to peace (e.g. Barbieri 2005) – that connects to democratic and/or liberal peace theory (examples and overviews in Owen (1997), Owen (2005), Friedman and McCormick (2000, relating to China),

⁷² In a nutshell (based on Saull's overview, in Saull 2010), on the background of the evolution of the world economy with the role of the U.S. after 1945, HST debates the dependency of the functioning of a liberal international economic order on a hegemonic state. The neo-realist version of HST, through scholars such as Robert Gilpin, Stephen Krasner and Charles Kindleberger, assumes that in absence of the hegemon using its power to enforce the rules of the economic order the system breaks down or degenerates into mercantilist/protectionist trading blocs. Proponents of the neo-liberal (for instance Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye) and the liberal-institutionalist (for instance John Ikenberry) strands of HST in turn point out that a hegemonic state is not sufficient, but that the maintenance of the system depends on the provision and maintenance of global public goods/international regimes that might become autonomous of the hegemon's material power (cf. Guzzini 1998). Critical approaches to HST in turn are often related to WST (for instance Immanuel Wallerstein and Giovanni Arrighi) that focuses on the question of the interrelation of structures of production and the geopolitical ordering. The neo-Gramscian approaches, like Robert Cox and Stephen Gill, focus on analyzing and locating hegemony within historically evolving social structures not only relating to state power and socio-economic factors but also on civil society. On HST and critical, Gramscian and Neo-Gramscian approaches, especially on differentiating between critical theory based on the work of Robert Cox and Neo-Gramscian approaches, see also Hummel (2000).

⁷³ Modernization/development theory in turn centers on the question of the influence of economic development/modernization (always understood as according to the liberal capitalist order) on the evolution and sustainability of democratic political systems, as well as the role of free trade as promoter of a beneficiary economic order. Meanwhile, the focus is rarely explicitly laid on the question on how the line of thinking that free trade promotes political liberalization is articulated through foreign economic policy in practice. If mentioned it is mostly just referred to as a taken for granted "common perception among policymakers" (cf. Friedberg 2012, 1; López-Córdova and Meissner 2011, 540).

⁷⁴ For an engagement with the 'historical materialist'/poststructuralist divide in IPE see also Jessop and Sum, Ryner and Jessop and Sum 2006; Ryner 2006) and Laffey (Laffey 2000) for IR.

⁷⁵ For a critique of Goldstein and Keohane see also: (Finlayson 2004, 533; Gofas and Hay 2010, 19–21, 23–28; Jacobsen 2003, 48; Laffey and Weldes 1997, 198f.).

Sjoberg (2013), Copeland (2014)) and in newer versions to ‘capitalist’ peace theory (e.g. Gartzke and Hewitt 2010; McDonald 2009; Mueller 2010; Schneider and Gleditsch 2010; Weede 2005, 2010)⁷⁶ – it rarely focuses explicitly on trade policy in terms of the advocating of and implementation of the liberal theory of history (see in what follows). This is also the case for the extensive literature dealing with ‘liberalism’ in its broader meaning⁷⁷, thus going beyond the economic sphere, or linking it to the philosophical tradition (for a comprehensive assessment and overview see i.e. Jahn 2013): the ‘transformation’ or articulation of what are treated as ‘ideas’ into ‘policymaking’ by taking the example of trade policy is not an extensive point of focus (e.g. Boucoyannis 2007, 704ff., 708; Deudney and Ikenberry 1993; Doyle 1983b, 342; for a notable exception see Jahn 2013, Chapter 5). In this sense, Beate Jahn for instance criticizes the disciplinary distinction of liberal theories in IR, that “tend to focus either on the political or the economic or the normative issue areas” (2013, 22).

1.3. American Exceptionalism, the Liberal Theory of History and U.S.-Japan and China Policies

While there exists a fair amount of scholarship on American exceptionalism (AE), this is less the case for what I call the ‘liberal theory of history’ (LTH, at least under this term, see in what follows) and in both cases the concepts are rather seldom explicitly connected to an analysis of U.S.-Japan or U.S.-China (economic) policy. This subchapter starts out with a brief account of the scholarship on American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history more generally, then looks at their role in U.S.-Japan and China policies and, as dealing with the existing scholarship on these issues, linking it up to literature on the role of ‘the other’ and ‘crises’ in liberal thinking more broadly.

American Exceptionalism

As a line of thought American exceptionalism is commonly traced back until the colonial period (referring to the puritan settler John Winthrop’s pronouncement of a ‘City upon a hill’ in 1630) and the American revolution (committed to ‘freedom, morality and the betterment of humankind’ in

⁷⁶ For a concise overview of the liberal peace literature see e.g. Sjoberg (2013, 22–25) and more extensively McDonald (2009, 4–76). McDonald argues that the ‘capitalist peace’ could account for China’s role in the international system, whereas the ‘democratic peace’ could not (2009, 287). For a call to differentiate between ‘liberalism’ and ‘capitalism’ more generally speaking, see Jahn (2013, 12). For what he calls ‘OECD-peace’ see Hummel (2000, 117).

⁷⁷ For an intriguing assessment of Liberalism as an “analytical construction that has masqueraded as a historical datum” see Gunnell (Gunnell 2001).

contrast to the situation in Europe at that time), with Alexis de Tocqueville taken to be the first one to use the term as such in his *Democracy in America* (1835-40) (cf. Holsti 2010, 397, 402; Lipset 1997, 18; McCrisken 2003, 1, 9; McEvoy-Levy 2001, 24; Nayak and Malone 2009, 264). As pointed out for instance by Meghana Nayak and Christopher Malone, American exceptionalism is not to be understood as “unified body of thought”. However its ‘core’ could be described as “an unwavering belief in the uniqueness of the United States and a commitment to a providential mission to transform the rest of the world in the image of the United States” (Nayak and Malone 2009, 260). In his account of American exceptionalism dealing with its history, assessment of the literature on it, and finally, its role in policy making, Trevor McCrisken in his *American Exceptionalism and the Legacy of Vietnam* (McCrisken 2003),⁷⁸ focuses on what he calls “the *belief* in American exceptionalism and its influence on U.S. foreign policy” from the period after the Vietnam War until the Clinton administration.⁷⁹ Importantly, in this sense McCrisken distinguishes between what he calls the *belief* in exceptionalism and the question of whether the U.S. is truly exceptional and whether this could be ‘measured’ (Mandelbaum 1997; as well as the references in McCrisken 2003, 5; see also Monten 2005, 119). In this respect he argues that regardless of whether it is ‘true’ or not, “the idea continues to be a central element of American identity”⁸⁰ and has thus informed and continues to inform U.S. foreign policy making (McCrisken 2003, 2, 4, 17f.; see also Patman 2006, 965).⁸¹ In this sense Peter Onuf maintains that “what makes Americans exceptional is [...] their self-conscious and self-defining embrace of American exceptionalism throughout their history” (Onuf 2012, 79), and according to Robert Patman not only the thought of being unique but, of being exemplary (Patman 2006, 965).⁸² McCrisken bases this assessment on a study of how exceptionalism figures in public and non-public rhetoric of

⁷⁸ But see for example also Monten (2005), and McEvoy-Levy (2001).

⁷⁹ For tracing exceptionalism in U.S. policy from after that time until the 2000s see e.g. Pan (2004, 311), Monten (2005), Widmaier (2007), Nayak and Malone (2009), Holsti (2010).

⁸⁰ According to polling results in 2011, the belief of America being greater (38%) or greatest along some others (53%) is held by nine in ten U.S.-Americans, see Onuf (2012, 1).

⁸¹ From a poststructuralist perspective I would not speak of the ‘belief’ or ‘idea’, but of the discourse of American exceptionalism.

⁸² Kalevi Holsti in turn claims that exceptionalism as a “type of foreign policy” is not exclusive to the United States, but he compares it to historical cases including post-Revolutionary France and the Soviet Union. What he concedes as unique to the American case is the *persistence* of exceptionalism (Holsti 2010). McCrisken as well concedes that Americans are not unique in their belief of their exceptional nation, or in pursuing foreign policies informed by those beliefs. Nevertheless, he argues that it is important to recognize the consequences of the belief in exceptionalism on U.S. foreign policy making, “as the U.S. remains the most powerful nation in the world” (McCrisken 2003, 16). In addition, I maintain that it is as important to look at ‘the consequences of the belief’ in times where ‘the power’ and ‘the belief’ (to stay with McCrisken’s terminology here) itself might both be contested.

Seymour Lipset in turn focuses on ‘Japanese uniqueness’ as counterpart to American exceptionalism in a chapter of his book, where he references the U.S.-literature on ‘Japanese uniqueness’ (p. 325) and points out that “these analyses not only tell us about Japan; they give insights into Western, particularly American culture [...]” (Lipset 1997, 212). However, it seems that Lipset buys into an essentializing characterization of Japan, especially in terms of a ‘collective society’, that speaks to the revisionists (he cites them throughout the chapter, but without referring to revisionism, or even mentioning it in other parts of the book). On ‘Japanese uniqueness’ see also Berger (1993, 124).

policy-making circles, and in connection to the actual policies pursued. He speaks out against treating it as either “mere rhetoric” or as just a “manipulative tool employed by policy makers” (see also Holsti 2010, 382f.; Hunt 1987, 15; Widmaier 2007, 782, 785). Meanwhile, he does not conceive of exceptionalism as ‘causing’ foreign policy as such, but argues that “exceptionalist beliefs have framed the discourse of foreign policy making by providing the underlying assumptions and terms of reference for foreign policy debate and conduct” (see also Khong 2013, 41; McCrisken 2003, 6, 17f.).⁸³

McCrisken identifies two main strands of exceptionalist thought, the exemplary strand – that goes back to the ‘city upon a hill’, and became widespread since the founding of the republic and further enhanced by Enlightenment ideals – and the missionary strand, in turn relating to the belief in the ‘manifest destiny’ and becoming influential since the 1840s and the westward expansion (McEvoy-Levy 2001, 24f.; Monten 2005, 129ff.; Nayak and Malone 2009, 266; see also Wheeler 2003, 206). Furthermore, he discerns three main elements: (1) that the U.S. as a special nation has a special destiny, (2) that it is different from the rest of the World (historically first and foremost from Europe) and (3) that contrary to other (great) nations the U.S. will not rise and fall.⁸⁴ Onuf in turn distinguishes between ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ exceptionalism, the former one envisioning ‘the end of history’ in terms of “the ultimate Americanization of the world” (hence, corresponding to the missionary strand), whereas conservative exceptionalism (corresponding to the exemplary strand) insists on the U.S. always being different and superior to all others (Onuf 2012, 81). In this context McCrisken notes that American exceptionalism perseveres to a greater extent due to what it promises, than to what it actually ‘delivers’.

⁸³ On whether American exceptionalism can be understood as an ‘ideology’ see for example Robert Patman, who calls it an “informal ideology” (2006, 946), Hunt (1987, Chapter 1 and 2), Chen (1992, Introduction) and the discussion in McCrisken (2003, 5). See also McEvoy-Levy (2001, Chapter 1), who calls it a “para-ideology”, and Hodgson (2009, 1), and their reference to Richard Hofstadter’s expression about the U.S.: “It has been our fate as a nation not to have an ideology, but to be one”. Jonathan Monten speaks of “the doctrine of liberal exceptionalism” (2005, 116), see also Agnew (1983). On ‘liberalism’ as a worldview, ideology and/or foreign policy doctrine see i.e. John Owen (1997, 19, 22ff.), and in more general terms Jackson and Stears (2012). Christopher Layne in turn maintains that “liberal ideology shapes both the way policymakers define U.S. interests and their perception of threats to those interests” (Layne 2007, 118). For a discussion of the democratic peace theory and U.S.-China relations see Friedman and McCormick (2000). On “American Political Science as Ideology” see Oren (2003, Chapter 1), and on the effect of “liberal absolutism on the study of political science in the United States” see also Layne’s brief reference (Layne 2007, 257, FN 12). On ‘ideology’ in general from Laclau’s perspective see i.e. Laclau (2014, Chapter 1).

⁸⁴ Nayak and Malone differentiate between American Orientalism, directed towards non-western countries, and American exceptionalism, directed towards Western – particularly European – countries (Nayak and Malone 2009). Referring to Thomas Dietz they argue that there are different kinds of difference (2009, 262), and this – albeit again to a different extent – is also true for the U.S. and Japan and the U.S. and China, as I expand on in the analysis in chapters four to seven. Siobhan McEvoy-Levy argues that during the Cold War American exceptionalism was extended to include Western-Europe to what he calls Transatlantic Exceptionalism (2001, 29). Wesley Widmaier in turn speaks of exceptionalist, pragmatic and crusading liberalism (2007, 783 see also in what follows on the LTH), while Taesuh Cha differentiates between “Jeffersonian liberal internationalism” and “Jacksonian populist imperialism” in his analysis of “the formation of American exceptionalist identities” through interaction with the European Empires and the Native Americans (Cha 2015). Surprisingly, he does not refer to Nayak and Malone’s article.

Advocates of the exemplary strand maintain that the U.S. must lead by example and have peaceful trade relations, but stay out of others' affairs. Proponents of the missionary strand in turn contend that the U.S. must actively 'help' others to become like them. Accordingly, exceptionalism lends itself to both, an 'isolationist' and 'internationalist' (or 'exemplarist' and 'vindicationist') foreign policy (see also Chen 1992, 13; cf. McEvoy-Levy 2001, 23; Monten 2005, 113f.; 124f.).⁸⁵

While both strands converge in American political values being universal in their nature (McCrisken 2003, 5, 8ff.; see for example Rice 2000, 49),⁸⁶ they also point to a tension between universality (in terms of its universal, missionary claims) and particularity/exclusivity (in terms of the U.S. being exemplary and always different) within American exceptionalism (cf. also Mariano 2015, 61), and more concretely also within 'Wilsonianism' (see in what follows), that in my view plays a central role when it comes to relating to 'the other'. It will be addressed in what follows, as well as in chapter 2.2.

When it came to policy making, while the proponents of the two main strands were for instance disagreeing on whether the former Spanish colonies should be annexed or not in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War in 1898 (McCrisken 2003, 12), the 'opening' of Japan and China to foreign trade in the 19th century in order to advance 'Western civilization' was in line with the missionary theme (Holsti 2010, 394; see also Shih and Huang 2015, 8f.). Woodrow Wilson is regarded as clear proponent of the missionary strand (although not supported by the U.S. Senate at his time, when it declined to support membership in the League of Nations in 1919, cf. Patman (2006, 965)) – and of the liberal theory of history, as explained in what follows – that became dominant after the U.S. entry into the Second World War, the aftermath of the war and the ensuing Cold War (McCrisken 2003, 14; Monten 2005, 114; Patman 2006, 966).

Regarding American exceptionalism and U.S.-Japan and -China policies, Holsti argues that one characteristic of American exceptionalism is the need to have an enemy (Huntington 1997; cf. also Khong 2013, 30), and that Japan 'replaced' the receding Soviet threat in the late 1980s, as the "dangerous other" to which U.S. exceptionalist identity was contrasted during the Cold War (cf. McEvoy-Levy 2001, 27, 35; see also N. Morris 2010, 27). In this vein Khong argues that Japan was then in turn replaced by China by the mid 1990s (Khong 2013, 31). The other four characteristics according to Holsti are a mission to liberate others, being free from external

⁸⁵ The missionary strand to my understanding includes the reasoning of the U.S. occasionally 'having to' transgress prevailing norms in order to fulfill its 'exceptionalist' duties (cf. Holsti 2010, 382).

⁸⁶ Most scholars attribute this to what Jonathan Monten calls the 'ideational' (or civic) as opposed to 'organic' (or ethnic) origins of U.S. political identity (cf. Monten 2005, 120, 122). In this respect Campbell in a sense refers to the U.S. as imagined community par excellence (Campbell 1998, 91; see also Mariano 2015, 61).

constraints, existing in a hostile world (cf. also Layne 2007, 119) and perceiving oneself as innocent victim (cf. Holsti 2010, 384f., 394). The mission to liberate in turn is based on “the twin pillars of political and economic freedom” as foundation of ‘the American Way of life’ (Holsti 2010, 399), a thought that figures also within the liberal theory of history, as I will show in what follows.

Economic expansion, i.e. the world’s openness to the ‘American system’ and to its goods is thus intertwined with “the security of America’s core values”, which is also why “ideological or economic closure abroad” is taken to constitute a threat to liberalism ‘at home’ (cf. Khong 2013, 34; Layne 2007, 33, 119; see also Tuathail and Agnew 1992, 196).

The Liberal Theory of History⁸⁷

As laid out at the end of chapter 1.2, there is almost no literature that specifically addresses the question of how what I call the liberal theory of history played a role in foreign economic/trade policy.⁸⁸ With respect to China it is often mentioned in more general works on U.S.-China relations, as well as in works on ‘liberalism’ and U.S. China policy in a broader sense (see in what follows, also for literature on Japan in this regard).

Probably one of the most comprehensive accounts of the liberal theory of history (also using this notion) is the one by Michael Mandelbaum (2002), in which he lays out how the (universalist) idea of economic policy leading to political liberalization can be traced back at least to President Wilson and the Wilsonian triad as the set of peace, democracy, and free markets. What Wilson expressed in his “14 points speech” to Congress in January 1918 – that free trade along with disarmament and democracy were pillars of a peaceful world – has since then become a major line of U.S. (foreign economic) policy, that became firmly rooted after the end of the Second World War and during the Cold War (Bachman 2000, 197; T. Dunne, Flockhart, and Koivisto 2013, 3, 23; cf. also Jahn 2013, 20; cf. Latham 1997, 34, 43; Mandelbaum 2002, 6, Chapters 1 and 2; cf. Scherrer 1999, 153).⁸⁹ In this sense Wilson is quite commonly regarded as ‘father’ of the

⁸⁷ This and the following subchapters draw from and expand on earlier work in Nymalm (2010) and Nymalm (2013). While the liberal theory of history could indeed be treated as a nuance of American exceptionalism (as pointed out to me by Dirk Nabers), I am partly focusing on it as distinction because of its special emphasis on, and role in economic policy making. On the interplay between exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history see also the subsequent passage.

⁸⁸ If addressed for U.S.-China policy in general, it is mostly briefly mentioned, like for example by David Bachman, who questions the idea. Furthermore, he calls it dangerous to argue for economic engagement as forbearer of democratization, as if the outcome does not show, containment might be viewed as the only alternative (Bachman 2000, 226f.)

⁸⁹ The thought of the central role and transformative power of economic policy originated 18th/19th century Great Britain – articulated by Jeremy Bentham among others – from where it spread to the U.S. (Buzan 1984, 598; M.

universalist 'liberal international project', and the U.S. after the Cold War as "owner and operator" of the "liberal capitalist political system" (cf. G. J. Ikenberry 2013, 23, 24).⁹⁰ While going back into the 1960s as response to Keynesian theories, the concepts of 'monetary economics' and 'the invisible hand' of the free market established themselves in the 1970s as basis for the political-economic philosophy of a "market society", hence of the necessary interconnectedness of economic and political freedoms. The core idea was that the power of the market lay in economic freedom, but that it could only exist in the context of political freedom where the individual was free to choose how to live, what to buy, and what to produce (Halper 2010, 53ff.).⁹¹ In the words of the major proponent, Milton Friedman: "On the one hand, freedom in economic arrangements is itself a component of freedom broadly understood, so economic freedom is an end in itself. In the second place, economic freedom is also an indispensable means toward the achievement of political freedom" (M. Friedman 2002, 8).⁹² In this context, capitalism became regarded as the only type of social organization that respected the principle of individual liberty, as it was seen as the only economic system capable of coordinating the activities of a great number of people without recourse to coercion (see also Khong 2013, 34; Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 172).⁹³ With the demise of the Soviet Union and the period after the Cold War, when the Japanese economy was

Friedman 2002, 10; cf. Latham 1997, 21). At that time it was reasoned that international economic relations would lead to closer ties and familiarity between the trading partners, what in turn would foster peace. As the participants benefited from the peaceful trade relations, war was expected to become regarded as irrational and therefore less likely (P. Dunne and Coulomb 2008, 3; Mandelbaum 2002, 29, 266). This thought can be traced back to Baron de Montesquieu's, Adam Smith's and John Stuart Mill's writings, cf. Ashley (1983, 466). The idea of 'free trade' leading to peaceful relations was also one of the convictions of Cordell Hull, secretary of state during the Roosevelt presidency and architect of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act (RTAA) of 1934, that ended the protectionist measures of the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930 (cf. Kolkman 2005, 37).

For a critique of this line of reasoning behind more recent U.S. foreign policy, and an endorsement of the counter argument of "hard power" having to come first to create the pre-conditions for the spread of economic openness and democracy, see for instance Layne (2007, 124, 132).

⁹⁰ In line with the tension between universality and particularity within American exceptionalism, Wilsonianism too was and can be characterized by "a fundamental paradox of apparent universality and actual exclusivity". While the principles of his 14 points speech were supposed to be universally applicable, real or potential 'enemies' at home (i.e. African-Americans, Asians) or abroad (i.e. Imperial Germany, the Bolsheviks) were practically 'excluded' unless they conformed to his vision, if they ever could. In this sense, Wilson viewed the history of the U.S. and the creation of the nation as process of liberal assimilation, that seemed to be the prospect also for the new world order envisioned after WWI (Ambrosius 2015). See also Doyle (1983a, 327).

⁹¹ These developments were first and foremost connected to the oil-crisis and the global economic downturn of the early 1970s, with alternatives to Keynesian 'statist' approaches finding a fertile ground with Margaret Thatcher in Britain and Ronald Reagan in the U.S.

⁹² Going back and according to the theories of John Locke and Adam Smith, private property constitutes a natural right of all individuals, who then exchange their products and subsequently establish a market. The market, as it proves to be the most efficient mechanism of balancing the supply and demand of material goods, leads to increased productivity and production, and in consequence to increased incomes. In this line of thinking, "this prosperity in turn constitutes liberal individuals, a liberal political culture, and hence also democracy" (Jahn 2013, 109).

However, Friedman conceded that capitalism was a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for political freedom, as the examples of fascism in Italy, Spain, Germany and Japan showed (M. Friedman 2002, 10).

⁹³ However, as for example Gilpin points out referring to Karl Polanyi, when it comes to the relationship between the economy and 'the rest of society', many societies throughout history have given and continue to give high priority to communal and collective purposes, as example he cites Germany and Japan. In Polanyi's sense, "the Western notion of individualism and of the market as an autonomous entity is unique and historically recent" (Gilpin 2003, 301).

declining and China not yet 'rising', the liberal theory of history seemed to have been accurate in its predictions (cf. Patman 2006, 966f.).⁹⁴ It acquired what most scholars call a hegemonic status in the sense of either not being questioned, or being permanently referred to in opposition to it: it provided the most widely adopted set of political and economic principles and was practiced by the most influential countries worldwide. What has also been called the "economic transition paradigm" established a direct connection between liberal economic principles, democratization and peaceful international relations: the spread of liberal market economies leads to economic growth and rising incomes, constituting the liberal individual who then demands the right to political participation (cf. Jahn 2013, 109).⁹⁵ Accordingly, the expansion of the liberal world order was considered a necessary and inevitable process (cf. i.e. G. J. Ikenberry 2010; see also Mandelbaum 2002, 26,326)).⁹⁶ This conviction was represented most prominently by Francis Fukuyama's notion of "the end of history," by which he meant the end of ideological struggles after the collapse of the main communist opponent, leading to "an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism" (Browning and Lehti 2010a; T. Dunne, Flockhart, and Koivisto 2013, 1; Fukuyama 1989, 3; see also Hobson 2008, 87; Jahn 2013, 1; Marchart 1998, 14; McEvoy-Levy 2001, 41-43; Wight 2013, 327), and even in 2009 for instance John Ikenberry stated that "the leading states of the world system are travelling along a common pathway to modernity" (cited in T. Dunne, Flockhart, and Koivisto 2013, 18).⁹⁷

American Exceptionalism and the Liberal Theory of History

The view that the liberal agenda of peace, free trade, and democracy could only be achieved and – in the post Cold War era (cf. Khong 2013, 20)– maintained through the special role of the U.S. (cf. Krause 2008, 80ff. on "hegemonic liberalism" according to HST, see also for instance Ikenberry (2013), Jahn (2013, 29) Layne (2007, 128)) is embedded not only in the central role of free trade in the Wilsonian triad, but this is where the liberal theory of history and American exceptionalism come together (see Layne 2007, 33 for what he terms "Open Door" as marrying a heritage of expansionism and a conviction of mission; cf. also Nabers and Patman 2008, 170;

⁹⁴ By the year 2000 the U.S. had signed over 300 new trade agreements (Jahn 2013, 111).

⁹⁵ However, revisionist thinking was countering this 'hegemonic status' of the 'free trade paradigm', see in what follows. For instance Hummel and Schoppa point out, that 'liberal thought' only became contested through the revisionist's increasing influence (Hummel 2000, 190; Schoppa 1997, 261).

⁹⁶ On contestation of this line of thinking in connection to Japan before and after 1989 see in what follows.

⁹⁷ For comprehensive criticisms of Fukuyama see for example Burns (1994) and Hughes (2012). For a 'reply' to Fukuyama relating to the Rise of Japan see Chalmers Johnson's paper *History restarted* (Johnson 1992), as well as Huntington (1993).

McEvoy-Levy 2001, 23; Halper 2010, 195).⁹⁸ In this sense Christopher Layne for instance maintains that Wilsonianism – that he understands as projection of American liberal ideology in terms of an economic and political “Open Door” abroad (cf. also Ambrosius 2015, 125) – “did not need to make a comeback after the Soviet Union’s demise, because with respect to U.S. grand strategy it had never gone away” (Layne 2007, 118).⁹⁹ In line with this view, the U.S. sees itself as the guarantor of “global public goods” (Parchami 2009, 182; Scherrer 1999, 155) in terms of – as expressed by Anthony Lake, the National Security Advisor in 1994 – having a special responsibility to nurture and promote the “core values of the pursuit of democratic institutions, the expansion of free markets, the peaceful settlement of conflict, and the promotion of collective security [...] for the sake of both its interests and its ideals” (Lampton 2001, 249). When asked to characterize the foreign policy of the Clinton administration, Lake called it “pragmatic neo-Wilsonian” (Hodgson 1993; see also Mandelbaum 1997). The promotion of free trade as a first step to political liberalization quickly became an objective of U.S. policy vis-à-vis not only Russia, but also China (Mandelbaum 2002, 267; see also McDonald 2009, 301; Uriu 2009, 12).

In this sense Khong speaks of the articulation of ‘liberty’ as standing for the rationale connecting the ideas of ‘the city on the hill’ and ‘national greatness’, leading to the pursuit of liberty at home and abroad (Khong 2013, 16f.). In Pan’s words “the United States places other nations on a common evolutionary slope and sees them as inevitably travelling toward the end of history that is the United States” (cf. also Onuf’s “liberal exceptionalism” Onuf 2012, 82; Pan 2004, 312),¹⁰⁰ which is why Japan since the 1970s/1980s and China since the 1990s were/are partly seen as countering that development (cf. Shih and Huang 2015, 8).

American Exceptionalism, the Liberal Theory of History, and U.S. Japan and China policies

While mostly not specifically addressing American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, there are a few studies on the role of ‘liberalism’ in terms of a ‘liberal democratic social

⁹⁸ An ‘open door world’ in this sense rests on the two pillars of an open, i.e. liberal international economic system and the spread of democracy and liberalism abroad, leading to the belief or perception (to use Layne’s terms) that “closure” abroad threatens “the American way of life” at home, which is why the open door “blurs the line demarcating domestic politics from foreign policy” (cf. Layne 2007, 31f.).

In line with this would be for example the 9/11 Commission Report in its conclusion “that terrorism against American interests ‘over there’ should be regarded just as we regard terrorism against America ‘over here.’ In this sense, the American homeland is the planet” (cited in Nayak and Malone 2009, 271).

⁹⁹ See also Cha, who traces “so-called Wilsonianism” back to the Unionist paradigm of the early U.S. (Cha 2015, 16).

¹⁰⁰ The thought that China would necessarily democratize as a consequence of economic liberalization has even led to predictions about when this might happen, based on GDP-growth rates (cf. Friedberg 2011, 50).

An exemplary statement on the ‘common evolutionary slope’ was for instance made by President George W. Bush in his speech at West Point on June 1, 2012: “The twentieth century ended with a single surviving model of human progress [...]”, cited in Nabers 2015 (forthcoming).

philosophy' in U.S. China policy. While in general one can hardly speak of one coherent 'liberalism' in a singular, but rather of many liberalisms (Ryan 2007), its core can be discerned as focus on the individual as 'ultimate unit of concern'¹⁰¹, in other words on the centrality of individual autonomy/self legislation/self government (see also Gilpin 2003, 301; C. Hughes 2012, 8; Jahn 2013, 28; Owen 1997, 16, 22, 32; Stears 2012, 77; Widmaier 2007, 780).¹⁰² For instance, in *China and the American Dream* Richard Madsen argues that in the U.S. the developments in China since WWII have been viewed and interpreted through their liberal democratic assumptions when it comes to political and social developments (cf. also Bachman 2000, 195; cf. Dorogi 2001, 2). While the 1980s with their economic reforms seemed very promising in this regard, what Madsen calls the "liberal myth" was shaken by the events on Tiananmen Square in 1989, but has made its comeback since then (Madsen 1995, preface).¹⁰³ The three 'China narratives' emerging from this perspective according to Madsen were "China as a troubled modernizer" (in need of U.S. support, which is in line with the discourses involving the liberal theory of history, see analysis in chapters four to seven), "China as Red menace" and "China as revolutionary redeemer", with the first one finally becoming 'hegemonic' (see also Goh 2005; Madsen 1995, 28ff.). These 'narratives' or articulations actually still do figure in the Congressional debates. Thomas Dorogi looks at "popular images/perceptions" of China in the U.S. (Dorogi 2001, Chapter 1) and largely agrees with Madsen when it comes to the 'liberal lens', especially on what I call the liberal theory of history, in the sense that capitalism would ultimately and inevitably lead to greater political freedoms in China (Dorogi 2001, 21).¹⁰⁴ In Chengxin Pan's study this line of thinking is captured by what he calls the "China opportunity"

¹⁰¹ Many thanks to Johannes Plagemann for pointing me to this phrasing.

¹⁰² Here also the linkage with capitalism as laid out earlier fits in (cf. also T. Dunne, Flockhart, and Koivisto 2013, 20; and Jahn 2013, 43, 103 going back to John Locke, on the signification of personal property for liberalism. The "property owning individual" is also the starting point for liberal economic theory; see also Owen 1997, 34). I come back to this aspect and 'definition' in what follows.

In Locke's thinking, private property (of 'the own person, labor of the body and work of the hands') is constitutive of individual freedom that in turn requires government by consent, which protects private property and thus individual freedom. Importantly, Locke articulated the division of the original common to private property as having already taken place in 'the state of nature' (Jahn 2013, 43, 103). Furthermore, crucial to remember is that originally 'liberal' did not mean 'democratic', but this connection became only established later (T. Dunne, Flockhart, and Koivisto 2013, 19; see also C. Hughes 2012, 7f.; cf. Jahn 2013, 24, 73, 94)

¹⁰³ In line with his assessment I do not agree with Kolkmann who maintains that Tiananmen *destroyed* "the illusion" that economic development would lead to political liberalization (Kolkmann 2005, 63). While the liberal theory of history was severely challenged, it was not completely discarded, as my following discourse analysis of the congressional debates also shows. And as Kolkmann himself writes, for the U.S. China's membership in the WTO was significant not least because it hoped for the required economic reforms spilling over into the political realm and leading to meaningful and comprehensive development towards democratization and human rights (Kolkmann 2005, 89).

¹⁰⁴ This was termed the "fallacy of modernization theory" by Paul A. Cohen in his *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (1984, Chapter 2), cited in Dorogi (2001, 24). See also Jones (2001, Chapter 5).

paradigm (Pan 2012, 108ff.).¹⁰⁵ Dorogi claims that it “has caused a misrepresentation of developments in Chinese society” (Dorogi 2001, 7; see also Turner 2014, 127ff.),¹⁰⁶ putting China at odds with the U.S., a thought that has been explicitly and recently formulated by Christopher Layne, who argues that “America’s political culture – based on exceptionalism, liberal ideology, and openness – is a big obstacle to coming to terms with a resurgent China” (see also Jacques 2014; Layne 2014; Pan 2004, and from a different perspective 2012, 45ff.). Aaron Friedberg too points to the “ideological divide” between the U.S. and China, which makes “issues such as censorship and religious freedom [...] not just superficial irritants that can be dissolved [...]”, but in his view the ideological divide will persist unless China democratizes, as “ideology inclines the United States to be more hostile toward China than it would be for other strategic reasons alone”. In this sense Friedberg further argues that,

“for Americans the success of a mainland regime that blends authoritarian rule with market-driven economics is a puzzle and an affront. Such a combination is not supposed to be possible, at least in the long run”

as it causes “philosophical discomfort” but also might hinder U.S. efforts to spread their model of liberal political institutions (Friedberg 2011, 42–44 emphasis added). Hence, these developments counter the liberal theory of history and American exceptionalism. In his review article on Friedberg’s book, Khong however draws the conclusion that when it comes to assessing whether relations between China and the U.S. will be peaceful, it is the different weight given to what he calls “democracy-legitimacy” and “economic interdependence” variables, that leads scholars to different scenarios (Khong 2014, 155, 169). This points in the direction of my argument on the potential ‘flexibility’ or question of the exclusiveness versus inclusiveness of liberal thinking, as I elaborate on in what follows in the next subchapter, as well as the analysis.

With respect to China (but not only) and its trade relations with the U.S., the liberal theory of history was especially prominent in the debates and the campaign – organized by the White House under President Clinton – on granting China Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) prior to its accession to the WTO. Clinton’s central argument besides considering benefits for the American economy was that opening China’s markets would undermine the control of the communist party (Hormats and Economy 2001, 8; Kolkmann 2005, 164, 177, 189; New York Times 2000; Sanger 2000):

¹⁰⁵ Slightly different is the “image” of what he calls “opportunity China” in Turner (2014, 44f.).

¹⁰⁶ For a similar argument about Western media coverage of the protests in Hong Kong in 2014/15 see Lee (2015).

“By joining the W.T.O., China is not simply agreeing to import more of our products. It is agreeing to import one of democracy's most cherished values, economic freedom. The more China liberalizes its economy, the more fully it will liberate the potential of its people [...]. And when individuals have the power, not just to dream, but to realize their dreams, they will demand a greater say” (President Clinton in: The New York Times 2000).

This thought was expressed in almost the same way by Condoleeza Rice, then foreign policy adviser to the republican presidential candidate G.W. Bush, during his campaign: “But trade in general can open up the Chinese economy and, ultimately, its politics too. This requires faith in the power of markets and economic freedom to drive political change, but it is a faith confirmed by experiences around the globe” (Rice 2000). And as president, George W. Bush took a similar view that globalization and free trade would serve as a vehicle for the export of American values. In 1999, two years before China's accession to the World Trade Organization, Bush argued, “Economic freedom creates habits of liberty. And habits of liberty create expectations of democracy... Trade freely with China, and time is on our side.” (Rachman 2011). As the analysis shows, especially the liberal theory of history continues to play a central role in the congressional debates on economic policies towards China.

When it comes to U.S. Japan policies, American exceptionalism, the liberal theory of history or liberalism in a broader sense (see in what follows) is not extensively addressed by the seminal works in this field. As already discussed in the chapter 1.1. however, these issues are touched upon, as the authors concerning themselves with the discourse on Japan read it mostly either as reflecting a challenge to the ‘western liberal world order’ (see the discussion of the respective authors in chapter 1.1, i.e. Scherrer, Hummel, Tuathail), or as ‘orientalism’ more generally (i.e. in N. Morris’ “Japan-Bashing”).¹⁰⁷ While Campbell focuses on the articulation of U.S.-identity vis-à-vis Japan, his analysis centers on ‘American individualism’ (which of course can be linked to economic liberalism and the rational individual’s pursuit of self-interest that is taken to ultimately also serve the collective interest) as ‘modern and civilized’ versus ‘Japanese collectivism’ as ‘archaic and tribal’, as well as on the ‘frontier experience’ (Campbell 1994,

¹⁰⁷ With respect to Nayak and Malone’s (2009) distinction between ‘Exceptionalism’ (towards Europe/the ‘West’) and ‘Orientalism’ (towards non-Western others) the question arises, whether Japan, as part of the OECD-World, was regarded as ‘Western Other’. However, at least in the congressional debates from 1985 onwards (and also in the literature of that time), Japan was clearly articulated as ‘non-Western Other’, see for example Gilpin and Cohen et al. cited at the end of the introduction and conclusion, as well as the analysis itself.

156ff.).¹⁰⁸ In this sense Japan stands against what is commonly defined as ‘core’ of liberalism, to repeat, its focus on the individual as ‘ultimate unit of concern’ (see beginning of this passage). In this respect one of Chantal Mouffe’s criticisms of the dominant tendency in liberal thought is that it does not allow for acknowledging the nature of collective identities, as it is premised on a rationalist and individualist approach (Mouffe 2005, 10).¹⁰⁹

While Masao Miyoshi briefly brings up the connection of the demands for free trade and open markets to “Enlightenment notions of universal citizenship, civil society and the modernist ideology of democracy” in the sense of the universalist understanding of the ‘market society’ or the liberal theory of history (Miyoshi 1991, 93f.), when it comes to the ‘idea’ of free trade in relation to Japan in a more narrow economic sense, importantly, Hummel points out that in spite of the preeminence of liberal thinking within the political elite, there were always counter discourses, that i.e. in case of the revisionists argued against the universalist idea of ‘free trade’ and a liberal trade regime for everyone (Hummel 2000, 164ff.). In this sense, Scherrer focuses on the discrepancy between the push for trade liberalization by consecutive U.S.-administrations since WWII and the skepticism or negative attitudes among the population (i.e. Scherrer 1999, 12). Kunkel speaks of “the Free Trade – Good Relations coalition (free traders) and the Hardline – Japan is Different coalition (hardliners)” with the free traders as “synonymous with U.S. foreign policy internationalism and the ascendancy of the United States as a global superpower”. Importantly, he characterizes free trade in this sense as a “shared belief system” within the foreign policy elite that was fundamentally challenged by the ‘Japan problem’ (Kunkel 2003, 24f.).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ The frontier experience or frontier thesis refers to Fredrick Jackson Turner’s formulation made in 1893, that a distinctly American character – forged around the core values of individualism, equality, self-reliance, democracy and independence – developed as a consequence of the meeting point between savagery and civilization (Ambrosius 2015, 132; cf. Nayak and Malone 2009, 266).

¹⁰⁹ On ‘the individual’ and liberalism see also William Connolly (2002, Chapter 3 on “Liberalism and Difference”) and Stephen White in his discussion of liberalism and George Kateb’s “Democratic individuality” (S. K. White 2000, Chapter 2).

¹¹⁰ See also on what was laid out in the introduction on ‘the hegemonic status of free trade’. When it comes to differences between Congress and the executive, Scherrer characterizes them partly as “fair trade/free trade” and “good/cop/bad cop” role plays, and to a certain extent explains them with Congress members being more exposed to special interests (i.e. calls for protection from certain industries, for instance with the argument of preserving jobs) from their constituencies. With having delegated certain authorities to the executive, members of Congress could call for protectionist measures, pleasing their constituents without having to worry about them actually being implemented, given the generally liberal trade agenda of the president. However, this may have increased the visibility of protectionist claims and in consequence paved the way for legitimizing counter positions to the otherwise dominant free trade agenda. Furthermore, although the president himself sometimes used the “good cop/bad cop” play (cf. also Kolkman 2005, 36; Scherrer 1999, 109), for instance when trying to put pressure on Japan by arguing that ‘otherwise Congress would impose even more severe measures’, this was first and foremost the case during the 1980s when the executive was actually acting to prevent Congress from invoking (more) protectionist measures and triggering a major crisis with Japan (see also Kunkel 2003, 69; Mastanduno 1992, 246, 261). However, this ‘play’ did not really characterize the situation under Clinton anymore, as he turned out to be in line with Congress when calling for more assertive policies towards Japan (Paulsen 1999, 142).

In my understanding, with Japan, the influence of the liberal theory of history was different than it is with China, as the question of 'liberalizing' Japan lay obviously on a different level. In the context of economic policies towards Japan the issue was rather about 'free trade' as universal principle (see in what follows) that was expected to be practiced for everyone's benefit and good according to the example of the 'exceptionalist', i.e. exemplary United States. Implementing and conducting free trade policies was articulated as linked to political, societal but also personal characteristics. While the 'difference' of Japan in this respect became to be seen as a 'problem' already in the 1980s, it was only in the 1990s that the revisionists (temporarily) managed to articulate their view on Japan as 'hegemonic'. The common view on this timing is that the persistence of the trade deficit as well as the end of the Cold War made it possible to shift to the confrontational 'results-oriented approach' favored by the revisionists, as economic interests did not have to be ranked behind security questions anymore (Nye 1992; cf. i.e. Schoppa 1997, 261).¹¹¹

However, according to my analysis I argue that it was not only the persistence of the trade deficit, but the way the trade deficit was articulated as challenge to U.S. identity not only in economic terms, but to its identity as 'world power' not only in a 'material' but also in an 'ideational' sense (here, using the common IR/IPE-terminology, see in what follows). This made it more acute to deal with the 'Japan problem', and contributed to the persistent articulation of Japan being 'different' and thus not 'compatible' with or responsive to free trade principles and policies. The identity challenge in turn had to do with Japan contradicting the universalist features of U.S. identity according to American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history (see in what follows in this and the next subchapter).

The 'inclusiveness/exclusiveness' of Liberalism?

A central question for this project that follows from the literature on the role of American exceptionalism, the liberal theory of history or liberalism in a broader sense (see in what follows) for U.S. (economic) Japan and China policies is, whether the 'liberal lens' necessarily leads to

A report from the Congressional research Service (CRS) from 1992 pointed out that Congressional pressures could be both, a help and a hindrance for the administration, depending also on the perceptions of who was setting the tone in the U.S. on the Japanese side (Nanto 1992, 17).

¹¹¹ For a similar argument about China, i.e. that China's strategic importance as a counterweight to the Soviet Union disappeared with the latter's collapse, resulting in a reassessment of U.S. China policies, see Dumbaugh (Dumbaugh 1998, 4).

hostility or confrontational attitudes towards Japan and China.¹¹² This issue in turn is linked to the question of the ability of liberalism to deal with challenges or ‘crises’ (understood as dislocations in terms of PDT, see in what follows),¹¹³ and to what extent they are attributed to or taken to be initiated by an ‘outsider’ (that can in turn be held accountable for it), as in the cases of economic competition with Japan and China.

From the point of view of PDT I argue that there is no ‘inherent logic’ of antagonisms (for the precise understanding of antagonism according to PDT see in what follows in chapter two), or of any other kind intrinsic in liberalism (or American exceptionalism or the liberal theory of history), but that it depends on the success or failure of the different types of (hegemonic) articulations which kinds of boundaries between an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside’ are or are not drawn, hence whether an antagonism is rendered into practice or not. The role of ‘the other’ is thus not a necessarily predetermined, but a political process (on the understanding(s) of (the) political see chapter two).¹¹⁴ In this sense Wesley Widmaier argues that “an unstable American liberal tradition has been constitutive of [...] shifting definitions of “the national interest”, encompassing: (1) an exceptionalist isolationism [...] (2) a pragmatic realism/internationalism [...] and (3) an absolutist or crusading internationalism [...]”.¹¹⁵ He characterizes the ‘liberal tradition’ as unstable, because it allows for all three variants and the tensions between them (i.e. “insular pride *in* liberalism can yield to crusading *on behalf of* liberalism”) (see also McEvoy-Levy 2001, 24; Widmaier 2007, 780, 783).¹¹⁶

Trine Flockhart however argues that

¹¹² In the wider literature on liberalism in its different meanings – i.e. as an explanatory theory, as an ontology, as an economic system and as a set of normative values (R. Friedman, Oskanian, and Ramon Pacheco-Pardo 2010, 506f.; see also Jahn 2013, 36) – the question of what I for the moment call the ‘intolerance’ or exclusiveness of liberalism itself has been and is brought up – the earliest probably being Toqueville himself – by scholars such as Hartz (1991), Hirschman (1982, 1478ff.), Doyle (1983a, 1983b), Owen (1997, 25, 37), Latham (1995), Prozorov (2006), Dunne (2010), Koivisto and Dunne (2010), Weber (2010), Williams (2011).

¹¹³ On the understanding of ‘crisis’ from a poststructuralist perspective in broader terms see Nabers 2015 (forthcoming).

¹¹⁴ On what they consider as liberalism’s eurocentrism and possible consequences for ‘self-identification’ and subjects see Dunne et al. and the respective chapters discussed in their introduction (2013, 18, 19).

¹¹⁵ One of Widmaier’s main points in the article on “Constructing Foreign Policy Crises” is his criticism of “materialist analyses” that focus only on capabilities of states and societal agents and do not take the role of agents in interpreting crises into account. He offers a “constructivist analysis” that draws on presidential rhetoric in the construction of crises “as events which legitimate shifts between variants of the American liberal tradition and definitions of the national interest”. Importantly, he argues that “crisis-constructions can themselves be (re)constitutive of state and societal interests”, so that “narrative choice” does not only and directly follow from “exogenous incentives”, and that his approach does not deny material changes, but highlights the discourses which frame material changes (Widmaier 2007, 779, 785).

¹¹⁶ The ‘instability’ of liberalism in the sense of its historical evolvement and internal contradictions is for example addressed by Jahn (2013), Flockhart (2013), and Rae and Reus-Smit (2013).

“by invoking crisis as a threat (rather than a natural condition) and by consistently employing a linear and progressive form of history, liberal thinking has not only lacked a transformative logic, but has also paradoxically seen crisis as a negative and avoidable condition but progress as a necessary and positive condition. This gives rise to a serious problem for liberalism, as it must explain (positive and desired) progress through (negative and unwanted) crisis” (Flockhart 2013, 75; see also Levine and Barder 2014, 872).

In this sense Chantal Mouffe maintains that although there are many ‘liberalisms’, the dominant tendency (premised on the rational individual) must negate the political and its antagonistic dimension (see also chapter two), as “what antagonism reveals is the very limit of any rational consensus” (Mouffe 2005, 10, 12).¹¹⁷ However, as already stated, I maintain that in general neither liberalism nor – as in the focus of this study – American exceptionalism or the liberal theory of history are *necessarily* unable to deal with ‘crises’, but that it depends on what is termed to constitute or figure as a crisis, hence the articulation as ‘crisis’, or not (see what follows in the analysis in chapters four to seven).

When it comes to liberalism and ‘the other’ – in this case another state or country – that can be made responsible for the ‘crisis’ (again, what PDT calls dislocation, see chapter two), John Owen for instance argues that it is no specific characteristic of liberalism, that people in general “strongly tend to favor a foreign state if it has their preferred system of government”, regardless of what type of government it is, and that they “identify their own (and their state’s) interests with the interests of like states, and against those of unlike states” (Owen 1997, 22ff.). In the case of liberalism, the core ideal of individual autonomy coupled with the believe in the universal character of the human nature, which is endowed with reason and rationality, leads for instance to the believe that institutions or the form of government of ones own country are desired and would work in the same way in other places (cf. Owen 1997, 36). This line of thinking speaks to the universalist features of American exceptionalism. Owen however attributes this to a general tendency of what he calls “favoritism”, i.e. to favor the own type of whatever it may be. (Owen 1997, 22ff., 28). In a nutshell this means that actions of countries considered as ‘same’, i.e. in this case liberal, are more likely to be interpreted as friendly, than actions of a country considered as ‘different’, i.e. illiberal, in other words ‘perceptions’ of the other depend on the self-understanding.¹¹⁸ In the case of the U.S., “long-standing American ideology says that liberal

¹¹⁷ Connolly argues, that “the liberal glorification of self-responsibility [...] contains resentment within its very formation”, as it comes with the idea that there must be someone responsible for everything, thus also for “every evil” (Connolly 2002, 94 see also Chapter 4).

¹¹⁸ If one takes a liberal state to have at least free discussion and regular competitive elections, then every state lacking one or both characteristics would be considered as illiberal (cf. Owen 1997, 49, 52).

democracies [...] have similar values and interests, and implies that such states are natural friends of America. Authoritarian countries, by contrast, are supposed to be unfriendly. Their rulers hate freedom and fear freedom, and so will be hostile to America, freedom's paladin" (Doyle 1983b, 325; cf. also Khong 2014, 165 in his discussion of Friedberg; Owen and Poznansky 2014, 4; see also Shih and Huang 2015, 11).¹¹⁹ Owen's discussion of what he terms "sociology" to explain favoritism actually to a limited extent bears resemblance to a PDT-understanding. Referring to Georg Wilhelm Hegel's reasoning that something is defined by what it is not, and that "for a person to have a determinate self, he or she must have qualities, and thus must have (or find, or create) an "other" against which to contrast those qualities", group identity accordingly may originate in two ways: "innovators or entrepreneurs" formulate a common interest that should unite disparate individuals (cf. in what follows on 'hegemony' in chapter 2.3). When forming a group, an opponent against which to define it is created. If the opponent has the ability to hurt the group's interests, the group can identify against it. Thus, "like any group, liberals see themselves in opposition to an 'out-group'. They cannot escape the negative dynamic of identity formation" (Owen 1997, 25f., 37).¹²⁰ In this sense, William Connolly as well in his chapter on "Liberalism and Difference" notes that "identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty" (Connolly 2002, 64).¹²¹ In the view of PDT however – and also in the view of other scholars, see for example Lebow (2008), Rumelili (2004),¹²² Gustafsson and Hagström (2015, 7), Berenskoetter (2007), Guillaume (2010) Abizadeh (2005) – 'negativity' is not predetermined (while it *can* be the result) as 'difference' needs not to be necessarily articulated into 'otherness' (see in what follows on

The term 'self-understanding' in this study does not allude to a rational, fully self-conscious subject, see in what follows in chapter 2.2.

¹¹⁹ Layne in turn maintains that "America's crusader mentality springs directly from liberalism's intolerance of competing ideologies and the concomitant belief that – merely by existing – nondemocratic states threaten America's security and the safety of liberalism at home" (Layne 2007, 121).

¹²⁰ Laclau and Mouffe themselves as well refer to Hegel in his understanding of 'identity' not as something positive and closed in itself, but as "constituted as transition, relation, difference" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 95).

However, Owen characterizes it as ironic, that liberalism's stress on autonomy brings conformity with it, as those who do not value it, do not fit in (ibid., 34, FN 35). In my view this is actually not ironic at all, but fits with what was said before, and later on Owen as well speaks of "the liberal doctrines of individualism and consent" (41). For how this plays out in the international realm see i.e. Jahn (2013, 80, 94), and Rae and Reus-Smit (2013, 96–99) on "toleration versus liberal absolutism". See also Stears (2012, 78, 82f.), referring to Louis Hartz's characterization of American liberalism as "paradoxical threat to individual freedom", and as a "dogmatic creed, imposed on all Americans".

For Richard Rorty's treatment of foundationalism (as rationalism) versus or in liberalism see Laclau (1996, 109).

¹²¹ Connolly calls this the paradox of difference, as while identity is constituted in relation to difference (by what it is not) and by its ability to 'define' difference, it is vulnerable to resistance of these 'definitions' by those attributed with 'difference', as well as to the potential of difference being turned into 'threatening otherness' (cf. also Rumelili 2004, 34). I will expand on identity and difference from a PDT point of view in the following chapters.

¹²² For the 'flexibility' of liberalism see also Stears (2012, 94) and Jahn (2013, 14).

identity in chapters 1.4 and 2.2).¹²³ In this sense, “Self–Other relationships do not always signify difference as fear or as danger but rather as distinction or rivalry” (Nayak and Malone 2009, 262; cf. also Opratko 2012, 74).

Nonetheless, I contend that the universalist claim within liberalism and also American exceptionalism, in spite of the tension, combined with the view of superiority/exclusivity of the U.S., bears *the* significant potential for articulating others in an antagonistic way.¹²⁴ As Pan has argued,

“rather than questioning the validity of their own universalist assumptions, the people of the United States believe that those who are different should be held responsible for the lack of universal sameness. Indeed, because “we” are universal, those who refuse or who are unable to become like “us” are no longer just “others”, but are by definition the negation of universality, or *the other*” (Pan 2004, 312 emphasis added).¹²⁵

As it is laid out in detail in chapter two, according to PDT the other is rendered into an antagonist when it is articulated as challenging or blocking the identity of the self. In the case of China, this challenge figures in

“the potential that Beijing will become an example, source, or model that contradicts Western liberalism as the reigning paradigm [...] and embodies an alternative to Western and especially U.S. conceptions of democracy and capitalism. China is a reminder that history is not so close to an end” (Chan, 1999, 179, quoted in Pan 2004, 313).

In the case of Japan, one aspect figured in “the inscription of Japan as rigid, hierarchical, and organized around groups [...] [that] suggest[s] the ‘tribal’ nature of Japan, and – as a consequence – its place outside of the ‘civilized’ community of trading nations” (Campbell 1994, 162). In this reading, it was Japan’s success in spite of being ‘uncivilized’ that accounted for the major challenge. In this sense ‘Japan bashing’ was about preserving ‘the self’ as universal despite of the challenge (N. Morris 2010, 137). More concretely, when it came to advocating a ‘get tough’

¹²³ As laid out in the chapter two, as well as in the discussion on the misunderstandings of PDT in chapter three: even if ontologically/theoretically speaking identity is always constituted through difference, this does not necessarily result in an antagonistic relationship on the ontical level. See also Rumelili (2004, 29).

¹²⁴ In this sense for instance Layne argues that “the inclination to universalize liberal democracy puts the United States on a collision course with others whose ideologies, institutions, and values differ from America’s, and it causes Washington to regard world politics as a Manichean struggle between good and evil, rather than as a contest between rival powers with conflicting national interests” (Layne 2007, 122).

¹²⁵ Pan’s attribution, however, of this line of thinking to “the people of the United States” in my eyes is a bit too general.

approach towards Japan, Tetsuya Kataoka at the time summarized the revisionist arguments as follows:

“... they maintain that Japan is an anomaly to the democracy and capitalism that prevail among the advanced industrial nations, being rather a bureaucratically controlled socialist state dedicated to economic development but immune to the laws of supply and demand. To prevent this system from menacing U.S. economic interests, its markets must be opened with politically coercive measures” (Kataoka 1995, 1).

Accordingly, Michael Hunt for instance maintains that in general it is the sense of “national superiority” central to “U.S. foreign policy ideology” that gives rise to diminishing stereotypes about other people, which in turn raise the false expectations that it would be easy to change their political and economic course for the ‘better’, and leading to frustration when it turns out that change does not happen as presumed (see also Dalby 1988, 436; cf. also Hagström and Gustafsson 2015, 12; Hunt 1987, 176).

Consequently, in my view the ‘expectations of change’ play a crucial role in whether the liberal theory of history and American exceptionalism feed into an engaging or confrontational relating to the other. In other words, both the liberal theory of history and American Exceptionalism bear the potential of articulating U.S.-identity as ‘inclusive’ or ‘exclusive’ (cf. Rumelili 2004, 37), according to the expectations pertaining to the potential of change in or of the other. An inclusive identity allows for the accommodation of difference, as it is based on characteristics that the other can potentially acquire, like for instance liberalism, democracy or capitalism. In this sense, the liberal theory of history as well as what Onuf has termed the ‘liberal strand’ of American exceptionalism, that relies on ‘the end of history’ as ultimate ‘Americanization’ of the world (cf. Onuf 2012, 81), allows for an inclusive articulation of identity, as the other can be transformed according to the self. On the other side, an exclusive articulation of identity is based on ‘inherent characteristics’ (or in my reading, essentialized characteristics, see in what follows in the analysis), like according to the ‘conservative strand’ of exceptionalism that sees the U.S. as always different and superior, and in consequence prone to threats from ‘others’.

The crucial point then is connected to the ‘limits’ of inclusiveness or to the question what happens, if the other does not change to become more like the self. U.S. identity as articulated through the liberal theory of history, as well as through the liberal or inclusive strand of American exceptionalism, is ‘secured’ or sustained by others who aspire to become like the self,

while potential resistance or refusal by the other challenges the identity or self-understanding.¹²⁶ The exclusive articulations of exceptionalism in terms of superiority in turn rely on distinction or dissociation. Hence, the response of the other to the self becomes crucial to the evolvement of the relationship (cf. Rumelili 2004, 37f.). Yet, as my analysis shows, the essential point here is not simply how the other ‘responds’, but how the acts or responses of the other are understood and articulated, i.e. rendered meaningful by the self – as they do not stand for themselves as ‘neutral facts’. Being (mostly) seen through the ‘liberal’ lens encompassing an inherent tension between universality/inclusiveness and particularity/exclusiveness – in my view the inclusiveness reaches its limit of potentially accommodating the other when there seems to remain no chance for change in terms of the other adhering to the purportedly universalist principles, and in consequence becoming more like the self.

Once this ‘limit’ is reached (which again is not a predetermined, but an entirely political process) in the sense of Connolly, as well as in line with the arguments by Pan and Campbell in this passage, the other might not only become articulated into a threat because of what it does, but “by the very visibility of its mode of *being* as other” (Connolly 2002, 66). I expand on these points in what follows on identity, as well as in chapter two and in the analysis itself.

1.4. The Study of Identity, Ideas and Discourse in IR and IPE – Lost in Translation?

Outside the topic of economic relations a growing amount of not only constructivist literature addresses what they mostly call ‘non-material factors’ in U.S.-Chinese relations, like ‘ideas’, ‘mutual perceptions and images’, ‘attitudes’, ‘beliefs’, ‘identities’, ‘public opinion’ etc. (Fewsmith and Rosen 2001; P. H. Gries 2006; Alastair Ian Johnston 2006; Lampton 2001; e.g. Wang 2000).¹²⁷ There are (in my eyes surprisingly) only few studies explicitly focusing on discourses (Blanchard 2012; Goh 2005; e.g. Pan 2004) or ‘identity’ (e.g. L. J. Morris 2012) in U.S.-Chinese relations. Mostly – and especially when it comes to studying economic policy – the focus is on what are called ‘ideas’ or ‘ideational aspects’ that then in these understandings encompass discourse and identity (Rousseau 2006, 3, 4; cf. also Schmidt 2008, 306; cf. Turner 2013, 3, 2014). A central

¹²⁶ See in what follows on ‘identity’ and ‘the subject’ in chapter 2.2. To repeat, the term ‘self-understanding’ in this study does not allude to a rational, fully self-conscious subject, see in what follows in chapter 2.2.

¹²⁷ Klotz and Lynch point out the problematic – and often misplaced – tendency to associate all work on ‘ideas’ with constructivism (cf. Gofas and Hay 2010, 14; Klotz and Lynch 2007, 4). As André Broome also notes, “constructivist scholars don’t own the field of ideas, identity and norms” (Broome 2013, 197f.).

Jianwei Wang (2000) provides an overview of cognitive and perceptual-psychological studies in American foreign policy not only towards China (cf. Wang 2000, 1–19). On social identity theory and related approaches see Gries (2006, 310ff.).

characteristic of this literature – with few exceptions – is its commitment to the ideational/material divide, with discourses or identities or ideas located in the ‘ideational’ realm, subsequently leading to the question whether and how there can be an impact on the ‘material’ (cf. also Howarth 2013, 254). This question in turn is mostly treated within the standard mechanistic causality-framework that underlies and sustains the dualist conceptualization (see in what follows), and in many cases goes hand-in-hand with neo-positivist methodologies.

Among the few explicitly discourse focused approaches for instance Evelyn Goh in her own words aligns herself with what she calls “the constructivist understanding of ‘reality’ [that] centers upon the interaction of the material and the ideational”, and she sets out to investigate their “constitutive relationship”. Although she does not want to advance discourses as “alternative explanatory variables”, but to investigate them as processes of change, ultimately she maintains the very common division between ‘discourse’ and ‘policy’/‘action’ (Goh 2005, 7, 9, 11, 266). As for the causality-question she states that “[i]n this view, there is no one *causal* variable; instead there are *constitutive* relationships between ideational and material factors that shape policy outcomes [...] and mak[e] possible a more nuanced understanding of causality” (Goh 2005, 261, emphasis in original).¹²⁸

Pan Chengxin in turn makes an in my eyes very important contribution by setting out to investigate the ‘China threat’ argument in U.S. IR-literature, with a focus on the argument as “discursive construction of other” and its practical consequences for U.S.-Chinese relations (Pan 2004, 306f.). He criticizes the dominant “positivist epistemology” that lacks self-awareness of its own character as discursive practice and thus risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy (Pan 2004, 306, 310, 326). Pan links the ‘China threat’ to the “American Self-Imagination” and its aspiration to “hegemonic leadership [...] in the post-Cold War world” (Pan 2004, 310–318).¹²⁹ In his book

¹²⁸ While Goh unfortunately does not elaborate on what these understandings of causality might be, she contrasts “constructivist approaches” to “rationalist political science” and points out the former’s closeness to those of historians. And indeed, compared to ‘rationalist political science’, historians’ take on causality is more differentiated, see e.g. Ringer (1989). Moreover, an affinity by historians to study ‘discourses’ might be explained by their approach towards the ‘objects’ of analysis, which they tend to see as “vehicles or signifiers [or] as opportunities to explain something else”, while being very aware of the difference between ‘sources’ and ‘literature’ (cf. Ingram 1997, 54). On history and IR more generally see for example Lawson (2012).

The ‘constitutive’ versus ‘causal’ argument in turn can be traced back to the ‘understanding vs. ‘explaining’ (cf. Hollis and Smith 1990) classification (cf. e.g. Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010, 16), a differentiation that I do not really regard as helpful, as I will explain in chapter three, as well as touching upon it when addressing ‘causality’ in what follows. As Fritz Ringer argues, “interpretation and explanation are *simultaneous* and almost *interactive* approaches to [...] actions and texts” (1989, 167 emphasis added) – in my view not only of the past, but also of the present. See also what follows in chapter three. For her (critical realist) account and criticism of the (non-) use of causal language in IR see also Milja Kurki (2008, 130ff.).

¹²⁹ See also Zhang Longxi’s article on China as “The Myth of the Other” (Zhang 1988). Lily Ling takes the argument even one step further and argues that the ‘China threat’ is more or less an inevitable production of what she calls ‘Westphalian IR’ (Ling 2013). In his criticism of offensive realism David Lampton points out that mistrust between the U.S. and China is also embedded “deeply in intellectual theories” (Lampton 2013, 57). Cf. also Jim George’s arguments about “theory as practice of IR” (George 1994).

on *Western Representations of China's Rise* he concerns himself with “a sociology of knowledge and politics of representation in relation to China watching”, of which he discerns the two main themes, assumptions or ‘paradigms’ on China’s rise to be the “China threat” and the “China opportunity” (Pan 2012, 7f., 23ff.,31ff.).¹³⁰

Oliver Turner as well argues that “throughout history ‘threats’ from China towards the United States, rather than objectively verifiable phenomena, have always been social constructions of American design and thus more than calculations of material forces”. He wants to “expose the centrality of *ideas* to [...] understandings of China ‘threats’, and to the American foreign policies formulated in response” (Turner 2013, 1, emphasis added). In his book on *American Images of China* he advances three principal arguments, premised on the understanding that “China (just like the United States) exists not as a pre-given, pre-discursive sovereign presence, but as what Edward Said called an ‘imaginative geography’” (Turner 2014, 1):

“[...] societal images of China have always provided truths and realities about that country and its people within the United States [...], American images of China have always been central to the formulation, enactment and justification of U.S. China policy in Washington [...], U.S. China policy has always been active in the production and reproduction of imagery and in the reaffirmation of the identities of both China and the United States” (Turner 2014, 5–8).

More specifically, he argues that “American representations of China have been [...] responsible for creating a threatening identity”, and that “these representations have enabled and justified U.S. China policies which themselves have reaffirmed the identities of both China and the United States, protecting the latter when seemingly threatened by the former”¹³¹ (Turner 2013, 1). Turner emphasizes that he is not claiming causal linkages or cause-effect relationships between “representation and foreign policy” (Turner 2013, 6, 7) or “imagery and action” (Turner 2014, 7, 21). Akin to Goh, he implicitly points towards the ‘causal versus constitutive’ understanding, when claiming to shift from ‘why’ to ‘how’-questions with his analysis (Turner 2013, 6), and linking ‘why’ questions to ‘material’ terms and ‘how’ questions to ‘ideas’ (Turner 2014, 3), while emphasizing the “co-constitution of the ideational and material worlds” (ibid., 23). However, there is a tendency in his article to treat discourses as instrumental (cf. Turner 2013, 5, 11, 15, 17,

¹³⁰ For a related argument on Japan as threat and opportunity in the 1980s see Thorsten (2012, 2).

¹³¹ These images/identities according to Turner are “Idealised, Opportunity, Uncivilised and Threatening China” (Turner 2014, 6). See also Björn Jerdén on assessing ‘China’s new assertiveness’ in his words as “a social fact within the bounds of the intersubjective knowledge of a particular discourse, and not as an objectively true phenomenon external to this discourse” (Jerdén 2014, 87).

20, 21, for a more nuanced reading see 2014, 27f.),¹³² which in my view might result from a missing more thorough theorization of 'identity' in his article (as well as on 'discourse' in his book), that would go beyond references to Campbell, Ashley and Doty (cf. Turner 2013, 5–6), as well as from a separation between the 'discursive' and the 'non-discursive' relying on Foucault (cf. Turner 2013, 4).¹³³ In his book he seems to maintain this separation in addition to understanding discourse 'only' as language (Turner 2014, 24, 28), while emphasizing that material power is constituted by "understandings of identity".

Identity

As I will lay out in more detail in chapter two, my argument is not about a clear-cut *definition* of what 'identity' *is* in terms of certain characteristics that for instance states might *have* (as e.g. L. J. Morris 2012, 137–139; Nau 2002, 4–7, 2003). I maintain that the understanding of identity *as discourse in practice* makes the central difference regarding my questions, as well as in terms of methods.¹³⁴ Identity does not exist 'in itself', but only to the extent of being articulated in discourses, or in other words, by being practiced (in a related way see Jan Assmann cited in Gustafsson and Hagström 2015, 10).¹³⁵ As it has been argued by scholars advocating a discursive understanding of identity in the field of IR, it offers a way of studying identities and their 'effects' without presupposing a certain account of identity as a pre-fixed category, attributing it to certain 'levels of analysis', or essentializing it through the 'results' of an analysis (Doty 1993, 298f., 302, 305; cf. Epstein 2010b, 1f.; Hansen 2006, 1; Howarth 2013, 233)¹³⁶, as ultimately happening in most of the constructivist work on identity that aims to carve out a 'middle ground'

¹³² Campbell suggests this tendency e.g. also in Weldes (Campbell 1998, 224 and FN 78). With respect to narratives e.g. Jerdén rightly points to the 'structural power' (i.e. non-intentional and impersonal) of narratives, regardless of their origin and intentions (Jerdén 2014, 86).

¹³³ However, Foucault in his writings was not unambiguous on this issue, see in what follows.

¹³⁴ Thus my intention is not to come up with a certain (poststructuralist or other) 'definition' of 'identity', but I rather understand the focus on identity as one (among others) "eye opener" (cf. Berenskoetter 2010, 3607), that can shed light on aspects neglected by the predominant neo-positivist accounts.

¹³⁵ Importantly, and as I lay out in more detail in chapter two, by the term 'articulation' I refer to the understanding according to Laclau and Mouffe and PDT, which encompasses linguistic and non-linguistic elements, in the same sense as 'discourse' in this understanding is not restricted to speech, but encompasses practice (or could even be termed practice), see in what follows.

¹³⁶ For the same reasons I argue for the understanding and study of 'ideas' *as* discourse, not as "substantive *content* of discourse", nor of 'discourse' as "a term that refers to talking about one's ideas" respectively (cf. Schmidt 2008, 303, 305 emphasis added). In this sense I would for instance also not speak about the U.S. 'invoking American Exceptionalism' (as i.e. Nayak and Malone 2009, 272), as this could be understood in an instrumental way, but rather of them 'practicing' or 'living' it through the articulation of their identity in difference to 'others'.

between 'rationalist' and what is in turn called post-modern, radical or critical constructivism (cf. Zehfuss 2002, 5).¹³⁷

A whole lot has been written on constructivism¹³⁸ and identity and their connectedness in IR, and much of it is related to the work of Alexander Wendt, his proclaimed "via media" (Wendt 1999, 40) and reactions to it¹³⁹, that shall not be repeated in its extensiveness here. In a nutshell and relating to the 'ideas/materiality' divide as well as the understanding of causality, the problem in my eyes is that although constructivists might argue against reading identity "as a variable in a causal chain [... because] culture, identities and interests are mutually constituted" (cf. Berenskoetter 2010, 3599; e.g. Risse et al. 1999, 149), they often ultimately fall back on essentializing identity¹⁴⁰ in their attempt to im- or explicitly preserve identity as a concept from the alleged 'fluidity' of post-positivist approaches (cf. also Howarth 2013, 226; cf. Zehfuss 2002,

¹³⁷ On the problematic of these kinds of 'classifications' see (Gofas and Hay 2010, 30; P. T. Jackson 2011, 202ff.; Jacobsen 2003, 51–54). On what Ole Waever called 'post-radical reflectivism' – "reflectivists not sticking to the post-structuralist guerilla war against the 'system', but also conducting concrete analysis in dialogue with the establishment" – see Waever (1997, 167, 169). On IR-constructivism as what he calls a "scientific ontology" see Jackson (2011, 141–142).

¹³⁸ Linking up to the clarification of the terms postmodernism and poststructuralism in chapter 1.1, 'constructivism' in turn is on the one hand sometimes criticized for the same reasons as poststructuralism (cf. Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010, 8; cf. also P. T. Jackson 2011, 122), or on the other hand claimed to be more 'down to earth' than postmodernism, especially in terms of methods (cf. Price and Smit 1998). Mostly the critique is only leveled at what is called 'critical' or 'radical' constructivism that in these cases is often taken to include poststructuralism (cf. Zehfuss 2002, 6f.). For instance Price and Smit use the term 'critical international theory' very broadly to refer to what they call 'post-positivist' and 'post-rationalist' works including post-Marxist, Frankfurt School influenced, and 'postmodern' authors. Furthermore they distinguish 'modern' and 'postmodern' forms of critical international theory, and make the same distinction within constructivism, while acknowledging that there are no clear lines of separation (Price and Smit 1998, 267, 289). Sometimes scholars themselves adopt the characterization 'critical' or 'social' constructivist, see examples in Campbell (1998, 281 FN 71). In general, the central difference to constructivism in IR in (almost) all its variants is that the latter "agree[s] on the assumption of *limited construction* [...], when [its] constructivist analysis starts, *some reality has already been made and is taken as given*" (Zehfuss 2002, 10 emphases added). In other words: constructivism's dualism is what enables it being invoked as a 'middle ground' between rationalism and poststructuralism, thus as "a critical but at the same time *scientifically sound* alternative to the mainstream (cf. Zehfuss 2002, 252, 253 emphasis added). Price and Smit call this "minimal foundationalism" (with reference to Mark Hoffmann) or "small-t truth claims" (Price and Smit 1998, 262, 272). David Howarth differentiates poststructuralist theories from constructivism to the extent that poststructuralism goes further in terms of adhering to a "radical materialism", that "is not just an epistemological and methodological orientation, which accepts the existence of multiple perspectives about reality". 'Radical materialism' is understood as foregrounding the contingency and contestability of social and natural reality on an ontological level (Howarth 2013, 12, 239f.). François Debrix argues for a distinction between poststructuralism and constructivism, although he reads them both as 'nonfoundationalist' (see chapter two), for what he terms an epistemological motivation. This refers to differences in constructivists' and poststructuralists' treatment of language. While both refer to language as performative, constructivists take the speaker as performer and language as his tool, while poststructuralists see language itself as performative and not only dependent on the speakers intentions (Debrix 2003, 6f.; see also Fierke 2003, 68ff.).

¹³⁹ For overviews with different emphases see e.g. Lapid (1996), Berenskoetter (2010), Zehfuss (2002), Zehfuss (2006), Hynek and Teti (2010), Cooper and Brubaker (2000), Neumann (1999, chap. 1). On the 'middle ground' question more generally and from a critical realist perspective see Patomäki and Wight (2002).

¹⁴⁰ See the exemplary criticisms of Wendt by Zehfuss (2006), Epstein (2010b), Hansen (Hansen 2006, 17ff.), Inayatullah and Blaney (1996) and Chakrabarti Pasic (1996), as well as the more general account on the 'normalization' of constructivism by Hynek and Teti (2010) and the criticism by Campbell (1998, 217ff.) on treating identity as a 'variable'. See also Hagström (2014, 5), and Rumelili (2004, 31–32).

259f.).¹⁴¹ In Maja Zehfuss' words: "[...] in Wendt's work taking the via media depends on proposing a conception of identity based on social construction which nevertheless remains unitary so as to function as a variable in an explanatory process" (Zehfuss 2002, 253).¹⁴²

As Fredrick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker in turn point out, within scholarship on 'identity', one often finds an "uneasy amalgam of constructivist language and essentialist argumentation" (Cooper and Brubaker 2000, 6, 27f.).¹⁴³ For instance David Kang¹⁴⁴ in his *China Rising* claims to place a "central causal emphasis on the role of national identities in shaping how states determine and respond to threats in international relations". He understands identity as "how a nation defines itself in the world, what it thinks is an appropriate role and actions for itself and others, and as a 'relatively stable understanding and expectation about self and others ...[that is] socially constructed'" (Kang 2007, 18, 20 quoting Wendt). Kang wants to "measure identity" by using "widely accepted social science approaches", such as opinion polls, statements and speeches, as well as "what a country actually does" (Kang 2007, 21).¹⁴⁵ Another example from the field of U.S.-China related studies – although still slightly exceptional because of its explicitness and extensiveness regarding theoretical and methodological considerations – is the work of David Rousseau. His intention is to shed new light on the debate about the impact of material and/or ideational factors "by presenting a model of identity formation that can explain when ideas will (and will not) have a decisive impact on threat perception", his case studies being "American and Japanese responses to the economic, political and military rise of China over the past two decades" (Rousseau 2006, 3, 7). The central conclusion of his book is that "threat perception is a social construct" and that it is the degree of "shared identity" or the definition of "in group" and "out group" that determines whether 'material factors' are viewed as threatening or not. He is guided by the questions how individuals develop ideas, how they transmit them to

¹⁴¹ On a general 'reclaiming' of "identity as a useful variable for the social sciences" see Abdelal et al. (2006), for a criticism of "attempts to 'soften' the term, to acquit it of the charge of 'essentialism'" see Cooper and Brubaker (2000).

¹⁴² Bahar Rumelili in turn claims that 'liberal constructivists' (in contrast to critical constructivists, who draw from poststructuralism in his understanding) compromise their premises on the socially constructed nature of identities because they do not see the difference between the ontological view of identity as constituted through difference, and a "behavioral" (i.e. here: empirical) relationship between self and other (Rumelili 2004, 34). 'Critical constructivists' in turn in his view tend to read the ontological preconditions into the "behavioral relationship", thus neglecting cases/possibilities of difference without othering. For a related problematic within the theory of Laclau and Mouffe see Opratko (2012).

¹⁴³ However, I see the reason for this amalgam not so much in "the tension between the constructivist language that is required by academic correctness and the foundationalist or essentialist message that is required if appeals to 'identity' are to be effective in practice", but in the residual dualism as well as the mechanistic understanding of causality in constructivist approaches, that I will address in what follows.

¹⁴⁴ These and the following criticisms are not meant to be a kind of 'bashing' in the sense of focusing on the deficits of other approaches in order to justify ones own (cf. Scherrer 1999, who eschews giving a 'state of the art' for this reason). However, I believe that the kind of (in some cases probably seemingly petty) problematizations that follow are necessary, as these scholars are prominent and widely cited in their field, which calls for clarity or clarifications in their formulations.

¹⁴⁵ He indeed does refer to what I would call 'sources' as "measures".

others, how certain ideas become dominant in society – here Rousseau even refers to Antonio Gramsci and the question of ‘hegemonic ideas’ – and what the international consequences of this dominance are (Rousseau 2006, 4, 6, 14, 211). As his aim is to “demonstrate the utility of a *testable constructivist theory of international politics*” (Rousseau 2006, 8 emphasis added), he evidently sticks with a conceptualization of ‘ideas’ and ‘identity’ as ‘variables’ (i.e. fixed ‘entities’) that aims at generalization and hence makes foundational claims (e.g. in terms of the fully constituted individual subject) at several instances, and for instance conceives of discourse only as language (e.g. Rousseau 2006, 62, 71, 142).

I address the in my eyes widely disseminated misunderstandings about fluidity, ‘anything goes’, relativism, idealism or ‘missing real world relevance’ (cf. Howarth 2013, 226) of the poststructuralist understanding of identity in chapter two. To put it briefly in this context: in my eyes one should not conflate a non-essentialist understanding of identity *in practice* with an impossibility to conceptualize it as an *analytical category* per se (i.e. although identity does not exist as fixed phenomenon or essence, we can still try to grasp and study it). Neither should we reify ‘categories of practice’ (i.e. what we study through research ‘on the ground’) through ‘categories of analysis’ (i.e. theory/concepts). But the answer to this ‘problem’ can of course equally not be to ‘fill’ the category with everything ‘identity’ in practice could possibly encompass (cf. Cooper and Brubaker 2000, 1–5).¹⁴⁶ As has been repeatedly pointed out in discursive approaches towards identity, for instance in works that precisely focus on how articulations of collective and/or national identity *make* (U.S.) foreign policy, a discursive or performative reading of identity concerning theory and analysis sheds light on the *productive* as well as the *constraining* features implicated in articulations of identity ‘on the ground’ (Campbell 1998, 9–13; Doty 1993, 299, 314; see also Hansen 2006, 1; Milliken 1999, 229; e.g. Weldes and Saco 1996, 373). Interestingly, this work is not taken into account for instance in the overview by Cooper and Brubaker, although their suggestions to dismiss the term ‘identity’ as analytical category and rather go for what they call identification, self-understandings/self-representations, commonality/connectedness (Cooper and Brubaker 2000, 14–33; cf. also Richard Ned Lebow 2012, 17), speaks to many of the issues addressed by discourse theorists (cf. Howarth 2013, 244ff. on identification).¹⁴⁷ In line with Felix Berenskoetter’s overview one can align the aforementioned works among others to scholarship focusing on “how conceptions of national

¹⁴⁶ See also Rumelili (2004) on what he criticizes as conflation between ontological premises and ‘empirical observations’, cf. also Opratko (2012).

¹⁴⁷ Although Cooper and Brubaker seem to distance themselves from any “Foucauldian/post-Freudian understanding of ‘identification’” and the “discursive and psychoanalytic repertoire” (p. 43, FN 57), they do consider ‘identification’ through discourses and “public narratives” (ibid., 16).

identity are constructed at the *level of the state*, specifically on how images of Self and Other influence foreign policy” (Berenskoetter 2010, 3604), a topic that is also missing from Cooper and Brubaker’s overview. These accounts point to “states as never finished entities” (Campbell 1998, 12) “constructed by the discursive practices of those who speak about, write about, and act on its behalf” (Doty 1993, 310) and whose foreign policy or “the policy of making foreign” (Dalby 1988, 419) is a discursive/performative articulation and making of its self-identity vis-à-vis an external other (cf. Campbell 1998, 9; Doty 1993, 310; Hagström 2014; Hansen 2006, 6).¹⁴⁸ With respect to the *theoretical* controversies on ‘state identity’ in IR, Jens Bartelson – by linking them to questions of ‘being’ and ‘knowing’¹⁴⁹ – seems to capture this line of thought by asserting that in this understanding the state “is but a name for a certain structural impossibility made possible by a political practice”, and in line with the ‘international system’ “nothing but [a] momentary stabilization [...] of historical practices of power politics” (Bartelson 1998, 321,322).

Another reason for misunderstandings about ‘categories’ and ‘practices’ in my view is the residual ‘ideational versus material’-dualism (and in this understanding discursive equals ideational) even among self-declared ‘all the way down’ discourse-approaches. Although for instance Charlotte Epstein initially claims to revisit and ultimately reject this distinction, in the same piece she does speak of “the co-constitution of discursive and material factors” and “discursive and material interests”. Furthermore, in her formulations she ultimately seems to maintain a separation between ‘ideas’ and ‘discourse’ although claiming not to do so (Epstein 2010a, 182, 183). The same unclarity lies within Lene Hansen’s work when she states that “poststructuralism argues that foreign policy discourses articulate and intertwine material factors and ideas to such an extent that the two cannot be separated from one another”. Hence, are they supposed to be ‘actually’ separated from “non-discursive material factors”, as “discourse incorporates material as well as ideational factors” (Hansen 2006, 1, 17, 21)? Nonetheless, Epstein does address a crucial point about a discursive approach towards ‘ideas’: it precisely tackles the ‘how ideas matter’ question without having to wonder about “getting into actors heads to discover ideas” (Epstein 2010a, 182, 183) as has basically been the case for most of the ‘ideas’-literature, and which in my view is again linked to the ‘causal story’ (see in what follows) most authors are trying to tell (see also Weldes and Saco for their criticism of the study of ‘belief-

¹⁴⁸ I address the criticism by Berenskoetter and others of too much emphasis on ‘the necessary other’ or ‘othering’ in chapter two. See also Hansen (2006, 38–54).

¹⁴⁹ Michael C. Williams in turn argues that a specific conception of identity related to what he calls “liberal sensibility” is constitutive of (neo-realist) theories of IR, in particular of theories of security, and he sees the debates between neo-realists and constructivists as “historically located disputes about the politics of theorizing security and the practical implications of doing so in different ways”, rather than as differences in theoretical foundations (Williams 1998, 204–206). See also Walker (1995).

systems' in this respect (1996, 371f.), as well as Krebs and Jackson (2007) for their focus on public rhetoric).¹⁵⁰

Ideas

While I certainly argue for using the concept of 'discourse' instead of 'ideas' for reasons I will lay out in what follows, I address the 'ideas-debate' in IR and IPE here as exemplification of the dualist 'ideational'/'material' divide in IR and IPE, as it is connected and can be linked to similar controversies around the terms identity and ultimately also discourse. While the ideas-debate is related to my topic of 'economic discourses', as there are a few works on ideas and economic policy, it will not resurface to the same extent as those on identity and discourses in chapter two – as 'ideas' are conceptualized and treated as discourse in PDT – another reason for why I address it more extensively here in this chapter.¹⁵¹

The so called 'ideational turn' in the social and political sciences in general has evolved in numerous debates and disputes on if and why 'ideas' do have an impact on the 'material', and if and how they should be studied (De Goede 2003; cf. Gofas and Hay 2010; e.g. J. Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Hagström 2014; Hall 1989; cf. P. T. Jackson 2011; and Jacobsen 1995 for IPE, 2003; Laffey and Weldes 1997; Owen 2010; Schmidt 2008).¹⁵² In a nutshell it can be stated that the mainstream (constructivist) research focuses on the 'impact' of 'ideas' in terms of 'variables', whereas those called 'radical' or 'post-positivist' constructivists (see earlier footnote in this chapter) study 'ideas' in terms of language and discourses (Hülse 2003, 214,225; cf. Nymalm 2014).¹⁵³ For IPE, de Goede summarizes the "three models of 'ideas' in IPE" as epistemic community approach, the work by Susan Strange (and those inspired by her) on knowledge structures, and approaches based on Robert Cox's reading of Gramsci. None of these approaches goes beyond the conceptual separation between a 'material' and an 'ideational' sphere, as poststructuralist work does, i.e. by emphasizing that neither the politics/economics nor the 'idealism/realism' distinction exist beyond their historical articulation (De Goede 2003, 86–91, 2006, 5; cf. also Hansen 2006, 10 on "causal epistemology" as discourse; Howarth 2013, 62, 254).

¹⁵⁰ See also Michael Shapiro's argument for the study of 'practice' rather than 'perceptions' or 'belief systems' (1989, 18).

¹⁵¹ For a critique of the 'ideas' literature from a PDT perspective see Howarth (2013, 253ff.).

¹⁵² For an overview and critique of 'ideational analysis' in political science see Finlayson (2004, 533ff.), especially FN 18, p. 544.

¹⁵³ For the field of IPE, in his overview of "constructivism in IPE" Broome speaks of interpretive (i.e. critical), qualitative (i.e. conventional) and quantitative (i.e. embracing rationalist methods) constructivism, mostly dependent on what 'methods' they use and still separate from "non-positivist" approaches (Broome 2013, 197), or what are called "post-modern constructivists" in other overviews (e.g. Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010, 13).

The divide stays also true for the mainstream of approaches to explaining U.S. foreign economic policy, regardless of whether they are classified as “system-centered, society-centered or state-centered approaches” (cf. G. J. Ikenberry, Lake, and Mastanduno 1988). In most cases – in my view also the self-proclaimed ‘interpretive constructivist’ ones claiming that ‘ideas’ constitute how actors conceive of their ‘interests’ – this subsequently means that ‘ideas’ are ultimately still understood as “epiphenomenal factors that either reinforce or compete with an actor’s material interests as alternative motivations for their behavior” (Broome 2013, 193; Finlayson 2004, 530f.; Howarth 2013, 255 on the separation of “ideas” and “interests”; see Turner 2014, 20 for this assessment of the literature on U.S.-China relations), and are mostly (implicitly) treated as ‘objects’ (Laffey and Weldes 1997, 194).¹⁵⁴ Although the debate is more recent in IPE than in IR, it still runs largely along the same ‘dualist’ lines in IR – revolving around the question whether ‘ideas’ should be accorded a causal role independent of ‘material factors’ or not (Gofas and Hay 2010, 5, 15). This becomes clear in Andreas Gofas and Colin Hay’s overview of the “varieties of ideational explanation” from rational choice theory to what they call “thick (radical) constructivism”, in which they point out the different manifestations of “the persistence of the perennial dualisms in political analysis [...] at the ontological, epistemological and methodological level of analysis” (Gofas and Hay 2010, 4, 17). In the end, Gofas and Hay themselves abide by what they call “analytical duality”.¹⁵⁵ For Albert Yee the “two overarching dilemmas of ideational analysis” are that

¹⁵⁴ If one wanted to stick to the term ‘ideas’ (instead of discourses, as proposed in this study), in accordance with poststructuralist discourse theory they can be understood as “an upshot of discursive variation” in terms of “constituted by the meanings we learn and reproduce, not [as] their source; nor are they the origin of the language we speak” (Nabers 2015, forthcoming).

¹⁵⁵ Gofas and Hay argue that there is a difference between their “analytical duality” and what they call “ontic duality”/“analytical dualism”, such as that theirs is just a “heuristic device” not an ontological position. However, in my view it remains unclear how their critical realist position could be conceived of in non-dualist terms (cf. P. T. Jackson 2011, 37). For example, Gofas and Hay criticize ‘postmodernism’ as a form of ‘idealism’ as in their view it denies “causal efficacy to material factors” and gives “absolutely no consideration whatsoever to the extent to which [‘cats’ and ‘dogs’] materiality might set limits on the social properties assigned to them”(Gofas and Hay 2010, 32,33). Apparently for Gofas and Hay it is not feasible, that the authors they cite as ‘postmodern’ (e.g. Doty) precisely eschew this kind of dichotomization and hierarchization between ‘material’ and ‘social’ properties, while they themselves claim to maintain this separation ‘only’ for analytical purposes. While criticizing the ‘mainstream’ understanding of causality for good reasons, I would argue that Gofas and Hay’s “constructivist critical realist” conceptualization of causality also remains committed to a residual dualism. While critical realist authors seek to broaden the meaning of the term ‘cause’ from only referring to a narrow understanding as ‘observable efficient or moving causes’ (hence the billiard ball analogy, see in what follows), they also aim at “deepening” it in terms of a “deep ontology” that conceives of causes not as ‘observable regularity relations’ but as “real causal powers of ontological entities”. The latter relates to “drawing on philosophical realism [...] that maintains that we must accept that the world exists independently of our efforts to understand it” (Kurki 2008, 6, 10, 11). In her criticism of ‘reflectivists’ (the term being originally coined by Robert Keohane in his distinction to ‘rationalists’, see Kurki (2008, 2f.), Hansen (2006, 4f.), Jackson (2011, 158)), Milja Kurki as well buys into the typical misunderstanding resulting from the maintenance of the ‘material’/‘ideational’ dichotomy. In this sense she disapproves of reflectivists’ alleged concentrating only on the study of the “‘ideational’, normative or discursive aspects of world politics, without asking holistic questions about the material constraints and conditioning of rules, norms and discourses” (Kurki 2008, 17). See also Colin Wight (2013) in his criticism of Patrick

“[f]irst, meaning oriented behavioralists and ideational institutionalists who focus on causation generally do not analyze the causal mechanisms stemming from the ideas themselves. Second, discursivists who analyze ideas themselves generally do not focus on their causal effects. Together, these dilemmas constitute the particular manifestations within the international relations field of both the enduring disagreement between explanation and understanding in the social sciences and the more recent controversy over modernity and postmodernity in contemporary social theory” (A. S. Yee 1996, 102).

Yee’s issue is not with dualism, but through the overview in his article – in which he claims that the “core problem” of “ideational analysis” lies in the analysis of “the causal effects” of ideas (A. S. Yee 1996, 70) – it becomes very clear that the dualism between ‘idea’ and ‘policy’ or ‘behavior’ is linked to an understanding of causality or causal relations in terms of a Humean conception: tied to observable regularities that give grounds for prediction and manifest themselves as ‘efficient causes’. In other words ‘causality’ means relying on the principle of constant conjunction (co-variation) or regular succession (if A then B) in terms of the billiard ball model as relationship between cause A and effect B, in which A is independent of, exterior, and prior to B (cf. Gofas and Hay 2010, 16; Kurki 2008, 58; see also Ruggie 1995).¹⁵⁶ It is this cause-and-effect-understanding and search for them – embedded in the dualist separation between the ‘ideational’ and the ‘material (cf. P. T. Jackson 2011, 63–69), that I will address in the next section – that on the one hand makes us look for ‘ideas’ as ‘objects’ (although ‘mental’ ones)¹⁵⁷ that somehow exist *independently* from the policymaker and the ‘policy’ itself. But on the other hand this understanding also leads us leads to a search for ‘ideas’ in terms of ‘real truths’ and ‘what people really believe’ *inside* their heads (e.g. J. Goldstein and Keohane 1993, 27).¹⁵⁸ This is precisely what discourse theorists are not aiming at, because the question lies not in finding ‘hidden truths’ but on what is claimed to be true by a particular discourse (Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010, 13f.; cf. De Goede 2006, 4) – hence, on what discourse *does*, not what it *reveals* (cf. Doty 1993, 304).

Jackson’s take on ‘monism’ and ‘dualism’, as well as Jackson’s response to what he calls a conflation between “every day common sense realism [...] with a stricter dualist claim about *how* objects exist [...] (P. T. Jackson 2013, 373).

¹⁵⁶ That A and B need to be separated becomes also clear i.e. from John Owen’s statement, that “the difficulty lies in inferring the ideas that subjects hold independent of the behavior to be explained” (Owen 1997, 18). See also the criticism of Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes on the ‘neo-positivist’ narrow Humean conception of causality in most of the ‘ideas’ literature (Laffey and Weldes 1997, 201–209). However, they also seem to differentiate between what Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane have termed ‘causal ideas’ and ‘broader world views’. In contrast to Goldstein and Keohane, Laffey and Weldes claim causal powers also for the latter.

¹⁵⁷ See Laffey and Weldes’ references to George Lakoff’s ‘commodity’ and ‘conduit’ metaphors (Laffey and Weldes 1997, 206–209). On Lakoffian metaphors and discourse analysis see also Blanchard (2012).

¹⁵⁸ Laffey and Weldes point to the conceptual unclarity in much of the ideas-literature in this regard (Laffey and Weldes 1997, 197–199). Another albeit interrelated reason in my view is the prevailing commitment to neo-positivist methodologies that I will address in the next section. See also Weldes and Saco (Weldes and Saco 1996, 370). For a criticism of the search for ‘true beliefs’ and the argument to focus on public rhetoric instead see also Krebs and Jackson (2007).

This is linked to the understanding of discourse and language as *productive* regardless of “the motivations, perceptions, intentions, or understandings of social actors” (Doty 1993, 302; cf. also Jerdén 2014, 86; Krebs and Jackson 2007). This is one important aspect of why I argue for the concept of discourse over ‘ideas’ (at least in the dominant understandings in IR and IPE addressed here), as I will illustrate in more detail in the chapters two and three on theory and method/political rhetoric.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, if ‘ideas’ and ‘identities’ are understood as discursive, i.e. articulated for instance through foreign economic policy, it is simply not possible to separate and conceptualize them as distinct ‘variables’ of the policies they are supposed to have an ‘impact’ on, thus to treat them in the conventional causal A-B framework (cf. Hansen 2006, 26–28).

Discourse

In much of (constructivist) IR and IPE-literature ‘discourses’ are treated along the same line as ‘ideas’. Although in the broad field of discourse theoretical and analytical studies there exist quite different positions and argumentations on and about the concept of ‘discourse’ – for instance whether one can speak of ‘the discursive’ versus the ‘non-discursive’ or whether discourse is ‘only language and text’ – until today these profound debates have reached the field of IR (Campbell 1998, 6; cf. Dalby 1988; Epstein 2010b; George 1994; Hansen 2006; Milliken 1999; Weldes and Saco 1996) and IPE (cf. Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010, 16 ff. Epstein 2010a, 176, 182 ff. De Goede 2006, 8 f. Maxwell 2001, 3) only to a limited extent. The mainstream take on discourses locates them in the ‘ideas-realm’, and mostly the term is understood as referring to ‘text and talking’ distinct from ‘action’ or ‘practice’ (e.g. Adler and Pouliot 2011 although claiming not to do so, see p. 12) and ‘facts on the ground’. Viviane Schmidt for instance claims to differentiate between approaches that “focus exclusively on *ideas* [and] tend to leave the interactive processes of discourse implicit”, and

“those scholars who speak of *discourse* [and] address explicitly the representation of ideas (how *agents say* what they are *thinking* of doing) and the discursive interactions through which actors

¹⁵⁹ However, there might be a point in Yee’s argument, that although what he calls ‘postmodernists’ reject this kind of simple cause-and-effect-scenario, the cited analyses of U.S. foreign policy – e.g. by Doty and Weldes, focusing on the discursive construction of external others that in turn enabled the respective foreign policy decisions – could be read as ‘causing’ the policies (see also Kurki 2008, 138–142; A. S. Yee 1996, 101). But again this would require an understanding of causality that goes beyond the rather mechanistic understanding described above. In this sense critical realism tries to find a ‘middle way’. If this from a poststructuralist perspective means that one has to “break with causality”, or whether one should rather seek alternative accounts of causality has not been too explicitly debated so far (cf. Diez 2001, 12ff.).

generate and communicate ideas (to whom they *say* it) within given institutional contexts (where and when they *say* it)” (Schmidt 2008, 306 emphases added).

She thus clearly maintains a separation of discourse as ‘speech’ (as well as between ‘ideas’ and ‘discourse’) apart from other ‘action’. Akin to the ‘reclaiming/saving identity-endeavor’ one can discern the attempt to “strip discourse of its postmodernist baggage” by referring the term “not only to structure [...] but also to agency [...]” (Schmidt 2008, 305).¹⁶⁰ But again even some self-proclaimed ‘all the way down’ understandings apparently cannot free themselves from the common dichotomies, for instance between ‘discourse’ and ‘action’, as discourse is still often conceived simply as ‘language’. For example, Epstein again from my perspective rightly brings forward a focus on “the discourses spoken by actors” (regardless of whether they actually believe it) as “actor behavior”, as it is through discourse that actors “make their own identity” in terms of a “speaking subject”: “[w]hat matters is quite simply what the actor says” (Epstein 2010a, 184, 189). Although she advocates locating discourse in the field of ‘action’ – “[t]o say is also ‘to do’” (Epstein 2010a, 190) – apparently for her ‘action’ in general is not necessarily encompassed by her understanding of discourse, as she speaks of “immaterial factors”, that “have become crystallizations of the dominant discourses that regulate specific field of action” (Epstein 2010a, 193), what ultimately makes her argument slightly unclear. Discourse scholars have widely argued against the dichotomization of language versus action/actor and discourse versus ‘reality’, as well as against the understanding of discourse as ‘only language’ (Campbell 1998, 6f., 193; Dalby 1988, 416f.; George 1994, 29ff.; Tuathail and Agnew 1992, 193; cf. Weldes and Saco 1996, 374f.), and of language as merely referential, ‘transparent’ or instrumental (Blanchard 2012; cf. Doty 1993, 301f.; Howarth 2013, 241). In Doty’s words, “how we ‘know’ what a practice is and the kind of subject engaging in it is through language” (Doty 1993, 312). Meanwhile “[d]iscourses do not present themselves as such; what we observe are people and verbal productions” (Tuathail and Agnew 1992, 193 quoting Alker and Sylvan). Thus, contra the (common) understanding close to Schmidt’s, “we have to overcome the disabling view of discourse as transparent communication between subjects about things, a view within which the value of the statements of a discourse is wholly absorbed in a statement’s truth value” (Shapiro 1989, 17). Still many scholars remain partly divided over the ‘discursive’/‘non-discursive’ issue, that I will address from the perspective of PDT in chapter two. As to the ‘causal-story’, it has been repeatedly pointed out, that

¹⁶⁰ On the ‘agency/structure’ problematique from a poststructuralist perspective see Ashley (1989, 272f., 309), Herschinger (2011, 41–46), Howarth (2013, Chapters 4 and 5), as well as chapter two.

“discourses do not function as explanatory causes in the conventional (i.e., Humean) sense. [...] As a result, it makes no sense to say that one term or element of a discourse ‘causes’ the meaning of another. Instead, it is the relationships between them [...] that constitute their meanings” (Weldes and Saco 1996, 373).

The relationship between ‘discourse’ and ‘policy’ (both conceived as elements within the discursive!) put forward in this thesis is mainly in line with this understanding.¹⁶¹ Thus the “explanatory power of ideas and discourses” should not simply be understood as demonstrating “their causal influence” (Schmidt 2008, 305) in the conventional sense.¹⁶²

How a PDT understanding of ‘discourse’ mostly departs from, but also in some instances connects to those in IR and IPE, is addressed in the following chapter.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this chapter is to lay out the central characteristics of the theoretical framework for this study, which is Political Discourse Theory (PDT), and to connect it to poststructuralist work in IR and IPE, focusing on both, common features and disagreements or divergences. After briefly pointing out the common issues and concerns addressed by poststructuralist scholars in IR and IPE, I then focus more closely on PDT in order to flesh out what I read as its key concepts of discourse, identity and hegemony.

Although PDT referred to as a ‘school’ has only quite recently started to make its way into the fields of IR and IPE,¹⁶³ its central characteristics and premises have been present to some extent since the 1980s – in IPE, which has been “particularly resistant to poststructural intervention”, rather since the 1990ies (cf. De Goede 2006, 1) – mostly through the work of poststructuralist, or

¹⁶¹ Albeit importantly not with Weldes’ and Saco’s understanding of discourses as ‘causal mechanisms’ according to scientific/critical realism. On ‘causal mechanisms’ from a PDT perspective see Chapter 3 in Glynos and Howarth 2007.

¹⁶² Which however does not mean, that poststructuralists should not engage in deliberating and developing alternative accounts of ‘causality’.

¹⁶³ So far this seems to be happening to a large extent through mostly German (speaking) authors such as Eva Herschinger, Dirk Nabers, Chris Methmann, Martin Nonhoff, Joscha Wullweber. For an overview of poststructuralist discourse studies from the German speaking field see Herschinger and Renner (2014), who also point to the prevalence of PDT among these authors. They also provide a brief overview of poststructuralism in IR (pp.18-21). For an overview of discourse theory in the social sciences see Torfing (2005). For the field of European studies see e.g. Rogers (2009).

even more generally post-positivist scholars.¹⁶⁴ Those commonly referred to as early ‘pioneers’ in IR are first and foremost Richard Ashley, James Der Derian, Michael Shapiro and R.B.J. Walker (e.g. Ashley 1989, 1996; Der Derian and Shapiro 1989; cf. also Howarth 2013, 277; Rob B. J. Walker 1995). They drew from the debates in other fields of social sciences and the humanities, about what constitutes ‘knowledge’ and claims about ‘the world’, and in the first instance criticized the ‘traditional’ IR-perspectives of realist and neo-realist theories (cf. Campbell 2010, 216). What was described or “loosely constructed as postmodern or poststructuralist approach” by the ‘pioneers’ was regarded as an “organizing strategy [that] is to deconstruct or denaturalize through detailed interpretation the inherited language, concepts, and texts that have occupied privileged discourses in international relations” (Der Derian 1989, 4). More concretely the target was no less than

“the foundationalism and essentialism of post-Enlightenment scientific philosophy, its universalist presuppositions about modern rational man, its hidden metaphysics, its metatheoretical commitment to dualized categories of meaning and understanding, its logocentric strategies of identity and hierarchization, its theorized propositions about human nature, its dogmatic faith in method, its philosophies of intention and consciousness, and its tendency toward grand theory and the implications of its imposition” (George and Campbell 1990, 280).

The initial central issue in both IR and IPE was the problematization of ‘the state’ in theory and analysis, notably always in connection to a deeper engagement with questions on the status of ‘knowledge’ and ‘science’ itself, as well as the politics and exercise of power involved in the (academic) disciplines and political practices themselves (cf. Ashley 1983, 465; see also Herschinger and Renner 2014, 18). From this followed criticisms of positivism, rationalism and empiricism – as for example in the works of authors such as David Campbell, Roxanne Lynn Doty, Jutta Weldes and Diana Saco (see chapter one) who problematized the taken for granted character of ‘state identity’ and ‘foreign policy’.¹⁶⁵ Meanwhile there has never been anything like a clearly delineated poststructuralist (Finlayson and Valentine 2002, 1f.; cf. Howarth 2013, 6),

¹⁶⁴ On the other side, PDT has also only recently started to take the respective approaches in IR and IPE into account, and it still seems to lack an acknowledgement of the ‘newer’ developments. Howarth for example points to James Der Derian and Michael Shapiro’s 1989-edited volume that he classifies as “pathbraking” (cf. Howarth 2013, 77f.), as well as to the advancement of social constructivism in IR (maybe a bit surprisingly referring only to Wendt as an example!). However, there have been quite a few later works and developments (see chapter one and what follows in this chapter) that in my view would be worthwhile taking into account.

¹⁶⁵ See also George (1994, 204–209). For a critical assessment of how the question of ‘state identity’ has been treated in IR see Bartelson (1998).

postmodern,¹⁶⁶ or of course even less a post-positivist ‘school’ (George 1994, 155; Gregory 1989, xii; cf. Hansen 2006, 5; see also C. Hughes 2012, 9f.) – the authors being rather not preoccupied with labeling or being labeled (1988, 189, cf. 1989, 8; Howarth 2013, 58) – nor are poststructuralists the only ones to focus on ‘discourse’ as key theoretical concept (cf. Milliken 1999, 225).¹⁶⁷ George and Campbell note four elements that they regard as shared throughout what they call the “broad agenda of dissent”: 1. The inadequacy of positivist/empiricist approaches to knowledge and society; 2. A focus on the social and historical process of knowledge construction taking into account power relations and rejecting all foundationalism; 3. A focus on the language debate and the linguistic construction of reality; 4. The extension of these issues to “the construction of meaning and identity in all its forms [...]” (George and Campbell 1990, 270). These four points largely concur with the four features of the concept of ‘discourse’ by the Essex School that I address and expand on in what follows.

In order not to go beyond the scope of this chapter I am not reproducing general accounts on poststructuralism in IR and IPE,¹⁶⁸ but instead focusing on the central premises of PDT and referring them to the corresponding issues and arguments by authors in these fields. In general it can be said, that although IR-and IPE-scholars might refer to Laclau especially when it comes to the understanding of discourse, identity, hegemony, or concepts such as empty signifiers or nodal points (e.g. Campbell 1998, Herschinger 2012, Nabers 2010, Methmann 2010, Dietz 2001), an explicit contextualization and ‘application’ of the whole PDT-approach as social and political theory in the study of global politics is more seldom (cf. Herschinger 2012, 70; Nabers 2009, 2015; e.g. Nonhoff 2006a; Solomon 2009, 270; Wullweber 2014). However, this assessment of

¹⁶⁶ The terms poststructuralist and postmodern are used somewhat interchangeably at least in most of the IR-literature, see the footnote on these terms in the previous chapter, and for instance the uses of these terms throughout the edition *International/Intertextual Relations* as “first collection in its kind in international relations” (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989; Gregory 1989, xii). In the *Oxford Handbook of International Relations* for example the entry is on ‘postmodernism’, which is denoted “in terms of writings that have taken up insights from ‘post-structuralist’ theory and applied them to world politics” (Burke 2008, 360). As pointed out by George and Campbell, Der Derian had noted (already in the 1980ies) that poststructuralism had emerged as the “sponge word” for diverse approaches comprising discourse analysis, genealogy, deconstruction and intertextualism. They consider the main shared ‘features’ to be “the constitutive nature of language” and an opposition to “closed systems of knowledge” (Der Derian 1988, 192; cf. also George 1994, 155–166 who uses the term postmodernism throughout his volume; cf. George and Campbell 1990, 270, FN 2). David Howarth makes a distinction between poststructuralism and postmodernism (as does Campbell in his later writings, see Campbell 2010), by pointing to Laclau’s argument that poststructuralism “need not include more extreme critics of modernity such as Jean Baudrillard and Lyotard”, while situating poststructuralism first and foremost within the linguistic turn in Western philosophy and theory (see also in what follows in this chapter). For Howarth, to repeat, poststructuralism “constitutes a particular style of theorizing, and a specific way of doing social and political theory, which is informed by a distinctive ethos. This style and ethos is rooted in a particular set of ontological presuppositions” (Howarth 2013, 6, 73). As a side note, according to Nigel Thrift Baudrillard and Lyotard themselves have disavowed ‘postmodernism’ (Thrift 1991, 457).

¹⁶⁷ For instance other schools such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), but also the fields of discursive psychology, communication and media studies work with the concept (cf. i.e. Jørgensen and Phillips 2002).

¹⁶⁸ For some of these accounts and collections of central debates see e.g. Campbell (1998, Epilogue, 2010), de Goede (2006), Edkins (1999), Hansen (2006, Introduction), Smith et al. (1997), Sjolander (1994), George (1994), Caldwell (1982), Samuels (1996), Burke (2008), George and Campbell (1990), Herschinger (2011, 4–8).

course depends to some extent to what one takes 'the whole approach' to be. My understanding in this sense is mostly in line with the 'Logics of Critical Explanation' (see chapter 3.2.), that conceives of PDT as explanatory, interpretative and critical theory. I come back to and address this issue in the following subchapters on discourse, identity and hegemony, as well as in chapter three.

Political Discourse Theory

Political Discourse Theory (PDT, also called Poststructuralist Discourse Theory) and analysis is related to what has become called the Essex School of Discourse Theory – in which the writings of Ernesto Laclau inhabit a central position. Starting with the problematization of essentialism and determinism in Marxist theory in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (HSS)* by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001; originally published in 1985), proponents of political discourse theory since then have set out to emphasize in their work the contingency and historicity of what we call 'objectivity', in terms of fleshing out the role of politics and power in its formation, by drawing primarily on the works of Michael Foucault, Jaques Derrida, Jaques Lacan and Slavoj Žižek (Glynos et al. 2009, 7). In this sense the focus lies on inquiring into the reproduction and transformation of orders and practices standing for our articulations, representations or categorizations of the world, by problematizing or questioning their 'taken for granted' or hegemonic character.¹⁶⁹ Laclau and Mouffe started by formulating a theory of hegemony via deconstructing the classical Marxist ontology that reduces identity to a class essence (cf. *HSS* Chapter 1), by engaging and taking further Louis Althusser's (cf. *HSS* pp. 97-105, 109) and Antonio Gramsci's (cf. *HSS* pp. 65-71, 136-145, 109, 134-145) works on Marxist conceptions of politics and ideology and through drawing from poststructuralist theories of language (cf. *HSS* pp. 112-113)¹⁷⁰ (Howarth 2013, 123-127; cf. Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 5), and especially the work of Derrida and Lacan (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, xi). In their preface to the second edition of *HSS* they speak of poststructuralism as their main source of theoretical reflection, while taking into account among others the late Ludwig Wittgenstein and Martin Heidegger, but also Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend, as well as of course Gramsci (ibid.). Evidently the

¹⁶⁹ It is important to bear in mind that Laclau's and Mouffe's understanding of hegemony is different from the common understanding in political science of hegemony as domination. See what follows in this chapter (2.3) on the concept of hegemony.

¹⁷⁰ Laclau and Mouffe criticize that the 'linguistic turn' also imported structuralism into the field of human sciences, see also ibid. p. 146, FN 22. In this sense, the Swiss structuralist linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's aim (see in what follows) in fact was to go beyond linguistics and to develop a structuralist approach to the human and social sciences. For a thorough assessment of Laclau and Mouffe's work see the contributions in the edited volume by Simon Critchley and Oliver Marchart (2009).

writings of Laclau and Mouffe were not aimed at a theory of discursive processes 'only' in the sense of communication via language or other means, but at a social and political theory. It cannot be overemphasized that the concept of discourse encompasses not only language, but all social phenomena (Laclau 1990, 100). The outset became, as stated by Laclau, to elaborate an alternative approach to the understanding of the structuration of socio-political spaces – in their words in *HSS: a theory of hegemony* (*HSS* Chapter 3) – by articulating a novel conception of discourse (Laclau 2000, x). Discourse theory thus

“is not just a simple theoretical or epistemological approach; it implies, by asserting the radical historicity of being and therefore the purely human nature of truth, the commitment to show the world for what it is: an entirely social construction of human beings which is not grounded on any metaphysical ‘necessity’ external to it – neither God, nor ‘essential forms’ nor the ‘necessary laws of history’” (Laclau 1990, 129).

In its further development PDT has drawn from hermeneutical critiques of behavioralism that oppose the separation of ‘meanings and interpretations’ on the one hand, and ‘objective political behavior’ on the other hand, but instead stressed the connectedness between meaning, interpretation and practice. In this sense PDT does not conceive of itself as “an independent or free-standing approach to social and political theory” nor as detached from social and historical contexts. On the contrary, it is and must be articulated in connection to the latter ones in order to “critically explain problematized objects of research”. In this respect social theory should not exclude the pursuit of *empirical research* that is in turn *theoretically and philosophically* informed (Howarth 2013, 12, 266). However, PDT opposes rationalist approaches that presume entirely self-conscious actors with given interests and preferences, as well as positivist conceptions of knowledge and method in terms of a ‘unitary science’ bound for generalizations and predictions by assuming an unproblematic ‘objective reality’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 6–7).

What this means for conducting research in terms of methodology and methods is addressed in the following chapters, here I concentrate on laying out the key terms for this project: discourse, identity and hegemony, as well as the related concepts that will be articulated as analytical categories in connection with the rhetorical analysis. It should be noted at this point though, that initially Laclau and Mouffe themselves were not preoccupied with problems of how

to 'use' their theories in research, but that this has later become a major project of the Essex School (Howarth 2013, 15f.; see e.g. Torfing 2005).¹⁷¹

2.1. Discourse¹⁷²

According to PDT the term 'discourse' or 'discursive structure' is significantly understood on the ontological, as well as on the ontical level. In a nutshell – to be expanded on in what follows under the central features – this means that discourse is both, a constitutive structure of meaning in terms of an ontological horizon that we cannot get outside of, as well as the concrete practice of speaking and acting in terms of linguistic and non-linguistic elements. In this sense Laclau and Mouffe explicitly refer to Ludwig Wittgenstein and take his notion of a 'language game' to be an example of what they have called 'discourse' (Laclau 2005, 106; Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 108; cf. also Zerilli 2009, 90f.):

"A is building with building-stones: there are blocks, pillars, slabs and beams. B has to pass the stones, and that in the order in which A needs them. For this purpose they use a language consisting of the words 'block', 'pillar', 'slab', 'beam'. A calls them out; B brings the stone which he has learnt to bring at such and such call [...] I shall also call the whole, *consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven*, the 'language-game'" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford 1983, p.3, cited in Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 108, emphasis added).

And Laclau and Mouffe add: "It is evident, that the very *material properties of objects* are part of what Wittgenstein calls language game, which is an example of what we have called discourse". (ibid., emphasis added).

The broader concept of discourse according to PDT can be summarized by pointing out four central features (cf. Glynos et al. 2009, 8f):

¹⁷¹ For an understanding of poststructuralism as theoretical discourse see Ashley (1989, 278f.), which in my reading amounts to a critique of the traditional separation between 'theory' and 'empirics'. As George and Campbell have pointed out regarding the difference between critical theory and poststructuralism: "Whereas Critical Theory wants to realize in practical political terms what traditional theory only contemplates, poststructuralism assumes that such theory is already practice. To understand society and politics in this sense is to ground theory not in practice, but *as practice*" (George and Campbell 1990, 280). See also Zalewski's understanding of "theory as everyday practice" (Zalewski 1997). On disagreements by proponents of critical theory and critical geopolitics with IR-poststructuralists see for example the exchange around Tuathail's review essay on David Campbell (Dalby 1996; Tuathail 1996a, 1996b). See also George (1994, 159–169) and Ashley (1996, 243f.), as well as the debate between Hoffmann and Rengger (Hoffman 1987, 1988; Rengger 1988). On a critique of critical theory as "latest edition of liberal idealism" see Jahn (1998).

¹⁷² In what follows I continue to also cite and refer to (poststructuralist) IR-authors – although they are not 'part' of the Essex School – in connection with thoughts formulated by PDT scholars in cases in which they in my view converge.

1. *Discourse as meaningful practice* that constructs and makes the social world intelligible through the attribution of meaning in what becomes what Dryzek calls “a shared way of apprehending the world” (Dryzek 1997, 8; cf. Glynos et al. 2009, 8). PDT presumes that all objects and actions are meaningful, their meaning being conferred by historically specific systems of rules (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 2ff.). There is no (!) separation between discursive and non-discursive phenomena, as every object is constituted as an object of discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 107), having nothing to do with the question whether there actually is a world ‘out there’ external to our mind, or not.¹⁷³ PDT does not deny the existence of objects external to thought – as this would presume an extreme form of idealism¹⁷⁴ – but opposes the claim that these objects could constitute themselves as objects ‘outside’ discourse (cf. Howarth 2013, 93). Although having become one of the most quoted passages of *HSS* (cf. Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 3) the misunderstanding about PDT and an ‘external reality’ is so persistent (cf. Nonhoff 2011, 98) that it is worth being quoted again:

“The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has *nothing to do* with whether there is a world external to our thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of ‘natural phenomena’ or ‘expressions of the wrath of God’, depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 108).

¹⁷³ This is an important difference to Foucault, who – at least according to the reading of Laclau and Mouffe (ibid.) and for instance Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983, 58f.) – separates between discursive and non-discursive phenomena. However, Foucault himself was apparently not unambiguous on this, see for instance his statement on “no prediscursive providence which disposes the world in our favor” in his *Orders of Discourse* (cited in Campbell 1998, 6, who links this passage to Laclau and Mouffe’s understanding of no separation). See also Methmann (2010, 354), Edkins (1999, 47ff.), Howarth (2013, 190).

Whereas a fair amount of scholars explicitly agree on no separation between ‘discursive’ and ‘non-discursive’ (cf. Campbell 1998, 6; Diez 2001, 19; Doty 1996, 5; Herschinger 2011, 13; Solomon 2009, 273), this remains a contested and sometimes confusing issue, if this problematique is not spelled out, as it has happened in the texts criticized for this in the previous chapter. Others in turn separate between discourse and practices (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 7; Neumann 2002, e.g. 2012, 62, 176). While Adler and Pouliot (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 3–4) credit the poststructuralists for drawing attention to “textual practices”, they maintain that the “return of practice to the linguistic turn” came only later. In my view the scholars they cite (Der Derian, Shapiro, Doty) never left practices out when speaking of discourse, but precisely understood discourse as practice.

¹⁷⁴ For a refutation of misreading PDT as idealist and relativist see Laclau (Howarth 2013, 93; 1990, 103–133; Laclau and Bhaskar 1998, 9f.).

For countering a misreading of his own reading of ‘monism’ as subjectivist, idealist and relativist see P.T. Jackson (2011, 115–116; 135–141).

Usually not quoted is the subsequent paragraph, which addresses the alleged idealism (and 'dualism'):

“At the root of the previous prejudice lies an assumption of the *mental* character of discourse. Against this, we will affirm the *material* character of every discursive structure. To argue the opposite is to accept the very classical dichotomy between an objective field constituted outside of any discursive intervention, and a discourse consisting of the pure expression of thought. This is, precisely, the dichotomy which several currents of contemporary thought have tried to break” (ibid.).

Hence, we always encounter objects already as meaningful and 'in context', not as 'neutral' and available to be inspected in theoretical or cognitive terms, and we ourselves can not get outside of this context and act upon it (cf. Glynos and Howarth 2008, 8). Objects and processes that we think about exist, “though our practices of reflection are never external to the lifeworlds into which we are thrown”. This perspective amounts to what Howarth calls a “minimal realism” or more accurately, a “philosophy of radical materialism, in which our conceptual and discursive forms can never exhaust the materiality of objects. Objects are thus constructed in different ways in different contexts [...]” (Howarth 2013, 10). Accordingly there can be no unmediated access to a 'real-concrete' or to a 'final' or absolute truth, as decisions about truth and falsity are settled within orders of discourse according to the criteria established by those orders themselves (Howarth 2000, 133, cf. 2005, 322, 328). This follows Martin Heidegger's critique of classical epistemology by conceiving the subject as always already within a world of meaningful objects and practices, what Laclau and Mouffe call 'the discursive' (Heidegger 1993, 142ff. §§31, 32; cf. Howarth 2005, 322; Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 107).¹⁷⁵ Discourses as configurations of social relations and practices are always understood as involving the exercise of power, as they constitute and structure the social in a particular way and not in another, which always brings the drawing of boundaries and exclusions with it (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 4). This understanding largely converges with the accounts of IR-scholars,¹⁷⁶ who understand discourse as generating the categories of meaning by which 'reality' is understood and explained, thus not only as “a way of learning 'about' something out there in the 'real world'”; it is rather a way of producing that something as real, as identifiable, classifiable, knowable, and therefore,

¹⁷⁵ On a critique of epistemology see also Rorty (1979 especially chapter three), and referring to him, Nabers (2015, forthcoming). See also Marchart (2007, 167).

On his reading of Heidegger in terms of 'monism', as well as on a critique of 'epistemology' see also P.T. Jackson (2011, 31, 129ff.).

¹⁷⁶ For an overview of the study of discourse in IR that still speaks to the most important issues see Milliken (1999).

meaningful. Discourse creates the conditions of knowing” (cf. George 1994, 30; Klein 1987, 4; cf. also e.g. Shapiro 1989, 11). As pointed out for instance by Marieke de Goede and David Campbell, the idea of an ‘external reality’, or the ‘ideal’/‘material’ distinction itself is internal to discourse (Campbell 1998, 7; cf. De Goede 2003, 91). In Laclau and Mouffe’s words:

“[...] any distinction between what are usually called the linguistic and behavioural aspects of a social practice, is either an incorrect distinction or ought to find its place as a differentiation within the social production of meaning, which is structured under the form of discursive totalities” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 107).

The contrasting view is described by Campbell as:

“[...] *epistemic realism* – whereby the world comprises objects whose existence is independent of ideas or beliefs about them – both of these understandings [in the text he refers to realism and Marxism, NN] maintain that there are material causes to which events and actions can be reduced. And occasioned by this epistemic realism, they sanction two other analytic forms: a *narrativizing historiography* in which things have a self-evident quality that allows them to speak for themselves, and a *logic of explanation* in which the purpose of analysis is to identify those self-evident things and material causes so that actors can accommodate themselves to the realm of necessity they engender” (Campbell 1998, 4).

This position largely concurs with what since Bernstein has been referred to as ‘Cartesian anxiety’ (see introduction), i.e. the view that we have to have some sort of ‘ultimate foundation’ for ‘reality’ and what we ‘know’ about it, in order to avoid an ‘anything goes’. However, in Foucauldian terminology, there is no reality perceivable outside techniques of truth (cf. De Goede 2006, 7), i.e. outside discourse.

2. *Discourse as ontological horizon* that implicates the understanding of any objectivity and social relations as relational configurations of elements that comprise agents/subjects, words and actions, that are rendered intelligible within the context of a particular practice, while each element acquires meaning only in relation – and in differentiation – to the other elements (Glynos et al. 2009, 8). This goes back to the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and the understanding of language as a differential system of signifiers without positive terms, where the meaning of each sign depends on its difference to other signs (cf. Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 9f.; Laclau 2007, 37). Going further into detail this means that on the one hand de Saussure distinguished between *langue* (the linguistic rules necessary for meaningful communication to be possible) and *parole* (individual acts of speaking), as well as between *signifiers* (sound-images,

e.g. the sound d-o-g) and *signifieds* (the concept 'dog') on the other hand. Signifier and signified together constitute the basic unit of language for de Saussure, the linguistic sign. Importantly, according to de Saussure's theory there exists no natural relationship between the signified and the signifier (the sound d-o-g and the concept of a 'dog'), but it depends on the functions and conventions of the language used. Thus the signifier d-o-g derives its meaning not out of its reference to the signified 'dog' but from its difference to 'cat' and other related terms. This is meant by an entirely relational and differential understanding of language, hence "Saussure's purely formal and relational theory of language claims that the *identity* of any element is a product of the *differences* and *oppositions* established by the underlying structures of the linguistic system" (Howarth 2013, 25–27). Departing from the Saussurean understanding of these systems as fixed or closed (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 106, 113) – and first and foremost building on Derrida's critique of de Saussure and structuralist linguistics (Edkins 1999, 21ff.; cf. George and Campbell 1990, 284; Gregory 1989, xv) – PDT stresses the incompleteness of *every* system of signification, and the impossibility of fixing a particular meaning once and for ever (Stäheli 2000a, 35; see also Waever 1997, 171 for poststructuralism in IR). In Laclau's words: "The unfixity of the relationship between words and images is the very precondition of any discursive operation which is politically meaningful" (Laclau 2005, 24–25). Derrida argued that it was not possible to fully capture the essential character of language (or any system) in its entirety understood as a closed and complete system. De Saussure's shortcoming according to this critique was to focus on language as product and not as a process (or only on the synchronic, and not the diachronic character), which also led him to first rigidly separate signifier and signified and then connect them through a one-to-one correspondence. This would imply that signifiers (i.e. the 'material') and signifieds (i.e. the 'ideational') can exist independently from each other, but in practice this is not the case. "The distinction between 'bat' and 'cat' is not just the result of the difference between the letters 'b' and 'c'; it is also determined by what these words mean" (Howarth 2013, 39–40). De Saussure's concept ultimately amounts to a dualism between the 'substantial' and the 'conceptual' or the 'material' and the 'ideational', and an understanding of signs/language as vehicles for ideas or human consciousness, which is also very common at least in the 'ideas' literature in IR and IPE (see chapter 1.4). 'Ideas' in this understanding would thus pre-exist language and lie and remain outside the dynamics of linguistic structure and its development, hence outside 'discourse' (cf. Howarth 2013, 42). Derrida's 'answer' was the concept of *différance*, which accounts for the active production of language and discourse. In a nutshell it means that although things and words are co-constituted, their co-constitution is itself never complete, as – because of their entirely relational character –

words can never completely exhaust the meaning(s) of things. This is the case, because things are always related to other things by differing from them, thus carrying their 'traces'. While meaning is produced, there always remain alternative possibilities visible but deferred in these traces (cf. Howarth 2013, 51–53).¹⁷⁷ This understanding was also taken up by IR-poststructuralists, who engaged in deconstruction (see e.g. the references to Derrida throughout the volume edited by Der Derian and Shapiro 1989). In short, a deconstructive approach seeks to problematize the binaries or dualist understandings stemming from 'Cartesian anxiety', i.e. body versus mind, material versus ideational, truth versus fiction etc., as well as their hierarchical positioning. It does not question the relational character of meaning itself, but emphasizes the processual character of meaning as dynamic, historically bound and context dependent (Ashley 1989, 319 FN 58; cf. Gregory 1989, xv f.). This happens by looking for instance at a text on its own terms, in the sense of noting binaries and hierarchies and pointing to their premises in order to situate them in the context they are derived from. In Derrida's words, "the task is [...] to dismantle [*déconstruire*] the metaphysical and rhetorical structures which are at work in [the text], not in order to reject or discard them but to reinscribe them in another way" (cited in Nabers 2015, forthcoming).¹⁷⁸

3. *The centrality of meaning and language* and the understanding of discourse as system of differences does neither reduce everything to language nor to text – as "the *linguistic and non-linguistic elements* are not merely juxtaposed, but constitute a differential and structured system of positions – that is a discourse" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 108 emphasis added) – but implies that the relational and differential character of language applies to all signifying or meaning systems (Glynos et al. 2009, 8). In the words of Laclau discourse "is not restricted to speech and writing but embraces all systems of signification. It is, in that sense, coterminous with social life" (Laclau 2006, 106, 2014, 145). Laclau has repeatedly argued against separating 'language' and 'action' or 'speaking' and 'doing', as this "evokes only too clearly an old differentiation between ideas in people's heads and actions in which they participate. Since Wittgenstein, we know that language games comprise both linguistic exchanges and actions in which they are embedded [...]" (Laclau 2005, 13). Hence, PDT conceives of the social as structured through difference, *analogous* to language (cf. Gregory 1989, xxi; Stäheli 2000a, 8). The social world is read 'as text' in the sense of focusing on central concepts in (Western) philosophical discourse such as 'meaning' and

¹⁷⁷ For a more detailed account of Derrida's theory developed through criticisms of i.e. Claude Lévi-Strauss and Edmund Husserl see Howarth (2013, 28–55).

¹⁷⁸ Jonathan Culler adds the feature that "to deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies, by identifying in the text the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of argument, the key concept or premise (Culler 1994, 86).

'knowing' and their implications for theory and practice (George 1994, 191). In this context it is important (and in accordance with Wittgenstein's understanding) to stress that language is considered a socially and collectively shared system of rules and conventions, not a "private property" (cf. Herschinger 2011, 13). Accordingly, the emphasis on language once more equals no retreat into 'subjectivism' or 'idealism'. As pointed out by Campbell: "The world exists independently of language, but we can never *know* that (beyond the fact of its assertion), because the existence of the world is literally inconceivable outside of language and our traditions of interpretation" (Campbell 1998, 6). This is also why

"textualist or poststructuralist modes of analysis emphasize 'discourse' rather than language because the concept of discourse implies a concern with the meaning- and value-producing practices in language [and beyond, NN] rather than simply the relationship between utterances and their referents" (Shapiro 1989, 14).

Meanwhile, as meaning and sense-making is conferred not only, but primarily through language, a focus on language lies at the heart of a poststructuralist understanding of discourse (cf. i.e. Nonhoff 2011, 96; Herschinger and Renner 2015, 14). Importantly, in this sense language is not treated as transparent or merely referential (cf. chapter 3.3) but the focus lies on both the linguistic practices constitutive of different fields, e.g. political or economic, as well as "on the language of inquiry itself" (ibid.). In the poststructuralist understanding of discourse "theory is as much the *object of analysis* as the tool for analysis" (cf. also George 1994, Chapter 1 and pp.155 ff.; George and Campbell 1990, 285).

4. Last but not least and relating again to PDT as an ontological horizon, *all systems of meaning are understood as structurally incomplete or undecidable* in terms of a fundamental lack or radical contingency (Glynos et al. 2009, 8 with reference to the works of Jaques Lacan and Slavoj Zizek; Glynos and Howarth 2008, 6). Discourses as structure of 'the social' are never closed entities but they are constantly being transferred through contact with other discourses. On an ontological level they are always already dislocated – because of their differential character (see in what follows) – while this dislocation manifests itself on the ontical level through particular events, experienced as 'crises'.¹⁷⁹ Every discourse as a system of differences strives for closure in form of

¹⁷⁹ To reiterate what was briefly stated on 'events' in the introduction, in a poststructuralist understanding an event is not "the thing that happens (the content [...]) but the fact that it happens: to wit, the eventfulness of its event (or, yet again, its event rather than its advent)" (Jean-Luc Nancy, cited in Marchart 2007, 74f.). In this sense Tom Lundborg refers to studying the 'reality' of the *pure event* (as distinguished from the *historical event*) as "expressions of *disruption* or *dislocation*, which, instead of referring to something specific that has happened in a particular moment in time, relate to how something ambiguous and indeterminate disrupts the fantasy of the static being of things – of

drawing its limits and fixing the meanings. With pure difference – if the differences did not constitute a system, a system itself being conceivable only by differentiation from what it excludes – no meaning at all in the sense of signification would be possible (cf. Laclau 2007, 37). In other words, it is not possible to establish a position without differentiating it from a ‘context’, and this process of differentiation in turn establishes the context itself (cf. Hetzel 2004, 199; Laclau 2007, 27). As “any structure or system of differences is defined by reference to something that is actively excluded from that system, thus establishing the limits of a particular structure”, the excluded is always present within the system itself, in turn accounting for the impossibility of a completely closed or sutured system (cf. Howarth 2013, 270).¹⁸⁰ From this ‘essential instability’ follows the *political character* of social objectivity (cf. Glynos and Howarth 2008, 7), ‘political’ understood as non-essential or non-foundational, as taking a decision in an ‘undecidable’ terrain (cf. Glynos and Howarth 2007, 114; cf. Marchart 2010). Asserting the contingency of all knowledge, identities and social relations opposes any foundationalist premise, that they could be grounded on a fixed ‘meta-theoretical’ base transcending human actions, as well as all essentialism that ascribes pre-given characteristics or essences to all being (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 5f.). This understanding of no ultimate groundings or foundations, thus their historical and contingent character was (and still is) a central concern of IR-poststructuralists, who repeatedly pointed out that they did not want to establish poststructuralism as ‘new paradigm’, while however arguing against claims that this positioning would lead to an ‘anything goes’. In Laclau’s words:

“This does not mean that at any time everything that is logically possible becomes, automatically, an actual political possibility. There are inchoated possibilities which are going to be blocked, not because of any logical restriction, but as a result of the historical contexts in which the representative institutions operate” (Laclau 1997, 50).

Knowledge, identities and social relations can and indeed do become fixed or institutionalized all the time, however this fixation can never be totally beyond (political) contestation (cf. Solomon 2009, 274). In Ashley’s argumentation, the main issue for poststructuralist analysis is taking the question of “historicity” seriously (1989, 261f.), in the sense of opposing any presupposition of “an unexamined metaphysical faith in its [modern discourse’s, NN] capacity to speak a sovereign voice of suprahistorical truth” (1989, 264), thus of ultimate foundations for knowledge and ensuing claims about the course of things through “the sovereignty of ‘reasoning man’”. This

subjects, objects and individual moments in time” (Lundborg 2012, 9). This largely corresponds to the understanding of ‘the Rise of Japan’ and ‘the Rise of China’ as dislocations in this thesis.

¹⁸⁰ This understanding again goes back to Derrida’s *différance* and the traces, see above.

critique is not meant as ‘anti-modern’ in terms of being directed against ‘man’ and ‘reason’ (1989, 289) or against other ‘Enlightenment notions’ (cf. George 1994, 140, 156),¹⁸¹ but as ascribing historicity or discursivity to what we seemingly unproblematically call modernity and its ‘achievements’. More generally speaking, in Jim George’s terms the postmodernist contribution to IR emphasizes the “historical, cultural, and linguistic practices in which subjects and objects (and theory and practice, facts and values) are constructed” (George 1994, 192). It is a criticism and eschewing of *any* kind of foundationalism as such, not of modernism in particular (cf. George 1994, 160). George has pointed to the “paradox of modernity” though, in the form of its

“celebration of an ever-increasing distance from the primitive premodern world (and its idealism and metaphysics) continually predicated upon the most basic of assumptions in “premodern” thinking – the assumption that there *is* a foundation for human knowledge, prior to and beyond history, culture and language. In the age that has triumphantly detached itself from the legacy of “premodern” traits, the paradox of modernity is that faith in (premodern) *foundationalism* still reigns at its ontological core” (George 1994, 43).

George argues for dealing with this paradox not through seeking to detach oneself from modernity in terms of proposing a sort of counter-project (which actually would not be possible as we are also part of/embedded in modernist discourse), but through engaging with the paradox – and thus with ‘modernist’ theories – from within, by ascribing to what Foucault has called an attitude or philosophical ethos of permanent critique of our historical era, in his view actually a thread *connecting* to the critical Enlightenment spirit (1994, 162).¹⁸² As George maintains,

“the aim here [is] not to dismiss the dominant readings but to illustrate that they are, indeed *readings* – that they can be read in different ways and that their status is derived not from any correspondence with an essential (real) meaning but from a discursive strategy intrinsically connected to the dominant form of (sociohistorical) knowledge and power” (1994, 192 emphasis added).

What Richard Ashley¹⁸³ in turn calls the ‘paradox of poststructuralism’ is basically the eschewing of any foundationalism as consequence of taking historicity seriously, thus as in his example for

¹⁸¹ See footnotes on poststructuralism and postmodernism in the previous chapter, as well as Laclau and Mouffe on the discursive construction of ‘Man’ (2001, 116–117). On the latter see also Howarth (2013, 61).

¹⁸² See Foucault’s *What is Enlightenment?* (Foucault 1984). On what he sees as possible dialogue between postmodernism and “Modernist-Enlightenment thought” see for instance Chris Hughes (2012, Chapter 7).

¹⁸³ But see also George’s criticism of Ashley in this context, in George (1994, 165, 175). William Connolly also criticizes Ashley for what he terms “a recipe for theoretical postponism” and argues not for eschewing or negating the

instance not taking a position in terms of choosing 'structure' over 'agency', but instead respecting this undecidable opposition as "an inescapable feature of the ways in which one may think about history" (1989, 273f.) In the words of David Howarth, "the problem of structure and agency does not admit of theoretical resolution at all, because it is an issue that resides in social relations themselves" (Howarth 2013, 149, 151, 161, 182, 270).¹⁸⁴ Hence poststructuralism cannot and does not intend to serve as an alternative 'ground' in the foundational sense, as it claims to be aware of its own historicity and contingency. This awareness is characterized as "an unceasing determination to see the consequences of this reasoning through matched by an insistent openness to criticism at every turn", and attributed to "a rigorously sustained integrity of theoretical intellect" in terms of a theoretical detachment from what Ashley calls 'historical practice'. However, again, against the numerous assertions to the contrary, this is not meant to lead to an 'anything goes', as poststructuralists understand every practice – be it theoretical or 'historical' – as political in the sense of participating "in the inscription of a sovereign voice and the narrative structuring of history" (Ashley 1989, 280), or in other words, in the sense of necessarily taking a certain position or decision while always being aware of its contingent foundations. I understand this as what Laclau and the Essex School have called to take a decision in an undecidable terrain. In Laclau's words: "To understand something historically is to refer it back to its contingent conditions of emergence" (Laclau 1990, 36).

The 'political'

The emphasis on 'historicity' is further addressed by other authors in IR who emphasize and elaborate on the concept and understanding of 'the political' in poststructuralism, mostly again by connecting to the works of Foucault, Derrida, Lacan and Žižek (cf. Edkins 1999). The 'political' as differentiated from and opposed to 'politics'

"has to do with the establishment of that very social order which sets out a particular, historically specific account of what counts as politics and defines other areas of social life as *not* politics. [...]

It is central to this process that the act of constitution is immediately concealed or hidden: Hence, "the political is ... revealed, not in what we call political activity but in the double movement

grounding of theoretical approaches, but for problematizing the grounding at the same time (Connolly 2002, 56), which I would read as 'weak ontology' in the sense of Stephen K. White (see in what follows). See also Howarth's criticism of Ashley, that points into the same direction (Howarth 2013, 77f.).

See also in what follows on differentiating 'post-foundationalism' from 'anti-foundationalism'.

¹⁸⁴ In the same vein Laclau discusses the relationship between 'the universal' and 'the particular', which is not about privileging one or the other, but articulating the (philosophical and political) relationship between them (Laclau 2007, Chapter 2; cf. Zerilli 2009, 89).

whereby the mode of institution of society appears and is obscured” (Edkins 1999, 2 quoting Claude Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory*, 11).

As expressed by Chantal Mouffe, ‘the political’ is the dimension of antagonism constitutive of societies, while ‘politics’ is the set of practices through which an order is created, that organizes coexistence in the context of ‘the political’ (Mouffe 2005, 9). Poststructuralist analysis bears the capacities to concern itself with and to render ‘the political’ visible. In his study on what he calls “post-foundational political thought” – encompassing a chapter on Laclau – Oliver Marchart extensively focuses on the difference between ‘politics’ and ‘the political’ (‘la politique’/‘le politique’; ‘Politik’/‘das Politische’) (Marchart 2007, 1). From the viewpoint of political theory he characterizes the “moment of the political” as the moment of the encounter with contingency, which

“is not only a crisis within a specific discourse (which leads to conceptual change only), but the encounter with the crisis or breakdown of discursive signification as such – in political terms, the encounter with society’s abyss or absent ground. And it is the realization of the groundlessness of the social as the entirety of the discursive, rather than just [...] of any particular discourse, which has come to define the emerging post-foundationalist constellation” (Marchart 2007, 32f.).¹⁸⁵

Interestingly, the term post-foundationalism does not figure prominently, if at all in Essex-School works. Laclau makes an explicit reference to the term in Marchart’s understanding and referring to him only in a text in 2012, reprinted in the 2014 collection of essays (Laclau 2014, 119). Laclau emphasizes, that in contrast to anti-foundationalism, post-foundationalism does not mean the absence of a ground, but the realization of its presence as an absent ground. He refers to the same passage in Heidegger on the ‘abyss’ or ‘Abgrund’ as Howarth (2013, 183), but Howarth does not employ the term post-foundationalism. Other scholars in fact do characterize PDT as anti-foundational or anti-essentialist, or as having an anti-foundational epistemology (Herschinger and Renner 2014, 13; Koch 2007, 1; Methmann 2010, 351; Torfing 2005, 13). François Debrix in turn speaks of non-foundationalism, by which he means “to hold given or accepted foundational beliefs in suspense” (Debrix 2003, 24).¹⁸⁶ For example, poststructuralism

¹⁸⁵ Marchart reads Laclauian discourse theory as a ‘political ontology’ in the sense of a (political) theory of signification (as such). Since there can be no social reality outside signification or beyond meaning, a theory of signification amounts to a theory of all possible being, thus to an ontology. Every ontology is ‘political’ in the sense of being concerned with every aspect of being in a quasi transcendental approach in the post-Heideggerian sense, thus concerned with ontological conditions, not the conditions or foundations of ‘knowing’ or ‘understanding’, hence leaving the modern hegemonic terrain of epistemology (167). Importantly, not everything is political but the ground/abyss of everything is ‘the political’ (2007, 146–149, 167–169). On Laclau and ‘the political’ see also Bech Dyrberg (2009), as well as the work of Chantal Mouffe (1993, 2005).

¹⁸⁶ On what they call foundations without foundationalism see also Chernoff (2013, 355) and P.T. Jackson (2011, 189).

is not 'anti-structuralism' in the sense of positing a different 'theory of origin', but it asks "not why and how there is stability to social systems, it asks why and how structures become undone"(Finlayson and Valentine 2002, 12).

In Laclau and Mouffe's work these issues figure in the central concepts of hegemony and antagonism and the social, political and fantasmatic logics that I will elaborate on in the chapter three. In Laclau and Mouffe's words:

"Our approach is grounded in privileging the moment of *political* articulation, and the central category of political analysis is, in our view, *hegemony*. [...] But to say *contingent articulation* is to enounce a central dimension of 'politics'. This privileging of the political moment in the structuration of society is an essential aspect of our approach. [...] the hegemonic link is [...] constitutively political. [...] This is why we conceive of the political not as superstructure but as having the status of an *ontology of the social*" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, x, xii, xiii, xiv).

This is also why Laclau understands social relations as always contingent, and as power relations. For the understanding of identity this means that "the construction of a social identity is an act of power and that identity as such *is* power" (Laclau 1990, 31). In this sense, Laclau understands 'the field of the political' as "[t]he moment of antagonism where the undecidable nature of the alternatives [of sedimented forms of objectivity *that make up the field that we will call the 'social'*, (ibid.)] and their resolution through power relations becomes fully visible" (Laclau 1990, 35, see also 2014, 68).

Ontology

From all that has been said it follows that ontology for PDT

"is not just about what sorts of things exist, but that they exist and how they exist. Indeed, of capital importance in this regard is the fact that objects and subjects are marked by an 'essential instability' that problematizes a simple listing of their necessary intrinsic properties and causal capacities" (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 11).

Instead "the meaning and identity of beings depends on the historical and relational contexts in which they appear" (Glynos and Howarth 2008, 10; Howarth 2013, 145).

I read PDT's understanding of ontology as a weak ontology in the understanding of Stephen White, as "ontological commitments in this sense are thus entangled with questions of identity and history, with how we articulate the meaning of our lives, both individually and collectively" (S. K. White 2000, 4). White refers to Heidegger's emphasis on being ('Sein') as a not purely cognitive matter, but as inextricably linked to 'existential human being' ('Dasein') – and points out that postmodernism and poststructuralism are not the only currents in this stream of thought (ibid., 5). This resonates with what has been said about foundational versus post-foundational understandings earlier. 'Strong ontologies' claim to show "the way the world is", and "it is by reference to this external ground that ethical and political life gain their sense of what is right; moreover this foundation's validity is unchanging and of universal reach" (ibid., 6). 'Weak ontologies' in turn accept that

"all fundamental conceptualizations of self, other, and world are contestable." Importantly, all the same "there is a sense that such conceptualizations are nevertheless necessary or unavoidable for an adequately reflective ethical and political life. The latter demands from us the affirmative gesture of *constructing foundations*, the former prevents us from carrying out this task in a traditional fashion. One aspect of constructing such *contestable foundations* involves the embodiment within them of *some signaling of their own limits*. [...] In a way, its contestability will thus be *enacted* rather than just announced" (S. K. White 2000, 8 emphases added).

Hence, a 'weak ontology' does not mean no ontology or no foundations at all, but being aware of the contingency of the foundations.

'Discourse' according to Laclau and Mouffe

I turn now briefly to the more detailed conceptualization of the term 'discourse' by Laclau and Mouffe, that lies at the 'origin' of their understanding of identity and hegemony, and that enfold their key-notions (nodal points, antagonism, dislocation, logics of equivalence and difference, empty signifiers), which I will articulate into analytical categories in chapter three. Concrete examples of the terms and categories do follow with the discourse analysis of the Congressional Record in the chapters four to seven.

What Laclau and Mouffe call discursive structure in their words "is not a merely 'cognitive' or 'contemplative' entity: it is an *articulatory practice* which constitutes and organizes social relations" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 96). Discourse is "the structured totality resulting from the

articulatory practice”, while articulation is “any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice”. In this case an element becomes a “moment”, thus a temporarily fixed position; temporarily because “no discursive formation is a sutured totality and the transformation of the elements into moments is never complete” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 107).¹⁸⁷ Elements in turn are “floating signifiers” (Laclau 2005, 131–133; Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 113) that may become “nodal points” when turned into moments. Nodal points are understood as partial fixations of meaning to which the differential positions relate (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 112). Hence,

“the practice of articulation, therefore, consists in the construction of nodal points which partially fix meaning; and the partial character of this fixation proceeds from the openness of the social, a result, in its turn, of the constant overflowing of every discourse by the infinitude of the field of discursivity” (2001, 113).

In other words, attributed meanings are and always remain contested by other possibilities of articulation. Importantly, articulation is not to be understood as linguistic practice only, but as any social practice, “[t]he social *is* articulation insofar as ‘society’ is impossible” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 114)¹⁸⁸, meaning that complete closure or saturation of the social as a fixed ‘society’ is never possible. The impossibility of final closure is due to the differential (hence essentially instable) character of any system of signification (see point 4. in this subchapter). Meaning can only be established as difference from that which it is not and from that which it excludes. Through this negating or excluding reference the ‘what is not’ is always present in ‘what is’, so that ‘what is’ is always confronted with its own limits. As laid out under point 4., the strive for closure is always present as well. From this ‘impossible (strive for) fullness’ follows what Laclau and Mouffe term antagonism as “experience of the limit of the social”, as “the presence of the ‘Other’ prevents me from being totally myself” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 125), see also in what follows on identity. This limit of the social is not something ‘external’ to the social, but it is “given within the social itself as something subverting it, destroying its ambition to constitute a full presence” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 127).¹⁸⁹ Furthermore,

“antagonism escapes the possibility of being apprehended through language, since language only exists as an attempt to fix that which antagonism subverts” [...], “for every language and every

¹⁸⁷ Martin Nonhoff discusses what he sees as Laclau’s shifting from ‘elements’ to ‘demands’, see Nonhoff (2007, 176).

¹⁸⁸ As pointed out by Laclau in a debate with Roy Bhaskar: “The notion of discourse, could, if you prefer, be replaced by that of practice” (Laclau and Bhaskar 1998, 9).

¹⁸⁹ For differences between a Laclauian and a Lacanian understanding of ‘antagonism’ see Zerilli (2009, 97–102).

society are constituted as a repression of the consciousness of the impossibility that penetrates them” (2001, 125).

Antagonism is expressed instead through the logics of equivalence and difference, which I address under the following subchapter on ‘identity’. It should be further noted here however, that while in *HSS* the notion of antagonism is central, it is complemented by the term dislocation in *New Reflections on the Revolutions of our Time* (NR, 1990). A (hegemonic) discourse becomes challenged or dislocated by events that cannot be reconciled or integrated by it (Torfing 2005: 16). “The response to the dislocation of the structure will be its recomposition around particular nodal points of articulation by the various antagonistic forces. [...] [D]islocation is both the condition of possibility and impossibility of a center at the same time.” Therefore, like antagonism, “dislocation is the primary ontological level of constitution of the social” (Laclau 1990, 40, 44), or in other words, the failure of the structure enables agency (see in what follows).

Importantly however, as pointed out for instance by Ty Solomon, for the relationship between (collective) self and other this means that because of its (ontological) lack, every identity is prevented from achieving ‘closure’ in terms of a fully constituted identity from within itself, and not *because* of an encounter with the other as something external. It is the encounter with the other that renders the lack visible on an ontical level (Solomon 2015, 13). Because of the impossibility of a fully sutured social system dislocations are always possible, while the inherent strive for closure attempts at precluding them. Then, in case of a dislocation the articulation of a constitutive outside can be made responsible for the own ‘deficiency’, as it serves to suppress the contingency of all identity and society (cf. Torfing 2005, 17). In my reading (see in what follows on identity), the dislocation then results in an antagonism that is expressed through the logics of equivalence and difference.¹⁹⁰

2.2. Identity¹⁹¹

In IR-literature, poststructuralism is commonly credited with mostly contributing to IR research by ‘bringing identity in’ (cf. Diez 2004, 321; Herschinger 2011, 25).¹⁹² The most important

¹⁹⁰ Laclau points out that “the defence of the community against an external threat has dislocated that community, which, in order to persist, cannot simply repeat something that preceded the dislocatory moment. That is why someone who wants to defend an existing order of things has already lost it through its very defence” (Laclau 2005, 121). This is an important point regarding my argument about the U.S. trying to preserve its identity vis-à-vis Japan and China, I take it up in the analysis in chapters four to seven.

¹⁹¹ This subchapter partly draws from Nymalm (2013).

difference of discourse-theoretical approaches in general and PDT in particular compared to other (constructivist) approaches towards identity – as laid out in chapter 1.4 – is that identity is not established as a pre-fixed category to be then applied to, or filled out by the ‘empirical results’ of an analysis (cf. Howarth 2013, 233, 235). Identity is understood as discursively articulated (not only but also through language, and in this respect ‘articulation’ is understood in the sense laid out in chapter 2.1, hence not only as linguistic expression), thus as an entirely social and relational phenomenon. In a strict sense ‘identity’ as such does not exist, but it ‘happens’ through identification with ‘subject positions’ being articulated in discourses, meaning that every identity is constituted within a relationship to others that is only temporarily fixable (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 111ff.). The subject positions can be understood as these temporal and partial – hence never complete – fixations,¹⁹³ which also means that in a PDT understanding no self-contained, completely self-conscious, stable subject exists.¹⁹⁴ The ‘self’ is what it is because it is contrasted with something else that it is not, and groups constitute themselves in relation to other groups (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 40, 43). The formation of individual and collective identities happens through discursive processes, during which identities are accepted, refused and negotiated. As meaning can never be ultimately fixed, the way is open for constant social struggles about definitions of society and identity with their respective effects (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 24ff., 36). Self and other are thus always constituted in differential relation to each other, also implicated by the strive for impossible closure or fullness, which renders the other into the constitutive, as well as the antagonistic other, that is on the one hand ‘necessary’, but on

¹⁹² For an ‘inventory’ of poststructuralist ‘achievements’ see i.e. Ashley (1996, 245f.) and Howarth (2013, 1–2), for ‘deficits’ see *ibid.* 75f.

¹⁹³ David Howarth reads ‘subject positions’ as [temporarily!] sedimented forms of identity “with which social actors identify in their ongoing social reproduction”, and he further differentiates them from ‘(radical) subjectivity’, which in turn accounts for the incomplete and split subject at the ontological level. The lack is rendered visible through dislocations on the ontical level, and in this sense enables identifications to deal with the experienced lack (cf. Howarth 2013, 246). Laclau himself criticized the understanding of ‘subject positions’ as something fixed in terms of “replacing the transcendental subject with its symmetrical other, that of reinscribing the multifarious forms of undomesticated subjectivities in an objective totality”, in other words, by a reification of structure. Instead he also pointed to the essential lack in the structure that enables the subject to emerge (Laclau 2007, 21), see in what follows (cf. also Nabers 2015, forthcoming).

See also Stephen White’s critique of a tendency in “postmodernism [...] to reproduce in a new guise the problem of frictionless subjectivity within their own stance” (S.K. White 2000, 6).

While I agree with Howarth (cf. Howarth 2013, 227, 246, 250) and other scholars (for instance Richard Ned Lebow 2012, 17) – and ultimately in his later work also Laclau – that ‘identification’ (cf. Laclau 2005, 54ff.) might actually be a better notion than ‘identity’, as it emphasizes a processual or performative understanding. Along with these authors I will however also stick to the use of the term ‘identity’ (in a PDT understanding) here. See also chapter 1.4.

¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, in this view the subject also does not possess a ‘hidden human nature’, and it is not ‘the origin’ of discourse, but is in a sense constituted or generated by discourse as social structure that enables the subject to become what it ‘is’ through identification with particular structural positions (cf. Nabers, 2015 forthcoming). See also in what follows in the next footnote.

the other hand reminds the self of its essential lack (see chapter 2.1 on Derrida's 'traces').¹⁹⁵ "[T]his *constitutive outside* is inherent to *any* antagonistic relationship" (Laclau 1990, 9). This is why poststructuralist understandings mostly refer to 'identity' as "identity/difference" (i.e. Howarth 2013, 227). Referring to the fundamental lack in every structure, every identity is conceived as "dislocated in so far as it depends on an outside which both denies that identity and provides its condition of possibility at the same time" (Laclau 1990, 39) on the *ontological level*.¹⁹⁶ On the *ontical level* the 'essential dislocation' may manifest itself through the experience of an 'event', or confrontation with an other, that cannot be integrated into the existing meaning system, or reconciled with the so far existing articulations of the self. What Oliver Marchart denotes as 'crisis' in my view comes close to 'dislocation' in this sense: "a result of a growing non-correspondence between an old paradigm and its changing institutional or social context, where competing hegemonic practices seek to take the old paradigm's place" (Marchart 2007, 56). Importantly, this relation "arises not from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their constitution" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 125).

In case of a dislocation, the other, or the constitutive outside, can be made responsible for it, resulting in an antagonism that is expressed by Laclau and Mouffe through the logics of equivalence and difference (cf. Laclau 1990, 39, 50; Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 132).¹⁹⁷ The logic of equivalence creates equivalent identities through the negation of other discursive systems – i.e. other groups – by subverting the differential character within the own discourse or in-group. The internal differences are (temporarily) canceled out by referring to an external other that is articulated as fundamentally opposed to everything that constitutes the self. In consequence, the internal differences become equivalent (only) as being opposed to a common external other.

¹⁹⁵ As pointed out by Ty Solomon, who also draws on Jaques Lacan: "It is this quest for a sense of fullness that leads to perpetual processes of identification, rather than the construction of fixed and conclusive 'identity'", and "one does not 'start out' as a subject, but only engages in identification because it is initially lack [...]" (Solomon 2015, 31, 52).

¹⁹⁶ Meanwhile dislocation is also productive, as it is this fundamental lack in the structure that allows for agency – or the 'subject' – to emerge. In this sense "the subject is merely the distance between the undecidable structure and the decision". BUT importantly "[...] because structural dislocation is constitutive, the dislocated structure cannot provide the principle of its transformations. The dislocated structure thus opens possibilities of multiple and indeterminate rearticulations [...]" (cf. Laclau 1990, 60, 39, 42). In this sense anything said about identity on the ontological level does not necessarily translate in any predetermined features on the ontical level, see also what was laid out in the passage on identity in chapter 1.4. In Laclau's words: "It is important to point out that there is no necessary relation between the dislocation as such [...] and the discursive space that is to constitute its principle of reading its particular form of representation" (Laclau 1990, 65).

¹⁹⁷ However, Laclau points out that no dislocation needs to be constructed in an antagonistic way, meaning that there are no "natural" antagonisms (Laclau 2009, 319), while "any position in a system of differences, in so far as it is negated, can become the locus of an antagonism (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 131). In this sense "[a]ntagonism as the negation of the given order is, quite simply, the limit of that order, and not the moment of a broader totality in relation to which the two poles of the antagonism would constitute differential – i.e. objective – partial instances" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 126).

In relation and to link up to what was said earlier (in chapter 1.3) on exclusive and inclusive articulations of identity, the chains of equivalence are aimed at or can lead to an exclusive articulation (cf. Rumelili 2004). The logic of difference does the opposite, it expands a given system of differences by dismantling existing relations of equivalence and thereby weakening and dissolving antagonisms, which corresponds to a potentially inclusive articulation of identity. The logic of equivalence thus simplifies the ‘political space’, while the logic of difference makes it more complex (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 130).¹⁹⁸ These two logics are not mutually exclusive, but as between identity and difference, there is always interplay between them, as the in-group strives to construct itself in non-antagonistic terms (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 11; cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 130).

Importantly however, in my reading the internal differences can also be articulated into what I call ‘internal chains of equivalence’ between opposed internal positions. In this sense, it is important to bear in mind that

“the antagonistic camp(s) will always be something more than the simple opposite(s) of the hegemonic force. For empirical analysis it is therefore necessary not to look for one single antagonistic border, but to be aware of the different perspectives from which different antagonisms are constructed”(see also Laclau 2005, 130f.; Wullweber 2014, 13).¹⁹⁹

Moreover, differences are not eliminated through equivalence, they are ‘only’ weakened. Without difference, there would simply be no equivalence, as the equivalential relation consists of nothing positive, just of the common ‘lack’ or deficiency – experienced because of the dislocation, and attributed to the other (cf. Laclau 2005, 79, 96). This is why the logics of equivalence and difference are articulated through so-called empty signifiers as signifiers of lack. Being ‘empty’, they provide a common point of reference – a nodal point – or equivalent notion of identification for different positions. They stand for both, what is lacking in a group or issue at stake, as well as for offering a possibility for the solution to overcome the lack (cf. Howarth 2013, 250). Laclau gives the notion of ‘order’ in a situation of disorder as an example. In a situation of disorder, ‘order’ becomes an empty signifier as it signifies its own lack or absence, while at the same time

¹⁹⁸ Laclau and Mouffe relate the logic of difference to the syntagmatic (combinative), and the logic of equivalence to the paradigmatic (substitutive) pole of language (ibid.).

¹⁹⁹ In the discourse analysis of the Congressional Record in this case, this means to focus also on the mentioned ‘internal antagonisms’ between the proponents and critics of, for example, a policy of ‘engagement’ or ‘retaliation’. In this respect it is important to look at the differences between the articulations of Japan and China as ‘different’ from the U.S., as this also happens in a more or less confrontational or accommodating way. Furthermore, this means that there is not only one ‘hegemonic force’ (on hegemony see the following subchapter), but, following from the dislocation, U.S. identity in both cases may take on different forms. I expand on this in the analysis in chapters four to seven.

pointing to the 'solution' to the problem of its absence (i.e. the restoration or creation of order). In this sense, when an empty signifier becomes a signifier of a lack, various proponents can compete for establishing their particular concept to abolish or deal with the lack. To exercise the filling of the empty signifier is when the discourse becomes hegemonic, when a particular proponent or group succeeds in (temporarily!) establishing its objectives as 'universal', i.e. as that of the whole collective (cf. Laclau 2007, 44). This goes hand in hand with articulating the other, that now becomes the 'excluded' or 'evil other' as responsible for the lack.

In my view, this can be expressed through the words of Campbell as follows: to preserve its identity, a community engages in "exclusionary practices in which resistant elements to a secure identity on the 'inside' are linked through a discourse of 'danger', with threats identified and located on the 'outside'" (cf. Campbell 1994, 149). To conceal this process, the aim is to inscribe this 'absolute difference' to the outside not just as one interpretation among many, but as universally valid, thus as hegemonic (cf. Ashley 1988, 257; Campbell 1998, 65; Laclau 2007, 42f.). This includes rendering alternatives to the hegemonic articulation unthinkable (Laclau 1988, 57; Marchart 1998, 14). However, it does not mean that the (temporarily) hegemonic articulation cannot be challenged again through alternative perspectives aiming at establishing themselves in turn as 'common sense' (see also what follows on hegemony).

In this sense identities can be partly understood as "strategic constructs" – and indeed a hegemony perspective emphasizes the role of political articulations in the construction of identities – however not in the sense of being completely freely manipulable in the sense of employing it as a conscious strategy, as (successful) identification always depends on the context available (cf. Howarth 2013, 243, 251), but also on the degree of the proponents of a certain position being gripped by a particular perspective, i.e. unable to distance themselves from it (see also in what was laid out earlier on the constraining and enabling features of discourse). In this sense for instance also Linus Hagström and Karl Gustafsson point to the limits of what they call the "actorising" of "identity discourses", in terms of there being a limit to an understanding of "cynical, rational actors who tamper with identities in an instrumentalist and strategic way in order to achieve their purposes without themselves being under the influence of identities" (Hagström and Gustafsson 2015, 8).²⁰⁰

What is of particular importance for this project, the attempts at preserving or stabilizing a particular identity or discourse has been termed "defensive hegemonic strategy" by Martin Nonhoff (2006b, 238–240). Laclau in turn retains that

²⁰⁰ However, I do not completely follow them in their conceptualization of identity and of "identity entrepreneurs". On the notion of 'strategy' in IR-poststructuralism and PDT see also Herschinger (2011, 41ff).

“someone who wants to maintain an existing order of things has already lost through its very defense. In our terms: the perpetuation of a threatened order can no longer rely on a purely differential logic; its success depends on the inscription of those differences within an equivalential chain” (Laclau 2005, 121).

In my reading this may lead either to articulating the self versus the ‘excluded other’, or a ‘rearticulated self in terms of dealing with ‘internal’ chains of equivalence (cf. also Herschinger 2011, 50ff., who understands what she calls “counter-hegemonic strategies” as aimed at shifting, not eliminating ‘the frontier’). How these dynamics play themselves out in practice, will be shown through the analysis in chapters four to seven.

In view of what has been said on identity from a PDT perspective, with respect to my topic of research I consent that “no state possesses a prediscursive, stable identity, and no state is free from the tension between the various domains that need to be aligned for a political community to come into being, an alignment that is a response to, rather than constitutive of, a prior and stable identity” (Campbell 1998, 91).²⁰¹ The identity of states is discursively constructed through the inscription of limits that serve to distinguish a self from an other, an inside from an outside, a domestic from a foreign (Campbell 1998, 9). In this sense a state can be understood as a product of competing hegemonic struggles seeking to impose their projects on society (Howarth 2000, 120), as “[...]every social order rests on a forgetting of the exclusion practices through which one set of meanings has been institutionalized and various other possibilities – other possible forms of meaning – have been marginalized” (Shapiro 1989, 15). My aim in this research is to inquire into how and with what outcomes these hegemonic struggles take place in the United States.

From what has been said, probably the two most important aspects when it comes to differences (and to a large extent, misunderstandings) between poststructuralist and more conventional (also constructivist) conceptualizations of identity, are that identities are neither primordial or essential, nor in a constant state of fluidity or flux (cf. Howarth 2013, 236). Because of their mutual dependence, neither identity nor difference can ever be fully constituted, while the permanent strive to do so produces the partial fixations that make it possible to conceive and speak of ‘identity’ and ‘difference’ in the first place (ibid., 242ff.).

An important question arising from this understanding – as well as from what was laid out earlier on the ‘inclusive’ and ‘exclusive’ features of ‘liberal identity’ in terms of American

²⁰¹ And Campbell adds: “Yet for no state is this condition as central as it is for America.”

exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history (chapter 1.3) – in my eyes becomes the issue of the ‘evil other’. Laclau’s understanding of every identity as differential/according to a system of differences implies the necessity to draw the limits of the system, however precarious and unfixable these limits in the end might be, as they are considered to be results of hegemonic articulations, which always carry the inherent possibility for dislocation. However, Laclau also points out that no dislocation *needs* to be constructed in an antagonistic way, meaning that there are no ‘natural’ antagonisms (Laclau 2009, 319; see also Norval 2000, 223; with reference to Stäheli 2009, 239). Hence “it becomes necessary to show the discursive strategies constructing a particular antagonism” (Stäheli 2009, 239), what is the endeavor of this thesis with respect to the discourses on Japan and China in the U.S. The question of whether it is possible to deal with dislocations and antagonisms in a way that does not lead to the construction of the other as ‘evil’ has been addressed by several scholars in the field of PDT and beyond (Connolly 2009, 179; Norval 2000, 212ff., 2009, 151ff.; cf. for example Stäheli 2009, 234ff.). In the words of Connolly, the problematic of the ‘paradox of identity’ lies in the quest for a ‘true’ identity (cf. also Howarth 2013, 244):

“[...] the paradoxical element in the relation of identity to difference is that we cannot dispense with personal and collective identities, but the multiple drives to stamp truth upon those identities function to convert difference into otherness and otherness into scapegoats created and maintained to secure the appearance of a true identity” (Connolly 1991, 67).

Coming back to the question of the ‘limits of liberalism’ in this sense, as discussed in chapter 1.3., linking it to PDT connects to the question whether or at what point in U.S.-Japanese and U.S.-Chinese economic relations the liberal theory of history and American exceptionalism are articulated in terms of an *exclusive* identity, thus drawing limits to its own *universalist* features, by antagonizing the other in order to preserve the self.

How the exclusion of the other, or the articulation of him/her as antagonist concretely takes place, is addressed in chapters four to seven. In what follows in the next subchapter, I briefly elaborate on ‘hegemony’ and hegemonic articulations aimed at filling the empty signifier.

2.3. Hegemony²⁰²

“Hegemony is, quite simply, a political type of relation, a form, if one so wishes, of politics; but not a determinable location within a topography of the social. In a given social formation there can be a variety of hegemonic nodal points” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 138, 139).

These words by Laclau and Mouffe basically encompasses the major characteristics of ‘hegemony’ in a poststructuralist understanding, that differs to important extents from the more conventional understandings in IR and IPE of hegemony as domination (cf. Howarth 2013, 197).²⁰³ The most prominent theorizations of ‘hegemony’ in IPE (and IR) are the frameworks of hegemonic stability theory (HST), World-Systems Theory (WST) and Neo-Gramscian approaches (cf. Herschinger 2012, 69; Saull 2010).²⁰⁴ Their main focus is on the interrelation between a global political and economic order and the role of the (hegemonic) actor/’state’/’historical bloc’ in it.²⁰⁵ Although Laclau and Mouffe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (HSS)* do discuss (or rather deconstruct) the Marxist uses and understandings of hegemony and they explicitly refer to Gramsci regarding their theory of hegemony, they also make very clear that in taking the concept further, they depart from what remains “a core essentialism” in Gramsci’s thought, i.e. that hegemony must always correspond to a ‘fundamental economic class’ (see also for example Dallmayr 2009, 38f.; cf. Howarth 2013, 195f.; Laclau 2005, 127). From the point of view of PDT this means not only to reaffirm an understanding of the economy as ‘last determining instance’, but also to exempt ‘the economy’ from being a hegemonic constitution itself (cf. Barrett 1991, 63; Howarth 1995, 130; cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 69; cf. Torfing 1999, 36). PDT rejects both assertions. The historical materialist approach as put forward for example by Stephen Gill and William Robinson (and also Robert Cox and for example van Kees van der Pijl) not only reproduces this kind of essentialism to a certain extent (see also Methmann 2010, 348, 354; cf.

²⁰² This subchapter builds and expands on Nymalm (2014).

²⁰³ Authors addressing the problems of miscommunication between different understandings are for example (Destradi 2010, 909, 912ff.; Herschinger 2012, 66; see also Joseph 2008, 109; Nabers 2010, 937). On an early critique of hegemonic stability theory (HST) and the concept of hegemony in IPE see Leaver (1989).

²⁰⁴ For a quite comprehensive characterization of these, as well as literature, see for example Saull (2010), Destradi (2010), Bieler and Morton (2004).

²⁰⁵ Importantly, Richard Saull for example points to both historical ‘sources’ of this understanding, which are the more acknowledged *Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli on the one hand, but also debates among Russian revolutionaries about the strategy of the Bolshevik revolution – in particular within the Third International (cf. R. W. Cox 1983, 163) – on the other hand (Saull 2010, Introduction). The latter ones often tend to be overlooked in IR- and IPE-literature that does not take Gramscian or Neo-Gramscian understandings into account. Gramsci himself relied on both of these strands (cf. R.W. Cox, *ibid.*). Most commonly the work of Robert Cox is taken to stand for the origins of Neo-Gramscian approaches, but Hummel for example argues for differentiating critical theory à la Cox from Neo-Gramscian approaches, as Cox draws on Gramsci, but not exclusively on him (cf. Hummel 2000, 31). Also Cox himself, who identifies his approach with historical materialism (R. W. Cox 2010), has distanced himself from the label.

Scherrer 1999, 28f.), as it sticks to the understanding of “hegemony [as] the basis for the supremacy of a class”, be it on a national or a “transnational capitalist class” level (cf. Gill 2008, 91–96; cf. Saull 2010). Furthermore, in consequence this approach also harbors a dichotomy between ‘ideas’ and ‘the material’ that proponents of PDT – for whom ‘the economy’ is not exempted from the discursive character of the social world – discard (cf. Ryner 2006, 145), and that is also challenged for instance by cultural political economy approaches (cf. Best and Patterson 2010, 5, 10).

As has been laid out earlier, to speak of the ‘discursive character of the social world’ means to understand it as consisting of meaningful social practices that constitute and shape ‘discourse’ as structure of the social. Discourse is not understood as ‘ideology’ in a narrow sense, but includes all types of social and political practice (importantly, as already stated, discourse does thus not refer only to language or a purely ‘ideational’ realm! (Laclau 2005, 12; cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 108)), institutions and organizations (Howarth 1995, 115). Institutions and organizations might be understood as (temporarily) fixed or ‘sedimented discourses’. Importantly, speaking of ‘discursive hegemony’ does not mean to exclude ‘material (i.e. economic or military) capabilities’. Instead it refers to them being part of the discourse: it is the meaning or signification of these material capabilities in context that matters (Hagström and Gustafsson 2015, 18; Herschinger 2012, 71; cf. Nabers 2010, 938),²⁰⁶ a perspective that is not very commonly addressed when speaking of hegemony in IR and IPE (see also Herschinger 2012, 66f.). Furthermore, this also does not mean to exclude an analysis of power, but instead power here is not understood as ‘power over’ but precisely as ability to hegemonize the discourse in terms of establishing a particular view/meaning as universal (see in what follows).²⁰⁷ Whereas this understanding clearly bears resemblance to Gramsci, the points of departure are also obvious, as Laclau and Mouffe take issue with the main tension they see in Gramsci (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 138): the contingency in the formation of subjects through the political process of articulation on the one hand, versus his ultimate reliance on classes as structural determinants on the other hand (cf. Retamozo 2011, 44). Meanwhile, they do have the same starting point in defining ‘hegemony’ as when a particularity takes up a universal signification (Laclau 2005, 70), or more concretely, a group establishing its ‘particular’ goal as that of ‘society’ as a whole.²⁰⁸ This

²⁰⁶ And – although conceptualized in a slightly different way – what these capabilities may be indented for, see for example Legro (2007). For studying ‘ideas’ in terms of “American representations of China [that] have been [...] responsible for creating a threatening identity” see for example Turner (2013).

²⁰⁷ In a related way on the role of rhetoric, see Krebs and Jackson (2007, 45).

²⁰⁸ In the writings of Gramsci the entry of ‘ideas’ occurs through his ‘enlarged’ definition of the state as encompassing civil society. Together they constitute what he called a solid structure or ‘historic bloc’ (blocco storico), which – and here Gramsci’s historical materialism shines through – encompasses ‘structures’ (= ‘material conditions’) and ‘superstructures’ (= ‘ideas’) that mutually influence each other and are not reducible to one another (R. W. Cox 1983,

happens via the (attempts at) filling of the empty signifier and the playing out of the antagonism through the logics of equivalence and difference, as laid out in the previous subchapter on 'identity'. In most cases the antagonisms are expressed through articulations of opposed identities. However, I question an inevitably necessary link between 'hegemony' and 'identity', as put forward for instance by Herschinger (2012), and rather take articulations aiming at hegemony to be a more general characteristic of 'politics' (cf. Retamozo 2011, 53ff.),²⁰⁹ as "a set of equivalences that is established between a series of particular demands" (cf. Howarth 2013, 82). Herschinger claims to offer a "comprehensive operationalization of central discourse theoretical concepts [...] leading to a framework of international hegemony missing from the current literature". Building on conceptualizations of 'identity' in the Essex School and "IR-poststructuralism" she conceptualizes "international hegemony as the production of a specific type of identity: hegemonic practices dichotomize the discursive space by conferring a particular meaning upon antagonistic poles, thereby creating a Self and its antagonized Other(s)" (Herschinger 2012, 71, 75).²¹⁰ Her 'definition' of hegemony is "the production of a new collective identity, as shaping an Other and a corresponding Self" (2012, 67, 74). Although this conceptualization does clearly make sense in her cases (international discourses on terrorism and drug prohibition), other accounts of the Essex School's understanding of hegemony convincingly make the identity-linkage less prominent (e.g. Methmann 2010 on discourses on climate protection).²¹¹

167f.). This historic bloc in turn is premised on the existence of a hegemonic social class, that "maintains cohesion and identity within the bloc through the propagation of a common culture". "A new bloc is formed when a subordinate class establishes its hegemony over other subordinate groups", which means "passing from the specific interests of a group or class to the building of institutions and the elaboration of ideologies." Being 'hegemonic' means that they will be 'universal' in form, thus not appear as those of a particular class. Moreover they will consent to the interests of the subordinate groups while not undermining those vital to the hegemonic class. Here it becomes clear that Gramsci referred to Machiavelli's image of 'power' as a centaur (when aiming at picturing the effort of the revolutionary party in its aim to engage with its base of support), thus he took 'power' to be a mix of consent and coercion: with hegemonic power the consensual aspect prevails, as it is "enough to ensure conformity of behavior in most people most of the time" (R. W. Cox 1983, 164). In other words, the 'superstructure' provided for a 'common sense' (what PDT would call 'hegemonic discourse') "through the embedding and reproduction of a cultural, ideational, and normative consensus within wider social layers beyond those that occupy positions of material power" (cf. Saull 2010). Gramsci formulated his thoughts in his so-called 'Prison Notebooks', written between 1929-1935 during his imprisonment as former leader of the Italian Communist Party (cf. R. W. Cox 1983, 162).

²⁰⁹ In his article on *The Uses of Hegemony in the Political Theory of Ernesto Laclau*, Martín Retamozo distinguishes between hegemony as a category – referring to the relationship between universality and particularity – and as three different concepts: the political, politics and the constitution of collective identities (Retamozo 2011). Furthermore, he points to the discussion on the tension between the logics of hegemony as a form of politics and *the form of politics per se*.

²¹⁰ I do not quite follow her on what IR-poststructuralism adds or can add to the Essex School's understanding of identity, but rather see it the other way around, as I lay out in what follows. Herschinger might have a point in referring to the debates about a non-threatening other in IR (Herschinger 2012, 67, 73), but these exist also among PDT scholars.

²¹¹ On the question of 'hegemony' and 'identity' see for example also Tuathail's critique of David Campbell: "Questions of identity may insinuate their way into all forms of politics but all forms of politics are not [necessarily, NN] about questions of identity" (Tuathail 1996a, 652). However, I do not agree with Tuathail's subsequent (historical

In a nutshell, for PDT 'hegemony' is "a kind of political practice that captures the making and breaking of political projects and discourse coalitions. But, on the other hand, it is also a form of rule or governance that speaks to the maintenance of the policies, practices, and regimes that are formed by such forces " (Howarth 2013, 274). Howarth calls these the two faces of hegemony: hegemony as a practice of coalition building and hegemony as a form of rule or governance (Howarth 2013, 202ff.), which in both faces is premised rather on incorporation of rival forces through consent than coercion, through the logics of equivalence and difference. In the words of Laclau and Mouffe, hegemony is an articulatory relation where persuasion dominates over the use of force and – in case of its achievement – a supremacy visible in the imposition of one will on the rest of society through the creation of consent and the incorporation of the interests of rival forces (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 134ff.; Norval 2000, 229, 2009, 155f.). In practice, hegemony is about struggles for the fixation of meaning or a particular meaning system (conscious and unconscious, in terms of being gripped by certain discourses, cf. Wullweber 2014, 10), which can only take place in an 'open system', thus absent from any (economic) determinism or pure structuralism. Meaning is never permanently fixable – which is NOT to say that everything is in 'constant flux' (!) (cf. for example Methmann 2010, 352) – and it is articulated not only, but primarily through language. Hence,

"from a poststructuralist point of view it is not possible – or at least it lacks sufficient complexity – to say that a certain person, class, or political group has become hegemonic. Rather, it is a certain element of common sense (Gramsci 1971, 419-425), a world-view, a societal relation, or more generally, a specific spatio-temporal discourse organization that is or becomes hegemonic [...]" (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 142; Wullweber 2014, 9).

In other words, a discourse 'on a grand scale' becomes hegemonic when it figures as the 'normal' and only way of explaining the world, like what in this thesis I treat as the 'liberal theory of history' immediately after 1989, exemplified by Francis Fukuyama's notion of 'the end of history' (see also references to Fukuyama in introduction and in chapter 1.3) in terms of the "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism" (Fukuyama 1989, 3). On a smaller scale, though related to the liberal theory of history, the attempts to react to the dislocation of this particular discourse through the Rise of Japan and the Rise of China in the U.S., are read as struggles about fixing a particular perspective on these issues and how they should be dealt with (i.e. in terms of

materialist) argument that "preoccupation with the politics of identity" (targeting not only Campbell but "dissident IR" in general) would lose sight of 'material politics' like "economic exploitation, capital accumulation and power applied for the instrumental purposes of economic gain". This line of reasoning is in line with critical realist misunderstandings of poststructuralism as idealist, as pointed out in chapter 1.4. On refuting these kinds of criticisms see also Howarth (2013, 226).

a 'defensive hegemonic strategy'), as well as about the 'meaning' of 'Japan', 'China', 'the U.S.', and their relationship in a changing 'context'. In this sense, the key of a hegemonic articulation in my reading is the ability to establish an understanding of what 'the problem' actually is, as well as offering or pointing at the solution for it, and both ultimately happens through the empty signifier. The contestation can emerge over both, the 'definition' of the problem as well as over its 'solution', and one approach is to make the 'excluded other' responsible for the problem, i.e. in this case articulating chains of equivalence towards Japan and China, and their unfair trade policies as reason for the trade deficit. Voices in turn resisting a particular problematization for instance may aim at dissolving the articulation of the other as responsible for the problem through chains of difference, while on the other hand building up 'internal chains of equivalence', i.e. accusing the executive of not having a proper economic policy in the first place (see in what follows in the analysis).

From what has been said, it follows that there is no escape from focusing on the actual articulation of the meaning of 'a problem' in discourses – which in the approach I am proposing means to engage in Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA) – and taking PDT further on the level of method, aspects that are rather scarcely addressed by the Gramscian or Neo-Gramscian historical materialist approaches (cf. Herschinger 2012, 70), and that were also often neglected by poststructuralist discourse theorists themselves. This is a problem in so far as discourse theoretical or analytical approaches are often criticized for a lack of 'methodological rigor' or 'solid methods' (see chapter three). Whereas this criticism in many cases might stem from a rather narrow (neo-positivist) understanding of methods, it has its point considering the reluctance of many discourse theorists to elaborate on 'how they actually do it', because, as phrased by Torfing, "they threw the methodological baby out with the epistemological bath water" (Torfing 2005, 27).

How to capture the processes at work when speaking of 'discursive hegemony' through the filling of the empty signifier(s) via chains of equivalence and difference in the discourse analysis of the Congressional Record, is laid out in the following chapter on methodology and methods, as well as through the analysis itself.

3. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

In this chapter I first situate the issue of 'discourse and method' in to the field of IR, and then expand on how methodological questions are dealt with from the perspective of PDT.

Subsequently, for this study I propose an enhancement of the key concepts of PDT laid out in the chapter two (logics of equivalence and difference, empty signifiers, etc.) through analytical categories drawn from Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA). Finally, linking up to the following analysis, I come to addressing the concrete ‘application’ of PDT/RPA in the analysis of the Congressional Record, i.e. the collection, treatment and organization of the sources.

As long as there have been studies on discourse in the broader field of IR (and IPE), one of the main criticisms brought forward against these approaches is their lack or neglect of ‘(rigorous) methods’. This, in my view, has mainly to do with two reasons: on the one hand, the early proponents of discourse focused approaches in IR, in their attempt to distinguish themselves and critique ‘mainstream IR’, did not engage themselves with ‘standard’ methodological and even less with methodical issues, at least not in the way and terminology they would have been expected to do so by the mainstream. On the other hand, criticisms of ‘lacking rigor’ stem from a particular understanding of what ‘rigorous methods’ are and should be, that usually neglects taking the differing philosophical/theoretical premises of discourse approaches into account (Bevir and Rhodes 2006; cf. Yanow 2006). To situate this debate into the (mainstream) field and categories of IR, discourse approaches broadly speaking are mostly considered to fall within qualitative or what has become called ‘interpretive’ methods.²¹² While the distinction of ‘qualitative’ from ‘quantitative’ first and foremost goes back to the aim to distinguish ‘field research’ and related (participant) observing, interviewing and document analysis from survey research designs and statistical methods, it is nowadays also questioned in its usefulness or meaningfulness. Thus, it is overly simplifying and even misleading to put the differences as ‘counting’ versus ‘interpreting’ (cf. Yanow 2007, 406; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2006, xv–xix).²¹³ What has been neglected for a long time, are the differences in theoretical or ontological premises when it comes to the use of ‘statistics’ or ‘document analysis’ (see also P. T. Jackson 2011, 7), but also the differences in the research questions posed that are linked to these premises (a point that is in my view also neglected in most of the literature on methodologies). As Dvora Yanow has put it: “Different methods presume different “reality statuses” for the topic of research. [...] Different reality statuses in turn presume different ways of knowing and different rules of evidence (that supports the “truth claims” of the analysis) or criteria for assessing its trustworthiness” (Yanow

²¹² This holds first and foremost true for the U.S., as in Europe discourse studies are often considered as constituting their own field (cf. Herschinger and Renner 2014).

²¹³ In this respect, for instance the distinction sometimes made between large-n studies as quantitative and small-n ones as qualitative is in fact only premised on the number of cases, as both might use the same techniques, for example statistics, based on the same theoretical premises, but just on fewer cases with small-n.

2007, 406). She proposes that a categorization into quantitative, qualitative-positivist and qualitative-interpretive would be clearer. The understanding of 'interpretive' (cf. Rabinow and Sullivan 1987) she puts forward goes back to the basic question about the differences between 'the world of nature' and 'the human social world'²¹⁴ and how they can be known and should be studied, the basic differences being commonly seen in the centrality of meaning making as well as context specificity for the latter one, leading to the view that the researcher cannot take 'a view from nowhere' on the phenomena he or she is looking at (Neufeld 1993; Rabinow and Sullivan 1987, Introduction; Yanow 2007, 407).²¹⁵ As meaning is central, and meaning is conveyed – not only but mostly – through language, this is a principal focus of what in this context has become called 'interpretive research'. Although this classification might be more accurate than quantitative-qualitative, I maintain that it is also not without caveats, as it suggests that quantitative and qualitative-positivist researchers do not 'interpret' their data, but just need to collect it as 'ready to speak for itself'.²¹⁶ This again – from the point of view of the alleged 'non-interpretivists' – on the one hand plays into the common allegation that discourse approaches concern themselves 'merely with language', which is not considered to be actual 'empirical research' in a traditional positivist understanding (see introduction on 'Cartesian anxiety'). On the other hand it looks as if only the so-called 'interpretivists' would concern themselves with questions of language (cf. Fierke 2003, 69ff.). As put nicely by Karin Fierke, the more precise question at stake in this debate is or should be *how* language matters, as there seem to be what she calls *two languages of language* (Fierke 2003, 71), which in a nutshell are the two positions of language as 'mere rhetoric' and language as constitutive of reality, which I also address in what follows on the analysis of rhetoric.²¹⁷ Originally this distinction goes back to what Fierke characterizes as not only one, but the two linguistic turns in philosophy, that can in principle be

²¹⁴ These issues are evidently also at the bottom of the debates on 'explaining' versus 'understanding', see the most prominent discussion on this in Hollis and Smith (1990), and also on what was said on 'Cartesian anxiety' in the introduction.

²¹⁵ For varieties of 'interpretive research methods' according to this classification, where for example 'poststructural analysis' figures as a variety of its own, see Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2006, xx). With respect to the common division and classification between 'nature' and 'the social' and 'natural' and 'social sciences' it should also be noted however, that also the natural sciences are not 'neutral' or exempt from the concepts and meaning we use (cf. Campbell 2010, 219; Nabers 2015, forthcoming).

²¹⁶ For a criticism of (behavioral) separations between 'meaning' and 'interpretation' see also Howarth (2013, 12, 266). Although I do not buy into their rather strict separation of 'explaining' and 'understanding', Hollis and Smith aptly noted that "even facts of observation need to be interpreted before they can be counted on, and any facts about underlying mechanisms or structures are 'visible' only through theoretical spectacles" (Hollis and Smith 1990, 66). Furthermore, taking the role of language into account, following Putnam and Skinner, "there can be no observational evidence which is not to some degree shaped by our concepts and thus by the vocabulary we use to express them" (Skinner 2002, 46).

²¹⁷ Fierke also addresses the broader issue of different languages in IR, in terms of "positivism" and "postmodernism", that are not always able to have a conversation with each other (Fierke 2003, 72). See also P.T. Jackson (2011). For similar debates in the field of economics see i.e. the edited volume by Henderson, Dudley-Evans and Backhouse (1993).

captured by the difference between Wittgenstein's early and late work: language as a picture or mirror of an independent reality, and language as a game, or rather many games, which the individual is part of as an actor, as well as being constrained by them like by a structure (Fierke 2003, 74ff.).

3.1. Discourse and Method in IR and PDT

One of the earliest treatments of methodological issues when studying discourse in IR is Jennifer Milliken's article from the end of the 1990s, and it still speaks to many, if not the most prevalent questions and issues. She argues that the refusal "to engage in mainstream modes of doing social science" (referring to the 'IR-pioneers', i.e. George, Der Derian, Campbell etc., see chapter two) should not lead to an exclusion of issues of research practice and method (Milliken 1999, 226). The same argument is brought forward by Jacob Torfing in the context of PDT, as he criticizes that "discourse theory has thrown the methodological baby out with the epistemological bathwater" by dismissing questions of method and methodology as "a positivist obsession" (Torfing 2005, 27). Milliken summarizes the critique of discourse scholarship as 'bad' and 'dangerous' science (i.e. by Robert Keohane, John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, cited in Milliken 1999), as well as the efforts by 'constructivist' scholars (i.e. by Emmanuel Adler and Alexander Wendt) to distinguish themselves from discourse scholarship, and attributes this to the aforementioned reasons (see also Levine and Barder 2014, 866; Milliken 1999, 227f.). However, in my view some of these persisting criticisms also rest on misunderstandings that arise from a neglect of the philosophical or ontological premises laid out in the chapter two on the one hand, and a narrow understanding of 'methods' on the other hand. Ultimately, and as I explain in what follows, these issues are or become intertwined. Referring to PDT, Torfing summarizes the most common misunderstandings as discourse theory leading to idealism and relativism, as not being an explanatory but only a descriptive theory, as not being critical, and finally, as being essentialist although claiming the contrary (Torfing 2005, 18-21). The misunderstanding about idealism has been addressed already in chapter two: asserting the discursive character of all social reality does not mean to deny an 'independent' existence of reality, but it means that 'reality' is not accessible to us outside of discourse. A (dualist) separation of 'ideas' and 'the material' or 'ideas and 'the discursive' in the common sense it is maintained in mainstream IR (constructivism) is not part of the understandings of PDT. Regarding questions of methodology and method, this misunderstanding leads to questions

directed to PDT scholars and approaches, like 'how to study what is in peoples' heads', 'how to show that ideas causally impact the material (if they do)', and 'how to account for ideas being constrained by material conditions'. These are questions that actually miss the point because of their neglect of the 'non-dualist' philosophical premises of PDT. In a way connected to the misunderstanding about idealism is the one on PDT being relativistic, as it pertains that if everything is discursive, then there will be no 'objective' truth or right and wrong, but just an 'anything goes'. While philosophically speaking the premise is in line with PDT, what follows is not an 'anything goes' or a 'free flux', as we are never just freely floating outside of the different discourses that have become established or fixed along lines of what counts as 'true' or 'good and bad'. That *theoretically* no discourse is protected from becoming dislocated or challenged does not mean that it will automatically and easily happen (see chapter two), as the *ontological* conditions of possibility do not inevitably translate themselves into predetermined necessities on the *ontical* level (see also paragraph on 'the political' in chapter two). To repeat in Laclau's words: "It is important to point out that there is no necessary relation between the dislocation as such [...] and the discursive space that is to constitute its principle of reading its particular form of representation" (Laclau 1990, 65). With the assertion that 'everything goes', questions of methodology and method become somewhat obsolete, as accordingly there could be no '(good) science' without truth or 'objectivity' (cf. what was said on 'Cartesian anxiety' in the introduction). However, again the philosophical claim of there existing no ultimate foundation or 'final truth' does not mean that we are not part of, and 'constrained' by existing discourses as very real and concrete 'regimes of truth', that clearly speak against an alleged free floating proliferation of differences. Similarly, the argument of there being no 'true method', or no method guaranteeing 'truth', does not lead to an anarchy of methods or their dissolution, but again, as can clearly be seen with the 'method debate' laid out here, the understanding of what counts as method and methodological rules are linked to paradigms within the field. Theoretically, they could change, but practically this does not take place easily (cf. Torfing 2005, 27). In this context, it is however equally important to note that for PDT truth and 'knowledge' are not reducible or equivalent to power in terms of 'subjective impositions'. As any other theory, method or interpretation, PDT and readings of phenomena derived through it can only count as "candidate for truth and falsity" within and according to the paradigms they are articulated in. This means that they are evaluated and judged upon by the paradigmatic criteria, i.e. consistency, reliability, validity etc. (Howarth 2005, 328). The present discussion of PDT and methodology by scholars advocating it would simply not take place, were this not the case.

The charge that PDT does not or cannot engage in critique is connected to the allegation about relativism, because, if ‘anything goes’, how could there be a basis or measure for critique? And, connecting to the question on essentialism, the question arises, whether PDT is not ultimately turning its (alleged) ‘anti-essentialism’ into an essentialism itself (cf. Torfing 2005, 21)?²¹⁸ I address the understanding of critique according to PDT in further detail in what follows on the *Logics of Critical Explanation*. As for essentialism, against this claim stands – as already stated – that ontological presuppositions do not predetermine any ontical effects. In this sense, claiming that there is no metaphysical, positively defined essence of the social world, does not result in particular, necessarily ensuing effects of this absence. Thus, on these premises “the rejection of an essentialist grounding of the social world cannot fulfill the role of a new essentialist ground”, or – as in the example given by Torfing, “an economic structure is logically speaking capable of determining the structure of society, but nothing [necessarily, NN] follows from the dislocation of the economic structure” (Torfing 2005, 21).

Finally, the allegation of PDT not being explanatory but ‘only’ seeking an understanding is tied to a narrow concept of ‘explanation’ in terms of a mechanistic account of causality.²¹⁹ In the view of PDT however, explanation and understanding are not separable from each other, as explanation first requires an initial understanding, and then again becomes part of an enhanced or increased understanding of the phenomenon we are investigating. In this sense PDT does place itself within the hermeneutical tradition of the social sciences, but, with the element of *logics* addressed in what follows, also departs from relying ‘only’ on contextualized self-interpretations (Howarth 2005, 319f.; cf. Torfing 2005, 19).

²¹⁸ On the question of ‘anti-essentialism and ‘anti-foundationalism see chapter two. As already explained there, I maintain that the term ‘post’-foundationalism is more adequate.

²¹⁹ As mentioned in chapter one, I do find PDT’s ‘silence’ on questions of causality problematic. It is clear, that it opposes causal explanations in terms of searches for universal laws or intrinsic causal properties (cf. Torfing 2005, 19), but does not really engage in debates on alternative understandings of the concept of causality, thus basically ‘leaving the field’ (on the post-positivist side) to critical realists. Furthermore, this silence, or what has mostly been perceived as rejection of causality by the mainstream, is one crucial aspect pertaining to the ‘bad’ or ‘no science’ allegations. Although one might argue, that “poststructuralism’s break with causality is thus not a flaw within its research design but an ontological and epistemological choice”, that however should not necessarily lead to conducting one’s analysis without methodological principles (cf. Hansen 2006, 28). In my view it might be too easy to simply retreat to the ‘causal’ versus ‘constitutive’ ground, without trying to problematize the monopolization of the concept of causality and the subsequent dichotomization of phenomena into ‘variables’ by mainstream understandings. This is an endeavor, that at this point however goes beyond the scope of this dissertation.

3.2. The Logics of Critical Explanation

Like most discourse approaches, PDT²²⁰ does not provide a clear-cut, ready-made set of methods regarding the objects or the conduct of concrete research.²²¹ As mentioned in the theory chapter, this was not the concern of Laclau and Mouffe (cf. Laclau 2009, 321), but became one of the later proponents of PDT. They started to debate and address what they themselves called the “Cinderella role” of methodological questions in discourse theory (cf. Howarth 2005, 316, 2013, 84; Nonhoff 2007, 174) with several publications on ‘applied’ discourse theory and possible research strategies (for example Howarth and Torfing 2005).²²²

Briefly put, PDT opposes any understanding of method as “a free-standing, neutral set of rules and techniques that can be applied mechanically to all empirical objects” (Howarth 2005, 317; cf. Torfing 2005, 27). Instead questions of method in PDT are always related to its philosophical premises – that reject essentialist, i.e. representational, theories of knowledge production – as well as to the particular topics and objects of research (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 6; Howarth 2000, 132, cf. 2005, 317). Here, PDT also distinguishes itself from several variants of discourse analysis, for example Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA; on differences see in what follows) (cf. Howarth 2005, 318).

Again, these premises resonate with poststructuralist/‘postmodern’ IR-work discussed in the chapter two. The ‘problem’ however is, that in IR as well as in other fields, many discourse studies do not, or rather did not, extensively elaborate on issues of methodology and methods. They basically conducted their analyses without expanding on these aspects (cf. Torfing 2005, 26; see Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2006, xiv for “interpretive” methods in general).

²²⁰ For the terminology of ‘discourse theory’ and ‘discourse analysis’ one could hold on to locating the ‘theory’ on the ontological level, “where the concept of discourse specifies the necessary presuppositions of any inquiry into the nature of objects and social relations”. This concept is also referred to as ‘the discursive’ (cf. Howarth 2000, 8f.). Discourse analysis accordingly refers to the ontic level, and is aimed at analyzing particular objects specified by one’s ontological presuppositions. (cf. Howarth 2005, 336; see also Nonhoff 2006a, 242).

²²¹ The concern with methods and whether or not to ‘prescribe’ them in terms of providing some sort of ‘toolkit’ for discourse analysis varies according to the different schools. For overviews see for example Jørgensen and Phillips (2002). As they point out, basically discourse analysis can be conducted within all areas of research, however – depending on the understanding of ‘discourse’ – it would not fit within all theoretical/philosophical frameworks (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 3–4). This is certainly true for PDT, that is not “just a method for data analysis, but a theoretical and methodological whole” (ibid.)

²²² However, this does not mean that Laclau and Mouffe themselves would have not been interested in the ‘real world political life’. Although their writings are often labelled (and oftentimes dismissed) as ‘purely theoretical’, Laclau and Mouffe have repeatedly elaborated on how their theories are connected to trying to make sense of events during the Cold War, like Budapest 1956, Prague 1968, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the wars in Vietnam and Cambodia (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 1ff), the transformations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s (cf. Laclau 1990, xi) and also, in the case of Laclau, in connection to his experiences in Argentina since the 1960s (cf. Laclau 2014, 1ff.). See also Dallmayr (2009, 35).

To provide a 'grammar' of how to translate PDT into research practice Jason Glynos and David Howarth (Glynos and Howarth 2007) have come forward with the concept of the *Logics of Critical Explanation*, which conceives of PDT as an "explanatory, interpretative and critical theory", that in its application seeks to avoid the problems of empiricism, subsumption and eclecticism (with reference to R. J. Bernstein 1976, 235; Glynos and Howarth 2011).²²³ Empiricism refers to suggesting an unmediated access to a 'real concrete' in terms of a 'raw material' of 'empirical observations' that can be used to draw generalizing conclusions. Subsumption in contrast refers to theoreticism or theory-drivenness that derives explanations only from abstract theories or subsumes phenomena under laws derived from empirical generalization (Howarth 2005, 322). Avoiding eclecticism, as also referred to in what follows under the element of articulation, basically means to be aware of the philosophical presuppositions of PDT when drawing from and 'combining' it with other approaches, which is entirely possible (see in what follows on RPA). In a nutshell the Logics approach aims at the *problematization* of empirical phenomena, their *retroductive* explanation as well as the *persuasion* of, and *intervention* into the relevant community and practices of scholars and lay-actors. The Logics thus consist of five basic elements: problematization, retroduction, logics, articulation and critique (Glynos et al. 2009, 10; italics in original).

In short, *problematization* relates to a Foucault-inspired construction of the object of research or research question that encompasses an archeological, as well as genealogical elements. This means looking at the rules, orders or epistemes of discourse (i.e. at the question how objects do become objects of discourse) and at the conditions of possibility for certain rules or orders etc. to emerge. In this sense, "genealogy strives to distance us from the rationale implicit in past and present practices" (Connolly 1984, 155). Social and political phenomena are not taken as pre-given, but their formation is part of the problematization. Furthermore, in my understanding, it is the problematization that to some extent 'makes the case' in terms of choosing what to focus on, as "rarely, if ever, does a case present itself 'beyond any reasonable choice' [...]" (cf. Hansen 2006, 73). This 'problem drivenness' – not to be confused with what has been termed 'problem-solving theory' (cf. Howarth 2005, 318)²²⁴ – in most cases leads discourse theorists to ask different kinds of questions than those scholars explicitly aiming at generalization, causal inference and maybe also prediction (cf. Torfing 2005, 22). In my case the problematization encompasses the 'puzzle' of similarities in the U.S. economic discourses on China and Japan in spite of the 'dissimilarities' in the bilateral relationships, as well as the neglect

²²³ On the difference between what he – with reference to Ulrich Oevermann – calls logics of subsumption versus logics of reconstruction see Herborth 2011: 138ff. In these terms I characterize the LCE as reconstructive approach.

²²⁴ For the seminal distinction between problem-solving and critical theory see Cox (1983).

by previous research of a historical dimension that considers the economic disputes beyond a 'topic oriented' or empiricist way. Whereas this accounts for the archeological component, the aim to inquire into the present discourses on China in light of the historical example of the discourses on Japan relates to the genealogical element.

Retroduction is meant as a form of explanation in contrast to induction and deduction in the sense that it regards the most important criterion for admitting a 'hypothesis', i.e. assumption, its accountability for the phenomenon or problem at stake. Retroductive reasoning begins with the observation of a 'problem' or phenomenon. The latter would be explainable if a hypothesis were true, and so one can assume this to be the case. This means that the 'hypothesis' is not inferred until its content is already present in the explanation of the phenomenon (Glynos et al. 2009, 10–11; with reference to Hanson 1961, 86), or in other words, " its criterion of validity depends on whether the posited hypothesis accounts for a problematized phenomenon by rendering it intelligible" (ibid., quoted in Glynos and Howarth 2007, 39).²²⁵ For me this also means that methodology and methods are not separable from, or external to the phenomenon one wants to investigate. Instead they can only prove themselves in practice, thus in the concrete research project. In this sense Howarth cites Max Weber's suggestion of conceiving method as "the reflective understanding of the means which have already demonstrated their value in practice by raising them to the level of explicit consciousness" (cited in Howarth 2005, 317). To my understanding this also implies that the 'hypothesis' is informed by the way the problem is 'diagnosed' or constructed (and vice versa), the latter in turn relating to the theoretical/ontological/philosophical premises of the researcher. My 'hypothesis' on the 'entailments of U.S. identity' is thus predicated on my problematization, which of course resonates with my discourse theoretical perspective (cf. Herborth 2011, 139, 145).

Whereas retroduction still mostly relates to the *form* of an explanation, the element of *logics* addresses its *content*, thus the practices or regimes of practices and the purposes, rules and ontological presuppositions that render a practice or regime possible and understandable on the one hand, and encompass its precariousness and limits on the other hand.²²⁶ For this purpose Glynos and Howarth develop a three-fold typology of logics – social, political, and fantasmatic logics. The category of *social logics* is meant to capture or characterize particular practices or regimes (that have become established or sedimented), *political logics* refer to moments of emergence and contestation of these regimes (Laclau 2005, 117; along the logics of equivalence

²²⁵ Glynos and Howarth seem to make no difference between retroduction and what was conceptualized as 'abduction' by Charles Sanders Peirce (ibid.).

²²⁶ This concept of logic is invoked as departure from contextualized self-interpretations of the hermeneutist tradition as well as from the causal mechanisms approach of proponents of critical realism (cf. Glynos and Howarth 2007, 12).

and difference, cf. Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 127–134), whereas *fantasmatic logics* point to the level of how subjects are gripped by certain regimes or practices (Glynos et al. 2009, 10–11 italics in original; Glynos and Howarth 2008, 11–12), in a way that they are considered as ‘normal’ with no alternative in sight. With respect to my study, and relating the logics back to the central concepts developed in Laclau and Mouffe’s theory of hegemony, in a nutshell the social logics correspond to the sedimented or hegemonic discourse of the liberal theory of history (embedded in and connected to American exceptionalism), which had become the ‘normal’ and largely uncontested perspective after the end of the Cold War. The dislocation and questioning of the hegemonic discourse and the articulation of antagonisms via the logics of equivalence and difference fall into the category of political logics. The aim to preserve or stabilize the discourse by attributing its dislocation to an ‘external enemy’ can be characterized as fantasmatic logics.

Articulation goes back to Laclau and Mouffe’s understanding of articulation as “[...] practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 105). PDT understands articulation not only as practice to be studied *by* the researcher, but also as practice *of* the researcher, who links the phenomena or ‘problems’ to be studied as well as the methodological approach and the methods themselves to the ontological premises, in order to avoid subsuming or eclecticism. This does not mean that one cannot draw from more than one concrete method in practice, but that the different ‘sources’ have to be articulated in relation to the ontological premises of PDT (cf. Glynos et al. 2009, 12).²²⁷ In this study, articulation in two first steps encompasses the linking of the key concepts of PDT and my assumptions on the role of U.S. identity (thus emphasizing the understandings of discourse, identity and hegemony) to the questions I am asking concerning the similarities in the discourses on Japan and China (the explanandum), as well as the constitution of an explanans by referring to the three types of logics (social, political, fantasmatic or in my case sedimentation, contestation, preservation of ‘liberal identity’). A third and fourth step consist of taking up the findings and methodological approaches of previous research (i.e. for instance in work on U.S.-Japan relations, see chapter 1.1) as well as specific concepts or methods I draw from, and articulating them from the viewpoint of PDT, before actually ‘applying’ them in

²²⁷ For example, discourse theorists do engage in ‘comparative analysis’, but their understanding of ‘comparison’ differs crucially from an understanding in ‘comparative politics’, whereas in my view it comes closer to ‘comparative history’. On comparative research from a discourse theoretical perspective see Howarth (2005, 332–335). Important to point out in this respect is that “comparative research in discourse theory does not involve the comparison of identical practices or institutions which are treated as purely equivalent units. Instead we compare practices and objects which share certain family resemblances, rather than essences. It is for this reason that the interpretation of particular phenomena necessarily precedes the comparative dimension” (ibid., 334). See also Hansen (2006, 75, 79), on comparative aspects in (historical) discourse analysis, and Adcock (2006) on generalization in comparative and historical social science.

my discourse analysis. I address this step for the concept of Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA) under the next section.

The element of *critique* finally relates to the ontological horizon of PDT that stresses the radical contingency of social relations and ‘knowledge claims’, and thus also informs the construction, investigation and explanation of social phenomena through the researcher. One aspect is to engage in revealing the non-necessary character of the regimes and practices studied, as well as pointing to their reliance on foreclosures and exclusions of possible alternatives. Glynos and Howarth relate this aspect to a “deconstructive genealogy” à la Derrida and Foucault (Glynos and Howarth 2008, 15). In my understanding this is in line with the thoughts expressed in the words of Quentin Skinner in the introduction, in terms of looking at the past to become aware of the historicity of the present. Meanwhile, critique can be articulated along an ethical and a normative dimension. Ethical critique addresses the dimension of fantasy, thus in how far fantasmatic logics operate in an ideological mode that aims at concealing the ultimate contingency of our social and political practices. Normative critique involves judgment through characterizing concrete relations of domination and challenging them in the name of alternative values (Glynos et al. 2009, 13). Importantly – and relating to what was laid out in the chapter on theory referring to ‘taking historicity and contingency seriously’ – Glynos and Howarth reject the option of developing a comprehensive normative framework for the reason that

“[...] the lure of elaborating a fully-fledged normative schema with which to evaluate and prescribe policies and practices runs the risk of failing to engage with the singular instances of power, domination and oppression that require careful empirical analysis, ethical critique and political intervention”.

Meanwhile they also oppose

“solutions that would involve a retreat into a type of relativism or subjectivism where ‘anything goes’ [...]. On the contrary, the whole point [...] is to develop an ontological stance and a grammar of concepts, together with a particular research ethos, which makes it possible to construct and furnish answers to empirical problems that can withstand charges of methodological arbitrariness, historical particularism and idealism” (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 7–8; see also Torfing 2005, 20).²²⁸

²²⁸ As pointed out in chapter two, in my reading this is in line with what has been termed “weak ontology” by Stephen White.

I understand this 'critical ethos' also in relation to the way of conducting research, thus as reflecting on ones own ethical and/or normative standpoints that (implicitly) inform the whole study from the beginning on, as I do not believe that it is possible, nor in the case of PDT desirable, to 'bracket' these commitments in the sense of a simplistic 'facts/value' distinction. On the contrary, these standpoints, commitments or choices, already in a way manifest themselves in the questions one is asking (or choosing to ask), as well as in the ways one intends to investigate or answer them (cf. Herborth 2011, 147f.), i.e. in the sense of 'solving problems' or taking a critical stands towards what constitutes these 'problems' in the first place.²²⁹ Relating to my problematization and assumptions regarding the discourses on Japan and China in the U.S., my aim in this sense is neither to criticize the liberal theory of history or American exceptionalism for their particular 'content' from a normative point of view, nor to put forward an alternative particular concept. Instead my ethical critique amounts to their ideological dimension of concealment/denial of radical contingency in favor of universalist claims, hence relating to a problematization of the 'limits of inclusiveness' and the role of 'the other' from within PDT (see chapters 1.4 and 2.). I come back to these aspects in the summary of the analysis, as well as in the conclusion, while elaborating on the element of *articulation* in the following subchapter.

3.3. From 'Ideas' to Discourses – Rhetorical Political Analysis²³⁰

"Political ideas, even one's own, are apprehended only as statements" (Barker 2000, 227).

Through rhetorical analysis we "observe the processes by which political concepts are rhetorically formulated and deployed as ways of grasping a political situation and winning the consent of others for some course of action or another. **In so doing we fill out the ideational with the political**" (Finlayson 2004, 541).

PDT stresses the centrality of language (while not limiting itself to the analysis of it!) when it comes to the aim of characterizing practices and regimes of meaning-making and -fixing (see chapter 2.1), and indeed this is where my analysis aims at going further than for instance the ones referred to in the context of previous research on U.S.-Japanese relations and revisionism – as well as the policy oriented ones in the field of U.S.-Japanese and U.S.-Chinese economic

²²⁹ As emphasized by Beate Jahn, it is not enough for any theorist to simply assert his/her reflexivity on values "at the epistemological level. It has to be *practised* on the methodological level" (Jahn 1998, 638).

²³⁰ For an overview on the (missing) rhetorical turn in social and political sciences, linked to 'ideational analysis' in political science see Finlayson (2004).

relations – by looking at the concrete articulations in the elite public discourses (i.e. here in Congress) on Japan and China. Building on the centrality assigned to the role of language and rhetoric conceived on an ontological and on an ontical level (see in what follows) in PDT, I will additionally draw from methods for the analysis of political rhetoric (RPA). Rhetoric can be characterized as the practical science and art of effective or efficient speaking and writing in public or, more specifically, the science and art of persuasive language use, the three crucial objectives of such persuasion being logos, ethos and pathos. From a prevailing (dualist) point of view (that will be scrutinized in what follows) persuasion connected with logos uses sound argumentation like factual information, whereas ethos and pathos draw from ‘non-argumentative’ means like emotionalization, suggestion, demagogy, propaganda, the use of threats, etc.²³¹ Rhetorical analysis then intends to analyze the employment and effects of linguistic and other semiotic means of persuasion in rhetorical terms. Political rhetoric in this context refers to the use of rhetorical means of persuasion by professional politicians (see also Gottweis 2007, 243; cf. Reisigl 2008, 97).

Taking up Robert Uriu’s understanding of what he calls policy assumptions as ‘concrete, tangible and visible manifestation of ideas’ – and thus also the other predominant ‘ideas’-approaches discussed in chapter one – I side with Alan Finlayson who argues that

“we need to examine *not ideas but arguments* and [...] to analyze political persuasion and preference transformation we must reacquaint ourselves with the rhetorical tradition. [...] Rhetoric draws our attention to forms of argument and reasoning that exceed the strictures of syllogism yet manifestly operate und function in real-world contexts of argument” (Finlayson 2007, 546; 553 emphasis added).

Hence RPA argues against the treatment of rhetoric as mere supplement to ‘real action’, or as manipulative, only instrumental and strategic means as opposed to ‘reason’ and ‘truth’, in other words against the tendency to reduce argumentation to the operation of logos, expelling the other two components of rhetoricity, ethos and pathos (Glynos et al. 2009, 13–14; cf. Gottweis

²³¹ In accounts that regard discourse as ‘mere rhetoric’, it is usually understood as being differentiated from the ‘logos’, in terms of being ‘irrational’ (see also Gottweis 2007, 239; cf. Laclau 2005, 12). See also in what follows on RPA. For the argument of persuasion being inseparable from politics in general, as accounting for “the politicality of politics” see Finalyson (2004, 536), who also argues for the rhetorical conception of politics in general. While being sympathetic to Laclauian discourse analysis, he characterizes it as too abstract for being turned into a methodology. For a conceptualization of rhetorical coercion, rather than persuasion see Krebs and Jackson (2007), who also argue against an understanding of rhetoric as epiphenomenal or ‘mere rhetoric’.

2007, 240; cf. Hülse 2003, 212f., 237f.; cf. De Man 1984, 196f.; cf. Shapiro 1984, 229f., 239f.).²³² In this sense, argumentation is also not reduced to “the creation and exchange of arguments” but it is also considered as a “performative process in which the boundaries of argumentation are defined” (Gottweis 2007, 245). The question, as put by Karin Fierke in relation to ‘language’ in general, is thus about *how* ‘ideas’ matter. PDT regards rhetoric as a constitutive aspect of social reality, and its analysis as essential part of understanding and explaining social phenomena (Howarth and Griggs 2008, 199).²³³ On an ontical level the analysis of rhetoric sheds light on the functioning and structuration of discourses. On the ontological level these phenomena are not understood as being represented by how we speak about them, but are considered as bearing a character of rhetoricity (Stäheli 2000a, 13f.), in terms of being expressivist and constitutive as opposed to designative (cf. Michel 2013, 275).²³⁴ In this sense Laclau not only mentions the central role of rhetoric in the structuration of any signifying system (Laclau 2009, 325), and states that rhetoric should be a privileged field of inquiry “if we are searching for a terrain in which the subversion of identities resulting from antagonistic relations could be represented” (Laclau 2006, 106). But he also speaks of the social organized as a rhetorical space or rhetorical mechanisms as “anatomy of the social world” (Laclau 2000, 79, 2005, 110).

It follows that from the point of view of PDT there is no way to escape the dimension of rhetoric, as it relates to the ontological dimension of PDT regarding the materiality of discourses. In the words of Laclau:

“The main consequence of a break with the discursive/extra-discursive dichotomy is the abandonment of the thought/reality opposition [...]. Synonymy, metonymy, metaphor are not forms of thought that add a second sense to a primary, constitutive literality of social relations; instead, they are part of the primary terrain itself in which the social is constituted. Rejection of the thought/reality dichotomy must go together with a rethinking and interpretation of the categories which have [...] been considered exclusive of one or the other” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 110).

²³² For the role of rhetoric in the field of argumentative policy analysis see Gottweis (2007). Although he argues against separating *logos* from *ethos* and *pathos*, he seems to treat argumentation in general in a rather instrumental way (cf. 2007, 246–247).

²³³ For references to the philosophy of the antique school of rhetoric in the theory of Laclau (cf. Hetzel 2007, 88ff.).

²³⁴ Urs Stäheli points to Hayden White’s work on 19th century historiography in which White focuses not only on the ‘content’ of the respective works, but on their linguistic mode, as “thought remains the captive of the linguistic mode in which it seeks to grasp the outline of objects inhabiting its field of perception” (H. White 1974, xi, ix–xii, 1–42). In other words we as ‘observers’ can only observe via the (linguistic) communicative concepts we possess (cf. Walter and Helmig 2008, 120). See also Hetzel (2007, 90). For rhetorical analyses of social science itself see for example McCloskey (1998), Fuchs and Ward (1994, 488ff.) and Gusfield (1976).

“So, far from these devices being *mere* rhetoric, they are inherent in the logics presiding over the constitution and dissolution of *any* political space” (Laclau 2005, 19).

Considering the ontological horizon Laclau articulates hegemony as “politico-tropological movement” and more precisely as: “[...] metonymical: its effects always emerge from a surplus of meaning which results from an operation of displacement”, meaning that a particular group takes up demands of other groups or extends its demands into nearby domains (Howarth and Griggs 2005, 11; Laclau 1998, 154; Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 141).²³⁵ Where a demand or claim of a particular group comes to symbolize the demands of an entire community, thus becoming hegemonic by filling the ‘empty signifier’, it becomes a metaphor. It creates new meaningful entities – orders of discourse or regimes of practices – by disarticulating and replacing the previously existing ones (Howarth and Griggs 2008, 207). Meanwhile this practice bears a catachrestical element, the trope of catachresis standing for the misapplication of a word or “a transfer of terms from one place to another employed when no proper word exists”, e.g. the ‘wings’ of an airplane or the ‘leg’ of a chair (Parker 1990, 60, cited in Howarth and Griggs 2008, 200; Laclau 2005, 71) which is also true of the empty signifier, that carries no proper meaning but acquires it only through the hegemonic operation.²³⁶ Analogous to the ultimately precarious character of every (hegemonic) discourse Laclau points out, that the demarcations between these rhetorical tropes as categories are permeable, thus corresponding to the ultimate impossibility to fix a particular meaning once and for all (cf. also Michel 2013, 286), and in these terms, to the structural incompleteness of all social reality (cf. Laclau 2001, 170).

On the ontical level the analysis of these and/or other rhetorical figures, as they appear in the discourses, is a means for fleshing out how the dynamics laid out in chapter two actually happen, in other words how certain tropes function to articulate particular viewpoints as without alternative and universal, in order to hegemonize the discourse.

While one possibility of putting PDT into practice through rhetorical analysis is to focus explicitly on these tropes mentioned by Laclau (see for instance Howarth and Griggs, 2008; Nabers 2015, forthcoming), in this study I am proposing a different approach, that I am laying out in what follows in the following chapter.

²³⁵ In the sense of reading these ‘domains’ as non-essential but political, I would add that these ‘domains’ themselves become rearticulated (for example extended or reduced) as to encompass (and exclude) different kinds of demands.

²³⁶ Here only in a nutshell: This corresponds to PDT’s understanding of the mutual interweaving of the literal and the figurative, or in other words the ‘real’ and its representation, which points to Žižek’s Lacanian inspired account of naming and its performative and retroductive effects, that in turn also relate to Laclau’s understanding of the relationship between universal/particular and contingency/necessity (Howarth and Griggs 2008, 200f.; Laclau 2005, 102–110).

3.4. Putting Theory into Practice²³⁷

For putting the key terms of PDT according to Laclau and Mouffe into practice in a discourse analysis, I draw from the so-called politicolinguistic approach by Martin Reisigl. In particular I make use of the categories of nomination (naming of actors),²³⁸ predication (attribution of features),²³⁹ argumentation (justification/delegitimization of nominations and predications), perspectivation (point of view of expression) and intensification/mitigation of the aforementioned categories (cf. Reisigl 2008),²⁴⁰ to capture the Laclauian logics of equivalence and difference and the relating to an excluded other. Reisigl is a proponent of the school of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which in turn encompasses a variety of approaches.²⁴¹ The major differences in the theoretical premises of CDA with reference to PDT are that CDA regards some societal phenomena as not having a discursive character. Discourse as a social practice is seen as constituting and constituted by other social practices through dialectic interaction. Social practices are seen as originally discursively constituted, but as having become sedimented in institutions and non-discursive practices (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 61f.).²⁴² Accordingly, discourse is mainly understood as “linguistic action, be it written, visual or oral communication, verbal or nonverbal, undertaken by social actors in a specific setting determined by social rules, norms, conventions” (Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2008, 5). Moreover, CDA does neither completely abandon the Marxist view on ideological effects of discursive practices, nor the possibility to distinguish between ideological and non-ideological discourses (Jørgensen and

²³⁷ This passage partly draws from Nymalm (2013) and Nymalm (2010).

²³⁸ On what she calls subject positioning see i.e. Doty (1993, 308–309, 313–316).

²³⁹ On predicate analysis see also i.e. Milliken (1999, 231–234) and Doty (1993, 306–307, 310–312).

²⁴⁰ On her conceptualization of these categories as “discursive strategies” see also Wodak (2009, 40ff.), who for instance includes metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches under nominations.

²⁴¹ Reisigl distinguishes at least five different variants, among them the ‘Vienna Variation of CDA’ he affiliates himself to. This variant is characterized by its emphasis on trans- and interdisciplinarity, its discourse-historical approach and a triangulate access – meaning a multimethodological approach – to its research topics and materials (Reisigl 2007, 28; Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2008, 12). With his politicolinguistic approach Reisigl wants to assume a transdisciplinary perspective by combining rhetoric, political science and linguistics (Reisigl 2008, 96). In his study on the use of nationalist political rhetoric in Austria, Reisigl focuses on the rhetorical constructions and representations of social actors and collective subjects like nations (Reisigl 2007, 9). In general, proponents of CDA have been more preoccupied with methods of discourse analysis than those of ‘early’ PDT, as they have commonly engaged in linguistic textual analysis of language use in social interaction.

²⁴² However, if Norman Fairclough for example considers these social practices as originally discursively constituted and sedimented over time, then I would see the difference to PDT not so much in this aspect, but rather in the consequence of assigning an ‘independent’ role to those sedimentations or structures. As Fairclough maintains: “The discursive constitution of society does not emanate from a free play of ideas in peoples heads but from a social practice which is firmly rooted in and oriented to real, material social structures” (Fairclough 1992, 66; cf. Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 62). But as pointed out, according to PDT this dichotomy between a ‘reality’ and ‘what is in peoples heads’ is not part of their conception. On sedimentation Laclau points out that it does not take place simply on the level of “words and images”, but in practices and institutions, as “our notion of discourse [...] involves the articulation of words and actions, so that the quilting function is never a merely verbal operation but is embedded in material practices *which can acquire institutional fixity* (Laclau 2005, 106 emphasis added).

Phillips 2002, 17f., 63f.).²⁴³ Working with the analytic categories thus importantly does not mean to incorporate the whole CDA approach and its differing premises, but to articulate the categories I am drawing from in relation to the premises and concepts of PDT.²⁴⁴

Conceived in this way, I articulate Reisigl's categories and the Laclauian concepts as follows: within the logics of equivalence and difference the (non-pre-existing and never fully constituted) self and other are constructed through articulating them in a certain way, and this happens via nomination and predication. In linking these characterizations to chains of equivalence and difference, the speakers use arguments to justify the nominations and predications. By differentiating the in-group from the out-group – the self from the other – the speakers articulate themselves from a certain perspective, thus they relate themselves to nodal points that are eventually turned into an empty signifier. The empty signifier makes the cancellation of differences within the in-group possible by enabling an equalization of its characteristics vis-à-vis the out-group (see chapter two). The intensification of the nominations, predications, arguments, and perspectives finally endorses the articulation of an excluded other (or the 'internal other' through internal chains of equivalence) through the attempt to fill the empty signifier(s). Mitigation in turn, like the logics/chains of difference stands for the other side in the struggle to fill the empty signifier and hegemonize the discourse, the attempt to dissolve antagonisms. Furthermore, in this analysis, the chains of equivalence and the intensifications stand for an exclusive or confrontational articulation of 'liberal identity' in terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, while the chains of difference and the mitigations point to the inclusive and accommodative potential of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history (see chapter 1.3).

Drawing on Reisigl's analytical categories read through the theoretical lens of PDT (and the Logics) lead me to structure the research material in a first step by answering following five questions pertaining to the five categories and the key concepts of PDT:

1. How are the actors linguistically constructed by being named (nominations/self and other)?

²⁴³ Laclau rejects the main two notions of ideology within the Marxist terrain, namely ideology as a "false consciousness" and as a necessary level of social formation. The only acceptable notion in his opinion would be ideology as an "absolute metaphor" or as a "gigantic as if", aiming at the closure of a discourse or social space respectively (Laclau 2006, 114).

²⁴⁴ On the differences and the question of possible "combinations" of concepts from PDT and CDA, see Jørgensen and Phillips (2002, 17, 62), Wodak and Krzyżanowski (2008, 5), Fairclough (2003, 88), Nabers (2009, 194), Torfing (2005, 9).

2. What positive or negative traits, qualities and features are attributed to the linguistically constructed actors (predications/self and other)?
3. Through what arguments and argumentation schemes are claims containing specific nominations and predications attempted to be justified or delegitimized (argumentation/chains of equivalence and difference)?
4. From what perspective or point of view are these nominations, predications and argumentations expressed (perspectivation/chains of equivalence and difference)?
5. Are the nominations, predications and argumentations articulated overtly, are they intensified or are they mitigated (intensification and/or mitigation/empty signifiers)? (cf. Reisigl 2008: 99f.).

Yet, I maintain that in many – if not most – cases, the analytic categories are not clearly separable: most frequently the nominations are carrying already a predicative, qualitative meaning, and the perspective is already part of the argument. In those cases I conceive of the predications and perspectivations as functioning already as intensifications or mitigations of the nominations and argumentations respectively. Furthermore, as Reisigl states in his study on the use of nationalist political rhetoric in Austria, from the category of predication and argumentation one can draw the main contextual topics and lines of argumentation of the debates (cf. Reisigl 2007: 41, 250), and this corresponds to how the actors are nominated with respect to their ‘identity’ regarding the topic.²⁴⁵

To summarize at this point: While drawing from different ranges of tropes and other devices for the analysis of rhetoric it is crucial to problematize them in relation to the philosophical premises of PDT, thus to articulate them from within the framework. Hence it remains important to conceptually distinguish between discourse as an ontological category that stresses the radical contingency and structural incompleteness of all meaning systems/systems of social relations that can be expressed in terms of ‘tropological movements’ of metaphors, metonyms,

²⁴⁵ To briefly reiterate in this context and in relation to the structuring of the analysis what was said on identity in chapter 2.2: While identities can be partly understood as “strategic constructs” – and indeed a hegemony perspective emphasizes the role of political articulations in the construction of identities – this does however not translate into an understanding of identities being completely freely manipulable, as (successful) identification always depends on the context available (cf. Howarth 2013, 243, 251), but also to the degree of the proponents of a certain position being gripped by a particular perspective, hence, unable to distance themselves from it in the sense of employing it as a conscious strategy. In this sense, employing these analytical categories does not mean to ‘actorise’ identity discourses in terms of an understanding of “cynical, rational actors who tamper with identities in an instrumentalist and strategic way in order to achieve their purposes without themselves being under the influence of identities” (cf. Hagström and Gustafsson 2015, 8).

synecdoches etc. On the ontical level of discourse as set of representations and meaningful and meaning making practices, the role of these tropes can be invoked for the concrete analysis of the latter, while still being informed by the ontological dimension (Howarth and Griggs 2008, 199). This also means that my aim in this study is not to inextricably link Laclau and CDA/Reisigl, but to suggest a way that might help to flesh out the practical implications of the Laclauian concepts, as I show with my analysis.

Structuring of the Analysis

For these reasons, the findings of my discourse analysis of the Congressional Record are organized as follows: I am starting with an overview on the more general nominations and predications (4.), then laying out the central topics of the discourses on Japan and China through the argumentations (5.), followed by the perspectivations (6.) relating to the topics. Discerned from the material, the two major themes relating to the dislocation of U.S. identity through Japan and China are the trade deficit and the (possible) challenge to the global leadership and role model character of the U.S. according to American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history (see introduction to the analysis and the analysis itself). These topics, and the central nodal points connected to them (see in what follows in the analysis), and the positioning towards them account for the chains of equivalence and difference throughout the categories of argumentation and perspectivation, and finally, intensification and mitigation (7.). While intensification attempts at fostering the chains of equivalence through an emphasis on the empty signifier and the aim to establish a particular understanding of 'the problem', as well as offering a solution to it, mitigation aims at weakening or even dissolving the antagonisms through chains of difference. The dislocation, nodal points and empty signifiers are present in articulation and perspectivation as well, however they figure even more clearly through intensification and mitigation in the corresponding topics.

How these analytic categories and PDT-key terms translate into a discourse analysis of the cases in this study is laid out in the introduction to the analysis and at the beginning of the chapters, while focusing on what this tells us about U.S. identity in the summaries of the chapters and subchapters.

Collection and Organization of the Sources

My analysis is based on debates in the U.S. Congress on economic issues related to Japan and China from 1985 to 2008. As I did not want to confine myself 'only' to specific events, but instead capture a broader picture on topics and matters that were brought up in or related to the field of economic policies, I decided on a 'middle way'. As mentioned in the introduction, I did focus on specific years within the timeframe, during which significant events (understood in the sense explained earlier) concerning the economic field, Japan and China, but also global developments, happened. The selection in a first instance was thus based on a careful reading of secondary literature, with adjustments made in the course of reading the materials (see in what follows). To repeat from the introduction, the events²⁴⁶ were:

1985: Plaza Accords, first year since WWII that U.S. is a debtor country,

1989: Structural Impediments Initiative (SII), end of the Cold War,

1994/1995: important trade summits with Japan, debates on China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) status,

1997: Asian financial crisis,

2000/2001: China's accession to the WTO,

2005: China announces end of exclusive dollar peg of its currency, debates on acquisition of Californian oil company (Unocal) by Chinese company (CNOOC),

2008: the 'outbreak' of the financial crisis, China becomes the U.S.' largest creditor

While the 1985, 1989, 1994/1995, 2000/2001 and 2005 incidents are more Japan/China specific (although with global implications), the end of the Cold War, the Asian financial crisis and the global financial crisis account for what are commonly denominated as globally significant (economic) developments with implications for the relationship between the U.S. and the respective number two economy.

To not confine my analysis 'only' to these events, I looked at the respective years in their entirety. Also, I did not only search for explicit statements on or connected to these events, or for instance

²⁴⁶ While on the one hand a selection of these 'events' (see what was laid out earlier on a poststructuralist understanding of this term) could be read as acknowledging or even 'reifying' them as sedimented 'historical events', in this dissertation they function only in the sense of analytic and practical devices for setting the timeframe of the analysis. However, their contestedness becomes clear in the analysis of the Congressional Record, see also in what follows in this section.

on Japan or China as a ‘threat’ – which would lead to implicit articulations going unnoticed, as well as to finding only what one is looking for – as I wanted to capture a broader picture of how economic debates are intertwined with the articulation of U.S. identity towards Japan and China and the understandings/constructions of Japan and China as ‘excluded other’, or something else. For these reasons I also decided against only focusing on specific cases. Instead, I conducted a search of the Congressional Record²⁴⁷ consisting of statements of the members of Congress – the Senate and the House of Representatives²⁴⁸ – speaking on the floor of the two chambers on all occurrences (including the extensions of remarks).²⁴⁹ The keywords for the search were “Japan economy” and “China economy”, and I included the results for the terms in the same order and near each other.

Because of this proceeding, not all of the events that I used as initial guideline for collecting a text corpus did actually turn out to figure prominently in the debates themselves, while other incidents happening during the same year were at the forefront, as the analysis will show. For instance, in 1989 the debates on the FSX-fighter plane played a very prominent role (see in what follows in the overview), while in 2005 the announcement by China not to peg its currency exclusively to the dollar anymore, but to a basket of different currencies, did not come up explicitly in the documents retrieved. This did not really have an impact on the analysis itself however, as once more my initial goal was not to study these events in particular, but to look at the broader evolving discourse of economic relations instead.

The average turnout for the years 1989, 1994, 1995 and 1997, was around 60 documents for each country and year. For 2000, 2001, 2005 and 2008 the documents on Japan decreased to around 30 per year, with an increase for China to around 100.²⁵⁰ In 1985 there were 60 results for Japan, while China was mentioned only a few times within these documents.²⁵¹ The length of

²⁴⁷ See http://thomas.loc.gov/home/cr_help.htm (last accessed January 24, 2015).

²⁴⁸ These two parts contain debates and statements made on the floor of each chamber, as well as records of various parliamentary actions and roll call votes. In addition, it contains communications from the president and the executive branch, memorials, petitions and information about legislation, including amendments. Committee activities are not reported here, though mention is made of reports received and meeting notices. Conference committee reports are typically printed in the record. Members are allowed to edit the transcript of their floor remarks before publication in the daily record or the permanent record. (see *ibid.*)

²⁴⁹ This section is now used only by representatives to include additional legislative statements not actually delivered on the House floor, as well as extraneous material, such as texts of speeches delivered outside Congress, letters from and tributes to constituents and newspaper or magazine articles. Similar extraneous material from senators is inserted in the Additional Statements section of the Senate part of the record. (see *ibid.*)

²⁵⁰ This concurs with Daniel Bob’s findings who concludes from his analysis of the Congressional Record from 1991-2000 that the 104th Congress (1995-96) was the turning point. Before it, more bills and references were made to Japan, after it to China (Bob 2001, 111f.).

²⁵¹ As the record is publicly available online only from 1989 onwards, the sources for 1985 (scans of the bound record) were collected and downloaded through the database Proquest Congressional, that is accessible from the Library of Congress and certain university libraries in and outside of the U.S.

the documents greatly differed from one to around 80 or more pages, depending on the occasion and nature of remarks.

Through a first reading of the still relatively large amount of documents, I discerned the two main topics – the trade deficit and the leadership challenge – and this went along with selecting the documents for a more detailed rhetorical analysis. For this, I coded 219 exemplary documents (according to the initial key term results, 137 on Japan and 82 on China, while China was additionally often referenced in the documents on Japan)²⁵² using the coding software atlas.ti, with the analytic categories derived from RPA as codes.²⁵³ The ordering of the documents according to the codes/analytic categories/PDT key concepts led to a further structuring of the analysis into the subtopics of the respective chapters (see contents and analysis).

The organization along the topics and subtopics, analytic categories and PDT key terms means that the analysis is not strictly chronological, but topical and conceptual/categorical. However, if the year is not explicitly mentioned, the references to the documents allow for the reader to check in the bibliography at what occasion in which year the statement was made. The analytical reasons for splitting the articulations into the analytic categories and concepts and, in a first step, in a sense detaching them from their original ‘context’²⁵⁴ and not treating them strictly chronologically, are that the analysis is not meant to recapitulate or narrate what ‘actually happened’. Instead, the focus lies on the discursive production and articulation of identities that does not occur in a linear way, i.e. starting from a clear ‘beginning’ and then leading to a particular outcome. The articulation of identities happens through constant shifts in, and renegotiations of relations and meanings, that can thus be captured in a better way through looking at the topics or nodal points in relation to which the different modes and potentials of identifications are enabled or become feasible. In this sense, again the focus is on *how* the text argues, not *why* (and who says something) (Torfing 2005, 41; cf. introduction). As laid out in chapter two, discourses are not (only) understood as ensemble of utterances or statements produced or initiated by speakers, but as structures of meaning that are productive and constraining ‘on their own terms’, hence in turn affecting the speaker and his/her possibilities of articulation (cf. Diaz-Bone and Schneider 2010, 464).

²⁵² The documents explicitly focusing on China retrieved through the Japan search are indicated in the bibliography of sources.

²⁵³ I used atlas.ti as an organizing tool to manage the amount of documents and codes, not as an analytic device. For literature on discourse analysis and coding in the latter case see for instance Diaz-Bone and Schneider (2010), Glasze et al. (2009).

²⁵⁴ The nominations and predications will however reappear in their ‘context’ of argumentation and perspectivation in the respective chapters.

While in the end I did conduct a supplementary word count to highlight and summarize the most frequently used expressions on Japan, China and the U.S. itself (see tables five to eight), it should be clear that the frequencies do not convey anything on their own, but always have to be read as a supplement and in relation to the overall discourse analysis. In this sense, they only reflect a certain trend that in most cases is in accordance with the findings from reading and analyzing the complete material. I come back to these findings in chapters four to seven, as well as in the tables at the end of the summary of the analysis.²⁵⁵

All this having been said, these are also the reasons for taking Congress as ‘unitary actor’ (while still accounting for the differential positions voiced, but not for the individual speakers or their party or committee affiliation), as the focus of this study is not on the (hidden/implicit) ‘purposes’ of the speakers in a narrow behavioral or motivational sense, but instead on the structuration of the publicly and openly conducted discourses as meaning-structures within which the speakers navigate, while being more or less aware or reflective on them.²⁵⁶ As laid out in the introduction and in chapter one, the procedural and ‘motivational’ aspect of Congressional policies in terms of voting behavior and party/interest group affiliation have been addressed by previous studies (see introduction and chapter one), whereas questions of identity and discourse in Congress have remained disregarded so far.

Furthermore, my aim is not to ‘evaluate’ whether Japan and China and their policies were ‘actually unfair’ or not – but on *how* unfairness was articulated – which has remained a more or less controversial or unresolved issue also among scholars and experts (cf. i.e. Reifman 1989, 2). Balanced views (i.e. from the Congressional Research Service) point to what they classify as ‘real problems’ but also to hyperbole and misperceptions in the political debates on both sides (cf. Nanto 1992, Morrison 2014).²⁵⁷ The bottom line in both cases seems to be that Japan and China were or are seen as pursuing policies aimed at their advantage (such as restricting imports and pegging their currency), but the effects on the U.S. economy in terms of the trade deficit are not as self-evident as argued by those blaming only Japan and China for the deficit and its

²⁵⁵ While many scholars start with the frequencies to discern important expressions (see for instance Nabers 2009, 2015) in my view this may be an option, but it is not indispensable. Frequency *may* be an indicator for how ‘important’ an expression is, but it is *not necessarily* so, as it always depends on the context and relations of the expression. In this dissertation, I am treating the word count as ‘only’ supplementary and as an (non-necessary) addition to the analysis.

²⁵⁶ To repeat, this study does not conceive of the subject as pre-given, fully constituted and self-conscious rational actor, see chapter two.

²⁵⁷ For instance Nanto’s CRS report characterizes Congressional policymaking with respect to trade towards Japan as “driven by strong domestic interests, appeals to broad political principles, and *numerous horror stories*” (Nanto 1992, 1, emphasis added).

consequences (cf. i.e. Bown and McCulloch 2009).²⁵⁸ The imbalances are also due to structural differences in the economies, for instance between saving, spending and investment rates, i.e. the continuous U.S. dependency on foreign investment to finance its budget deficit (Keidel 2011; for a general assessment of these factors see for instance Moran 2015; cf. Reifman 1989, 4f.).

Finally, when it comes to the question of 'the context', i.e. the timeframe and the events, I do not extensively recapitulate what has been written in the vast 'topical' literature on U.S.-Japan and U.S.-China economic relations, in order to provide a 'historical context' for the analysis. In line with PDT there is no extra-discursive, pre-given 'context' external or apart from discourse.²⁵⁹ Hence, the aim of my approach is to start from the actual material, the articulations in Congress and the 'context'/references they generate themselves, while giving 'background information' for the reader on the issues brought up in the debates not in a separate chapter, but in connection to the analysis itself. However, I did lay out the most significant events and policies in the introduction and in chapter one. Furthermore, in the introduction to the analysis I am providing a brief overview of the major events and issues during the timeframe studied (based on secondary literature as well as the Congressional Record itself), while addressing them again in further detail through the actual analysis.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

"[I]t's not the resemblances but the differences, which resemble each other". Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism*, 1969, p. 149, quoted in Howarth (2000, 25).

As laid out in the introduction, the main question of this project is to find out how U.S. 'liberal' identity as globally leading economic and political role model is affected by the rise of what are taken to be possible contestants, as in the case of Japan since the 1980s and China since the 1990s. Within this dissertation I focus on the discourse in the economic realm, which centers

²⁵⁸ For a recent assessment on past and present 'currency manipulation' see for instance Jeffrey Frankel's commentary (Frankel 2015).

²⁵⁹ In this respect it should also be noted, that against another common allegation, discourse analysis does not amount to 'mere description', as it does not presuppose that the discursive practices analyzed are 'neutral' in the sense of merely reflecting "pre-discursive experiences or objective interests" (Norval 1996, 3f.). A discourse analysis as understood in this dissertation is aimed at revealing the mechanisms through which 'naturalizations' occurred or are aimed at, in the sense of concealing the socially constructed and contingent nature of 'reality' and institutionalizing a certain 'view' as hegemonic (cf. *ibid.*).

mainly on trade policy, and take the debates in the U.S. Congress as an example of the elite public discourse for inquiring into how U.S. identity is articulated towards Japan and China when debating economic issues (for the significance of Congress in the field of trade policy, see introduction). I assume American exceptionalism as well as the liberal theory of history (see chapter 1.3) to play a significant role when it comes to the U.S.' self-understanding or 'subject positioning' (see chapter two) as global economic and political role model, how the U.S. relates to Japan and China, and how it conceives of them.

TOPICS, STRUCTURE AND 'CONTEXT'

Once more, it is important to keep in mind that I do not anticipate the 'cases' of Japan and China to be similar (see introduction). The two most important differences broadly put lie in the overall character of the bilateral relationship with the U.S. outside the economic field: (1) the U.S. and Japan were close allies, and, also due to its post-war constitution, Japan was generally seen as posing no military or security threat to the U.S.;²⁶⁰ (2) Japan was considered a 'member' of the 'Western' world in terms of having (been) transformed to a liberal democratic capitalist system, and being an established industrialized nation, after WWII. Although – contrary to Japan – China had been an U.S.-ally during WWII, after the founding of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 it became a Cold War adversary that remained 'ideologically suspicious' (see introduction and chapter one) also after the rapprochement since the 1970ies. This evidently also holds true and plays an important role for the military and security realm, but also has repercussions on the economic field. Due to China's size, weight, and role in the Asia-Pacific region, the "China problem" is commonly articulated as encompassing economic and security/military dimensions (cf. N. Morris 2010, 141; Uriu 2009, 244).²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ However, because of the economic frictions and Japan's economic rise this possibility was debated at the time in political as well as in academic circles, see for instance Berger (1993), Packard (1987). The most prominent and extreme articulation of this scenario was probably George Friedman and Meredith Le Bard's book "The coming War with Japan" published in 1991 (cf. N. Morris 2010, 28). On parallels with later literature on China, like Ted Galen Carpenter's "America's Coming War with China", see also Morris (2010, 141).

As the development of its military power did not take place as 'predicted' first and foremost by realist IR theory, Japan was either attributed with being an 'abnormal state', or for instance a 'trading state', 'civilian power', a 'reactive' or 'defensive' state (see Gustafsson and Hagström 2015, 3).

Huntington for instance argued at the time that Japan had "accepted all the assumptions of realism [maximization of power to insure security in an anarchic world, first and foremost through military power, see *ibid.* in Huntington] but applied them purely in the economic realm" (Huntington 1993, 72). For an overview on criticisms on Huntington's take on Japan as a 'threat', see Kataoka (1995), who also 'credits' Huntington for having linked the trade related revisionist discourse to geopolitics (*ibid.*, 1).

²⁶¹ On differences between 'Japan bashing' and 'China bashing' see also N. Morris (2010, 141). While she maintains that so far the 'bashing' was far more intense in the case of Japan, Morris also points out that in spite of their criticism of

These two main differences do also figure in the discourses on economic issues, where they are met by the two major similarities (cf. for example also Uriu 2009, 243f.; Bown and McCulloch 2009, 670ff.) between Japan and China in their relationship to the U.S.: (1) the largest bilateral trade deficit with the U.S.,²⁶² resulting in becoming the major (worldwide) creditor, bringing with it a kind of ‘mutual dependence’ in both cases;²⁶³ (2) an ensuing debate on whether Japan’s and China’s economic performance and the implications for the economic, but also political relationship with the U.S. poses a challenge to the U.S. in terms of its global leadership and role model character for economic and political development.²⁶⁴

Based on the analysis of the economic debates in Congress I argue that these two issues, the unbalanced trade relationship and the ensuing leadership question, challenge or dislocate U.S.-identity (especially in terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history) as global economic, but also political role model. This in turn affects the way Japan’s and China’s identities and their relations to the U.S. are articulated in these debates.

The analysis itself starts out along these two major topics – the trade deficit and the question on the U.S.’ global role – preceded by an overview through introducing the most important general nominations and predications (chapter four), while these and also the other

overdrawing parallels between Japan- and China bashing, what she calls “recovering Japan bashers”, such as Clyde Prestowitz and Chalmers Johnson, were not unengaged in deliberating on a ‘China threat’.

Furthermore, when it comes to differences in the economic realm, Bown and McCulloch point out that Japan in the 1980s was already an established industrialized nation, while China – in terms of per capita income – is still a ‘poor’ country (Bown and McCulloch 2009, 671).

²⁶² As for instance pointed out by Bown and McCulloch, “to many, the [trade] imbalances themselves are convincing evidence of unfair trading practices” (Bown and McCulloch 2009, 670).

²⁶³ For the case of Japan Robert Gilpin at the time maintained that “by the mid-1980s, the world monetary and financial system based on the dollar had become largely underwritten by Japanese capital. The greatly overvalued dollar would have declined and perhaps collapsed in value as a consequence of the Reagan Administration’s economic policies had it not been for this Japanese financial backing” (Gilpin 1987, 332). George Packard points to the mutual dependency of Japan on the American market for its exports, while it was financing the growing U.S. budget deficit and basically sustaining an economic recovery through keeping U.S. interest rates low by its investment in U.S. Treasury bonds and corporate securities, which is why Japan needed a healthy U.S. economy as much as Americans did (cf. Packard 1987, 4). Gilpin saw the dependence upon foreign investment as a “vicious circle” (Gilpin 1987, 337). In 1988 Zbigniew Brzezinski (formerly President Carter’s security adviser) was invoking “Amerippon” to “provide new leadership and stability to the global economic system” (cited in Kataoka 1995, 10-11), which bears resemblance to “Chimerica” coined by Niall Ferguson and Moritz Schularick (2011). On China having replaced Japan, while not (yet) to the same extent see i.e. Layne (2007, 154). On the ‘dependence’ of the U.S. on China as an export market and China as a financier of the budget deficits through its large holdings of U.S. Treasury securities see Morrison (Morrison 2014, Summary).

All this having been said, there were also significant differences in the bilateral economic relationships, see in what follows in the overviews as well as in the analysis (cf. also i.e. Bown and McCulloch 2009).

²⁶⁴ Regarding the trade deficit, China replaced Japan as the largest deficit-trading partner in the year 2000, while the U.S. had been running a deficit with Japan since 1982 (cf. Xie 2009, 61, 125). It became a net debtor nation with Japan as its biggest creditor in 1985 (cf. N. Morris 2010, 24), with the U.S. and Japan being also the largest worldwide debtor and creditor respectively (see also Figure 5). Japan had become the second largest market economy by the 1970s (cf. Kunkel 2003, 37). China overtook Japan as largest creditor to the U.S. in 2008 (cf. Faiola and Goldfarb 2008). Furthermore, China also surpassed Japan as the world’s second largest manufacturer in 2006, and the U.S. in 2010 (Morrison 2014, 8).

categories derived from RPA are always read through and linked back to the key concepts in PDT. In the case of nominations and predications, these are the initial articulations of self and other. Following in chapter five are the main lines of argumentation for the topics of the trade deficit and the potential global challenge relating to Japan and China. The category of perspectivation in chapter six is treated for both topics together, as when looking at the perspective the U.S. sees itself in relation to Japan and China, the trade deficit and resulting debt are articulated as ‘cause’ of, or reason for the ensuing leadership question. For the same reason, intensification and mitigation are also treated together for both topics. Argumentation and perspectivation account for the chains of equivalence and difference, and the articulation and attempts at filling the empty signifier, while intensification and mitigation sustain or weaken these dynamics. I briefly restate the meaning of the analytic categories as well as their link to PDT at the beginning of each chapter.

Finally, when I refer to ‘the U.S.’ in this analysis, it denotes the expressions or (self-) attributions of the speakers. In the project at large ‘the U.S.’ stands for Congress that is one example in the field of public elite discourse in this study. Therefore, even though I use the term ‘the U.S.’, regarding a broader perspective I do not take Congress alone and the articulations voiced there to be entirely representative for ‘the U.S.’ as a whole, but conceive of them as part of a bigger picture, that however lies outside of this dissertation.

OVERVIEW ON THE U.S.-CONGRESS AND JAPAN

The major issues concerning Japan and economic policies during the time frame analyzed and referred to in the debates are related to the solving of questions on how to deal with the increasing Japanese imports into the U.S., while encountering barriers for U.S. exports to Japan. In the debates these matters of market-, and increasingly and importantly also industrial competition, became connected to the prevalent trade balance issue (see Figures 1. and 2.) as a ‘lightning rod’ (cf. Nanto 1992), as well as to the question of Japanese investment in the U.S. (Hodges 1989; Kunkel 2003, 32, 37; cf. N. Morris 2010, 24).

At the beginning of the 1980s the prevailing topic and cause for economic frictions lay in the high numbers of Japanese auto-exports into the U.S. After many rounds of negotiations, the parties came to an agreement on so-called Voluntary Export Restrictions (VERs) by the Japanese side in 1981, for initially three years with following extensions (and slight raises in the cap), until

they were finally terminated in 1994.²⁶⁵ These extensions were frequently debated in Congress. Furthermore, there were several initiatives intended to 'open' the allegedly closed Japanese market for diverse goods ranging from satellites to beef, and culminating in the so called Market-Oriented-Sector-Specific (MOSS) talks in 1985 and 1986, however not leading to a significant outcome in terms of an improvement from the U.S. perspective (cf. Mastanduno 1992, 240).²⁶⁶ In 1985 the so-called Plaza Accords were negotiated within the G7-framework by the five major industrial countries (the United States, Japan, West-Germany, France, and Britain).²⁶⁷ Their main goal was to drive down the value of the U.S. dollar (cf. Hummel 2000, 145; Kunkel 2003, 53), as it was seen as one of the major factors contributing to imbalances in trade and investment.²⁶⁸ Japan was also accused of manipulating its currency (P16:45; P79:4; P141:3) (cf. also i.e. Kennedy 1988, 459), although this argument was less frequently voiced than later with China. While the depreciated dollar did result in a rise of U.S. exports and a lowering of the bilateral trade deficit by 1990, the effect seemed to fade again from 1991 onwards (cf. Nanto 1992, 3ff., 11).

In 1986 an agreement was reached on trade with semiconductors, yet bringing about U.S. sanctions – the first trade sanctions against Japan since WWII (cf. Packard 1987, 3) – in the following year (cf. Hummel 2000, 139ff.).

In 1989 the so-called FSX fighter plane agreement between the U.S. and Japan gave rise to a major controversy (cf. i.e. Spar 1992). The U.S. had initially agreed to the transfer of F-16 aircraft technology to Japan to function as a basis for a new Japanese aircraft. However, the initial agreement was domestically contested, and the central issue became not only whether Japan – an ally of the U.S. – could actually be trusted with that technology (cf. N. Morris 2010, 57). On the

²⁶⁵ This agreement prompted the biggest car producers on the Japanese side to set up manufactories in the U.S., which did not reduce, but partly added to the frictions over the coming years (cf. Hodges 1989; J. K. Jackson 1990, 4f.). See also Nanto (1992, 8), who points out that competition in automobiles and auto parts actually became more intense after the VERs. The report also emphasizes that this kind of protection of home industries turned out to be more expensive than expected in terms of the cost to consumers for each job saved (ibid.). See also Bown and McCulloch (2009, 671), also for VERs in other sectors (ibid., 674).

²⁶⁶ The talks centered on the sectors in which U.S. exporters had very low market share in Japan compared to other world markets, such as medical equipment, forestry products, telecommunications equipment and auto parts (cf. Nanto 1992, 12).

²⁶⁷ The other two G7 members are Canada and Italy.

²⁶⁸ Hummel importantly points out that the high dollar was in part a result of policies initiated by the Reagan administration in the early 1980s, with high interest rates as measure for attracting foreign investors to buy U.S. government bonds to lower the fiscal deficit. The latter in turn was even further increasing in consequence to tax cuts and rising military expenditures. The rise of the dollar following from increased investment had a negative impact on the international competitiveness of U.S. producers and exporters vis-à-vis European and Japanese competition, leading to job losses in U.S. industries (Hummel 2000, 139). A report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) on Japanese investment in the U.S. in the 1980s points out that the surge in Japanese portfolio investments (i.e. Treasury securities, corporate stocks and bonds) resulted from these high interest rates and a fall of domestic savings below domestic investment requirements, that was filled in by foreign capital inflows. In this sense Japanese investment reflected the favorable investment climate in the U.S., while – according to the report – the full impact of foreign investment on the U.S. economy was not entirely understood (at the time). The report calls this a shortcoming “which seems to fuel the national debate over the costs and benefits of investment”(J. K. Jackson 1990, 22ff.). See also in what follows in the analysis.

one hand these issues were tied to ‘the Toshiba scandal’ (see in what follows in the analysis), but also to the fear that Japan’s aircraft industry might want to outcompete the U.S. (cf. Packard 1987, 5f.). On the other hand the debate also ensued around the question – given the already huge trade deficit (see figure one), which had in total risen from around \$16 billion in 1981 to \$49 billion in 1989, after peaking at \$57 billion in 1987 (Nanto 1992, 4) – whether the deal could not have been concluded in a more profitable way for the U.S. In this respect it was debated, whether the agreement would not have presented an opportunity for Japan to show ‘good will’ as a trading partner and as an ally (cf. Spar 1992, 282). Finally, the agreement was revised enabling for the protection of certain U.S. technologies and a higher share for U.S. companies in the production of the plane.

Also in 1989 the so called Structural Impediments Initiative (SII) attempted to deal with what had by then become the highly contentious issue of Japanese structural trade barriers (i.e. in the six areas of savings and investment, land use, pricing mechanisms, the distribution system, keiretsu/inter-firm relationships,²⁶⁹ and exclusionary business practices), leading to two agreements and the removal of Japan from the list of ‘unfair trading partners’ according to the Super 301 legislation (see following footnote) of the year 1988 (cf. Mastanduno 1992; Schoppa 1997, 74), under which it had been cited earlier that year.²⁷⁰ The launch of the SII initiative, only shortly after citing Japan under Super 301, was commonly regarded as ‘compromise’, or rather as standing for the “institutional battle between Congress and the executive and [for] the ideological

²⁶⁹ Meaning that within certain industrial groups firms fostered their business relationships by holding blocks of shares of the other firms within the group (J. K. Jackson 1990, 28).

²⁷⁰ According to Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, or Super 301 like it was legislated in 1988, the president is authorized to “take all appropriate and feasible” action in response to any foreign practice that is “unjustifiable, unreasonable, or discriminatory and burdens or restricts United States commerce”. The Super 301 called upon the president, or – if in response to a petition – the Trade Representative, to retaliate if negotiations to abolish the restrictions identified, failed (J. Goldstein 1993, 194f.). It had been proposed already in 1986, and while at that time not being directly targeted at Japan, the trade issues with Japan were the major motivation for those supporting the bill, and it had likely been drafted “with Japan in mind” (Mastanduno 1992, 242). In 1989, under the Bush administration, Japan was cited under the Super 301 as ‘unfair trading nation’, along with Brazil and India (N. Morris 2010, 56), which was a kind of compromise to satisfy those demanding ‘retaliation’ and those opposing Super 301 for its potential negative effects on the ongoing Uruguay Round of the GATT talks (Schoppa 1997, 71–75).

Already earlier, for instance in 1985, Section 301 was initiated by President Reagan as reaction to congressional pressure against Japan, Brazil, South Korea and the European Community (EC). According to Kunkel, these initiatives “averted what might otherwise have become a wholesale congressional revolt against executive branch primacy on trade policy”, and he calls them an important turning point “ushering in a new policy environment more favorable to critics of Japan’s trade policies” (see also Hummel 2000, 139ff.; Kunkel 2003, 53).

Another legislative provision passed with the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 ‘with Japan in mind’ was the so-called Exon-Florio provision. It granted the President the authority to suspend or prohibit foreign acquisitions, mergers or takeovers of U.S. businesses, which threaten to impair the national security. Behind this was the proposed acquisition of the Fairchild Semiconductor Corporation from a French company by Fujitsu. (J. K. Jackson 1990, 27). See also Bown and McCulloch (2009, 671).

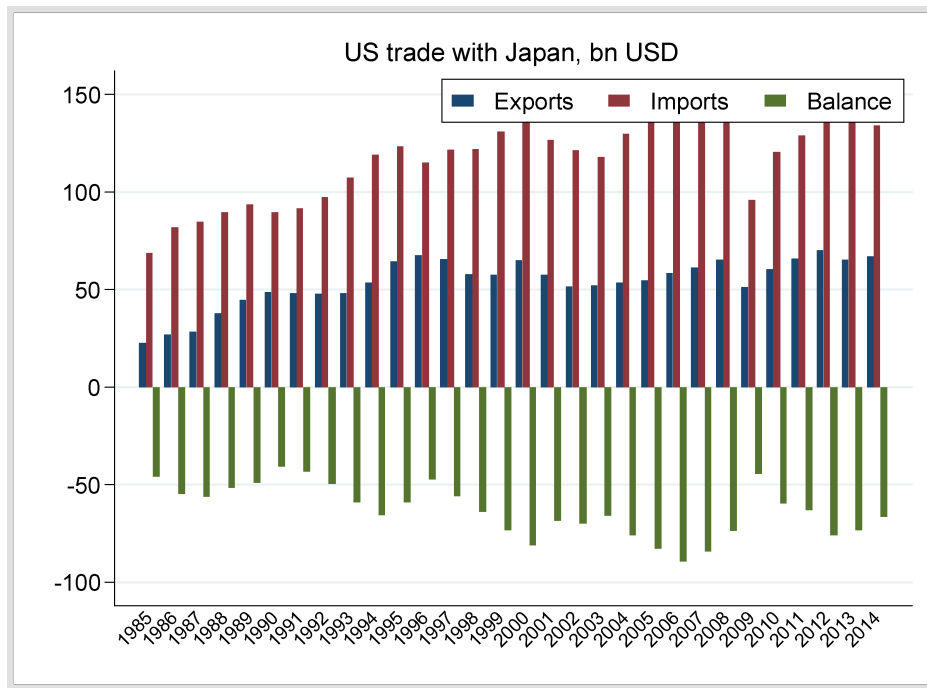
battle between traditional liberal economic and Cold War principles on the one hand and emerging “revisionist” views on the other” (Schoppa 1997, 75).²⁷¹

Finally, under the Clinton presidency the so-called Framework (for a New Economic Partnership) Talks were initiated in 1993. They evolved into the (in)famous disputes on ‘objective criteria’ or ‘numerical targets’, that had been a reason for U.S. sanctions on semiconductors already in 1986. Whereas the U.S. wanted to agree on concrete numbers for the market share of foreign companies in the respective sectors in Japan, this was vehemently opposed by Japan.²⁷² The negotiations failed in 1994, and in the same year the U.S. imposed sanctions on Japanese mobile phones for the alleged violation of an earlier agreement, and also reinstated the Super 301 regimentation that had been lifted in 1989. Sanctions were averted and an agreement reached for certain sectors and products after the U.S. dropped its demand for numerical targets. When it came to the still contentious issue of autos and auto parts in 1995, U.S. sanctions were also avoided through a last minute agreement, with the U.S. not having reached its goals of concrete numbers for market share. This also marked the end of U.S. offensive strategies when it came to trade with Japan (cf. Hummel 2000, 149ff.; Paulsen 1999, 134ff.; Uriu 2009, 241f.).

²⁷¹ The ‘Cold War principles’ refer to the prioritization of security and alliance related aspects in the bilateral relationship, to the detriment of economic and trade issues, as the critics of this line argued. See in what follows in the analysis on ‘economic security’.

²⁷² Concerning the negotiations on semiconductors in 1986, the U.S. side maintained, that Japan had agreed, in a confidential letter, to the concrete numerical target of 20 per cent share of the Japanese semiconductor market, while Japan denied ever having made a concession like that (Hummel 2000, 147; cf. Kunkel 2003, 83). The Clinton administration’s goal in the Framework Talks in 1994 again was focused on setting ‘objective criteria’ for evaluating whether the market share had increased or not, what was opposed by the Japanese as they interpreted these as ‘numerical targets’ that they rejected, also based on the 1986/87, but also on similar experiences with the Bush administration and VERs in 1992 (Schoppa 1999, 324).

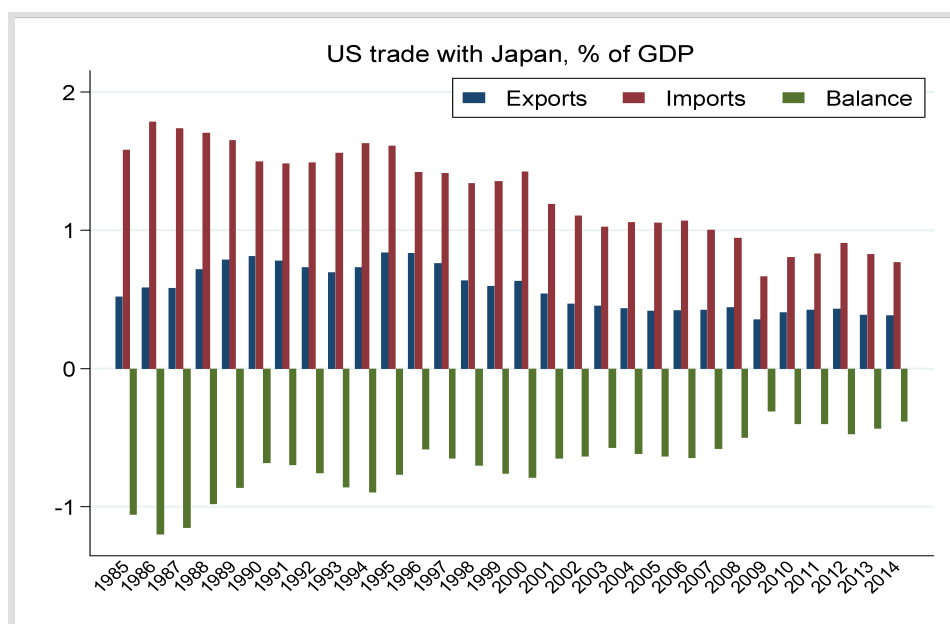
Figure 1: U.S. trade in goods with Japan in billions of U.S. Dollars²⁷³



Sources: Trade data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5880.html> (last accessed March 26, 2015). All figures in U.S. Dollars are on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted.

²⁷³ I am grateful to Karsten Mau for his assistance in converting the data, also for the following graphics, into figures.

Figure 2: U.S. trade in goods with Japan as percentage of U.S. GDP



Sources: Trade data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5880.html> (last accessed March 26, 2015). GDP data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, <http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp> (last accessed March 26, 2015). All figures in U.S. Dollars and GDP are on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted.

OVERVIEW ON THE U.S.-CONGRESS AND CHINA

With China the main question also centered on the growing trade deficit (see Figures three and four), which went from around \$6 billion in 1989 to \$286 billion in 2008, accompanied by a heated debate on the alleged manipulation of the Chinese currency especially from the year 2003 onwards (cf. Nymalm 2013). Until the year 2000 these issues were linked to the topic of Most Favored Nation Status (MFN) or Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR), and the question of whether trade relations with China should not only depend on ‘economic issues’, but also be conditioned on the improvement of its domestic human rights situation.

The matter of ‘Most Favored Nation Status’ (MFN)²⁷⁴ with China goes back to the suspension of MFN in 1951 in accordance with the Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1951, in

²⁷⁴ Since 1934 the U.S. applied MFN (with regard to tariffs) routinely to all external trade relations. This mechanism was created with the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act (RTAA) of 1934, that ended the rather protectionist regime of the Smoot Hawley Tariff Act of 1930. In this sense, the term ‘most favored nation’ is actually misleading, as it only means to grant the same benefits/low tariffs negotiated with a party that was granted MFN, to all other trading

which the executive was called upon by Congress to suspend MFN for the Soviet-Union and all other countries of the “Sino-Soviet block”. The Trade Act of 1974 in turn provided for a procedure to lift the suspension, which however became tied to the so-called Jackson-Vanick Amendment of the Trade Act. Accordingly, the president could annually waive the suspension of MFN for the respective country, provided that a bilateral trade agreement was concluded and that the requirements for Jackson-Vanick were met. Originally drafted for pressuring the Soviet Union to either improve the situation and rights of minorities, and/or granting them the right to emigrate, with this amendment trade and human rights became connected, as the presidential waiver was tied to calling upon the trading partner to improve its human rights situation. Congress was entitled to annually challenge the waiver through a joint resolution by the Senate and the House that the president could veto in turn. The veto could be overruled through a two-thirds majority in both chambers. The bilateral trade agreement between the U.S. and China entered into force in February 1980, and was subject to the annual renewal of the MFN-status until 2000. Importantly, MFN only became controversial since Tiananmen in 1989 (Dumbaugh 1998, 1; Gagliano 2014, 137; cf. Kolkmann 2005, 102ff.; Xie 2009, 5, 101; J. Yang 2000, 17), leading to annual debates in Congress, that for instance passed legislation to revoke MFN for reasons of ‘unfair trade’ and human rights twice in 1992, each time vetoed by the president (Bush senior) with the vetoes sustained in the Senate (cf. Gagliano 2014, 152ff.; Xie 2009, 6, 109ff.; J. Yang 2000, 75ff.).²⁷⁵ Kerry Dumbaugh in his report on behalf of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) characterized U.S.-China policies in the years between 1989 and 1992 as rather confrontational, with

“Beijing generally unwilling to make policy concessions to the United States, President Bush unable to resume pre-Tiananmen “normal” relations with China, and Congress increasingly frustrated by its lack of significant success in pressuring either China or the Bush Administration to change its policy approach”,

partners with that status (cf. Kolkmann 2005, 37, 102). In the U.S. MFN was renamed ‘Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR)’ in 1998, which did not change anything but the name. The reasons were domestic, as the term ‘most favored’ had become hard to communicate to constituents especially in the case of China (see also Dumbaugh 1998, 34; Gagliano 2014, 143f.). For example, in Congress the opponents of MFN articulated it as suggesting that “certain nations on this planet are most favored in the eyes of the United States and in the eyes of Americans [...]” (P113:19).

²⁷⁵ As Xie points out, in the years between 1989 and 1995 a total of 75 bills relating to MFN and China were introduced, compared to only four between 1973 and 1988. Since 1995 there were on average about two bills annually, and between 1999 and 2001 the House voted each year on joint resolutions to disapprove of MFN renewal. Except for the years mentioned, they were all defeated (Xie 2009, 109). On other presidential vetoes by Bush against congressional China bills (four in late 1989 and early 1990) see Dumbaugh (1998, 6).

Importantly however, in 1989 itself the process of MFN renewal took place without controversies, even though it happen after June 4. Two sets of non-MFN related sanctions were passed during that year, and the disputes over their broadening as well as over the China-policies of the executive paved the way for the confrontations over MFN during the following years (Dumbaugh 1998, 5).

while most of the debates were carried out through the annual process of renewing MFN as a vehicle (Dumbaugh 1998, 4).

In 1993 President Clinton – who in his election campaign had criticized Bush for being too soft on China when it came to human rights – conditioned granting China MFN by an executive order that explicitly demanded that China improved its human rights policies during the next twelve months. While the order granted MFN for another year, it was not a waiver.²⁷⁶ However, a year later Clinton officially ‘delinked’ MFN and human rights by distancing himself from the earlier policy and renewing MFN in 1994 (J. Yang 2000, 113, 122f., 145). This does not mean that the U.S. in general did not enact punitive trade measures on China, nor did it end the debates on human rights in China. For instance in 1995 the U.S. imposed 100 per cent tariffs on more than \$1 billion value of Chinese goods, the largest imposition of U.S. trade sanctions so far (cf. Gagliano 2014, 143). When it came to the question of China’s membership in the WTO – which was under negotiation since 1986, when Beijing had applied to resume its membership in GATT²⁷⁷ – there was no legal need for Congress to approve the 1999 bilateral agreement on China’s accession, nor the accession itself. However, if Congress had not granted China PNTR, the U.S. would have had to invoke a specific WTO clause (Article XIII) in order not to be in violation of its Article II (unconditional MFN for its members). This in turn means that the conditions negotiated in the bilateral agreement would have not entered into force. Moreover, the U.S. could have been challenged by China at the WTO in this case. Hence, Congress became a central actor in the PNTR issue (cf. Kolkmann 2005, 105; Xie 2009, 167, FN 5). In 2000 Congress approved PNTR for China, preceded by intense debates and a presidential campaign for PNTR (cf. Kolkmann 2005, 107ff.).²⁷⁸ China became a member of the WTO in December 2001. This however did not end neither the discussions on China’s ‘unfair trade’, nor on human rights (cf. Gagliano 2014, 144f.; Xie 2009, 6, 66).²⁷⁹

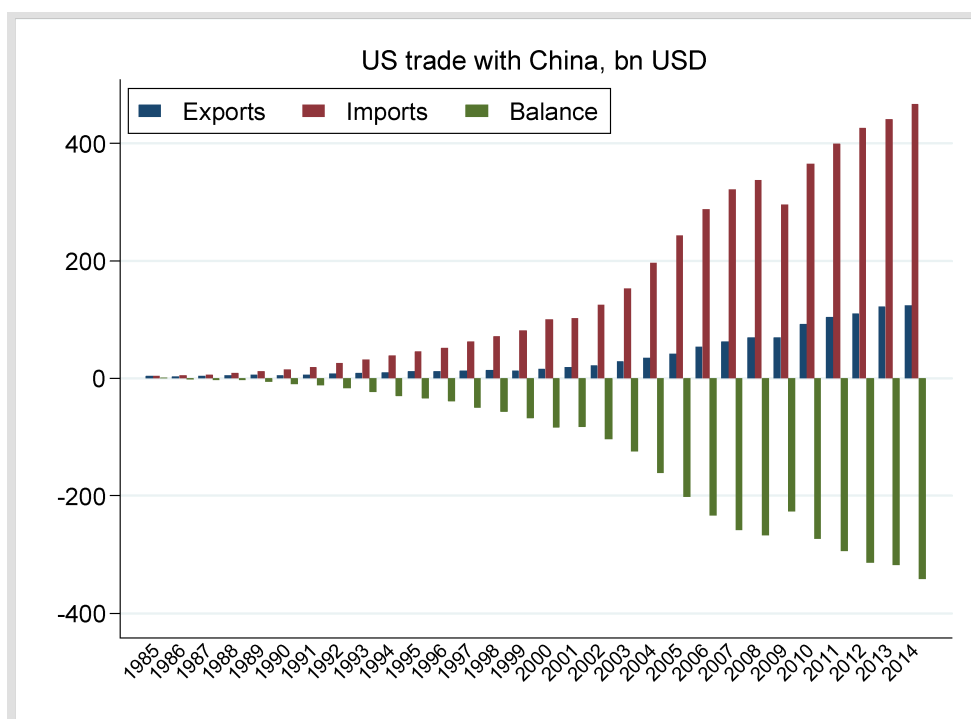
²⁷⁶ Kolkmann points to the meaning of the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as a turning point for the significance of (then still considered as) not strictly trade related issues, like human rights, workers rights, environmental standards etc. for trade agreements (Kolkmann 2005, 51).

²⁷⁷ China – at that time under rule of the Guomindang (GMD) – was actually among the 23 founding members of the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in 1947, Japan joining in 1955. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the GMD government that had fled to Taiwan withdrew from GATT in 1950. Taiwan was granted observatory status in 1965, that ended in 1971 after the United Nations (UN) recognized the PRC government as sole representative of China in all UN bodies and institutions. When GATT became institutionalized as WTO in 1995, negotiations with China on its GATT-membership had not been concluded yet (cf. Kolkmann 2005, 90).

²⁷⁸ In the same year China replaced Japan as the largest deficit trading partner of the U.S., see introduction to the analysis.

²⁷⁹ Also in 2000 Congress established a commission to monitor human rights practices in China, as well as a requirement for the U.S. trade representative to annually submit a report on China’s WTO compliances (cf. Gagliano 2014, 145).

Figure 3: U.S. trade in goods with China in billions of U.S. Dollars



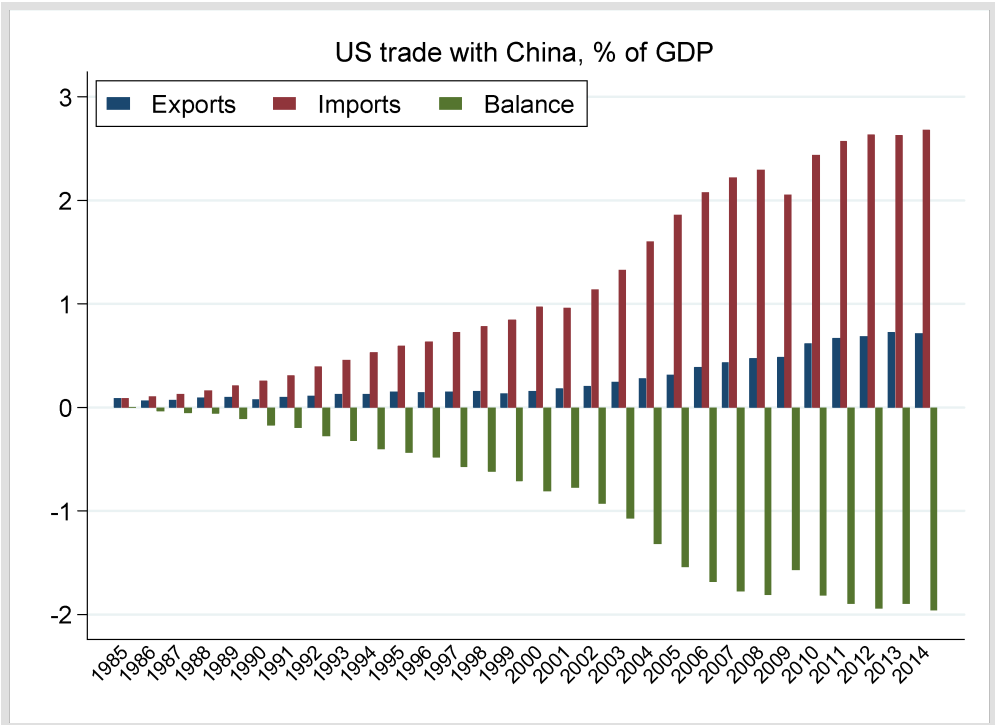
Sources: Trade data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5880.html> (last accessed March 26, 2015). GDP data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, <http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp> (last accessed March 26, 2015). All figures in U.S. Dollars and GDP are on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted.

Summary

To summarize, while with both, Japan and China trade issues and the deficit were at the forefront of the economic agenda (see figure five), there were similarities and differences in both cases (for an overview see for instance Bown and McCulloch 2009, 672). With Japan, the prevalent question was first about ‘protecting’ the U.S. market from increasing imports from Japan, that since 1985 was surmounted by the goal of gaining market access to Japan (as well as competing with Japan in third markets, cf. Bown and McCulloch 2009, 671) for U.S. companies and products (cf. Hummel 2000, 219). The major debate ensued over whether the trade deficit could mostly be attributed to ‘Japan’s unfairness’, and how to deal with it in consequence. In a nutshell, the question became whether ‘free trade’ would solve the ‘Japan problem’ and change Japan, or not.

With China, the trade issue started out the other way around, as the goal in the 1990s was first to gain access to the Chinese market, and only later, after 2000 became an issue of protecting the U.S. market from Chinese imports (cf. Gagliano 2014, 150). While the alleged ‘unfairness’ of China, and the question of how to deal with it, stood at the heart of the debates as well, it was – also for historical reasons – also linked to the (‘technically’ not connected) human rights issue, and China’s persisting ‘illiberalism’.

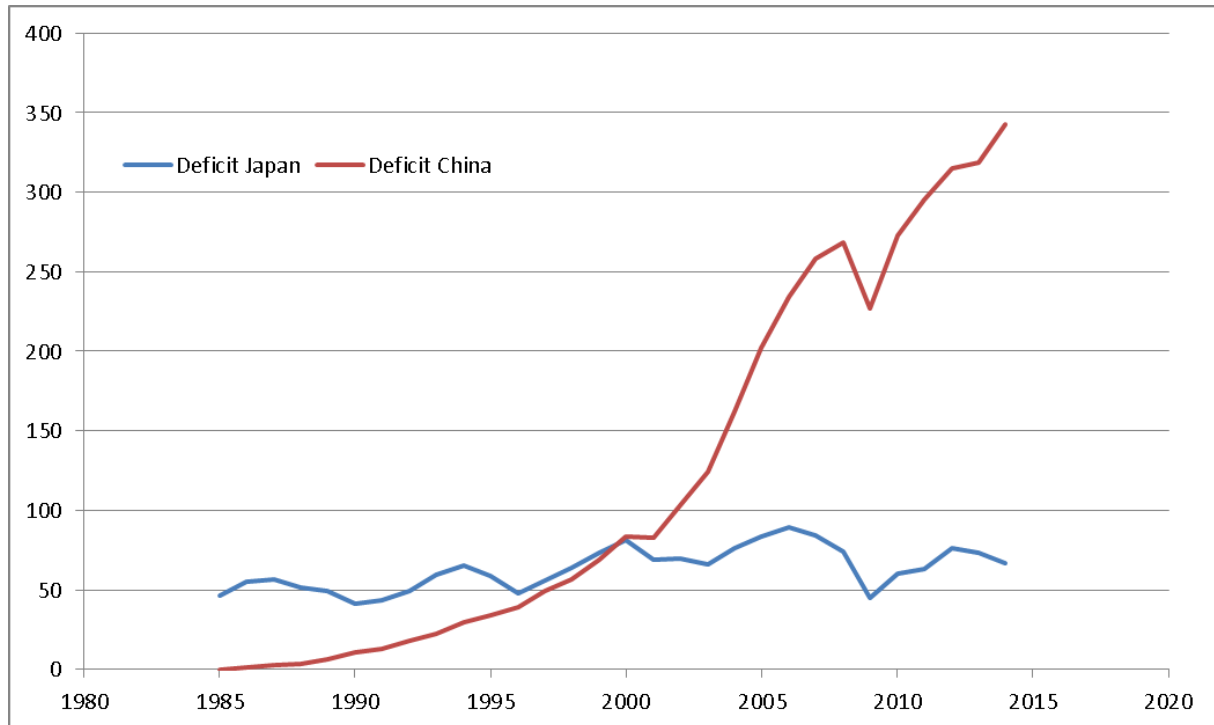
Figure 4: U.S. trade in goods with China as percentage of U.S. GDP



Sources: Trade data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5880.html> (last accessed March 26, 2015). GDP data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, <http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp> (last accessed March 26, 2015). All figures in U.S. Dollars and GDP are on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted.

Here the question on the transformative impact of free trade posed itself within, but also outside the economic realm. In both cases, there was a divide between the executive and Congress, but also within Congress itself. The details will be addressed with the following analysis.

Figure 5: U.S. trade deficits in trade in goods with Japan and China in billions of U.S. Dollars



Sources: Trade data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5880.html> (last accessed March 26, 2015). All figures in U.S. Dollars are on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted.

4. NOMINATION AND PREDICATION: OVERVIEW ON ARTICULATIONS OF SELF AND OTHER

As linguistic constructions of self and other, the nominations stand for how the actors are being named, while the predications account for the positive or negative traits, qualities and features that are attributed to the linguistically constructed self and other, here as understood in terms of PDT. In most cases however, nominations and predications are articulated together (see in what follows).

The main topics (and later on also nodal points) in the economic discourses on Japan and China can first and foremost be discerned from the categories of predication and argumentation, but are of course also reflected in how the self and other are nominated. In the congressional debates analyzed, the nodal points develop around those aspects of the economic relationship

that account for the dislocation or dislocatory effects on U.S. identity: this is first and foremost the unbalanced trade relationship, its alleged reasons and consequences, and the question of how to deal with it in an 'effective' way (cf. also i.e. Cohen, Paul, and Blecker 1996, 175; Gagliano 2014, 136). Connected to this topic as a consequence of the evolvement of the economic relationship is the question of the standing of the U.S. vis-à-vis the main economic competitor (cf. Berger 1993; Uriu 2009, 243f.), Japan and China respectively, which is then linked to the issue of what it means for the overall global role of the U.S.

The speakers in Congress position or articulate themselves differently in relating to these topics, and as the analysis shows, their argument about Japan and China has to do with their self-understanding and the perspective they see themselves/the U.S. (see on what was said on Congress as 'the U.S.' in the introduction to the analysis, as well as on self, other and the subject/subject positions in chapter two) vis-à-vis Japan and China.

How self and other are then related to each other in terms of equivalence and difference is addressed in more detail under the following chapters five and six, and the categories of argumentation and perspectivation.

4.1. The *arrogant Japanese and Communist China versus a strong ally and a big economic power*²⁸⁰

Looking at the nominations – the initial articulations of self and other – detached or 'isolated' from their context of predication and argumentation (in which they will reappear in the respective chapters), first and foremost reflects the obvious difference between Japan and China on the 'ideological level', which plays an crucial role in the articulation of the economic challenge, especially through China. As will be shown, the predications in turn echo this difference yet in another way, as the qualities and features attributed to Japan and China are articulated on a different level (differences in character versus differences in ideology, see in what follows), i.e. through personal or impersonal characteristics. Furthermore, in line with the two major topics as red lines staying the same over the years, these more general nominations and predications do not significantly change over the time period studied, except for a decrease in frequency when it comes to Japan and an increase when it comes to China.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ To avoid an over-extensive use of quotation marks in the chapters of the analysis, I used *italics* for the direct quotations.

²⁸¹ Whether – at least in the case of China – this is connected to what Gagliano states as one of the findings of his study, that "congressional interests vis-à-vis China remained remarkably consistent between 1992 and 2012" (Gagliano

Through the most frequently used general nominations Japan is mostly simply referred to as *Japan* (e.g. P2:17; P5:37),²⁸² *the Japanese* (P4:5; P14:30), or *the citizens of Japan* (e.g. P88:2), sometimes also as *Japan Inc.* (e.g. P:28:4; P85:1; P87:2, see in what follows in the next chapter).

China in turn rarely goes without the predication *communist* (e.g. P146:2; P125:53, 60; P192:2; P138:5, 44, 55; P207:10), which figures 428 times in the documents on China (see table seven). The other nominations for China usually are *regime* (e.g. P113:14; P125:88; P126:10), *state* (e.g. P138:44; P175:12), *country* (e.g. P146:4) and *nation* (e.g. P125:69; P192:6), except for the also frequently used *Red China* (e.g. P175:17f.; P189:16) or *Red Chinese* (e.g. P134:8; P176:10), which again also refer to China's communism (cf. also Turner 2014, 4, 97ff.). China is also often more figuratively called *the (Chinese) dragon* (e.g. P146:5; P186:4), *the sleeping dragon* (P138:40) or *the super dragon* (P176:37), as a metaphor for China's potential strength and power (an equivalent for Japan would be e.g. *land of the rising sun* (P71:5), in the first instance referring to a literal translation of the meaning of 'Japan').²⁸³ Sometimes the *leadership/government* (e.g. P138:55; P125:60) is deliberately differentiated from *the Chinese people/the people of China* (e.g. P125:58, 76), mostly to emphasize the 'evilness' of the government but not referring to the Chinese as a people (on the government/people distinction see also i.e. P. Gries 2014 and; Hoenicke Moore 2015, 148 who calls this "a long cherished liberal tenet of American democracy").

With Japan this kind of distinction is made to a very limited extent, an example are the debates on a 'missing Japanese consumer culture' (see in what follows) and statements like: *It is a country trying to break free from the bureaucratic shackles which have victimized its people and reduced its quality of life, shackles which have denied the public a voice in the governance of their country and a fair share of its considerable prosperity* (P106:1, in 1994), which, like the speaker himself concedes, does rather sound like a characterization of Russia or China, than of Japan (from a U.S. perspective!).

For China the overall negative or antagonizing nominations, like *dictatorship* (e.g. P145:22), again mostly go together with the predication *communist* (e.g. P124:2; P165:2; P125:53; P138:62). Other expressions in this vein are *rogue dictatorship* (e.g. P145:2; P138:43), *totalitarian dictatorship* (e.g. P181:1; 138:40), and *brutal/vicious/corrupt dictatorship*

2014, 170), is debatable. However, he also notes that while in the first years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union Congress focused on China's unfair trade practices blocking access to their market, it shifted to protecting the U.S. market from Chinese imports with China's growing economic strength (ibid., 150).

²⁸² "P" and the number, e.g. P2 refer to the document number ("primary document"), and the number after the colon stands for the page number of the document.

²⁸³ 'Rising Sun' became the title of a popular novel by Michael Crichton published in 1992, and turned into a movie by Philip Kaufman in 1993. It deals with the Japanese industrial presence in the U.S., and was later regarded as "delivering Japan-bashing to the masses" (cf. N. Morris 2010, 103ff.).

(e.g. P138:43, 55; P202:5). I address these kinds of nominations more explicitly under the category of intensification.

Among the potentially accommodating nominations for China are *big economic power* (e.g. P115:4), *economic giant* (e.g. P150:1), *a regional power* (P112:3), *an emerging superpower* (e.g. P176:54), as well as *economic partner* (P143:6) and *trading partner* (P205:1) – but they also point beyond the economic sphere (P188:2; P190:1) as in following exemplary statement: *no country figures to have a greater impact on the United States than the People's Republic of China. The emergence of China as a major world power is one of the historic events of the late 20th century* (e.g. P190:1).

In the case of Japan in turn, the predications, even if referring to the Japanese government, do not stay on the level of characteristics or features attributed at the impersonal level to the state or government, but they are frequently extended to ‘the Japanese character’ or also ‘Japanese society’ or ‘character’ of the latter, whereas with China they stay on an impersonal level in this respect. For instance, ‘the Japanese’ are repeatedly referred to as *arrogant* (P22:13; P63:19), *intransigent* (P22:13; P107:1), *acting like a greedy child* (P22:47), *stubborn* (P37:33), *selfish* (P42:33; P63:19), *treacherous* (P50:18), *conspirative* (P69:3), *ruthless* (P71:66), *self-righteous and aggressive* (P79:7; P93:37) and *disingenuous* (P:116:1).

On the accommodative side, Japan is referred to on both, however more on an impersonal than a personal level, for instance as *friend(s)* (e.g. P71:10, 38), *(strong/great) ally* (e.g. P71:11, 38; P71:45; P73:149), and *(trading)partner* (e.g. P25:46; P97:3), or even as *(big/world) economic power* (e.g. P72:1; P97:4; P115:4), sometimes specified as *second largest Free-World economy* (P27:7), *second largest economic power in the free world* (P32:38; P56:8) or *one of the three super powers* (P71:157).

4.2. Our nation and the American people versus Uncle Sam and Uncle Sucker

The general nominations for the U.S. with respect to both Japan and China are *our nation/we as a nation/this nation/the nation* (e.g. P71:51, 117; P95:35; P121:4; P125:51; P95:35), *America* (e.g. P88:2), occasionally *Americans/we as Americans* (e.g. P2:17, P88:1) or *the American people/the people of America* (e.g. P39:48; P71:89; P95:21; P162:4; P176:50). Also very frequent versus Japan and China is *Uncle Sam* (e.g. P71:5, 100, 143; P130:1; P125:53; P136:39; P138:13) which mostly – as will become clear under argumentation and perspectivation – is meant in a depreciating way relating to the U.S. being economically outperformed by Japan and China. In

some cases this is made explicit, like in: *Uncle Sam once again has become Uncle Sucker* (P71:143). The latter nomination is also used as such (e.g. P95:21; P138:13), just as *sucker(s)* (P136:40) or as *(good old) Uncle Sugar* (e.g. P92:3), which often also refers to *the good old American taxpayer* (e.g. P95:21) or *our taxpayers* (e.g. P99:1), in criticisms of the executive and its policies, that in this line of argumentation have a negative effect on ‘the taxpayer’ in terms of causing unfavorable conditions on the U.S. job market, or because of the U.S. bearing the costs for Japan in the field of defense (see in what follows). More intensified versions of ‘Uncle Sugar’ versus Japan are *patsy* (P5:37), *losers* (P29:33), or *pussycat* (P102:3), and *a bunch of chumps* (P138:3) versus China.

In this line, the most frequent nomination for the U.S. relating to Japan is *debtor* (P4:5; P10:12; P27:12; P39:48; P53:8; P40:23; P77:4, 11; P68:6; P82:1; P83:22; P93:24; P100:5, 8; P109:2; 132:50), the expression figured 93 times in the documents on Japan²⁸⁴ (see category of argumentation, chapter five, and table seven). It also comes up with China (P133:78), however surprisingly not in 2008 (at least in the documents retrieved) when the role of the largest creditor shifted from Japan to China – but otherwise the emphasis towards China lies more on the U.S. as democracy and free and fair trader (see category of argumentation and the footnote on ‘debtor’).

The U.S. as a people in difference to ‘the Japanese’ in the economic realm are described as *generous* (P28:3; P42:35), *compassionate people with a finely tuned sense of fair play – of right and wrong* (P69:3), *good guys* (P42:37), *trying to be good citizens in the world market, keeping our doors open in an attempt to expand world trade* (P42:39), *hopeful, big-hearted and idealistic toward the Japanese and others* (P29:33), as *greeting Japanese investment with encouragement and open arms* (P80:2), and as *tinkers [and] people who use our ingenuity* (P134:5f.). The last two characterizations refer to the attributions of Japan’s markets as closed and the Japanese as ‘copiers of U.S. technology’, which will be addressed in the chapters on argumentation and perspectivation. Furthermore, relating to Japan, the U.S. in Congress is characterized as taking *trade policy as foreign policy to help other countries get back on their feet* (after WWII) (P198:8), or in terms of being the *generous rebuilders of Japan* (P49:15), which – again laid out in more detail under the category of perspectivation – refers to the U.S. articulating itself as not being treated in a suitable manner by its ally, Japan.

Relating to Japan as ‘entity’, the U.S. is articulated as free and fair trader (e.g. P40:13; P42:33; P73:127; P80:2) and *the world’s only military, economic, and political superpower* (P112:1), or *the*

²⁸⁴ For the year 1985 on Japan only the coded passages, not the whole documents were included, as atlas.ti was not able to perform a word count for the documents from the bound Congressional Record. The coded passages were exported into MS Word, and then the words were counted. For the frequencies see the tables five to eight at the end of the summary of the analysis.

world's only complete superpower (P120:7, more examples follow under the topics in the following chapters).

When it comes to articulating the difference to China, the U.S. is first and foremost nominated as *the preeminent political, economic, military and ideological power in the world*, or as *(economic) superpower of the world* (e.g. 143:3; P209:23), and *the world's strongest democracy* (P149:6; P124:2). With *no other country [having] the same heritage about freedom and liberty* (P162:5), the U.S. is articulated as having *the best opportunity in history to promote human rights, the rule of law, free markets, and democracy [...] in the far corners of the globe* (P146:107; P175:10; P195:14; P143:3; 218:1). The U.S. in this line of articulation first and foremost *stands for freedom* (P125:67; P186:1), *free-market economics* (P174:12; P132:54; P136:5; P143:9) and *(global) leadership* (P125:89; P174:11f., 17; P189:4).

These and also the more specific nominations and predications not treated here are picked up in the following chapters under the respective topics and subtopics.

Summary of Nominations and Predications

The nominations and predications attributed to Japan and China point to the 'different difference', or different articulation of difference, between the U.S. and Japan, and the U.S. and China. What in the case of China could be called 'master difference' lies in ideology (liberal democracy versus – illiberal by definition – communism), and is thus more obvious and self-evident. In this sense, the nomination and predication 'Communist China' can be taken to stand for itself, as it conveys the major feature of China's otherness in terms of 'illiberalism', as well as an evaluation in terms of depreciation for it, as hardly anyone in Congress – or beyond – would associate anything positive with communism.²⁸⁵ However, as will become clear under the categories that follow, the degree of otherness and othering – i.e. *how* 'different' communist China is or will be – has a lot to do with whether one still expects China to evolve towards a (more) liberal form of government.

With Japan, there is no (obvious) difference in the form of government or ideology – at least not at the first sight – so there has to be another 'explanation' for them not behaving like

²⁸⁵ On congressional 'antipathy' towards communism see for example Xie (2009, 111). On 'antipathy' towards communism in the U.S. more generally see for instance Turner (2014, 4, 97ff.), Doyle (1983a, 328), and Gries (2014, i.e. page 326), who argues that while this accounts for negative views on China in general, it has more impact among U.S. conservatives than liberals (his survey was conducted among "Main Street Americans", hence the broader public, but Peter H. Gries in his conclusion does consider effects on U.S. China policy in Congress as well (ibid., 17). Jie Chen for instance focuses on 'anticommunism' as 'ideology' in U.S. China policy from 1949-1982 (Chen 1992).

expected from an ally and member of the Western liberal capitalist nations. The 'personal' nominations and predications (like 'stubborn', 'selfish', 'conspirative') already point to what became one of the main 'explanations' and perspectives on Japan: Japan being culturally, societally and character-wise different. This difference in turn was articulated as 'reason' for their policies and success in the economic sector.

The nominations referring to the U.S. point to the dislocation of U.S. identity relating to being the number one economy: in the case of Japan this is first and foremost having become a net debtor in 1985 for the first time since WWI (see for instance the reporting in the NY Times, Kilborn 1985). With China the more striking aspect of the dislocation is China's economic success – also in terms of having become a creditor to the U.S. – in spite of being 'communist', at least in terms of still being ruled by the communist party (cf. also Friedberg 2011, and the other authors cited on this in chapter 1.3 on the liberal theory of history and American exceptionalism).²⁸⁶ Hence, the emphasis on the U.S. being a 'democratic' superpower towards China, and being a 'complete' superpower towards Japan, referring to the fact that Japan – due to its post-war constitution – was lacking the 'superpower component' of military power. Both articulations emphasize an overall advantage of the U.S., in spite of its economic underperformance, in terms of aiming at sustaining its identity as global role model.

The topics and issues linked to these nominations and predications are taken up in more detail in the chapters that follow, as well as addressing the more specific nominations and predications in connection to the respective topics at the beginnings of the chapters.

²⁸⁶ At least in the debates analyzed, there is no thorough discussion about a differentiation between 'communist rule' and 'capitalist economy' as emphasized in (academic) scholarship.

Table 1: Summary of Nominations and Predications²⁸⁷

	inclusive	exclusive
Japan	friend; ally; trading partner; economic power	arrogant, intransigent, selfish, greedy Japanese
China	great power; economic power; regional power; emerging superpower	communist China; Red China; communist/dictatorial regime
U.S. vs. Japan	“we” as a nation, Americans, generous, open minded, idealistic people; complete superpower	debtor, Uncle Sam, Uncle Sucker, Uncle Sugar, patsy, losers; complete superpower; free and fair trader
U.S. vs. China	our Nation; the American people; liberal democracy; democratic superpower	Uncle Sam, Uncle Sugar; liberal democracy, democratic superpower; free and fair trader

5. ARGUMENTATION ON THE MAIN TOPICS: THE TRADE DEFICIT AND THE CHALLENGE TO U.S. WORLD LEADERSHIP – LAYING OUT THE CHAINS OF EQUIVALENCE AND DIFFERENCE

Through the analytic category of argumentation the purpose is to show through what arguments and argumentation schemes claims containing specific nominations and predications are attempted to be justified or delegitimized. Furthermore, in my reading of RPA within the PDT framework, the arguments link the nominations and predications to chains of equivalence and difference, which in turn are further sustained through articulating them from a certain perspective (see chapter six). The chains of equivalence are aimed at establishing or sustaining a collective identity through differentiation from an outside of this collective, i.e. in this study

²⁸⁷ Some of the nominations and predications appear in both columns, as – depending on the ‘context’ – they appear in both, inclusive and exclusive articulations, or in both, chains of equivalence and difference.

another institution or proponents of different policies (within Congress or the U.S.) or another country, people or society (i.e. Japan, the Japanese, China, the Chinese people). The collective is articulated in terms of equivalences or resemblances between its members, that are however only maintained through the common difference they share vis-à-vis what is articulated to be the excluded outside. In this sense, through the chains of equivalence, the difference towards the outside is articulated in a way aimed at overweighing internal differences, hence cancelling them out or making them equivalent. This ultimately happens via the empty signifier, which stands for the lack or 'problem' within or for the in-group, and that the out-group in turn is made responsible for. In this sense, the chains of equivalence emphasize the exclusive or confrontational features of U.S. identity in terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history. The chains of difference in contrast are aimed at weakening the articulation of the out-group as so fundamentally different from the in-group, by emphasizing the internal differences as well as giving other reasons for the problem or lack. The chains of difference account for the inclusive and accommodating traits of U.S. 'liberal' identity. However, in my reading and in terms of being a 'defensive hegemonic strategy' (see chapter two), the internal differences can also be articulated into 'internal chains of equivalence', when for instance Congress posits itself against the executive, or the 'free-traders' set themselves against the 'hard-liners'. This does not necessarily weigh out the differences vis-à-vis the outside, but it accounts for a shift in the lines of argumentation. How these dynamics play themselves out will be shown in the following chapters.

5.1. The trade deficit with Japan – *the most competitive economy versus the most protectionist country on earth*

The main line of argumentation towards Japan from 1985 until 1995 is dominated first by the articulation of the trade deficit as 'root cause' for the economic problems of the U.S. (see also what follows with respect to China), and second by a search for, and/or putting forward explanations for origins and solutions of the deficit (cf. also Cohen, Paul, and Blecker 1996, 175). This is an issue also with China, however, the question here lies less on the origins, as China's 'unfairness' on the one hand seems to be more obvious, as it is still transforming its economy, but on the other hand also simply because China is 'communist', i.e. 'unfair per definition'.

In this sense, the trade deficit (here with Japan) and its consequences account for the central challenge to/dislocation of U.S. identity as *the world's most competitive nation/economy*

(e.g. P105:10, 238), *leader of the free world (in the realm of trade)* (P30:10; P73:29; P93:39; P132:18) and *the advocator of free trade* (P40:13; P42:33; P73:127; P80:2; P95:20; P120:7; P132:54f.; P140:2) and *free competition* (P83:9; P105:15, 234, 238; P107:2). Because of the trade deficit the U.S. now sees itself as a *dumping ground* (P10:12; P22:11; P28:2; P41:23) and, more severely, as having become the *(worlds largest) debtor* (P4:5; P10:12; P27:12; P39:48; P53:8; P40:23; P77:4, 11; P68:6; P82:1; P83:22; P93:24; P100:5, 8; P109:2; 132:50).²⁸⁸ In consequence it is argued that throughout the years the U.S. is experiencing job losses, and a decline in competitiveness and productive capacity mainly because of the trade deficit (P4:4; P17:35; P27:8, 12, 50; P66:16, P71:36; P71:152; P74:1; P95:45; P115:1; P115:4; P121:3; 132:44, 87; cf. also Nanto 1992), the same consequences and reasons that are brought up with China in the coming years.²⁸⁹ One crucial aspect in this regard, that is also one of the main dividing lines between the 'free traders' and 'hardliners' (see in what follows), is the vital question of whether the trade deficit is actually the cause of problems, or rather the effect (cf. i.e. Cohen, Paul, and Blecker 1996, 177).

Japan as 'unfair'

Contrastingly to the U.S. as free trader, Japan – sometimes denoted in terms of *Japan Inc.* (e.g. P:28:4; P85:1; P87:2), which mostly critically refers to Japan's economic policies, but was also used as a metaphor for Japan's success²⁹⁰ – is articulated as *protectionist(s)* (e.g. P:68:46; P29:35), *most protectionist country on earth/in world history* (e.g. P42:28; P130:1), *(closed) mercantile country/nation/society* (e.g. P95:37f.; P121:5), and *unfair trader* (e.g. P69:7; P30:10). Thus, it is argued that the major reasons for the deficit throughout the years are Japan's unfair trade practices (also further specified under the category of perspectivation).²⁹¹ The 'unfairness' throughout the years is first and foremost seen in Japan not playing by the rules of the free market and an open trading system (P25:46; P26:1; P27:11f.; P38:21; P39:48; P42:34; P64:34; P68:7, 22; P71:39; P71:63, 117; P73:142; P80:5; P107:1; P135:2; P198:9), while itself benefitting

²⁸⁸ Relating to both Japan and China the U.S. was also nominated as *a \$ 1 trillion debtor* or contrastingly *the world's largest creditor into the 1970's* (P133:78).

²⁸⁹ While the trade deficits certainly contributed to these economic problems of the U.S., they were not the sole and only reason, see introduction to the analysis, overviews, summary and conclusion.

²⁹⁰ The expression 'Japan Inc.' occasionally came up already in the 1930s, but became more frequent in the 1970s. 'Western' commentators generally used it as part of the explanation of Japan's economic success, referring to what was seen as cooperative structure between Japanese companies, as well as their 'protection' through the government, especially the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI). 'Japan Inc.' also referred to what was discerned as Japan's strategy or pursuit of economic success as first priority (cf. N. Morris 2010, 23, 152).

²⁹¹ On whether the frequency of 'fairness/unfairness' references in the print media is connected to the size of the trade deficit, see Hummel who points to different findings of studies in this regard (cf. Hummel 2000, 187).

from it (P2:3; P18:42; P65:7; P66:16; P67:28; P69:2ff.; P73:143). Japan is seen as purposefully restricting the access of American products to Japanese markets (P6:36; P13:30; P28:4; P34:7, 33; P68:9; P68:21; P105:112; P121:4; P129:1) and enabling not only more Japanese imports to the U.S., but also *unfair marketing prices by Japanese companies in the U.S.* (P13:30; P68:20; P73:32; P85:2; P89:16; P101:2; P105:19; P151:11ff.). This is referred to by the nominations of the U.S. as *dumping ground*. Referring to its 'unfairness', Japan is called *the worst case example of being unfair* (P69:3; P71:161, 122; P72:1; P73:82; P84:10; P102:2f.; P107:1), *protectionist* (P42:40; P68:21; P92:28, P95:21, 26) and *mercantilist* (P73:127; P95:21), which are the most common predications.²⁹² 'Unfair' appears 255 times (see table five) and protectionist 102 times.

Moreover, as already pointed to in the context of the more general nominations and predications, throughout the years Japan is referred to on a more personal level for instance as *greed-filled (power elite)* (P85:5), *bureaucrats* (P27:50; P40:13; P42:30; P63:19; P104:3f.; P122:2), as having a style of *agreeing in principle to an issue and then seeking to renegotiate it until [getting] what [it] want[s]* (P22:11), as offering *lame excuses* (P27:50), *screwing us* (P31:37), *not giving up anything* (P47:47), *engaging in one-way trade* (P56:8), *cheating (their consumers)* (P68:43; P132:14), *capitalizing on our generosity* (P71:83), being *single minded* (P71:104) and *not interested in fair trade* (P71:48). In addition, Japan is characterized as *taking advantage of us* (P71: 122), *all take and no give* (P:72:1), *refusing to trade on an equal playing field* (P73:31), *adept at finding opportunities to deviate from agreements* (P84:13), *obsessed with money* (P85:1), as an *equal opportunity protectionist* (P92:28), *insensitive to the relationship with us [... and] with the rest of the world* (P93:7), and as *employing a double standard* (P103:1). In an intensified way, it is even claimed that: *The Japs even have a word [...] called HARAGE (pronounced Ha-Rah-Gay) which [...] means saying one thing when you really mean the opposite* (P28:2).

These lines of argumentation stand for the chains of equivalence towards Japan, that aim at articulating Japan in its 'unfairness' as fundamentally different from the U.S. 'Fairness' becomes the central empty signifier, and the 'lack of fairness' the central 'problem'. The signifier is literally empty, as when referring to Japan it is literally present only through its absence, i.e. being articulated through its opposite, 'unfairness', and the other characterizations that equally stand for, or evoke unfairness (i.e. protectionist, mercantilist, greedy etc.). Meanwhile, these attributions also reflect a degree of frustration of the U.S., with not being successful in the trade negotiations with Japan, which will be addressed under the category of perspectivation in chapter six.

²⁹² Like with the trade deficit, most assessments of Japan's economic policies do regard some practices as detrimental to the U.S. and to 'free trade', however the picture was not as black and white in terms of the direct consequences for the U.S. economy. See in what follows, as well as the conclusion.

On the other side, there are voices building chains of difference aiming at weakening the potential antagonisms. Japan is frequently referred to as *friend(s)* (e.g. P71:10, 38), (*strong/great ally*) (e.g. P71:11, 38; P71:45; P73:149), and (*trading*)*partner* (e.g. P25:46; P97:3). The relationship with Japan is seen as endangered (P17:35; P25:47; P27:7; P28:3; P34:7; P38:33; P68:13; P73:145; P106:1) because of the trade deficit, and also because of growing public resentment towards Japan (P2:17; P79:2, 5; P140:2), that partly results from the trade deficit. (cf. also Nanto 1992, 2, and the ‘emotional’ aspects of the congressional debates under the category of perspectivation). Already in the mid 1980s warnings about U.S. protectionism (P30:10; P40:13) and the return of Smoot-Hawley (P21:11f.)²⁹³ as response to the trade deficit were brought forward, in line with cautions about making Japan a *single scapegoat* (P27:9). Instead these expressions called for ‘putting the own house in order’ and for not seeking to *externalize problems through trade protectionism*, and the *mistaken impression in Congress that changes in the trade policy would turn around the deficit* (P52:30) (see also perspectivation).

The latter statement is an important argument on the balanced side of the debates, and it is also voiced with China: even if Japan, and later China, would fundamentally alter its trade practices – regardless of whether they were actually ‘unfair’ or not – it would not have a significant impact on the trade deficit, unless the U.S. did not engage in reforms in economic policies on a broader scale.²⁹⁴ Invoking Smoot Hawley in this context was *the* negative metaphor for protectionism at the time, it was likened to “an image as powerful in the foreign economic sphere as that of Munich in the political-military sphere” (cf. Mastanduno 1992, 239).²⁹⁵

Self-criticisms – *putting the own house in order*

The calls for ‘putting the own house in order’ however have two sides: criticizing Congress itself in terms of partly giving in to the dislocation, or blaming the executive (and sometimes the advocates of free trade also within Congress more generally) for its inadequate handling of the issue, in terms of articulating internal chains of equivalence. Especially in the mid 1980s the executive is held responsible for its allegedly poor handling of domestic and foreign economic policy issues. So it is argued on the one hand that the administration is not standing up to Japan

²⁹³ The so-called Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930 (named after its sponsors) raised tariffs on imports into the U.S. significantly, over 52 per cent on average. It was and is attributed with being one major cause of the economic depression of the 1930s – as the trading partners of the U.S. retaliated – and even the ensuing political climate ultimately taken to have lead up to WWII (J. Goldstein 1993, 125f.; Kolkman 2005, 37; Kunkel 2003, 28).

²⁹⁴ See for instance Kunkel, and also in what follows on ‘free traders versus hardliners’ (Kunkel 2003, 53, 71).

²⁹⁵ ‘Munich’ in this sense stands negatively for a policy of appeasement, referring to the Munich Conference of 1938 where Britain and France did not challenge Germany’s partial annexation of Czechoslovakia, in the hope of preventing a major war in Europe. See also in what follows under ‘appeasement’ in chapter seven on intensification.

(P1:3; P3:4; P4:6; P11:19; P40:13; P42:38, 40; P50:40; P61:19; P68:7f.; P71:66, 117; P73:125; P82:4; P84:5; P95:47; P127:1) and thus was practically inciting Japan to continue with its 'unfair trade' (P13:12; P16:44; P27:50; P29:35; P46:49; P68:21).²⁹⁶ In this sense, the trade deficit is (partly) also articulated as a result of substantially failed domestic and trade policies (P8:3; P9:11; P68:29; P89:18), like neglecting the impact of the high exchange rate of the dollar (P2:17; P6:36; P16:45; P21:11; P24:1; P25:47; P50:3; P68:11, 15), which in turn is seen as resulting from the rising federal deficit and spending (P2:17; P6:36; P8:3; P27:7; P30:10; P50:3; P52:30; P53:7; P77:4; P109:4).²⁹⁷ As the Plaza Accords of 1985 did not show the desired long-term effects on the value of the dollar, this discussion persisted well beyond that year and also the immediately following ones.

In the mid 1990s one of the central arguments of how to deal with the trade deficit with Japan, was on whether numerical targets²⁹⁸ in terms of a 'results oriented trade policy' (Reifman 1989; cf. i.e. Schoppa 1997, 258) would be the solution to the problem (P106:2; P107:1), or whether this would lead to the U.S. in fact *managing trade* or being credibly accused of doing so (P106:4), which conflicted with U.S. identity as a free trader.²⁹⁹ The 1992 CRS-report on trade points to the central difference between the philosophies of 'free market' vs. 'managed trade', as in a 'free market' view "as long as the rules for entry and subsequent market activities are fair, the outcome must be fair". For 'managed trade' "an outcome can be unfair even if the process is fair, because results are affected not only by market access and rules but by past practices, perceptions, or advantages of existing position" (Nanto 1992, 14). The three main observations behind the 'managed trade' approach cited by the report are basically in line with the revisionist positions: (1) Japan's economy and society are different from those in other industrialized nations in the world, from which it follows that Japan requires different policies; (2) Japan's

²⁹⁶ See introduction and the introduction to the analysis for references to congressional pressure towards the administration especially in and since 1985.

²⁹⁷ See footnote on the Plaza Accords in the introduction to the analysis.

²⁹⁸ The precedent or first step away from a process- towards a results-oriented market access approach was taken with the Semiconductor Agreement in 1986, while it had already been advocated by the Commerce Department and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) prior to the MOSS talks in 1985 (cf. Schoppa 1997, 71). Concerning the negotiations on semiconductors, the U.S. side maintained, that Japan had agreed to the concrete numerical target of 20 per cent share of the Japanese semiconductor market, while Japan denied having ever made a concession like that (Hummel 2000, 147; cf. Kunkel 2003, 83). The Clinton administration's goal in the Framework Talks in 1994 again was focused on setting 'objective criteria' for evaluating whether the market share had increased or not, what was opposed by the Japanese as they interpreted these as 'numerical targets' that they rejected, also based on the 1986/87 (and similar ones in 1992) experiences.

²⁹⁹ See also what follows on 'free traders' vs. 'hard-liners'.

Within the executive there was a debate on 'managed trade' already in the mid 1980s (that continued under Bush in the 1990s), when the Reagan administration was becoming more assertive towards Japan, as it was facing harsher attitudes from Congress, see introduction (cf. Schoppa 1997, 67, 71).

Furthermore the CRS report on Japanese investment also pointed to the argument by some analysts, "that concern over Japanese investments in the U.S. businesses, whether warranted or not, has the potential to undermine the historical U.S. position as the champion of the free international flow of investment and goods" (J. K. Jackson 1990, 30).

government plays a greater role in the operations of individual companies than does the U.S. government; (3) the style of negotiations and pressures at that time was harming the overall relationship with Japan, calling for other ways to resolve bilateral differences (Nanto 1992, 16). The third point however was not of primary concern to the revisionists who advocated a hard line approach towards Japan. The 1992 report concludes that “although managed trade is presented as a new approach to trade disputes, it essentially would be a system of government-administered trade targets and quotas”, and points out that most economists believed that it could lead to inefficiencies and distortions of trade with third countries (Nanto 1992, 16).

In this sense, when it comes to the debates on possible sanctions on Japanese auto(parts)-imports in 1995, from the free-trade perspective plenty of criticism is voiced towards the administration. It is argued that the sanctions would violate the U.S. commitment to free trade (P120:2, 6), threaten jobs in the country (P120:3), and – while being *politically popular* – might create the potential for a *very serious trade war* (P120:4, 6; P127:1f.), and make the U.S. *stand against our allies and trading partners* (P120:6). In this line of argumentation the ultimate ‘superiority’ of the U.S. is emphasized, for instance by arguing that, provided that there is *truly free trade, American industries don’t need protection, they need competition* (P174:10). On the other hand – and this is a parallel to the debates on ‘free trade’ with China – free trade as policy and principle is criticized in terms of being articulated as a *Western myth* that does not fit the *New World Order* anymore (P166:1; also already called ‘an ideology’ earlier, see P20:37), because in this line of argumentation economic policies should relate less to broader foreign policy goals (like after WWII), but *follow American interests* (P173:3; P174:13). From this view, the promotion of free markets is articulated as in America’s interests, but not as absolute goal (P174:13).

The dividing line between what John Kunkel for instance calls the ‘free trade – good relations’ and the ‘hardline – Japan is different’ coalitions³⁰⁰ from an economic perspective ran along the free traders’ view that the ‘Japan problem’ was either a political problem, or a macroeconomic problem ensuing from U.S. economic policies, that was not caused by Japan’s trade barriers. In any case free trade was seen as best policy, as it was argued that the U.S. would lose from restrictive actions against Japan (while any Japanese barriers in the end were to their own disadvantage), and that the bilateral trade deficit actually did not impact U.S. economic prosperity. According to this view, even an opening of the Japanese market would have only a

³⁰⁰ In other terms those advocating an accommodating approach towards Japan were at their time also for instance called ‘Japan lobby’ or ‘Chrysanthemum Club’ vs. ‘Japan bashers’ (Kunkel 2003, 55; N. Morris 2010, 50). In the case of China the ‘equivalent’ terms are for example ‘China lobby’ or ‘Panda huggers’ versus ‘China bashers’ or ‘Dragon-Slayers’ (cf. i.e. P. Gries 2014, 331).

minimal impact on the trade deficit, if it did not go hand in hand with changes in U.S. macroeconomic policies such as the savings, investment and exchange rates. The hardliners in turn argued that 'free trade' with Japan would not work, as in its structural barriers to imports Japan was seen as different from other advanced economies. Furthermore, they argued that Japan's low domestic demand and consumption rate, external surpluses and import barriers were not compatible with its increasing international economic responsibilities, given the size of its economy. Japan's protectionism was seen first in tariffs, then non-tariff barriers, and finally its industrial policy (Kunkel 2003, 53, 71).³⁰¹ However, the conciliatory voices to this argument added, that trade disputes should be handled more carefully with a partner that is also a strategic ally (P174:14). On the other side this also connects to the debates on the relation between security and economics during the détente in the 1980s, and especially after the Cold War, that will be addressed in the next subchapter on 'Japan as competitor'.

A few years later, in 1997, and connected to the slow-down of the Japanese economy (in the wake of the Asian financial crisis) and to the debates about giving so-called 'fast track negotiation authority' (since 2002 called Trade Promotion Authority, TPA) to the President³⁰², free trade as key American principle is however praised again in Congress. Coming close to the liberal theory of history-arguments and perspective in relation to China, it is argued that world trade was not only *the most important contribution of America in the post-World-War II period*, but that it also *stopped communism in Europe, [...] rebuilt Japan [...], won the cold war [...], and set more people free than any victory in any war in the history of mankind* (P132:11, 18). America is seen as *dominating the world markets* (P132:13) and the Japanese economy as *on its back* (cf. also Uriu 2009, 242), as it is argued that *government-dominated trade fails and the marketplace succeeds* (P132:14). Other voices still criticizing the free trade approach argue against being labeled as protectionists themselves when opposing fast track, because of the still existing and growing trade deficits with both Japan and China (P132:44, 46). Moreover, the question comes up, whether the U.S. will have the same problems with China as it had with Japan (P155:7;

³⁰¹ This view was rooted in broader theories on the changing structure of international trade since the 1980s, according to which it was for instance argued that the government should intervene in markets and economic processes to enhance competitiveness and to counter what were articulated as 'unfair' trade practices by other countries like Japan. 'Free trade' would only work if it was 'fair' in terms of 'reciprocal'. (cf. Paulsen 1999, 34, 37, 40, 53; see also Schoppa 1997, 70).

Most authors classify the 'free trade' view as 'hegemonic' (i.e. Hummel 2000, 190) in guiding American trade policy since the Great Depression, i.e. in terms of being "orthodox" (Schoppa 1997, 70), a "shared belief system" (Kunkel 2003, 24), a "consensus" (J. Goldstein 1993, 247). See also introduction for the 'free trade inclination' of the executive.

³⁰² According to the Trade Act of 1974 the Fast Track mechanism granted the president with the right to negotiate and conclude trade agreements while keeping Congress and the respective committees informed. Congress then could approve the agreement without any changes, or reject it as such within 60 days. Until the 1990s Congress regularly granted and extended Fast Track for the prescribed three years, in 1994 however Clinton failed to get congressional approval (cf. Kolkman 2005, 40). President George W. Bush was granted TPA from 2002 until 2007, while President Obama has announced pursuing it in and since 2012.

P132:79, 87; P133:17ff.; P135:4)³⁰³, as the trade deficit with China is also growing: *If the United States simply accepts Japanese intransigence, how will it succeed in opening markets in China – [...] – or in other mercantilist countries?* (P108:3) and *if the United States insists on open markets in Japan, how about China?. We have the same circumstance with China [...] Exploding trade deficit, but no decisive action by the United States* (P164:2).³⁰⁴

In this respect, relating to the ambiguities of equivalence and difference in Congress, the U.S. in general is also characterized as *paper tiger* (P4:5), *naive* (P29:34) and (therefore) *not very daring, decent and fair to our own people* (P29:33), *weak when it comes to trade issues* (as opposed to used to *being known as a bunch of shrewd Yankee traders* (P71:77-119)). It is claimed that in consequence the U.S. is *being taken for a ride again by the Japanese* (P93:40), is *inept in handling our trade relations with Japan* (P95:48), and that the U.S. suffered from a *decline in self esteem [that] puzzles both our allies and rivals* (P109:2). The most intense expressions however articulate the U.S. not only as *victims of unfair trade* (P108: 2; P115:2) but even as having become an *economic colony* (P115:4, this is taken up under the category of intensification in chapter seven). On the one hand it is argued in this respect that these consequences were the fault of *wimpy diplomats* (P73:55), but also, more self critically, that Congress itself *has been a bunch of wimps* (P130:1), and that it has not had *the courage and the guts to stand and say to our friends, 'Do what is right'* (P92:30, 33). These articulations are connected to arguments about having emphasized safeguarding the bilateral relationship in terms of the broader political picture to an overwhelming extent, to the detriment of the field of trade policy (see in what follows in the next subchapter on Japan as competitor, and there in the footnote on 'economic security'). Contrastingly Japan is articulated as *the only country in the world that will come away from the negotiating table with us 100 percent of the time with 100 percent of what was on the table* (P93:31).

As the previous two subchapters show, there remain ambiguities in both, the external and internal chains of equivalence and difference when it comes to arguments about the unfairness of Japan in relation to the role of U.S. policies in the trade deficit. An attempt to deal with these ambiguities can be seen in the argument on Japan being 'different' in a cultural and societal sense.

³⁰³ The other countries contributing to the U.S. trade deficit are cited as Mexico, Canada, (and to some extent the European Union).

³⁰⁴ While the trade deficit with Japan had fallen from \$65.7 billion in 1994 to \$47.6 billion in 1996, China's surplus was steadily rising, from \$10 billion in 1990 to \$83.8 billion in 1999 (see figure five), which was also the first year that China's surplus surpassed that of Japan (Uriu 2009, 242).

Japan as 'different'

Relating to the arguments about 'unfairness' and 'Japan playing by different rules' are characterizations of Japan not only as economically, but also as culturally and societally 'different' in character (P73:135, here referring to Clyde Prestowitz), which in turn in this line of argumentation is linked to the differences in the economic realm in terms of 'causing' them. Some of these characterizations come up already in the 1980s, before the 'high tides' of revisionism within the Clinton-administration in the early 1990s.³⁰⁵ In my reading, these arguments serve to weaken the internal differences and build up and strengthen the chains of equivalence vis-à-vis Japan. Referring to differences in the economy it is argued that the Japanese are *playing by a different set of rules* (P25:46; P27:11; P69:3), *planning their economy* (P71:39), or, more explicitly, *not playing by the same rule book as Western nations* (P121:5). *The Japanese system, with its structural barriers and government intervention* is articulated as *different from any other in the world* (P86:1). The *Keiretsu-system [...] incompatible with the principles of free international trade* (P122:1, 3)³⁰⁶ is emphasized, and the Japanese economy in general is characterized as *a cozy, interlocking system of cartels that excludes others* (P80:3), and equally *the structure of the Japanese economy* is described as *facilitating horizontal agreements and cartel-like behavior* (P34:9) and as completely export oriented (P74:2, 7; to the detriment of Japanese consumers, see in what follows). It is also maintained, that although Japan in general was viewed as part of 'the West', that if Japan were *a normal capitalist nation*, it would not *view its trade surplus as an indication of its superiority over the West* (P93:14).

Furthermore it is pointed out frequently that Japan does not have a 'consumer culture' like the U.S., but that in Japan *the customer comes last* (P73:49; P88:1ff.; P93:16; P93:37; P104:4), as they are *measuring the strength of a nation not by what it can consume but by what it can produce* (P132:52).³⁰⁷ In a debate under the topic *The Lack of Japanese Consumer Culture* it is argued that

³⁰⁵ See introduction and chapter one for the central arguments of the revisionists. See also i.e. N. Morris (2010, 27, 31ff.).

³⁰⁶ See introduction to the analysis. The 1992 CRS report points to an exaggeration on the U.S. side, when it came to perceptions of keiretsus, as having "conjured images in the American psyche of giant monopolies or cartels long outlawed in the United States" (Nanto 1992, 1).

³⁰⁷ This argument is also put forward for instance by Huntington, who speaks of Japan's "producer dominance" as one component of its "strategy of economic power maximation" (Huntington 1993, 73). He further argues that "among the industrialized nations Japan is unique in the extent to which it gives priority to economic power over economic well-being" (ibid.), which is in line with the 'Japan is different from the West' -arguments.

America's tradition has, at least in this century, been one where those obtaining wealth are, and feel obligated, to insure the welfare of society as a whole. In Japan, a country with vastly different, if not contrary ideas, this is simply not the case. [...] It results in an intricate web of price supports, tax subsidies, special benefits, targeted incentives, discretionary guidelines, and the like. In short, a perfect environment for favoritism, patronage, influence peddling, bribery and extortion (P88:1f).

Additionally, when speaking about Japan's *aggressive export expansion and [...] resolute resistance to imports other than raw materials into its own domestic market*, it is put forward that *the strategy is deeply infused into the procedures of the Japanese Government and the behavior of the Japanese people (P68:9)*. This relates to the arguments about differences in Japanese society and culture that again were made already in the mid-1980s: *the Japanese at home [...] have a very different structured society. I do not know that we anymore would like the structured, planned, highly controlled society of an out and out Socialist economy (P18:47)*. For example, import barriers are viewed as government-imposed but also as cultural (P76:2), as it is argued that the Japanese have a *different mentality and cultural constraints (P58:3)*, or that Japan has *resistant cultural attitudes (P32:38)*, and a *self-image that allows imports of raw materials, but of the fewest foreign manufactures possible (P32:38)*, with a *cultural background and history [that] it has long been understood that they must trade to survive (P42:30)*.

A common allegation is also the 'collectivism' of the Japanese, as when Japan is articulated as an *adversary whose people are conservative, traditional, homogenous and emphasizing the group rather than the individual (P73:49)*.³⁰⁸ Likewise, in contrast to Americans, the Japanese are characterized as *worried about the future and wary of risk, cautious about spending (P58:3)*, but also as *focusing on the long term, and not the short term like the U.S. (P73:12)*. In this context it is maintained that *Americans do not think the way the Japanese think. We do not take the long-range view (P73:154, see also P69:2; P166:1)* and – according to a Japanese professor cited in the debates, referring to the 'fairness' argument – *the American predisposition to view things in simplistic black-and-white terms is antithetical to [the Japanese mindset] (P69:2)*. The Japanese however in turn are criticized for not having a sense of *absolute right or wrong (P69:3)*. In consequence it is argued on the one hand that these differences require *new approaches to a unique problem (P31:38)*, or that it is *the overall policy of Japan that has to be changed (P56:2)*. In this respect – and this is a similarity with the debates on free trade with China – it is argued that *Western misconceptions concerning the Nature of the Japanese challenge* have to be realized by the U.S. in order not to continue *the self-imposed handicap of*

³⁰⁸ 'Collectivism' is one of the most common attributions also in the scholarly literature on Japan at that time, see the references in the introduction to Gilpin, Kennedy, and Lipset. For a criticism see for instance Campbell (1994).

doctrinal adherence to inapplicable free-trade theories (P69:2; P71:8; P73:153f.). On the other hand it is also emphasized that the Japanese side itself was using the ‘difference argument’ for maintaining trade barriers, so it is demanded that they should *stop coming up with explanations for why their system is unique* (P42:33), and with *using the uniqueness argument for a long time to keep out our commercial goods* (P73:82; P73:127; P42:31).³⁰⁹

In contrast to these characterizations of Japan and ‘the Japanese’, the U.S. are described as *willing to take risks*, being *spenders* (P58:3), treating *the customer as king* (P73:49), and as *having a sense of right and wrong* that the Japanese allegedly lack (P69:3). On the other (self-critical) side other U.S.-characteristics are voiced as not favorable, like always *looking at short term advantages* and in the worst case just *giving up the oven* (P73:12), through placing *a great deal of concern on the diplomatic impact* [of trade policies] (P71:61), while – in contrast to Japan – not having realized *that our economic strength is our national security and that trade is a major pillar of our economic well-being* (P73:50) (again, see in what follows on ‘economic security’ in the next subchapter).

By articulating Japan as ‘different’ not only from the U.S., but from ‘the Western world’ in general, the ground the U.S. is purportedly standing on vis-à-vis Japan is extended, while also augmenting the range of the problem to not only concerning the U.S. – in terms of universalizing a particular claim or demand. This was for instance a central argument of the negotiators of the Bush administration during the SII. They articulated Japan as ‘different’ and out of step with the advanced industrialized economies of the time, and as a threat to the GATT-based trading system (cf. Mastanduno 1992, 255). Furthermore, this kind of argumentation is intended to foster the chains of equivalence in terms of essentializing Japan’s difference as there ‘being nothing to be done about it’, as in this view the difference is cultural and societal, hence too deeply infused to possibly change.³¹⁰ This was an important argument of the revisionists, as the consequence they put forward was that the U.S. had to change its policies to being more confrontational, concretely, demanding for and insisting on ‘objective criteria’ or ‘numerical targets’.

In this sense, emphasizing the ‘difference’ of Japan is in line with articulating an exclusive U.S. identity that does not give room of manoeuvre or change for the other.

³⁰⁹ See footnote on ‘Japanese uniqueness’ in the introduction.

³¹⁰ While differences for instance in negotiation style and in business conventions certainly existed, it is about their inscription as fixed and essential characteristics with negative or adversarial connotations that renders the argumentation into ‘othering’.

Connected to this line of argumentation is the perspective the U.S. articulates itself from (addressed in the next chapter six), as well as the question on the consequences for the U.S.-Japanese relationship and the global standing of the U.S., that is addressed in what follows.

Overall, the articulations for both the U.S. and Japan are not unambiguous, whereas, as will become more obvious under the following topic as well as under the categories of perspectivation and intensification (chapters six and seven), the overall dislocation of U.S. identity stems from seeing itself in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis Japan, that in this view first and foremost results from Japan's 'unfairness' through its difference.

5.2. Japan as competitor – and *world (economic) power?*

This topic stands for the main consequence of the dislocation or challenge to the U.S. through the economic development of Japan: the question what this might mean for the U.S. not only in the economic realm, but also on a broader scale as a 'global power'. Again, also with this topic, there are accommodating or inclusive voices articulating chains of difference, and confrontational and exclusive ones constructing equivalences.

On the accommodating side, relating to this topic 'rising Japan' is nominated as *(big/world) economic power* (e.g. P72:1; P97:4; P115:4), *maturing economy* (P68:43), *a world leader [and] economic and financial superpower* (P77:8; see also P83:12; P91:1; P118:2, P63:19), and *the newest superpower* (P100:4), sometimes specified as *second largest Free-World economy* (P27:7), *second largest economic power in the free world* (P32:38; P56:8) or *one of the three super powers* (P71:157). In this sense of resemblance with the U.S., Japan is also articulated as *crucial/important/valuable/good ally (of the United States in the Pacific)* (P2:17; P38:20; P42:38, P83:9, 12; P86:1), *friendly neighbor* (P4:5), *(important) friend* (P71:10; P84:3), *a democratic success story, a nation of hard-working, talented people who can bring progress to all Asia* (P31:37; P83:9), as *smart, tough and patient* (in negotiating on trade, P42:31; P29:35), *America's major economic partner* (P97:3; P127:1), as one of the *two engines* (China being the other one) *driving the economic future of the Asia-Pacific region* (P113:3), and as *seeking appropriate world responsibilities* (P91:1). In terms of further commonalities between Japan and the U.S., they are both praised for standing at the forefront of the free nations and free economies of the world (P67:28) after *the flower of friendship between our countries blossomed upon a battlefield* (P67:29), hence in spite of and in contrast to their past as adversaries.

The dislocation, or 'root cause' of the dislocation (on the ontical level!) with Japan however emanates from the economic realm, in Japan evolving from being conceived 'only' as *a competitor* (P44:170 in 1985), then *the principal economic rival* (P64:35 in 1985), progressing to *the second greatest industrial power* (P65:7 still in 1985), *a technological superpower* (P73:8 in 1989), *the wealthiest nation in the world* (P77:6 in 1989), and finally to being *the most technologically advanced nation* with seemingly *unlimited horizons* (P100:4 in 1989). In this line of argumentation this is first and foremost also connected to Japan having become *the worlds largest creditor/number one creditor country* (P93:24; P97:1; P100:1, 4), and *a potential world power because of the foreign-policy leverage of its overwhelming financial strength* (P118:2). Japan is seen as *a (tightfisted) economic giant* (P83:28; P63:19), *the fiercest competitor on the globe* (P93:23), and *a new economic enemy* (P91:8; on competition being the major driving force behind the trade frictions cf. also Nanto 1992).

The confrontational voices see Japan as having an *export-or-die mentality* (P85:3), as an *economic imperialist* (P88:1), and *determined to have market dominance* (P92:24; P79:2). It is argued that Japan is pursuing *political aims* through its *economic endeavor*, as *administrators in industry and government take it for granted that Japan should become ever more invincible in the face of a potentially hostile world* (P79:5, 7). Japan is attributed with being aware of *economic impacts and economic power* – contrary to the U.S. who is articulated as considering the *diplomatic impact* on the one hand and *military power* on the other (P71:61, 63) – while the Japanese are defining their *national security in terms of industrial competitiveness* (P73:12; P83:28), and *rightly associating economic strength with national security* (P73:50). This line of reasoning is again in line with the revisionist view of Japan that maintained that Japan had a particular strategy to build up its overall standing through its economic policies (see assessments cited earlier, i.e. by Huntington, that Japan was acting in line with realism in the economic field) through targeting certain industries to the detriment of the U.S.³¹¹

This line of argumentation in turn has consequences for U.S.-Japanese relations, which are addressed in what follows.

³¹¹ While Japan's economic rise especially in the early years was to a large extent building on its strength in exporting, it was on the other hand not as 'closed' as argued by the hardliners, see for instance the CRS-report by Dick Nanto, who (in 1992) argues that "while Japan still maintains some notorious border barriers, particularly the import quota on rice, most of the rest are similar to those in other industrialized nations of the world" (Nanto1992, summary).

U.S. relations with Japan

When it comes to the consequences of Japan's economic rise, given the size and strength of the Japanese economy, and – according to the view aimed at articulating chains of equivalence – contrary to what Japan is seen as making out of it, Japan's *special responsibility* to open its markets is frequently voiced (P34:7; P42:29; P91:4, 6; P92:27). So it is argued that Japan should act as *the No. 2 economic power in the world* (P92:27) according to *an enlightened role in global leadership more generally* (P97:4; P113:3). Japan is criticized for failing to live up to its world responsibility (P42:29; P56:8; P65:7), and accused of *nurturing a semi-dependent attitude towards the United States* (P52:30). This is regarded as unfair, as it is argued that no other country has benefitted more from the international economic system (P65:7): *as a long-time beneficiary of the free-trading system maintained largely by the United States [...] Japan ought to be taking leadership in [...] opening its markets and its business practices so that the rest of the world can benefit from the Japanese miracle as well* (P77:8). But Japan allegedly, only pursuing its commercial advantage (P71:40), *takes advantage of the international marketplace, [while] protecting its own industries* (P107:2). And all this is happening in spite of the Japanese being no *fragile flower* anymore but *big boys* (P93:42)³¹², at times however presenting themselves as the victim of 'U.S. protectionism' or critique (P119:1).

This line of reasoning is also related to 'historical arguments' about the U.S. paying for Japan's defense (P73:53, see also perspectivation) and thus enabling its economic success³¹³, and about Japan in this sense not behaving like a proper ally (P73:55f.; P92:30)³¹⁴, as expressed in statements like Japan is *supposed to be an ally* – meaning not acting like one (P73:55, see also P73:122: *if the Japanese had been fair and cooperative allies/had done the fair and cooperative thing*) or: *Since the end of World War II, we have done everything possible to help rebuild Japan's economy and transform her into a world economic power, and she has become the worst offender in fair trading practices of any nation today* (P72:1). This in turn is also linked to Japan being articulated as *the world's first economic superpower without military power* (P91:6), which also

³¹² The 'fragile flower' alludes to portrayals of Japan as 'feminine' in terms of being weak and vulnerable after WWII, especially vis-à-vis 'Communist China' (cf. Dower 2001, 311).

³¹³ See also e.g. Kennedy (1988, 459). However, a counter argument was that Japanese investment in the U.S. in turn helped finance the defense expenditures (cf. Gilpin 1987, 332).

³¹⁴ See also N. Morris (2010, 25). Connecting to the 'historical arguments' about Japan's defense (that are mostly brought up in the debates on the FSX-fighter plane in 1989) is also a different line of argumentation that also figures in the debates on China, although relating to a different context: the U.S. as 'guide' for Japan (and China) towards 'liberal democratic capitalism': it is argued that because of Japan's history in Asia, it would be better that the U.S. stayed involved and that Japan did not develop the capabilities to become a military power again (P92:10; P93:3, 8ff.).

does not fit with 'general expectations' or understandings about a 'great power' (see i.e. Berger 1993).

In terms of articulations attempted at sustaining U.S. identity, the U.S. on the one hand relating to this topic is first and foremost articulated as *world power* (P13:12; P47:48; P97:4; P100:4; P174:12), *the world's only military, economic, and political superpower* (P112:1), *the world's only complete superpower* (P120:7), *healthier and better prepared to move into the 21st century than the Japanese economy* (P120:3) and as *a great promise [and] the leading nation* (P143:2).

In this context, by the end 1980s it is however argued that in and for the U.S. national security should also be understood in terms of economic security (P71:63, 105, 161) and economics and trade as equivalent to *power and influence* (P74:8; see also P77:5; P96:3; P132:52), i.e. in terms of *financial power* (P77:5f.), and that for these aspects the U.S. needs a proactive economic and commercial strategy (P73:148) *in order to prevent a dramatic erosion of our economic standing in the world* (P71:152; P74:1), and jeopardizing U.S.-leadership in world affairs (P77:16; P78:3). This is one of the major debates emerging after 1989 (cf. also Kolkmann 2005, 42) – not only, but in this context especially in relation to Japan – as it was argued that with the end of the Cold War the U.S. could and should stop prioritizing the political or security related aspects in the relationship with Japan, and focus on economic issues that were causing trouble. This line of argumentation became especially prominent with the Clinton presidency since 1992 – but had its precedents already during the Bush presidency (cf. Schoppa 1997, 70) – as Clinton was placing the importance of economic policies and issues in general at the center of his political agenda (cf. i.e. Paulsen 1999).³¹⁵

The pessimistic outlook is once more connected to the U.S. losing its creditor status and having become a debtor (P77:4; P132:50), and according to some *a second class power* (P109:2), and in this respect also to *the increasing ownership of foreigners in the United States [that] is likely*

³¹⁵ In a nutshell, when it comes to broader lines of reasoning on international relations after the end of the Cold War, this line of thinking was embedded in the idea that after the end of the ideological competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, economic competition would become the main issue in international relations, which is why 'national security' had to be redefined in economic terms. On the one hand this meant to focus on the strength of the economic sector and performance in general (in terms of GDP, exports and employment rates), as well as on seeing industrial and technological capabilities as foundation for defense and security related matters. In this sense, economic performance was articulated as basis for a continuous U.S. worldwide leadership (cf. Paulsen 1999, 32f., 46). For instance, the controversy around the FSX-fighter plane (see introduction to the analysis and in what follows) evolved along the lines of these debates (cf. Schoppa 1997, 71). How these issues connect to the arguments about a potential U.S. decline because of Japan's economic success, as well as to arguments against 'free trade', is treated under the category of perspectivation.

to result in some loss of control over our own destiny (P77:16; P82:2ff.).³¹⁶ This view is addressed further under the category of perspectivation.

On the other hand, it is maintained (in 1994) that the U.S. is still the world's only military, economic, and political superpower, that therefore must lead (P112:1), for instance when it comes to *transforming a command economy into a free market economy* (in this particular example in the case of Russia, P112:2f.), and, to a different extent in the case of Japan, as *the Japanese domestic industry [is] virtually closed to foreigners and will remain closed unless we, as a nation, force them to open it* (P121:4).

What will also become clearer under the category of perspectivation is the self-criticism of the U.S., which is partly directed towards the executive. So it is argued, *that many of us search for a scapegoat to blame for our manifold ills. But the bitter truth is that we have no one to blame for our condition but ourselves. For the wounds to our economic health and to our national pride have been largely self-inflicted* (P109:2), as in this view the United States government is refusing to compete for commercial success (P125:2).

Summary of argumentations towards Japan

The main line of argumentation towards Japan from 1985 until 1995 is led by the articulation of the trade deficit as origin for the economic problems of the U.S., as well as by attempts to explain and resolve the deficit. In other words, the trade deficit is diagnosed as 'the problem', and the 'reasons' are first and foremost seen in Japan's unfairness. 'Fairness' becomes the empty signifier, the signifier of the deficiency or lack that stands for its own absence. (The attempts at filling the empty signifier and hegemonizing the discourse are addressed under the following categories and chapters). The absence is 'literal' in the sense of being voiced through the articulation of its denial through 'unfair Japan'. In view of Japan's unfairness, all internal differences are supposed to become equivalent, hence sustaining an exclusive or confrontational U.S. identity that does not give room for 'unfair traders'. However, the voices that emphasize the non-action or, in their view inappropriate approach of the own executive towards the issue of the trade deficit, articulate themselves in terms of chains of difference towards Japan (yet not necessarily as inclusive), as they see own policies as (part of) the problem. Leading up to 1985 – the year of the Plaza Accords – another possible reason for the disadvantageous standing of the U.S. is seen in the high value of the dollar, but this again is partly connected to a criticism of the executive's

³¹⁶ See footnote on investment in what follows under perspectivation in chapter six.

(lacking) policies. In this sense, the chains of difference go hand in hand with what I call internal chains of equivalence that articulate the policies of the executive as responsible for the ‘problem’.

While it becomes visible from looking at the category of argumentation, or initial articulation of chains of equivalence and difference, that the U.S. first and foremost sees itself in a disadvantageous position when it comes to economic competition vis-à-vis Japan, there are attempts at ‘explaining’ this disadvantage through Japan’s unfairness that is claimed to be cemented in its cultural and societal differences. This kind of argumentation is intended to foster the chains of equivalence and exclusivity in terms of essentializing Japan’s difference as there ‘being nothing to be done about it’, thus it being too deeply infused to possibly change. However, it is not yet clear from this category what this means for the question of consequences to U.S. global leadership. It is seen as potentially endangered, and for this reason – especially after 1989 – the U.S. is called upon not to treat economic issues to the detriment of security (anymore), but to assess economic questions as security-related ones. This aspect is further addressed under the category of perspectivation in chapter six, where the topics in the debates analyzed become connected.

5.3. The trade deficit with China – *free trade versus unfairness*

With China as well, the trade deficit accounts for the major dislocation to U.S. identity in terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, for mainly three reasons: as with Japan for the consequences for the U.S. economy, but also going beyond the economic realm and relating to the global standing of the U.S. (as explored under the next topic and subchapter) – for the fact that according to American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history China’s system should not be economically more successful than the U.S. (cf. i.e. Friedberg 2011; Layne 2014) – and finally but importantly for the missing political liberalization also according to the liberal theory of history.

Concretely, the dislocation to U.S. identity occurs in terms of the U.S. articulating itself as the *most powerful economy* (P137:32; P195:40; P209:1; P210:2) and *the world’s free trade leader/model for free and fair trade* (e.g. P146:5; P136:5), that *plays by the rules* and is *the most transparent, most honest, most basic system in the world* (P209:23), that *can compete with anyone* provided that competition is *fair* and on a *level playing field* (P211:2; P205:4; P211:2). However, this is allegedly not the case with China, as is laid out under what follows.

China as unfair

Generally, the economic relationship between the U.S. and China in itself is first and foremost criticized for 'economic' reasons, namely the deficit (P114:5; P115:4; P125:51; P132:44; P133:78; P176:5, 50; P201:5; P141:34; P214:1) and China's 'unfairness' (P115:1; P125:63, 72; P132:87, 99; P133:19; P175:14; P176:38; P202:4; P142:34; P207:3, 7) (cf. also Gagliano 2014, 136) and – since around 2000, especially since 2005 – the manipulation of its currency (P136:39; P141:2; P142:34f.; P205:8ff.; P207:7, 17; P208:1f.; P212:1).³¹⁷ As already pointed out at the beginning of chapter 5.1, with China the question on its 'unfairness' ('unfair' comes up 154 times in the documents on China, see table seven) lies less on the origins, as China's 'unfairness' on the one hand seems to be considered as more obvious, as it is still transforming its economy, but on the other hand also because China is 'communist', i.e. 'unfair per definition'. Because of the *trade deficits*, China is regarded as *one of [the U.S.] most difficult trade policy challenges* (P169:2). As with Japan, China as an 'unfair trader' in terms of its *manipulation of trade* (P113:14), its *discriminatory and unfair trade practices* (P126:4; P172:2) [...] *that make the Japanese look like proponents of Adam Smith and free trade* (P125:65), is articulated as a major problem and the actual reason for the trade deficit (cf. also Gagliano 2014, 136). Like Japan, allegedly *all they want is the money* (P126:4, 9), while they *consistently fail to live up to the terms of [their] trade agreements* (P178:2; P136:86, 100), *frustrate U.S. companies* (P136:100), *are cheating and not keeping [their] word with trade obligations* (P205:5), *as Chinese leaders say one thing and do another* (P137:18), and as China is *a country that manipulates its currency* (P211:1f.). In contrast to the nominations and predications on Japan under this topic, the ones on China stay within, or at least closer to the 'economic vocabulary', whereas those on Japan are voiced on a more personal level, i.e. relating to a person's character. As with Japan however, it is furthermore argued that China is making promises that it does not keep (P145:11; 195:5), and that it maintains trade barriers (P146:4; P175:21; P183:1; P188:5; P193:6), while being the source of cheap imports into the U.S. (167:66; P133:18; P207:17). China is thus seen as conducting *mercantilist policies*, that are *anti-American* and *predatory* (P186:1ff.), and – already more intensely – that China (in this statement along with New Zealand, the European Union, and *the*

³¹⁷ In general, the currency issue with China did figure less prominently in the debates analyzed than expected, which also might be due to the broader keyword search on "China economy". "China currency" however would have been too specific for the purpose of this study. In a nutshell, when it comes to evaluating whether the Chinese currency was or is undervalued or not, most scholars agree that it was the case (albeit to a different extent with remaining disputes), but also – like when it comes to the trade deficit – that the negative consequences for the U.S. economy were not as straightforward as maintained by hardliners calling for retaliation, but that they had to be seen in connection with structural and macro-economic factors as well (Evenett 2010; Keidel 2011; Moran 2015; cf. i.e. Morrison and Labonte 2011), see also Nymalm (2013).

old Soviet Union) poses a tremendous threat, as *all of these nations are trying to take a piece of our economy. They want our jobs and our well-being to transmit to their country* (P144:10), which is why we must be accurate in how we assess the current threats to our economy, or we will not be able to sustain the American way of life (P144:11).

Like in the case with Japan, these arguments on China's unfairness serve to build up chains of equivalence around the empty signifier 'fairness' – as with Japan, present through its literal absence in the presence of 'unfairness' – by articulating the lack of fairness and its consequences, first and foremost the trade deficit, as problem that has to be dealt with. To emphasize its urgency, arguments like the one on not being able to sustain the American way of life are brought forward, and the 'bad example' of Japan is invoked, while claiming that the situation with China was even more critical.³¹⁸

On the other side, there are also attempts at sustaining U.S. identity in terms of denying the challenge. When it comes to dealing with 'unfair China', the U.S. is articulated as having leverage over China, not least because of *the power of the American purse*, that everybody wants to do business with (P145:3). In this line of argumentation, U.S. trade policy could and should also work as *a stick* in the form of section 301 investigations (P149:10).³¹⁹ Likewise, it is argued that the U.S. had the task to make sure in all international forums that *China has to play by western rules if it wants to be a global player* (P169:6). Meanwhile it is also emphasized that – referring to China's possible membership in the WTO – only the U.S. itself could protect American interests (P174:9ff.), and that *trade with America is not just a right but a privilege* (P76:44). As *the most powerful nation* the U.S. is called upon not to give in to bad trade deals (P189:4). Furthermore, it is also argued that the U.S. should take up the challenge to *energize* itself in order to *maintain its place in the world* (P143:3), and see the challenge posed by the economic development in China, India and Eastern Europe to create a political consensus in favor of change and growth (P143:9). This bears similarity to the argument about taking up the challenge posed by Japan rethink the relationship between economic and security policy.³²⁰ However, potential U.S. leverage over China is noticeably not seen as unambiguously given, as will become clear under what follows.

³¹⁸ Like with these arguments towards Japan, while China's policies were not always and at every instance 'following the rules of free market policies', the picture especially regarding the consequences for the U.S. economy is not as clear or as black and white as argued by the confrontational voices in Congress. See introduction to the analysis and conclusion.

³¹⁹ See footnote in overview on Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, or Super 301 like it was legislated in 1988.

³²⁰ On the articulation of these developments as 'Sputnik-shocks', referring to the launch of the Soviet satellite in 1957, see Thorsten (2012, Introduction).

Self-criticisms – *values versus commercial interests* and the liberal theory of history

In terms of self-criticisms – as with Japan – a strand of self-characterizations seems to some extent to be giving in to the dislocation, while on the other hand the internal differences are also partly dealt with through internal chains of equivalence versus the executive, as it is argued that it does not act in an adequate way to solve ‘the problems’ with China.

In this sense, in general terms, economic and foreign policies are repeatedly declared an overall failure (P164:2; 125:10; P133:17; P176:4, 51) and the administration as lacking toughness (P125:53; P133:19; P186:2). As with Japan it is argued that national security should include and be tied to economic issues (P207:16). However, more prevalent than the security question with respect to the economy in the case of Japan, are criticisms of the executive, that are connected to the broader question of ‘values’ versus ‘commercial interests’ (see in what follows), hence the impact of free trade beyond the economy according to the liberal theory of history: in this vein, in concretely mentioning the president, it is criticized that for example George Bush was bailing out China’s leaders when it came to the threat of Congress revoking MFN (P149:4), and that he did not *stand up for American workers who wither against illegal dumping practices and an undervalued Chinese currency* (P207:17). It is claimed that only his inaction in turn provoked Congress *to force annual showdowns* (P162:7, see also Dumbaugh 1998, 4). Clinton in turn is blamed for having *crumbled like a cookie* on MFN (P145:22), and in this sense he is said to have *abandoned the so-called ‘America-policy’* (P146:9),³²¹ as he seemed to be more responsive to financial interests (P163:2), and had no clearly and coherently articulated foreign policy (P124:1; P176:43; P125:6). On the other hand, criticisms of the executive are also voiced as part of the chains of difference, when the linkage of MFN and human rights is critiqued as a failure and not an ideal lever (P160:1f.), as more moderate voices argue against hinging *the entire Sino-American relationship on this issue* (human rights in China, P112:3) in terms of moral commitments (cf. Paulsen 1999, 157), and in consequence treating China as *an enemy in our trade relations* (P136:127).

As was the case with Japan, the U.S. are criticized overall as being *naïve* (P136:39, here directed against the executive) and a *paper tiger* (P162:10, referring to Mao Zedong calling the U.S. a paper tiger), and still conducting *trade policy as largely focused on foreign policy*, in spite of *the large deficits with China or Japan* (P198:8), and as [...] *[like] most democracies, being unwilling to confront the harsh realities of nature* (P201:2). In this sense – but even more critically as

³²¹ This refers to Clinton’s speech on ‘America policy’ in 1993, when he – referring to the linkage between MFN and human rights that he had proclaimed back then – had stated that “We no longer have an executive branch policy and a congressional policy. We have an American policy” (J. Yang 2000, 123).

becomes apparent under the ‘values’ versus ‘commercial interests’ debates that are addressed in what follows – the U.S. (in terms of “we”) are also criticized for being *blindly devoted to trade at all costs* (P189:11), acting *like shopkeepers [...] listening to the cash register* (P138:21), and being *driven by money*. Furthermore the U.S. are characterized as *accustomed to quick fixes* and expecting *to be able to fix problems overnight* (P136:6), which bears resemblance to long-term versus short-term thinking in relation to Japan.

The ‘values’ versus ‘commercial interests’ debates (see passage on relations in chapter 5.4) are not only about the possible impact of the liberal theory of history, but also about the question of who in the U.S. actually benefits from economic relations with China.³²² This points to further internal chains of equivalences additionally to the ones articulated against the executive. On the one hand, the question is posed as how important China as an economy and market is for the U.S. and its interests (P159:1; P125:84, 89; P126:5; P136:30f.; P195:8; P196:1; P197:1). In this context it is argued that *MFN removal would hurt U.S. consumers, [...] be a disaster to the U.S. business community and [...] place as many as 200,000 direct American jobs at risk* (P145:11; P148:2; P149:8; P176:4; P178:1; P185:1f.; P188:6; P200:12), as China is seen as *one of the fastest growing markets for U.S. exports* (P146:2). In line with these arguments that the U.S. would lose market share in China that might be taken up for example by the Europeans (P146:76; P160:1; P125:49; P176:4, 35), denying MFN is articulated as *cutting off our nose to spite our face* (P177:2) or *the economic equivalent of saying ‘Lift up a rock and drop it on your own foot’* (P178:1). Within this line of reasoning there is an attempt to build up internal chains of equivalence between those claiming to protect the U.S. economy through maintaining MFN versus those insisting on using MFN as leverage in the issue of human rights in China. On the other side it is argued that although domestic jobs play a role in the MFN-debates, the U.S. should not sacrifice its values in terms of not falling *all over ourselves in trying to justify a policy of appeasement* (P161:1; P176:30, see intensifications in chapter seven), and not *kowtow to Chinese bullying* (P162:7), as it is argued that only *U.S. businessmen [were] reaping handsome profits in a low-wage economy* (P165:3; P175:8; P138:5). In this sense what are called *the believers in the theology of total free trade* are criticized, because in consequence *U.S. workers have to compete with Chinese workers who earn twenty cents an hour* (P166:5) and *corporations are moving jobs to low-wage developing nations* (P189:2; P138:55; P215:6) *to export back here to the United States* (P136:38). This line of argumentation criticizes the focus on U.S. business interests to the detriment of *the people in the United States* (P176:31; P189:8ff.; P195:6; P138:6, 40; P200:6; P204:8; P209:2ff.; P132:16) who were *held hostage* by the business community (P180:4), as expressed in statements like: *some of*

³²² See also for instance Xie (2009, 112, 152).

my friends love capitalism more than they hate communism (P182:2), and *we sold [the Soviet Union] 'just about anything they could not shoot at us'* (P136:26). The extension of these arguments maintains that *the Soviet military machine* should not be replaced *with another military superpower built with American trade dollars* (P138:57). In this sense it is argued that *granting PNTR now is a signal of abject weakness. It is a signal of greed* (P136:42), *the almighty dollar* (P137:126) and *money, money, money* (P195:51).

In sum, the internal chain of equivalences is articulated between 'the business community that sacrifices values over profits' and 'the believers in the theology of total free trade' versus those standing in for human rights. This issue is addressed further in chapter 5.4 in the subchapter on U.S.-relations to China.

The 'values versus interests' issue is the red line of the question how to deal with the trade deficit and China's growing economy. It is addressed also under the other categories.

As with Japan, the argument of China being 'different' also figures within the chains of equivalence and difference. However, it is articulated differently from the difference of Japan, as the following subchapter, as well as the other categories will show.

China as different – reason for engagement?

As with Japan, China is also articulated as (culturally) *different* (e.g. P136:2), but – in spite of the obvious ideological difference – generally in a more inclusive and potentially accommodating way than Japan: China is seen having *existed as a self-contained society for many centuries, [that] did not move easily into a cooperative relationship with the nations of the West* (P114:1). *Throughout its 4000 year history, China has resisted outside influences* (P136:6). As for the question of how to deal with China's difference, one frequent assertion – and this is also a 'culturalistic' argument – is that *the Oriental people, the Chinese in particular, are very sensitive to face. If they determine in any way that we are applying any kind of pressure, covert or overt, we will be totally unsuccessful* (P146:37; P178:2; P137:57), as their *wounds* are still *fresh from [their] harried humiliation by the Western powers* (P137:57, here referring to the Opium Wars). Therein allegedly lies *the psyche of the Chinese civilization and of many of the Chinese people*, and China's *yearning to be a global superpower* (P137:57). This is often associated with China being *one of the oldest civilizations in the world, one of the most developed civilizations in the world* (P159:2; P195:14), *a great nation with an ancient culture and a proud tradition* (P188:4), that is *motivated*

by concerns about pride and stability (P159:4), but that for much of the 20th century, has been playing catch up with the West (P137:57).

However, it is also emphasized that *China has never experienced the types of freedoms that we in the Western world have developed so tortuously over so many thousands of years* (P125:8), and that it is *not a free country* (P189:4). In this line *Confucianism* is associated with *persistent feudalism, that mixes in with decaying socialism and rapid capitalism* (P169:13), and China is seen as having *a Marxist superstructure, superimposed on a capitalist substructure [...] a recipe for tension, dislocation and conflict in the long term* (P169:5). In this sense China is also pictured as giving an *unparalleled view of a nation in the constant grip of absolutism, in which the Chinese people have been treated as disposable resources of the state* (P201:2). This again shows that in distinction to the difference of Japan, China's difference is mostly articulated in terms of its form of government and less in terms of personalized individual, or societal characteristics.

The more negative articulations of China's difference point to China's *long history of aggressive behavior, [...] activated by [...] actual and perceived grievances* (P201:1). China's long history is seen as *an unbroken international internalization of the concept of externally expanding power as a guiding principle of foreign policy* (P201:2), and China as *willing to do whatever it takes, regardless of ruling ideology, to become a global superpower* (P137:57). It is argued that *China, despite its communist roots and totalitarian regime, realizes that in the modern world it not only takes military strength to become a superpower, it also takes economic strength* (P137:57). In line with this reasoning one of the important questions becomes whether the U.S. can *really trust China* (P137:58), and where China is evolving. On the one hand it is maintained that *it is not a society that is evolving toward freedom* (P202:1) – hence contradicting the liberal theory of history and being fundamentally different from the U.S. – and that *the regime in China is more powerful, more belligerent to the United States and more repressive than ever before* (P202:10). Contrary to this view, China is on the other hand depicted as *evolving into a more open society with a government that is increasingly sensitive to international opinion and willing to work with fellow nations and the United States* (P190:3), and as *a case for economic engagement as a mechanism for affecting political change* (P136:60). This is the central debate over the liberal theory of history that plays out and is addressed the subchapter on U.S. relations with China (in chapter 5.4), as well as under the other categories.

On the other side however, China's 'difference' is articulated as reason for engagement: according to this line, *China has allowed gradual economic liberalization [...] while maintaining a politically authoritarian system* (P155:6). It is emphasized that *Western and Asian societies have different understandings and expectations of human rights* (P157:3), and that China, as a proud

nation, will not be pushed around and let the U.S. impose their system as they have no background of democracy (P159:2f.). But it is also acknowledged, that the 'difference' might be an excuse on both sides, on the side of the business circles for trading with China regardless of its human rights situation (P162:9), and on the Chinese side by claiming, that *for cultural reasons, historical reasons, they don't have to abide by intellectual property rules or anything else* (P132:87), which bears resemblance to the criticism of Japan for bringing forward their 'uniqueness' as an excuse for restricting trade or imports. Also, it is argued that China's difference might *preclude the kind of relationship we have with other countries in the region such as Japan* (P124:3). In many statements, for example in the debates on Unocal (see in what follows on perspectivation towards China), the difference is emphasized implicitly by reiterating the nomination and predication *Communist China* at the beginning of every sentence of a longer statement on China (e.g. P:207). For further arguments on China's 'difference' see the following passage on China as world (economic) power.

In terms of chains of equivalence and difference, China's difference is not articulated as unambiguously as Japan's as accounting for the equivalential, or confrontational and exclusive arguments. This has to do with the proponents of the inclusive and accommodating features of the liberal theory of history and the 'end of history'-strand of American exceptionalism (see chapter 1.3), that still have hope for change in China. Further arguments for and against this view are treated under perspectivation in chapter six, but also under intensification in chapter seven.

5.4. China as world (economic) power – and challenger of the U.S.?

As with Japan, under this topic the consequences of China's economic rise for the U.S. and its standing as a global power are debated. It becomes clear that, compared to the challenge of Japan that lies in economic competition not only referring to 'quantity' in terms of Japanese imports flooding the U.S., but also in 'quality' (i.e. due to the technological level of Japan, which might supersede the U.S.), with China it is rather the size of the Chinese economy and its impact beyond this sphere.

The rather neutral or positive predications concerning China's rise are *the most populous country in the world* (e.g. P114:7; P125:76), *big economic power* (e.g. P115:4), *economic giant* (e.g. P150:1), *a regional power* (P112:3), *an emerging superpower* (e.g. P176:54) and even *nuclear (super) power* (e.g. P112:3; P125:55). Relations with China are seen as important for economic

reasons (P136:32) – with China articulated as *economic partner* (P143:6) and *trading partner* (P205:1) – but also beyond the economic sphere (P188:2; P190:1) as in following exemplary statement: *no country figures to have a greater impact on the United States than the People's Republic of China. The emergence of China as a major world power is one of the historic events of the late 20th century* (e.g. P190:1). In this line of argumentation, rejecting MFN/PNTR is articulated as having a negative impact on all aspects of the relationship (P136:16). When it comes to assessing China's character as a 'power', it is on the one hand articulated as *rapidly becoming a great and complete power* (P113:4; P123:1; P176:63; P182:1), as *a major regional actor/key country in Asia* (P147:2; P188:2; P137:46) *with the potential to be an international superpower* (P149:5), and as *the strongest military power in Asia and an independent nuclear power* (P149:5). Furthermore, with respect to its future development, China is seen as *a country whose power and influence will grow not only in Asia but in the world at large* (P149:6), *the chief economic and political tiger that will dominate Asia in the years to come* (P124:1), *one of the two or three most important countries in the world early in the next century* (P125:7), *a pivotal nation in the Pacific rim* (P125:89), and *a trading power/superpower in trade* (P169:2; P215:3).

In this respect, the more inclusive voices point to China as an *engine driving the economic future of the Asia-Pacific region* (together with Japan) (P113:3), potentially being the *first example of a Communist system that will succeed in meeting the economic needs of her people* (P113:2), and a *driver for global economic growth* (P150:1). In this line, China is also seen as important for the U.S. economy in terms of *offering a growing and potentially large market for American goods, services and technology [... and] as a [potential] partner in writing the new rules of trade in this new world market place* (P149:6), as *a fertile market with tremendous possibilities* (P125:89), *a nation whose economy is increasingly free and open* (P125:64) and as *an economic partner* (P143:6).

On the other hand, China over the course of time is taken to be a country that *could overtake the U.S. as the world's largest economy within the next decades* (P114:3), *as the one country in the world that can be our rival in the 21st century* (P132:11), *and increasingly [as an] economic competitor, however [...] not an adversary* (P137:46), but finally also as *the largest single security threat to the Asian nations* (P149:6).

According to these differing articulations of China, the prospects for an engaging or confrontational approach are both laid out and will be elaborated on in more detail in what follows.

U.S.-relations with China

Those who argue for engaging China articulate it as *too big, and too dynamic, and too strategically important to ignore or push to an enemy status* (P125:7), as *it can ill afford the perception that the United States continues to bully and dictate to her at will* (P113:4).³²³ In this context, the relationship is thus seen as important not only for economic reasons (P113:3), but also because of the broader picture of U.S.-policies in East Asia (P145:38) and worldwide, as China is articulated as *a major actor in important international efforts we undertake. [...] We cannot slap China in the face, and then turn around and expect that country's help in achieving success in other foreign policy initiatives* (P146:2), as in this view *the United States-China relationship will probably be the most important relationship that the United States will have for the next 20 years. That is whether China is viewed by this country as our enemy, or [...] as an ally, or perhaps something in between* (P125:9; P175:10).

It is also argued that *if we treat China – our World War II ally* (P190:2) – *as an enemy, it will become our enemy* (P188:8; P184:2), and that *how China evolves will profoundly affect our economic, political and security interests* (P184:1; P188:16) *around the world* (P188:2). Moreover, a general self-criticism is implied in statements such as *[Taiwan and South Korea] were our allies, and we did not talk about MFN with [them]. But their human rights record was no better than China's. We stuck with them because they were our allies in the cold war* (P159:4),³²⁴ or as in *America cannot afford a trade policy that opens Vietnam and shuts down China* (P165:1), *rescinding MFN would deny China the trade status that we grant to virtually every other nation in the world* (P125:83). These kinds of arguments are further addressed when dealing with 'U.S. hypocrisy' in chapter seven under the category of mitigation. Moreover, it is argued that *the rest of the world does not agree with us on China. We cannot even force change in Cuba, a tiny country with an aging dictator and a population about the size of Michigan* (P195:14). More explicitly and farsightedly it is even reasoned that *the main fear in China with regard to U.S. attitude is that the U.S. looking for a boogie man or looking for an enemy, after Russia, to settle on China* (P169:9).

The questions of how to deal with China as a rising power are more obviously than with Japan connected to the broader issue of the impact on U.S. identity in its role as promoter of free trade

³²³ I address the tension between the more negative view of the *Chinese government as a brutal and anachronistic regime [...] under [whose] repression flourishes one of the world's largest and most rapidly growing economies* (P125:88) under the categories of perspectivation and intensification in chapters six and seven.

³²⁴ See articulation of Taiwan and South Korea as 'good examples' in line with the liberal theory of history in what follows.

and liberal democratic capitalism also beyond the immediate economic realm. The constant argument of those in favor of expanding trade relations with China – through making MFN permanent and ultimately agreeing to China’s membership in the WTO – is that free trade would ultimately result in political reform and opening in China (LTH-argument). For these reasons, argumentation and perspectivation are also more intertwined than with Japan.

With MFN the central argument unfolds around the question on whether granting them actually improves the human rights situation in China, or whether the U.S. is just acting according to commercial interests: *The debate [...] is not just about China and the Chinese Government [...]. This debate is also about our own country, about what we are willing to stand up for [...] about whether or not we as a Nation put trade before people and profits above principles* (P176:8; see also 49, 52; P137:126). The most frequently voiced statements evolving around the ‘values versus interests’ argument in this vein are for example:

What does our rhetoric mean? What do we really stand for? What in fact drives American foreign policy? Is it human rights, is it respect for individuals, is it the values we cherish, or is the bottom line the bottom line, pure economics, pure trade, pure opportunities for profits? I call upon this Nation and this Congress to engage in a debate as to what we believe in as a nation, what we stand for as a nation [...] (P113:14f.) and *to being true to our roots, true to our heritage* (P162:5; P193:6).

It is also argued that

if we do nothing [...] our credibility as a world leader and as a defender of human rights will be devastated and that if we do nothing today, we will be saying it's OK to get tough with Cuba – it is a small country – or Afghanistan – or Laos or Montenegro. It does not cost us much to stand on principle with them. They are little and their potential trade is not significant. [...] we will be saying we do not stand on principle when it comes to big boys – like China- because it costs too much. [...] We should not [...] trade away our commitment to human rights and freedom (P146:5, 8), *as freedom is not free* (P187:4), and *not be hypocrites with a market in sight to exploit, and let the principles of Jefferson and Madison go out of the window* (P162:5).

Hence, in line with this reasoning, U.S. identity in terms of its liberal values is articulated as ‘unfulfilled’ if there was no decisive action against the human rights situation in China. China (and the world) would perceive this as weakness by the United States, that might be viewed as *the ‘paper tiger’* (P162:8f., see also subchapter on U.S. hypocrisy under the category of mitigation in chapter 7.4). Here, the dislocation manifests itself through internal chains of equivalences that

are articulated along the lines of those allegedly using the liberal theory of history as a 'fig leaf' for furthering their commercial interests versus those holding up the traditional values the U.S. purportedly stands for. As will be shown under what follows, and also under the category of mitigation, there are also accommodating or inclusive voices aiming at reconciling these internal differences from the perspective of the liberal theory of history.

Additionally, the central line of argumentation with regard to trade relations with China evolves not only around the deficit and the role of China for the U.S. economy, but – in connection to the issue of 'values' versus 'commercial interests' – also around the question of the potentially transformative impact of U.S. trade policy on China's political system, most concretely in the congressional debates on the human rights situation. Those in line with the liberal theory of history argue for the interconnectedness of economic and political liberty that can be made effective through free trade.³²⁵ This becomes apparent in statements like *the erosion of state control over the economy and erosion of the dependence of individuals and families on the state for basic necessities will open the door to peaceful political change in China* (P122:3; P125:50), and

the best foreign policy tools available to us to encourage political and civil reform abroad are policies that promote capitalism, market reform, and free trade. All three are powerful levers for political change, precisely because they are powerful mechanisms for economic change (P145:15; P157:2; 179:2f.).

The free market is articulated as *the greatest liberator known to man!*, and even though the process in China might be slow (P154:4; P176:2), and although China might be moving to a different kind of capitalism, *there is no alternative to capitalism as the market economy is the way of the future* (P171:3). It is maintained that *the free exchange of commerce and ideas offers the best hope we have to project the light of freedom into Communist China* (P176:2; P178:2), and that *the road to democracy is paved with free markets as free trade is the bridge to reach out to the Chinese* (P136:129). Trade and investment are articulated as *part of a greater effort to promote long-term progress toward political pluralism and democracy in China* (125:53) as *greater economic ties not only benefit the United States, but will help bring social and political change in China* (P195:29), even though it is conceded that *Clinton's decision [to delink MFN and human rights] was in part based on pure commercial interests* (P125:76).

Against those voices who uphold that the argument was just about trade, it is reasoned that *our greatest export is not our products and our services, our greatest exports are our ideals*

³²⁵ Cf. also for instance Xie (2009, 112).

and our values (P137:35; P195:2, 53). In this context South Korea and Taiwan are now referred to as positive examples (P157:2; P125:85; P176:3, 40; P179:3) where the theory actually worked (see also Dumbaugh 1998, 33). Referring to the debate on MFN and human rights it is argued that it is precisely *the exposure to Western values and the king of economic improvement [...] that have improved the human rights situation in China* or will (further) improve it (P145:19, 39; P146:6f., P120:1; P125:48, 54; P126:3; P194:1). According to this view *history has shown, ideas follow trade* (P146:66) and as *economic growth is the most effective catalyst for political change* (P176:42), *developments come as natural results of economic reform rather than from American pressure* (P147:2). For China, it is argued, *trade is the opening force behind [its] opening to the world* (P150:2), and as such, figuratively put, *it is the fax machine, not the trade sanction that freed Eastern Europe, and it is the fax machine, not the trade sanction, that will free China* (P167:54; P195:21). The connection between economic and political development is taken for granted, because according to the liberal theory of history, an *economic democracy cannot exist long term without a social democracy following*, and according to this view, as capitalism penetrates Chinese society, the push for greater democracy will inexorably follow (P170:3; P136:94). China's membership in the WTO, and the extension of PNTR, could only further this development, as *trade is the engine of the 21st century* (P136:6, 31ff.; P137:90; P195:149; P197:1ff.; P138:2ff; P200:2), and with China being a WTO member its practices that harm its trading partners could also be taken care of efficiently (P197:3; P203:2). In this sense, the liberal theory of history and the U.S. role according to it, is articulated as not being dislocated, but as having already produced positive change and as still producing it.

For these reasons the proponents of the liberal theory of history also argue for engagement with China (P184:1f.; P185:1), as it is reasoned that *this is the only way the United States can hope to influence the direction of change and help ensure a positive outcome – a market-oriented economy paired with a more open and free society* (P114:3; P176:51; P138:14, 18). In this sense the U.S. – in line with its self-understanding as a role model – articulates itself (like with Japan, see in what follows under perspectivation) as a 'guide' for China:

through American influence, positive changes can be made in other societies, including China (P125:89; P176:36), *Americans doing business in China have contributed to prosperity and at the same time are continually able to transfer the values and ideals of freedom and democracy through direct contacts* (P176:3).

In line with American exceptionalism, the U.S. is seen as sole facilitator of China's liberalization: *without our influence, how will democratic values come to be accepted in China? [...] We have a duty here in this body to make sure we are an influence in China (P176:8), America can be a shining example to the world (P176:39, 46), as we can help to change the world. [...] We can be on the right side of history (P194:5).* For these reasons it is broadly claimed that in the vote on PNTR for China *history demands a 'yes' vote (P195:9). The way we engage the Chinese Government will help determine whether China assimilates into the community of nations or becomes more isolated and unpredictable (P138:12), as once more China will likely not initiate the decisive measures toward more meaningful economic and political reform without substantial, sustained, and increased pressure from the United States (P213:11).*

Moreover, in accordance with the broader lines of liberal thinking, it is argued that *the best way to avoid conflict is to engage each other in trade and closer economic ties (P176:64; P137:71; P195:1, 18; P196:2; P197:6; P199:13).*

Those opposing MFN, because according to their argumentation there has been no improvement in China (P180:3) – which is why they call China a *disfavored nation (P180:5)*³²⁶ – often argue contra the whole liberal theory of history-approach or view. Hence, it becomes clear that in spite of this line of thinking having been very prominent already before Clinton's WTO campaign, there has also always been an opposition or internal differences towards it. For instance it is maintained that trade should be seen as a weapon available to stand up to China (P145:43), and that the liberal theory of history was not about political reform, but about commercial interests (P146:28), and – most importantly – that the whole theory was actually not correct: the line of argument runs from *it would be incautious to assume that it [social change in China through rapid economic growth] will necessarily lead to democracy (P160:2) in the Western sense (P163:3), to that the trade relationship only bolsters those in power and does nothing to further the cause of democracy (P125:59; P187:1).* It is argued that only economic sanctions affect *totalitarian governments (P167:57).* The claim that trade would improve human rights is called a *myth (P176:6), as in this view economic prosperity does not bring about 'automatic' democracy (P176:22; P189:3; P195:15), which is why trade should not be taken as panacea (P138:4; P200:4).* Furthermore it is maintained that capitalism does not bring democracy as the historical cases always cited are not so clear, for instance because *not every capitalist economy has produced a democratic government (e.g. Germany and Japan, P138:44ff.).* Clinton's mantra in line with the liberal view, and also Bush's earlier arguments for it (P138:25) are also criticized, as

³²⁶ See footnote on the renaming of MFN into PNTR in the introduction to the analysis.

developments in China would point into another direction (P138:25ff.): *The commercialist view of China, by contrast, rests on no historical foundation; it is a libertarian fantasy* (P138:31).

Summary of argumentations towards China

One of the main lines of argumentation towards China over the whole time frame, as with Japan, centers on the articulation of the trade deficit as main cause for the economic problems of the U.S. Like with Japan, according to this line of argumentation, the trade deficit is diagnosed as 'the problem', and the 'reasons' are first and foremost seen in China's unfairness. 'Fairness' again becomes or continues to be the central empty signifier, the signifier of the deficiency or lack that stands for its own absence. With China too, the absence is 'literal' in the sense of being voiced through the articulation of its denial through 'unfair China', in view of which all internal differences are supposed to become equivalent. However, as in the case with Japan there are voices that emphasize the non-action or, in their view inappropriate approach of the own executive towards the issue of the trade deficit. In terms of internal chains of equivalence it is also argued that the executive should stand up to China's unfairness, but this debate also becomes to a large extent intertwined with the question on MFN, the liberal theory of history, and the role of the U.S. in promoting potential (political) change in China. The internal chains of equivalence are articulated between the supporters of the liberal theory of history that hold an inclusive and accommodating view of China, and the exclusivist opponents that do not believe in change in China through free trade. When it comes to the question of 'difference', China is also seen as culturally and historically different, however in a more 'contextualized' and accommodating way than Japan. In this sense, the question on the consequences of China's growing economic power are mostly depending on whether one is in line with the liberal theory of history, or not. Those in line with it mostly support a policy of engagement towards China, where the U.S. can act as a guide. They also emphasize the positive aspects of China's rise and see China in a potentially constructive role in the region and beyond, if there is cooperation with the U.S. Those arguing against the liberal theory of history-perspective, see it as a myth that has not worked in the past and will not work with China in the future, as it has not moved into the right direction so far, i.e. has not liberalized (enough) politically.

Summary of Argumentations

The trade deficit

With both, Japan and China, the trade deficit is seen as the major problem in the economic relationship, as it is articulated as a cause for the disadvantageous economic standing of the U.S., as well as the negative consequences of this when it comes to the U.S.' global standing. With Japan, this is first and foremost manifest in Japan becoming the major creditor. With China, this became the case in 2008, while the trade deficit with China had surpassed that with Japan in 2000. While in the case of China, this of course has a dislocatory impact especially as it is 'Communist China' the U.S. is indebted to. However, because it occurred for the first time since WWI that the U.S. was indebted to anyone when it happened with Japan in 1985, it was voiced a lot more frequently with Japan than with China later on. For both, Japan and China, their 'unfairness' – and in a slightly different meaning, their 'illiberalness' – is articulated as root cause of the trade deficit, meaning that if it was not for this 'difference' and Japan's and China's unfairness, they would probably not have been able to challenge the U.S. at all. Stronger with Japan than with China in this respect are the self-critical voices, that aim at dissolving the potential antagonism through pointing at the own policies' role in the economic situation. In both cases, this leads to building up internal chains of equivalence versus the executive, in both cases because of its allegedly inadequate dealings with Japan and China and for not being 'tough enough'. In Japan's case, occasionally the Congress itself is also criticized for not standing up to Japan, but also for making Japan a scapegoat instead of addressing problems with the own economy. In China's case, the internal chains of equivalence are connected to the liberal theory of history-debate on 'values versus commercial interests', and both, the executive as well as those in Congress supporting the LTH-view are criticized for 'putting commercial interests first'.

When it comes to the question of 'difference', Japan is articulated as 'different' in a 'cultural' sense, referring to personal and cultural characteristics that manifest themselves in the economic realm, as was one of the major arguments of the revisionists. Japan's 'difference' is thus articulated into otherness, as it stands against 'liberal universals' such as the emphasis on the individual and – for the economic realm – the absolute adherence to free trade. With China, difference is articulated 'differently', and in this context finally in a more accommodating way compared to Japan. It mostly stays on the 'China's type of government is different, i.e. communist and illiberal' level, while also pointing to some 'cultural' characteristics like the importance of 'face', but there are also attempts at explaining these differences through China's history and the

violent encounters with Western powers. It seems that the accommodating features are stronger with China, as the liberal theory of history (still) provides a means for dealing with these differences and (still) gives hope for ultimately changing them. One reason might be that the experiences on the U.S. side with China (i.e. in trade negotiations) had/have not been as 'instructive' in terms of frequent as with Japan, so that there is no seemingly 'sedimented' pattern in negotiations with China yet, contrary to Japan, in which case 'difference' is essentialized in a way that it seems impossible to change, as was the ultimate 'message' of revisionism.

The leadership challenge

The challenge with Japan first and foremost stems from the economic realm, where the U.S. fears for losing its status through having become a major debtor, but also through Japanese qualitative competition, especially in the high-technology sector (cf. i.e. Uriu 2009, 42ff.). While it is emphasized that the U.S. still is a 'complete superpower', referring to Japan's lack of a military component, it is pointed out that Japan should act more responsibly as the number two economy, especially as the U.S. was paying for its defense. The U.S. potentially losing its 'superpower status' is thus clearly connected to economic underperformance. U.S. relations with Japan are mostly seen as dependent on the trade issue, while there are constant complaints about Japan 'freeriding' on the U.S. defending it. The accommodating voices emphasize Japan being an ally and part of the 'free world', and argue against letting the trade frictions disturb an important and close relationship.

With China, the challenge is articulated as 'rooted' in the economic realm too, however it is also linked to China's overall potential as a (regional) power in Asia and beyond. U.S. relations with China in this regard center very much around the question of China's 'difference' in terms of being 'communist' and not being an ally, and whether this should lead to engagement – as the proponents of the liberal theory of history argue – or to containment or something else, as maintained by its critics. However, except for the intensified arguments and views that are treated in the following respective chapters, the U.S.-Chinese relationship is in general articulated as having the potential of not evolving into an antagonism, which – compared to the heated debates on Japan – seems almost surprising given China's more obvious difference. This again might be linked to there still being enough hope for change in China, while in the situation with Japan this perspective had already given way to revisionism and essentialism.

For both Japan and China this topic is treated in more detail in what follows under the category of perspectivation.

Table 2: Summary of Argumentations

	chains of difference	chains of equivalence
Japan	Japan = second largest free world economy, economic power, America's major economic partner; seeking appropriate world responsibilities	Japan = unfair and culturally different, economic imperialist, protectionist and mercantilist → trade deficit as root cause of economic problems
China	China = potential economic partner, too important (market) to antagonize or ignore; major power (in Asia/worldwide)	China = unfair and ideologically different (communist), illiberal → trade deficit as root cause of economic problems
U.S. vs. Japan	U.S. needs to put own house in order, deal with causes of high dollar, high spending; against making Japan a scapegoat; partly also blame on executive for inadequate economic policies; should not be remedied through 'managing trade'	U.S. as most competitive nation, free and fair trader, suffers from unfair Japanese practices, becomes debtor and dumping ground; internal chains of equivalence: U.S. executive not tough enough; free trade does not work with Japan → for results oriented policy

U.S. vs. China	U.S. should not hinge whole relationship on MFN; China's long 'different' history and grievances suffered through 'West'; U.S. can positively influence China through economic interaction, i.e. free trade	U.S. as preeminent superpower, needs to stand up to its values; China is not evolving towards a 'free society'; internal chains of equivalence: values vs. interests, free trade/LTH will not change China
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6. PERSPECTIVATION TOWARDS JAPAN AND CHINA – THE U.S. AS VICTIM OF UNFAIR AND ILLIBERAL POLICIES

Through the analytic category of perspectivation, the aim is to look at what perspective or point of view the nominations, predications and argumentations are expressed from. Read through the lens of the PDT key concepts, in order to differentiate the in-group from the out-group – the self from the other – the speakers articulate themselves from a certain perspective, thus they relate themselves to nodal points that are eventually turned into an empty signifier, first and foremost through intensification (that will be treated in the following chapter seven). The empty signifier then makes the cancellation of differences within the self possible, by equalizing its characteristics vis-à-vis the other. In terms of identity, what follows from the perspectivation can be an accommodating inclusive relating to the other, or a confrontational exclusivist one.

6.1. Perspectivations towards Japan – *the cart is before the horse and the U.S. is left with faded flowers*

The main perspective the U.S. articulates itself from vis-à-vis Japan throughout the whole period of time – while the attention starts shifting towards China from 1995 onwards – is that of being *constantly on the short end of the stick* (P1:3; with occasional exceptions in 1997 when the U.S.

economy seems to be back 'on top', P:132). The dominant U.S. economic perspective – the major topic and issue still being the trade deficit – is an expression of inferiority towards Japan, of being a victim of 'unfair' Japanese policies, of being forced to retaliate – simply because Japan's policies leave no other possibility – and of being dependent on Japan.³²⁷ All this is articulated against the background of the U.S. still being the provider of defense and security towards Japan, which is captured metaphorically by the impression of *the cart [being] before the horse* (P73:50).

The perspective of economic inferiority is expressed in statements like *Americans need to improve their export capabilities. We often fail to match the Japanese skill and determination* (P2:17). In a similar vein, the organization of U.S. economic policy in terms of trade policy is criticized compared to Japan: *there is absolutely no single agency that is accountable for our trade policy. How different from our neighbor Japan* [referring to the MITI] (P4:4; cf. also Nanto 1992, 21, who in his CRS report characterizes U.S. trade policy towards Japan as “fragmented and coordinated (or uncoordinated) as any other U.S. policy”).³²⁸ It is for example also claimed that, *that we have no competitive strategy for our auto sector is one of the main reasons we are losing* (P19:31). Quoting a speech by the Chrysler President Lee Iacocca in 1985 (given his position, an outspoken critic of Japan and its policies), it is argued that *the United States is “getting whipped” by foreign competition* (P39:48). In a similar vein are statements like *we still have not learned the difference between being a partner in a trade deal and the patsy of one* (P5:37), and *we are going down the tubes internationally in this particular competition* (P13:11). Congress articulates the U.S. as being *left with faded flowers* (P81:1), *with our competitiveness in many industries already mortally wounded* (P83:30),³²⁹ *as the Japanese are beating America in many aspects of the international trade race* (P84:4), and *we have failed to stand up to the Japanese and insist on fairness* (P92:31), so *they have been eating our lunch for decades* (P93:25). The perspective that the U.S. could and should learn from Japan (cf. Vogel, 1979), that was also prominent among both critics (i.e. also the revisionists) and 'friends' of Japan was expressed in statements like: *The*

³²⁷ Cf. for instance also Huntington (1993, 78f.).

³²⁸ The Japanese Ministry of Trade and Industry (MITI, replaced by the Ministry of Economic Trade and Industry – METI – in 2001), was largely considered “the most powerful link of the Japanese government and linchpin of the Japanese economic miracle” (Thorsten 2012, 42, 149), a view that was most prominently put forward by Chalmers Johnston in his *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* in 1982. The MITI was seen as pursuing and orchestrating Japan's industrial policy by directing resources, structuring markets and influencing enterprise decisions, and as such it became the 'indicator' for Japan as a 'developmental state' versus the U.S. as 'capitalist regulatory state' (Kunkel 2003, 136f.).

³²⁹ This is an example of 'war rhetoric' (cf. also Zeiler 2001, 224) that is very prevalent under the category of intensification, see in what follows in chapter seven. In the same vein is following statement: *an American negotiating team [...] was defeated last month and is now in Tokyo to receive its second humiliation* (P102:1).

Thinking of politics or political campaigns in terms of 'war' is not uncommon in the U.S., in the sense that for instance Bill Clinton's presidential campaign management center and team became called 'The War Room' (which is also the title of a documentary film on the campaign). This nomination was then also used for the campaign center and group on PNTR in 2000 (cf. Kolkman 2005, 112ff.).

lesson we can learn from Japan is that aggressive government economic development and trade policies can be effective [...] (P95:36), the United States would have a much better trade policy if we followed many of Japan's historic practices (P105:126).

Furthermore, it is maintained that Japan is becoming superior in terms of technological innovation (cf. also for instance Cohen et al. 1996, 176, who speak of Japan as “challenge to U.S. preeminence as an economic and technological superpower”):

American business executives no longer patronize the Japanese as “imitators”, end “copiers” of American technology. [...] In the wake of Japan's drive for technological supremacy, they are scrambling to keep up with the new scientific research in Japan [...] American scientists find themselves hard-pressed to learn of Japanese breakthroughs (P66:17).³³⁰

Again, it is also pointed out that Japan does not separate security related questions from an economic perspective: *we viewed this deal [FSX] from a military point of view, while Japan considered the economic implications (P71:63), they kept their eyes on the ball. They know that the strongest economic system is the strongest base for a strong national security (P73:52).*³³¹

Adding to the impression of inferiority, what comes up in a few debates is the issue of Japanese investment in businesses and real-estate in the United States, which is articulated as Japan ‘buying up the U.S.’:³³² *the Japanese are buying up Columbia Pictures, Rockefeller Center, half of downtown Los Angeles and much else [...] do the Japanese have a money machine? (P79:3). Japan owns a great deal of America. They own [...] a majority of the office buildings in places like Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Washington, DC, [...].* Once more it is pointed out that the U.S. itself bears some responsibility for the situation, as in *we have not discouraged that kind of investment (P80:2; see also P89:3), so that Japan has succeeded in buying large segments of this country (P100:5).* A report from the Congressional Research Service (CRS) in January 1990 categorizes Japanese investment in the U.S. as “one of the more visible signs of Japan's emerging role as an

³³⁰ See also i.e. N. Morris and Uriu (N. Morris 2010, 24; Uriu 2009, 42ff.).

³³¹ For details on the FSX see introduction to the analysis and for instance Spar (1992), who points out that commercial interests were not absent on either side.

³³² Japanese investment happened in different parts of the U.S. and in various sectors, but purchases of ‘iconic’ industries or ‘landmark’ buildings drew most of the attention. Those were for instance Sony's purchase of CBS Records (1988) and Columbia Pictures (1989), Matsushita acquiring the MCA-Universal Film Studios (1990), as well as the attainments of the Radio City Music Hall and Rockefeller Center in New York by Mitsubishi Estate. On the one hand these investments were welcomed, on the other hand also articulated as ‘economic invasion’, as a result of which it was reasoned that New York could as well be renamed ‘New Tokyo’, L.A. Tokyo's ‘twenty-fourth ward’ and Hawai'i Japan's ‘forty-eighth prefecture’ (cf. N. Morris 2010, 24). By the end of the 1980s Japan had become the second largest investor in U.S. businesses and in real estate (cf. Kunkel 2003, 42) after Great Britain, see J.K. Jackson (1990, 4) and Hodges (1989).

international financial power”, and points out that it has incited a negative reaction amid parts of the American public, that arises from

“a feeling that the United States is declining as an international economic power as well as a world power and that Americans view the economic strength of industrial competitors such as Japan as a greater threat to U.S. security than the military strength of such countries as the Soviet Union.”

Furthermore, in spite of Japanese investment being only half that of Great Britain’s, 78 per cent of the public (in 1988) saw Japan as number one (J. K. Jackson 1990, 2).³³³

In line with the perspective of inferiority is that of being a victim of unfair Japanese policies, which also runs as a red line through the debates over the entire range of time. This is articulated through statements like *everyone seems prepared to blame the United States for its problems in trade* (P10:9), however in this view *discrimination against every American manufacturer and every American commodity is rampant in Japan and in most of our trading partners* (P18:42). Especially with respect to the automobile industry it is claimed that *U.S. auto firms are not on a level playing field with their Japanese counterparts* (P19:32), *they are targeting American industries and victimizing the United States. Most Americans don’t even understand that a new game is being played, let alone that they are losing* (P20:37), *we are [...] suffering from the Japanese style of negotiations* (P22:10). The argument of Japan ‘targeting’ certain technologically advanced industries in the U.S. in terms of strategically competing against them, but also for acquisition, was put forward prominently by the revisionists. In part, the critics of acquisitions feared that the company in the U.S. would be stripped from its technology that would be used by the parent company in Japan (J. K. Jackson 1990, 6). In this sense the U.S. ‘openness’ is contrasted with Japan taking advantage of it:

America greets Japanese investment with encouragement and open arms [...] Japan greets American investment with discouragement, closed doors and silent ‘cultural barriers’. Our trade relationship with Japan, the world’s second largest economy, is a one-way street. [...] the Japanese will do everything in their power to keep it that way (P80:2), *industry after industry is taken from us in world competition: cars, computers, cameras* (P83:22).

³³³ The report also points out that from 1980 to 1988 Japanese investment increased more than eightfold from \$35 billion to \$285 billion, and that the largest share of that investment was in U.S. Treasury securities (J. K. Jackson 1990, 3, 14).

In line with this perspective, it is argued that in consequence *the United States is [...] being flooded by goods* (P22:11). It is further emphasized that *the international trade crisis between the United States and Japan [...] threatens our economic recovery, our industries, and hundreds of thousands of American jobs* (P25:46). While *Japanese businesses get rich and American workers lose their jobs by the thousands* (P28:3), *Japan has not sought to strengthen but to weaken our world trading system* (P29:7), and consequently *those countries that practice free trade are penalized* (P37:34). While *we are trying to be good citizens in the world market [...] yet we do not see a similar willingness on the part of the Japanese* (P42:39). On the contrary, the Japanese are described as 'enjoying' the situation in statements like *the Japanese are laughing all the way to the bank* (P42:42). Japanese protectionism is said to be constantly *hurting the United States badly* (P68:21), as again *with the help of unfair trade practices Japan has already taken advantage of us to the disadvantage of our economy in general and to our auto and semiconductor industries in particular* (P71:37). It is also generally maintained that *the more open an economy is [...], the more vulnerable its industries are to dumping, and the United States unquestionably has the most open market of any country in the world* (P151:15). This allegedly results in a situation that *there is a temptation on the part of many nations to think that we will be the dumping ground of last resort – much as we have been in the past* (P151:20), as *the rules of trade between the United States and Japan are fundamentally unfair* (P198:8).

From this kind of perspectivation it becomes clear that while on the one hand there are voices arguing that Japan might actually be doing something better than the U.S., thus to some extent conceding to the dislocation, there are strong attempts at articulating Japan's unfairness through chains of equivalence as the single reason for its success, hence aiming at preserving U.S. identity as leading economic power. This kind of articulation also fits with the assumption according to American exceptionalism of being 'surrounded' by a hostile world (cf. Holsti 2010, see chapter 1.3).

However, as the following subchapters show, another answer to the dislocation are internal chains of equivalence directed mostly against the administration.

U.S. decline through *Japanese economic hegemony*?

From the predominant perspective of inferiority, the assessment of the situation goes as far as predicting an actual decline of the U.S.³³⁴ on the economic, and also broader scale as a consequence, and this starts already in the mid-1980s through statements like: *the economic health of the United States is threatened by continuing increases in the Nation's trade deficits with Japan and other foreign countries* (P8:4). It is explicitly stated that *the Japanese will continue to prevail, take over the international market, destroy the American standard of living and our capacity as a world power. That's the threat we face* (P13:12). Meanwhile this scenario is described as *an unacceptable erosion of traditional leadership in the international marketplace* (P24:1). In this vein it is asked *how much longer can we continue to subjugate United States interests to Japanese economic hegemony?* (P73:73). The possibility of a change in course from earlier history until the 1980s is articulated through statements like: *We all know where Japan's economy was after the end of WWII [...] then, the United States produced goods for the world. Now, Japan does* (P73:133). The belief in Japan's technological superiority is expressed in statements like *if Japan would say no to the United States and sell semiconductors to the Soviet Union instead, 'It would instantly change the balance of power'* (P82:2). *In the not-too-distant future the United States would begin to slide into a second-rate international power* (P82:5), and it is emphasized that there was indeed

a deepening belief that America is an ebbing power (P82:8): *Just 44 years ago [...] the United States, conqueror and ruler of Japan, fully emerged as the world's preeminent superpower. Now, the roles have been reversed. Japan has managed history's most spectacular comeback. It stands today as the newest superpower* (P100:4).

³³⁴ This kind of 'declinist' line of reasoning was especially prominent in the context of and when referring critically to economic policies under President Reagan, the trade deficit, and the U.S. having turned from a creditor to a debtor. In a nutshell the main arguments were that after the Cold War U.S. military power had or would become less important, that it would suffer from 'imperial overstretch' while losing its technological competitiveness, and that the individualistic style of Anglo-American capitalism was countered by a 'communal' style capitalism in Europe and Japan that was perceived as deviating from the rules of the liberal trading regime, and posing the U.S. at disadvantage. In this sense it was argued that Japan was pursuing power not through military, but through economic means (cf. Paulsen 1999, 28–31).

For schools of 'declinism' in a broader historical perspective and also related to the Rise of China see for example Beckley (2011). See also Patrick Thaddeus Jackson (2010).

From the perspective of critical theory, Robert Cox maintained at the beginning of the 1990s that it was not necessarily an actual 'objective' decline of the U.S. in terms of its material capacities that indicated a weakening of the 'hegemonic order', but the debate on decline itself, in terms of the problematization of and discussions on the leadership role of the U.S. (cf. Hummel 2000, 51).

Contrastingly, the new situation is articulated as grim: *the huge deficits weaken our country* (P164:2), *the economic position of the United States [is] deteriorating* (P133:78). *They are beating us in trade [...] that world power that loses its manufacturing capacity will cease to be a world power* (P136:18), and the question for the future in this vein is articulated as *whether we want the Europeans or the Japanese to be the economic model other nations look to emulate* (P209:42), hence possibly not anymore the U.S., which would be an outright contradiction to its self-understanding as global role model according to American exceptionalism.

One of the main reasons for the inferiority and the possible decline is articulated in having become a debtor – which is also one of the most frequent nominations for the U.S. in relation to Japan (see chapter five and table six) – and in this respect dependent on Japan, which becomes apparent in following perspectifications: *Japan is financing our debt* (P4:5), *we [are doing anything] to make the Japanese happy, so they won't foreclose on the mortgages* (P71:55), *maybe they will stop buying our debt, our government loans, and our securities. Maybe they will teach us a lesson* (P71:69). In a broader perspective of the U.S.-Japan relationship it is seen as *an ironic situation in which the world's largest creditor is defended by the world's largest debtor, and the debtor borrows from the creditor and pays interest on the moneys borrowed. The cart is before the horse* (P73:50). Referring to Clyde Prestowitz' book *Trading Places* (published in 1988) with the subtitle *How we allowed Japan to take the lead*,³³⁵ it is emphasized that *the United States was the biggest creditor nation in the world. Now Japan is, and the United States is the biggest debtor nation in the world. Then we were the economic leaders, the technological innovators, now Japan is. The phenomenon has been called 'Trading Places'* (P73:134). The felt dependency on Japan is further expressed in statements like: *Our United States Treasury turns to Japan with knees trembling when we go out to sell our bonds. Will they buy?* (P73:50). In this sense some voices express that they have

become convinced that America is in decline and will increasingly need Japanese capital so badly that we will accept it on whatever terms it comes, the Japanese believe that they can get away with constructing a more tightly controlled, more profitable, more mercantile, and of course, more self-interested method of exercising world leadership than the American post-war model of leadership (P77:8; in 1989).

³³⁵ This was one of the 'core' revisionist works in which Prestowitz argued that Japan deviated from the 'Western model' and that the U.S. itself not only failed to understand this, but also lacked the knowledge and understanding of the requirements for strategic economic power (cf. N. Morris 2011, 37).

The CRS-report on Japanese investment addresses the concern of some observers about the possible leverage of Japanese investors over the U.S. – for instance a pullout should the dollar decline too much or too rapidly – but concludes that Japan was actually not more prone to withdrawing its funds than any other foreign or even American investor (J. K. Jackson 1990, 13f.)

Still, in line with these concerns, in Congress the U.S. is potentially seen as being on the short end globally, and not only in relation to Japan, as in following statements: *the United States is now the world's biggest debtor nation [...] and foreign ownership of U.S. assets [...] is rising very rapidly* (P77:11; in 1989), and it is argued that

there is a danger to U.S. debt and dependence on foreign capital. That danger is a real loss of American economic and political independence [...] how long before our foreign creditors pull on America's debt chain to command obedience? (P82:1), as our debt grows, we are losing our capacity to control our destiny (P89:3).

The loss of control is seen in the dependence on foreign investments: *we anticipate [...] that the Japanese will purchase [...] a good part of our domestic deficit week by week [...] We count on Japanese and European friends (P93:6), we simply have placed ourselves in the vulnerable position that we have to rely on the good will of investors from all over the world (P93:10).* And again, the U.S. being indebted first and foremost to Japan and China is emphasized: *America's private debt is held by foreign countries, 53 per cent [...] Japan first, and China second [...] I think that is not good for our country, for our grandchildren [...] give America back to Americans (P207:15; in 2005).* Accordingly, in 1988 Zbigniew Brzezinski (the former security adviser of President Carter) argued referring to the value of the dollar and the debt that “the United States will be hard put to exercise effective economic leadership, and its capacity to sustain its role as the principal defender of the free world will be severely undermined” (cited in Kataoka 1995, 10).

Importantly, the question on how the United States should respond is also articulated as ‘depending on Japan’, in the sense of Japan leaving no other choice, as it is maintained that the U.S.’ means, but also its patience have simply been exhausted, as for example in statements like:

If this continues, I, as a free trade advocate, will be forced to introduce legislation which will mandate that we put quotas on the Japanese [...] (P41:20), no open world trading system can exist if a major trading nation bases its economy on exporting goods [...] while adamantly refusing to import virtually anything [...] (P41:27).

In this sense, for instance steel import talks with Japan in 1985 are labeled as *a lesson in futility* (P22:10) already, and it is argued that *the trade honeymoon is over for all of those in Western Europe and Japan, and elsewhere, who will not abide by some fair rules of the game* (P8:25). It is contended that it is Japan's *willingness [...] [that] will determine whether protectionist sentiment in the Congress and across the Nation will increase or subside* (P26:40), as allegedly everything has been tried: *our negotiators [...] have knocked on every door* (P27:50), hence *we can no longer tolerate the one-way street [...] that have characterized past Japanese-American trade relations* (P28:4). Japan is repeatedly accused of making 'empty promises': *They must understand that we have long passed the period when we will be mollified by smiles and promises* (P28:4), *we are tired of playing on a field tilted heavily in their direction* (P30:14), as it is claimed that *the Japanese have so far successfully disregarded warnings* (P37:33). According to this perspective, the U.S. 'has to' react: *The United States deserves equal treatment by the Japanese; and if we do not get it, we will act to retaliate* (P42:28), as it is again argued that *the days of talk are over and the days of action are beginning* (P42:29). The trade discussions with Japan are articulated as *complicated, generally polite- and usually unproductive* (P42:34), but still – upholding U.S. identity as fair and free trader – it is claimed that *we have never retaliated against Japan for unfair trade practices* (P56:3).

Accordingly, the U.S. is also seen as 'unselfish victim', which again resonates with the feature of American exceptionalism of seeing oneself 'surrounded by a hostile world': *if we do not promote this country's economic interests in the interest of a free and fair market, other people will successfully promote their own selfish interests* (P56:4). Or as in: *It is not my intention to be critical of Japan [...] [it] is the reality that Japan must open its markets to the United States. Let me remind our Japanese friends that no American politician can stand idly by and watch our industrial base deteriorate* (P61:24). Repeatedly it is argued that nothing has changed over time (see also in what follows on 'frustration'), but that *the same old patterns of behavior by the United States and Japan are being repeated* (P69:1), as

for decades now, American business has met a Japanese market closed in all sorts of sectors. We have negotiated over semiconductors, glass, insurance, apples, oranges, medical equipment, supercomputers, wood products, beef and more (P119:1), and *we have watched a 30-year parade of Presidents and administration official disturbed about our unequal relationship with Japan. Leaders wrung their hands [...] but didn't make serious changes [...]* (P164:5, in 1994).

Through the perspectives of being on the short end and being the victim, being dependent on Japan and finally, Japan leaving no other choice, basically two arguments in terms of chains of equivalence are put forward: the perspective is articulated as contradicting U.S. identity in terms of an economic and global power to such an extent that the U.S. has no other choice but to react to the situation in order to prevent possible decline. Furthermore, if it does react in a way that stands against its identity as a free trader, this is also 'Japan's fault', as after a long period of the U.S. trying every strategy, the situation leaves no other choice. In this sense, via the empty signifier '(un)fairness', everything the U.S. does serves only to 'restore' fairness, and is hence in line with its self-understanding .

Is Japan still an ally?

Another reason articulated for the 'exhaustion of patience' is the disappointment in the behavior of Japan as an ally (P73:28, 56, 117), as in statements like *the world's largest debtor nation is providing for the defense of the world's largest creditor* (P93:24). In this sense it is argued that *it is intolerable for us to be [...] the guarantors of Japanese security interests and have Japan still reluctant to give a fair deal on the economic front* (P73:117). Already in 1985 this argument is expressed in a more intensified manner: *I'm no communist, folks, but it's not Russia that's laying waste to my business, and to most of the rest of business in this country. It's Japan ... our friend. While, by the way, we pay to defend him against our enemy!* (P29:34).

A particular case of discontent was seen in the Toshiba technology and chemical weapons issue: *I share those frustrations over Japanese carelessness in exporting technology to the Soviet Union in the Toshiba case and to Libya in the chemical weapons case, and over Japanese reluctance to take on a greater role in our common defense and on third world debt* (P73:1).³³⁶ In the case of the FSX-fighter plane, exasperation is expressed in opinions like *let them go to the French and British. Let the French and British protect Japan. Let them look to the French and British for the*

³³⁶ In 1987 it was revealed that the Japanese Toshiba Machine Company had violated regulations set by the international Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls – of which Japan was a member – through selling computer-guided propeller milling machines to the Soviet Union between 1982 and 1984, what purportedly improved the capabilities of Soviet submarines to evade detection. Norway and France had also acted against the regulations, but most critique in the U.S. was directed against Toshiba. In this context, in July 1987 nine Republican Congress members publicly destroyed a small Toshiba radio-cassette player with a sledgehammer at a press conference on Capitol Hill (cf. N. Morris 2010, 57).

The Libya chemical weapons case refers to a revelation by Toshiba in 1989, that in late 1985 it had provided electrical equipment for a plant in Libya that in the late 1980s turned out to be suspected by the U.S. to be producing containers and shells for chemical weapons. Toshiba company officials insisted however, that they acted only as a subcontractor and that to their knowledge the plant was intended for manufacturing equipment for desalting seawater. The shipments at the time were not considered to have violated export control laws (Sanger 1989).

*protection that they get from the United States (P73:56) and in it is a golden opportunity for Japan to show their good faith [...] the Japanese are missing that opportunity (P71:67).*³³⁷

Because of all these reasons, there are calls to finally take action, again following the argumentation that Japan leaves no other choice: *we should do two things: [...] not to have our markets open at all to the Japanese unless their markets are reciprocally open to us. Second, stop subsidizing dumped goods coming from Japan [...]* (P42:30). It is argued that *what we have to do is stand up and have a little bit of backbone [...] controlling the largest and freest market in the world, we have to open markets abroad, if we have the resolve* (P71:69; P83:27). Again referring to past experiences it is argued that *we have learned from previous administrations, who have backed down in the face of Japanese intransigence, that only firm and consistent pressure will make sustained progress* (P107:1), while finally, during Clinton's time as president it is emphasized that *this [the Clinton] administration has stood up and said: we are not going to put up with this* (P164:1). The (in) famous 1989-poll by BusinessWeek-Harris is also cited, with its results of *68 percent of the public [feeling] that the economic threat posed by Japan outweighs the military threat from the Soviet Union, and nearly 70 per cent of the respondents [feeling] that Japan imposes unfair trade barriers on American products* (P86:1). It is also pointed out that *a large percentage of Americans [are] saying 'no' when it comes to the question whether any other country or nationals of any other country should own factories, stores, land in our States* (P93:6).³³⁸

On the other hand, there are also voices expressing worries about being on a collision course with Japan (P25:47, P31:37, P67:27,28,29; P82:3), and about protectionism as reaction (P4:5): *the United States led the way to a protectionist world after the first world war (P38:32), with some 300 protectionist bills now before Congress, we are indeed seeing the ghost of Smoot-Hawley. If we toy with protectionism, we will be toying with another depression* (P67:16). Conciliatory voices claim that *all we ask for [...] is equity* (P56:5), *we all wish to avoid a trade war* (P56:8), and referring to both sides, the U.S. and Japan: *we must accept Japan's increased presence in the world market, so must Japan accept the responsibility of her role* (P97:4). This perspective will be addressed further under the category of mitigation in chapter 7.2.

A frequent perspective in seeking to explain the situation once more focuses on the 'differences' of Japan, again economic and cultural arguments being intertwined in many cases. While some voices are pointing for instance to the missing tactfulness of the U.S.-trade

³³⁷ The 1992 CRS-report characterizes the linking of trade frictions with security issues in Congress as instrumental, as it was also about "compelling Japan to provide local support of about \$50,000 per year per U.S. soldier stationed there" (Nanto 1992, 1).

³³⁸ Michael Hodges aims at putting the results of the poll in a critical perspective by mentioning another poll from the same year that found that "77 per cent of the Americans responding believe that there is a heaven, 76 per cent that they have a good or excellent chance of getting there" (Hodges 1989, 375, FN 5).

representative when it comes to dealing with the Japanese (P8:22; see also P39:48, P69:4 on a similar matter), otherwise it is more commonly argued that *excessive politeness prevents Japan and the United States from facing the conflict* [...], as the relationship had a *fragile walking-on-eggs quality* (quoting James Fallows, P93:11, 42). This statement is explicitly referring to the revisionist arguments in what are called

three very excellent books aimed at this particular point, where are we going? One is by Karel van Wolferen, a Dutchman, 'The Enigma of Japanese Power.' Another is written by Chalmers Johnson, 'MITI, the Organization of Trade, the Ministry of Trade, and the Japanese Miracle,' And the third is written by James Fallows, entitled 'Containing Japan.' (ibid.).

Again, in this view *the Japanese system with its structural barriers and Government intervention* is articulated as *different from any other in the world*, and it is emphasized that the Japanese were also proud of that fact (P86:1). It is argued that *what exists here is a clash in perspective over the role of business in society and that must be recognized*, and once more it is stated that the Japanese would not worry about consumer welfare, which from the point of view of the U.S. had *very sad results* for the Japanese people (P88:1f.). According to this view, the U.S. was following *Adam Smith and David Ricardo, competitive advantage, free markets, open markets, open competition. The Japanese [...] follow the federalist Alexander Hamilton of closed markets* (P105:20). In this sense it is maintained that *the difference between the United States and Japanese markets [in automotive trade] could not be more dramatic and more symbolic of our troubled trade relationship* (P122:2).

Self-criticism – or the search for an ‘internal’ culprit?

While the main blame for the disadvantageous standing of the U.S. is thus obviously laid on Japan, self-criticisms reflecting the internal differences of different kinds are articulated again as directed broadly towards the U.S. in general terms, but also internally as chains of equivalence against the executive and ‘free trade policy’ at large.

The self-critical perspective on the one hand imputes the U.S. for its naïveté, but also for its ‘bad habits’: *once again, the voices of sirens [...] are lulling us into believing that calm waters lie ahead, even though we know the sky will turn dark, the seas will boil and we’ll be pushed onto the rocks of disaster* (P10:9, referring to the announcement by Japan to import more American manufactured goods in 1985). Or, less figuratively: *I do not say this to bash the Japanese. I say it*

to salute them [...] I say it to bash ourselves (P73:50). And when it comes to ‘bad habits’ it is argued that

America is now paying the piper [...] depending on the thrift of the Japanese and other nations to pay for its extravagances [...] The malaise is now so deeply rooted in American customs [...] without forceful leadership at the top levels of Washington, there is a risk it may not get done in time to preserve U.S. control of the U.S. economy (P90:2).

In this respect Japan is even given a point in criticizing the U.S.: *the Japanese rightly argue that the United States lacks a responsible fiscal policy and adequate savings rate* (P91:6), *why do we on Capitol Hill not understand what the working men and women of this country understand very well?* (P92:2). The U.S. is articulated as not thinking about its own future, as it is seen as inclined to *buy and wear Chinese shirts, Mexican shorts [...] buy cars made in Japan, and then wonder where all the jobs went* (P173:1).

On the other hand, and in terms of internal chains of equivalence, there remains enough criticism also for the own executive:

For the last 4 years the president has labeled as “protectionists” those of us in Congress working for a reform of our trade laws. He has told us to let the administration solve our trade difficulties [...] I don’t want to pick on the Japanese. They are guilty of nothing more than being the most adept at exploiting the President’s trade program, which seems to have as its goal the deindustrialization of America (P3:4, this was in 1985 and the President was Reagan).

The executive is repeatedly criticized for not taking the ‘warning voices’ seriously: *those of us who early recognized the danger [...] were ignored or ridiculed. We were called protectionists, isolationists, and even “trade warmongers”* (P40:32). In this sense it is argued that *the different bills [...] reflect legitimate frustration with the trade deficit and with the Reagan administration’s apparent indifference to the problem* (P50:47). In 1989 the argument is that *our leaders and economists have been telling us all along that we can always give up the high-labor, low technology industries to Japan. That will free us to pursue high-tech industries – like computers and aviation* (P71:56), whereas in 1995 it is still maintained that *there will be a massive vote of no-confidence in the political and cultural leadership elites in the West who have steered us into decline [...]* (P166:7), and until 2000 it is also criticized, that too few people were working on trade issues (P198:5).

The internal criticisms are also directed against the principles and policies of 'free trade' and its advocates more broadly: *they treat the notion of "free trade" as an article of faith, despite the fact that there is no true free trade in the world today [...] and leave [...] the American people at a great disadvantage* (P20:37), as allegedly *in the United States nothing must stand in the way of free-market efficiency, very narrowly defined to exclude any and all social consequences* (P104:4). In this context, American companies are also blamed for *wrapping themselves in the American flag* and asking the government to help them, but in the end they were either not doing enough to stay competitive (P132:14) – for example the own auto-industry in 1985 was criticized for not having used the VER's to improve their quality and productivity (P46:29) – or they were moving their production to more profitable locations. This kind of reasoning comes up more pointedly with China, when it comes to the question of who actually (still) profits from economic relations despite of the trade deficit.

Furthermore, throughout the statements the 'emotional' aspect of this 'short end' perspective is emphasized (cf. also Packard 1987, 4), with the outbursts being directed against Japan, but again also against the own policies. While the following statements show a certain reflection on emotional aspects, in terms of self-characterizing them as frustration or anger, other ones treated under the category of intensification simply express anger.³³⁹ As pointed out by Stephen Cohen et al. (however, without attempts at an explanation) with respect to Japan, in their assessment "no other country has generated as much anger and frustration among its trading partners for allegedly not opening its markets to the extent that other countries' markets are open to Japanese goods" (Cohen et al. 1996, 176).

What is explicitly called 'frustration' (the terms 'frustration', 'frustrated', 'frustrate' figure 67 times in the documents on Japan) is literally described in statements like *this body voted 92 to 0 on a resolution expressing its frustration with our friendly neighbor, Japan, in regard to the trade imbalance* (P4:5), *accumulated frustrations from years of this kind of action has led to sharp congressional reaction this year* (P8:3, in 1985), *the bill [...] is the result of years of frustration with Japan* (P34:6), and *momentum for Congress to do something on the trade problem has reached a fever pitch. We currently face over 300 bills [...] they reflect legitimate frustration with the trade deficit* (P50:47, in 1985).

The perspective is articulated as reflecting the *frustration with the "glacial pace" of the trade talks* (P68:9), *the frustration of dealing with persistent trade imbalances* (P71:104), with a

³³⁹ For the importance of differentiating between "conscious and non-conscious" emotions when it comes to the analysis, see Solomon (2015, 53). For a criticism of mainstream approaches that depict emotions as irrational, see Hagström and Gustafsson (2015).

very high potential for this issue to become a lightning rod for broader frustrations in the United States-Japan relationship (P73:1, referring to the FSX-issue), as frustration and anger toward Japan is growing, endangering a special friendship with a good ally (P86:1), and the United States is growing increasingly frustrated (P91:6).

Other statements explicitly articulate anger both directed towards Japan, but again also internally against the executive: *I know that I will be accused of "Japan bashing" but I can accept that. But, really, my anger is less directed at the Japanese [...] than it is at our own Government (P10:9).* The perspective of the broader population is characterized as reflecting *the outrageous treatment by Japan of American goods and services (P25:46)*, and while from this view the anger is apparently not always taken seriously, as for instance *the Asian Wall Street Journal read "[...] American outrage fades as quickly as it rises" (P59:43)*, it is emphasized throughout the whole timeframe that *there is a lot of anger out there in the hills and valleys and plains and plateaus and mountains of America (P73:70)*. Furthermore, some voices point to *the internal stresses and anxieties – and anger – provoked by economic policies and tendencies (P166:7)*, or to exasperation and tiredness as in statements like: *the citizens of this country are sick and tired of seeing the trade imbalance grow (P4:5)*, *we are tired of playing on a field tilted heavily in their direction (P30:14)*, *our patience has worn thin (P42:29)*, *I am very disappointed by this lack of results (P96:3)*. It is argued that there was *every reason to be disappointed (P102:2)*, *many people have tired of the struggle [...] it is no surprise that people are weary (P107:1)*, *we are upset about Japan (P163:1)*, and *the United States complains endlessly about the Japanese deficit (P163:3)* without anything happening.

More balanced views articulate the emotional aspects as 'explanation' for the frustration:

The Japanese appear to be underestimating the emotional wallop this issue carries in Congress (P14:30), what is important is that the Japanese fully appreciate the depth of feelings about our trade problems (P28:4), people are upset, rightly or wrongly [...] we may be wrong about it but that's the general feeling (P38:21).

Other ones point to the danger this in their view poses to the relationship: *[...] an issue that has few rivals in terms of its potential to poison trade relations with the United States: whether to extend quotas on exports of automobiles (P14:30)*, and on general terms it is acknowledged that *trade threatens to become this Congress' most divisive political issue (P21:11)*, *the Japanese*

government [...] worries about a severe reaction from us here in this country if their auto companies flood our market (P22:12).

As for Japanese reactions, from the U.S. perspective they are seen for instance in following differing ways: *Japanese cynics are hoping that the American outcry will go away soon so they can get back to real work. More thoughtful Japanese worry: "I am seriously concerned that there is too much emotion and impatience in Congress [...]" (P59:42).* But equally the disputes are also seen as 'dangerous' in the sense of affecting, but also going beyond the trade relationship: *the results of the deterioration in our international trade and investment balances have created a political crisis in Congress that threatens our good political relations with Japan (P61:24).* While *the sentiment for trade protectionism is growing rapidly in the United States (P67:28),* more generally *the mutual animosity/resentments in the relationship [...] may be reaching dangerous levels (P79:5; P91:10).* The situation is characterized as: *there is a sense of mistrust of the Japanese on occasion, antipathy toward the Japanese (P93:5), at least ripples of anxiety about the Japanese (P93:7), people understand that this trade deficit with Japan is far beyond anything this Nation has ever experienced (P95:46).* In this sense, the 1990 report by the CRS points to economic disputes with Japan at times arising from "accumulated frustration over trade negotiations [that] take the form of measures aimed at Japan or Japanese companies" (J. K. Jackson 1990, 26). The 1992 report speaks of "two decades of constant wrangling with Japan", and of "the constant recriminations [having] taken their toll" (Nanto 1992, 13).

While a few scholars do remark that 'emotions' played a role in the debates on U.S.-Japan (trade) issues, they often only just mention it (e.g. Packard), or explain it by the long timeframe of difficult negotiations that did not lead to the desired outcomes (e.g. Uriu, Nanto, Schoppa). Uriu characterizes especially the framework talks as having come at a certain price – "a degree of resentment, anger, and distrust of Japan, even among U.S. traditionalists, that was not present before" (Uriu 2009, 240). As a consequence, he points to what apparently at the White House since 1996 (during the Clinton presidency) was referred to as 'Japan fatigue':

"Simply put, the nastiness of the Framework, and Japan's complete intransigence, made any attempt at negotiations painful, fruitless, and simply not worth it [...] many officials now wanted to have as little to do with Japan as possible, in any realm" (ibid.).

From a PDT perspective, these kinds of articulations of an emotional perspective can be read as reflecting the consequences of the dislocation of U.S. identity through the economic rise of Japan in terms of preventing the U.S. from living under what it claims to be 'the normal course of

(economic) development'. In other words, and here only in a nutshell, the emotional perspective can possibly be explained by a profound experience of a 'lack' or 'theft of enjoyment', as it has been termed for instance by the Essex School authors Jason Glynos and Wei-Yuan Chang. By enhancing PDT through the categories of enjoyment and fantasy – derived first and foremost from Lacanian psychoanalysis – they argue that feelings, or the expression of feelings of anger can be understood as experience of a 'theft of enjoyment' in the sense of the other being responsible for it, and the other still enjoying at the expense of the self (Chang and Glynos 2011, 111f.). As phrased by Slavoj Žižek: "we always impute to the 'other' an excessive enjoyment: he wants to steal our enjoyment (by ruining our way of life) and/or he has access to some secret, perverse enjoyment" (cited in Solomon 2015, 47). From an understanding of the subject as (fundamentally) lacking and never being able to achieve the fullness it is seeking (see chapter two), it follows that it "continually experiences both frustration and satisfaction [...]", which are transformed into emotional expression in discourse (Solomon 2015, 53, 58). In this case it would be Japan 'enjoying' its economic success at the expense of the U.S., or in other words (of a different approach), that Japan was gaining too rapidly at the expense of the U.S., as its (relative, but relating to the 'global leadership question, also absolute) economic position was being compromised by Japan's economic success (cf. Spar 1992, 283).

Summary of perspectivals towards Japan

Whereas with Japan the central challenge to U.S. identity comes from the possible perspective of losing its global leadership through being outperformed economically, it also seems to be connected to a profound disappointment about Japan that is expressed in statements of frustration. In my reading, on the one hand this is due to unfulfilled expectations of Japan to adhere to the economic model of liberal democratic capitalism – and still being (more) successful – as practiced by the U.S., and instead to stick to a 'different style of capitalism' as argued by the revisionists. This contradicts or dislocates U.S. liberal identity as role model and guide according to American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history. Adding to the dislocation is furthermore, that the proposed measures of retaliation against Japan additionally challenge and conflict with U.S. identity as a proponent of free trade. As the category of perspectival shows, one way to deal with these contradictions is to articulate Japan as leaving 'no other choice' to act for the U.S. Partly, the same argument is used against the executive: because it does not do anything, Congress needs to act. On the other hand this kind of 'adversarial behavior' seems to 'hurt' even more when practiced by an ally that also depends on the U.S. for its military security

(see debates on the FSX-plane). In this sense, the emotional reactions to the trade questions with Japan in Congress reflect not only a certain exasperation due to the long timeframe of negotiations with unsatisfying long term outcomes, but also the experience of a 'lack of enjoyment' by the U.S., while Japan is seen as thriving on the U.S.' expense.

6.2. Perspectivations towards China – *how to deal with China?*

The perspective towards China is to some extent more ambiguous than towards Japan, especially when it comes to the question of what to do about the economic issues and their implications beyond that field (cf. also Kolkmann 2005, 68). The main constant in the perspectivations is the liberal theory of history- (and American exceptionalism) perspective, and the opposition in different forms and nuances to it, that reflect the challenges to U.S. identity: the U.S. has economic interests and stakes in trade with China, while it also articulates itself – through being a trading partner – as facilitator and guide of economic and political liberalization in China. On the other hand, it needs and wants to stay committed to its identity and “instinct” as promoter of human rights:³⁴⁰ *Linking trade and human rights was an instinctive American response to Chinese repression in 1989* (P149:4). Human rights are articulated as *an integral part of U.S. foreign and trade policy* (P172:1), as it is repeatedly emphasized that *the United States' interests in maintaining engagement and dialogue with China are not limited to jobs and trade. We have a strong interest in seeing China treat its people according to international human rights standards* (P125:64, 51).

The economic perspective is mostly articulated as the U.S. having become dependent on China as a market place (P149:3; P167:47; P132:49; P167:47, 64) and, like with Japan, as being in a disadvantageous position mainly because of China's unfairness (P176:30, 58; P186:3; P137:137; P198:4; P204:11; P205:4, 16; P208:4; P209:21), currency manipulation (P208:3; P212:4; P216:1; P217:3) and the trade deficit (P125:56, 72; P173:3; P132:45, 48; P133:71, 77; P136:19, P189:1, 10; P209:3, 22; P212:1), which – once more like with Japan – from this perspective figures as the root cause for the economically disadvantageous situation. First and foremost, China is regarded as being important for the exporting industry and especially the job market in the U.S.: *in the economic front, American exports and American jobs are dependent upon sound relations with*

³⁴⁰ Cf. also Kolkmann (2005, 70), Gagliano (2014, 101f.). According to Gagliano congressional legislative activity concerning human rights and China remained “relatively consistent” and “unaffected by China's increasing military and economic power or the expanding Sino-U.S. trade relationship” (2014, 114). However, he also notes that “trade interests in Congress frequently outweighed other congressional interests, such as those in the human rights and proliferation issue areas” (ibid., 141).

China (P188:2). It is maintained that if the next century will be *the Asian century* [...] *American companies need to gain foothold in [China's] market early. Our competition is already poised if we retreat* (P167:64). Being unfairly treated by, having a deficit with, as well as being indebted to *Communist China* (P175:13; P207:4) adds to the severity of the perspective. As with Japan, this is also connected to an overall negative impact on the U.S. (economic) standing, resulting from continuing to be a debtor, being indebted to foreign governments and corporations with Japan at the first and China being at the second place (P207:7, 15, in 2005), that is articulated as having led to *the deteriorating economic position of the United States* (P133:78; P216:2). In this sense, *the single largest merchandise trade deficit in the history of the world* is seen as a serious *crisis* (P173:3), as for example instead of buying from America, China could suggest moving the manufacturing to China (P132:49). The U.S. is also articulated as a victim of globalization more generally (P189:12): *America has lost her independence* (P207:9), also in terms of economically depending on China's investment in U.S. debt (P166:5; P207:7) as expressed in: *they are holding a financial guillotine over the neck of our economy, and they will let it drop if we do things [...] that are not well considered* (P207:5). In 2005 the debate extended over the question of energy (in)dependence connected to national security, in the context of the bid of the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) for the Union Oil Company of California (Unocal) (see P207). Unocal had already accepted a bid by Chevron, which however lay \$2 billion under the Chinese offer, and Chevron subsequently increased its offer for half a billion. The vote was regarded as uncertain, because the final decision was to be made by the shareholders. The House passed a resolution urging the president to review the deal based on his powers according to the Defense Production Act of 1950 (of which the Exon-Florio provision, see introduction to the analysis, is an amendment), which authorized him to suspend or prohibit a foreign acquisition if it threatened or impaired national security. Finally, it did not come to the vote as CNOOC withdrew its bid after heated political discussions in the U.S. (cf. Gagliano 2014, 149).

Otherwise, the dependency is mostly articulated because of China being the (second) biggest investor in U.S. treasury bonds, hence financing U.S. government debt (see chapter five). In this context the concern is even raised, as to what extent the problems with China will become the same as with Japan:

Is China going to become another Japan, the capitalist but closed market [?] (P169:12). *Our economic relationship with Japan is beginning to change as China becomes a more important factor and as Japan's own economic and political problems force a reassessment of their own situation* (P155:7, in 1994).

Also in 1994 the situation is described as: *we are upset about Japan and have expressed ourselves with some effect. But we have heard very little about the trade deficit with China* (P163:1, see also P164:1ff.), that is pictured as *a worsening trade problem that is bleeding U.S. economic strength by the buckets. That problem is our spiraling bilateral trade deficits with two big economic powers – Japan and China* (P164:4) In 1997 it is argued that *they have nontariff barriers that make the Japanese nontariff barriers look like the work of amateurs* (P176:58).

Hence the question of how to deal with China, especially given the experiences with Japan, becomes the crucial concern.

How to deal with China (to prevent decline)?

The approach ‘to take action’ and in what form is to some extent less unified than towards Japan, as ‘the Rise of China’ still triggers many open questions as to how to deal with it (cf. also Kolkmann 2005, 68; Paulsen 1999, 153), as expressed in:

How should America deal with it [a potential Chinese threat]? (P123:3, in 1995);³⁴¹ *Where is China going?* (P188:1, in 1997). *The truth is none of us know what to do to get China to change. We do not want it to be another Soviet Union and we do not want a 40-year cold war with the largest country in the world* (P126:6, in 1995). *Could we live with a Singapore-style China?* (P169:5, in 1995).

And in broader terms it is asked: *What is the position and role of the western world? How is this important process linked to the western world in general and the U.S. in particular? [...] is this nation seen as relevant around the world these days?* (P169:8, 9). *What can we do as a nation?* (P218:2, in 2008). These questions in turn are connected to that of a changing world and the U.S. role in it: *The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism in Europe [...] have created a new historical reality. Never before has the competition among the world’s leading powers been concentrated on economic, as opposed to military and ideological, realities* (P155:2). Interestingly, this sounds more like describing the situation with Japan, than with China, that is still predominantly articulated as ‘ideologically different’. Moreover, because of this, it is actually not the first, but the second time, although the Rise of Japan was happening during the Cold War. However, in 1994 it is argued that

³⁴¹ And this question continues to persist for Congress (and beyond) in the 2010s: “Can the United States compel better behavior from China via quiet diplomacy or public confrontation?” (Morrison 2014, 37).

it is clear that no one Western country, such as Germany, Japan or the U.S. is capable of being the locomotive to generate sufficient economic growth. For the first time in modern history, the locomotive for the West must come from new growth in the rest of the world. Nonetheless, the U.S. must take the lead to achieve its objective (P155:26).

In this respect the task is described as challenging: *I would argue that the task of bringing Western Europe back from the catastrophe of WWII was easier, politically and economically, than the task facing the FSU [the former Soviet Union] and, possibly, China today (P155:5).* In this context warnings against being outperformed by China are expressed: *As before 2020, China may surpass America as the world's largest economy. Superpower America has competition, after all. And we had better hustle, too, or the Chinese will eat our lunch (P143:3, in 2005).* And, after a few years, China's global role is seen as going beyond the economic sphere: *Many believe the 21st century will be the century of the communist Chinese regime; that their economy will pass ours; that their rival model of governance will be adopted throughout the world of the corporate structure where one can make money (P218:2, in 2008).*

The perspective on the question of 'how to deal with China', as well as how the relationship between the U.S. and China will look like, to a large extent depends again on whether it is seen through the prism of the accommodating/inclusive or confrontational/exclusive features of U.S. identity in terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, as will become apparent under the following passages, as well as through the categories of intensification and mitigation in the next chapter.

Relations to China – the role of the liberal theory of history

When it comes to assessing the consequences for U.S.-relations with China, those in line with the differential, inclusive and accommodating features of the liberal theory of history argue (often very figuratively) from this perspective: *Sunshine is the best disinfectant for repressive governments. And that is what trade brings. It is a new world out there, the Iron Curtain is drawn open, and international companies are chipping away at the Iron Rice Bowl in China [...] But let us not kid ourselves, nations like Russia and China are still in transition (P146:12).* In this line it is maintained that *with the end of the cold war [...] and the transformation of Russia into a democratic government with an open market economy [...] we must now turn our attention to China with the intent of achieving the same results (P167:55).* As according to this view, in the case of China:

China's economic growth, with its associated opening to the outside world, is also the primary engine of China's continuing social and political transformation. [...] In a Marxian irony, Communist social and governmental structures have become a constraint on China's continued development and are changing under the pressure of China's economic dynamism (P150:1).

From the liberal theory of history-perspective it is argued that China should be granted MFN/PNTR (P136:87; P137:63), and that it should become a member of the WTO, *as economic freedom often precedes other freedoms as well (P125:7) hence the best way to promote positive change in China is to grant China permanent normal trade relations status (P136:12)*. In this sense it is upheld that

trade is the future. Make no mistake about it: trade can open up the exchange of ideas--ideas like democracy, freedom of speech, freedom to worship, and freedom of association (P136:24). China entering the WTO [...] [is] pushing China toward more liberal political, economic and social policies (P136:32).

And, in line with the believe in 'the end of history' it is claimed that: [...] *we had a cold war. Communism lost, capitalism won. Now our economic and political system will help deliver freedom, peace and prosperity throughout the world because free markets cannot prosper in authoritarian regimes (P137:63)*. And, importantly, it is emphasized – in line with the liberal theory of history – that there does not need to be a contradiction between economic interests and values, but that these are interconnected:

America was built not only on the ideal of freedom and democracy, but on the economic base of free enterprise from which such ideals flow [...] Only by opening our minds and our markets can we help China reform its human rights policies, its intellectual property rights infringements, and its arms sales (P177:1).

According to this line of thinking *economic and political freedoms share deep roots (P194:4)*. This is an example for articulating chains of difference aimed at weakening internal differences between the 'values' and 'interests' factions through articulating the liberal theory of history as providing a common ground for both sides. In other words, in order to hegemonize the discourse, there is an attempt to incorporate opposing views by re-articulating them as in line with the 'common good'.

In this view the U.S. sees itself from the perspective of guiding China (P136:1; P199:13; P203:1) through engagement (P136:7; P123:2, P124:2; P188:3) and as a world's leader in promoting free trade (P136:1), as it is argued that *since 1980 [...] our engagement has helped to change China for the better* (P136:7) and that in general – in line with American exceptionalism – *pressure for democratization [...] usually comes from the United States or from nowhere at all* (P138:31).

Self-criticisms

On the other hand, criticisms of the whole liberal theory of history approach and the role of free trade are also articulated prominently (P176:35). For instance, it is repeatedly criticized for just being a 'fig-leaf' for American companies to move their production to China (P136:42; P200:3; P209:24). This again points to the internal differences or dividing lines between 'values' and 'interests', here articulated as 'business interests' versus 'basic values' but also as the 'business community' versus 'ordinary workers'. Contra the liberal theory of history it is pointed out that capitalism does not necessarily rule out illiberalism: *philosophical communism is indeed a rotting corpse, but totalitarian communism is alive and well in the PRC. In fact, throughout the world, political oppression can and does coexist quite comfortably with various iterations of capitalism* (P201:4). The U.S. is accused of being *blindly devoted to free trade with nations like China* (P189:10), and that *corporate America* is doing business for profits with *Red China* (P189:16). Over the years it is maintained that *the administration and the business community have made granting PNTR to China their single-minded trade focus* (P136:2; 162:11), while a majority of *the American people oppose MFN for China* (P191:1, i.e. 61 per cent in 1997). *Even as China's slide into tyranny and militarism continued in these last 12 years [i.e. since 1989], the United States Government has permitted a totally indefensible economic rules of engagement to guide our commercial ties with the mainland of China* (P202:3). Furthermore, from this perspective free trade is repeatedly articulated as having a negative impact on the job-market in the U.S., in terms of the 'good' jobs going to China, in terms of *giving our kids jobs at Wal-Mart, jobs at McDonald's, while the General Motors jobs, the General Electric jobs are going to China* (P209:4). In this view, *the economists' free trade policy (without reciprocity) has caused a hemorrhaging of American jobs, production, research, technology, investment and development to China and India* (P215:6).

More general self-criticisms directed not only at the liberal theory of history-perspective yet again point to an extent of naïveté when dealing with China: *We need to take note of the words of these Chinese officials. We need to listen more carefully. Beautiful words do not mean promises kept. Sometimes when we in the United States hear "yes" the Chinese are only saying "maybe"*

(P136:40). This comes close to the statement on there being a word in Japanese standing for 'saying one thing while meaning the opposite (harage)' (cf. P28:2). And like in relation to Japan and the trade deficit, the U.S. is criticized for its 'bad habits': *if the United States has one weakness going into the future, it is our savings rate, and that rate generally is about 1 percent [...] people [in China] [...] save almost 60 per cent of their income* (P210:2). *America can't keep running on its China credit card to buy foreign manufactured goods* (P219:2). In this sense it is asked: *Number one, what is going on? [...] our trade policy is almost by definition a disaster* (P204:8).

In this context the executive is also criticized for not taking care of the trade deficit issue (P132:45, 72; P198:4; P205:4, 16; P209:14, 33), nor the currency question (P212:4), but also for having maneuvered itself into the MFN-dilemma: *The administration is faced with a dilemma: Grant MFN and confirm that bullying the administration works, or deny MFN out of embarrassment and lose billions of dollars of U.S. exports and tens of thousands of U.S. jobs* (P165:1; P180:7).

Like with Japan, there is an emotional perspective, for instance frustration, expressed with China's alleged intransigence, in this case on both, the issues of political and economic liberalization. However, the debates are not as heated as with Japan (except for the intensified expressions that follow in the next chapter): *[...] the trade problem we have with Japan, China, and other countries [...] is a frightening picture in red* (P164:3), *we are all horribly frustrated that this country does not seem to be able to change, to give its people human rights* (P126:6), and, once more like the 'individual' perspectives voiced towards Japan: *perhaps I am a bit sensitive because, first and foremost [...] I consider myself a free trader* (P202:3). Pointing into the more intensified direction are statements like: *Do you know how much debt China owns of ours? Is that not embarrassing enough?* (P205:10). *We should not have to kneel down in front of the Chinese, the Communist Chinese, vegetarians as Mr. Watt referenced, or anyone else* (P207:10). Sometimes the 'emotional' aspect is however also meant rather positively as in:

China has always held a special intrigue for Westerners [...] But this special fascination has not translated into a smooth and predictable relationship [...] But, our fascination persists, perhaps because we have a sixth sense about – and emotional reaction to – the huge sleeping giant on the other side of the world (P114:1).

A possible explanation for the lower degree of vehemence expressed with China compared to Japan (and also under the category of intensification), might be that 'the lack of enjoyment' caused by what was taken to be a close ally, and initially a country quite close to 'the self' in the

case of Japan is experienced as more severe. In this sense, the dislocating impact of failed expectations was greater, as more unexpected, with Japan than with China.

Summary of perspectivations towards China

As with Japan, in the perspectivations towards China the economic challenge is very present as well, and – even more strongly than with Japan – the failed expectations pertaining to China’s (missing) political liberalization, and how to deal with them, go right into the ‘heart’ of U.S. identity as promoter of liberal democratic capitalism according to American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history. In China’s case this dislocation is again met in two ways: the equivalential and the differential one, meaning that there are accommodating or inclusive, at times also self-critical approaches, as well as confrontational, exclusive ones, where the ‘self-criticism’ is partly externalized and partly also directed against the executive. The U.S. also articulates itself from the perspective of being a victim of unfair Chinese economic policies, and while the frustration voiced is not as strong as with Japan, it is also directed internally against the executive, but also against the supporters of ‘free trade’ and the liberal theory of history. From the accommodating perspective there are attempts at resolving or dissolving the dilemma on ‘values versus interests’ or ‘jobs versus human rights’ in a way that articulates these goals not as opposed, but as going hand in hand from the perspective of the liberal theory of history. This is an example of an attempted hegemonic articulation: an incorporation of opposed views in the name of a ‘common good’. The question of how to deal with China is still more open than with Japan, which is connected to the interpretations of the end of the Cold War in 1989, and whether this actually signifies ‘the end of history’.

Summary of Perspectivations

The purpose of the analytic category of perspectivation is to focus on the point of view the nominations, predications and argumentations as forming the chains of equivalence and difference are expressed from, and what mode of differentiation between self and other this entails.

The analysis through this lens shows, that whereas with Japan the main perspective is quite obviously articulated as one of inferiority, this is not as unambiguously the case with China. While in both cases the U.S. mainly articulates itself from the perspective of being treated

'unfairly', in the case of Japan it sees itself as being almost constantly on the short end, and possibly facing decline as the consequence of having become economically inferior and because of being indebted to, and thus dependent on Japan. The major dislocation not only through the deficit, but also through the debt is linked to the fact that it was the first time the U.S. became a debtor since WWI. In terms of the aim to deal with this dislocation while preserving U.S. identity as promoter of free trade, the situation is expressed through chains of equivalence and the empty signifier of Japan's unfairness, as that Japan was leaving no other choice for the U.S., than to retaliate. In this vein, Japan is articulated as not behaving like an ally, and as being 'different' to the extent that the U.S. approach practiced so far would not work. The 'no choice' perspective is one way to deal with the dislocatory effect on U.S. identity, or the U.S. self-understanding as a 'free trader', as the retaliatory protectionist measures contradict this feature. When it comes to a more self-critical perspective, these criticisms are directed against the U.S. in general, as being naïve and also as having 'bad habits' (overspending etc.), but also against the executive and (its) free trade policies, as these are seen as not adequate for dealing with the position of inferiority. In this sense, on the emotional side of the short end perspective, frustration and anger are expressed towards Japan, but also towards the own policies. They are (implicitly) articulated as causing a 'lack of enjoyment', hence of Japan 'enjoying' or being in an advantageous position at the expense of the U.S. The more balanced views on the one hand aim at explaining the emotions as stemming from the many years of accumulated negative (in terms of not leading to the desired outcomes) experiences in negotiations with Japan, as well as still criticizing being 'over-emotional' on the other hand.

With China, there are two main conflicting identity-perspectives and nodal points: wanting to be an advocate and promoter of human rights on the one hand, and having to deal with being (more or less) dependent on China's markets and its continuing investment in U.S. treasury bonds on the other hand. Like with Japan, the U.S. articulates itself from the perspective of being a victim of 'unfair' or 'illiberal' Chinese policies. When speaking about China's unfairness, the question comes up as whether the problem with China would evolve in the same way as with Japan in the past. The major 'identity-conflict' for the U.S. with China lies at the point of whether the U.S. should push for political liberalization – first and foremost in the field of human rights – through free trade, thus the liberal theory of history-view, or deal with the human rights issue in a direct, more confrontational way. From the inclusive LTH-perspective it is argued that it can actually accommodate both, 'values' and 'interests', in terms of aiming at dissolving the antagonism through weakening both the internal and external chains of equivalence through articulating chains of difference, or in other words re-articulating values and interests in a way

that they become compatible. In terms of internal chains of equivalence, as with Japan the self-criticism in turn is directed against U.S. naïveté and ‘bad habits’, and – depending on the perspective taken – also against the liberal theory of history and im- or explicit business interests, but as well against the executive for either its free trade policies in terms of the liberal theory of history, or from the other perspective, for its handling of the MFN issue in an inadequate way. It seems that in the case of China the ‘lack of enjoyment’ is not severe enough yet, so that the emotional side of the debates is less prominent than with Japan. However, the following chapter on intensification shows that American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history also bear the potential to articulate China into an antagonist.

Table 3: Summary of Perspectives

	chains of difference	chains of equivalence
Japan	Japan is not to blame for taking advantage of ‘failed’ executive policies	Japan = unfair, targeting U.S. industries, becoming technologically superior; buying up the U.S.; not behaving like an ally
China	evolving in a positive direction because of free trade and engagement through the U.S.	China = unfair, manipulating trade and currency; another Japan = capitalist but closed market?
U.S. vs. Japan	emphasis on own ‘bad habits’ (overspending and not saving enough); against protectionism; contextualization of ‘emotions’ BUT ALSO: blame on executive (i.e. failed economic policies) → internal chains of equivalence	U.S. = inferior, victim, in decline, dependent on Japan, needs to act → retaliation because Japan leaves no other choice; free trade does not work! frustration and anger because of Japan (‘lack of enjoyment’)

U.S. vs. China	LTH-arguments: U.S. can and shall promote change/liberalization in China BUT ALSO: values (i.e. human rights) vs. interests (i.e. commercial interests) → internal chains of equivalence	U.S. = dependent on China as market place, disadvantageous position because of China's unfairness; LTH does not work = fig leaf for commercial interests
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7. INTENSIFICATION AND MITIGATION – ECONOMIC WARFARE VERSUS ENGAGEMENT

Through the categories of intensification and mitigation the aim of the analysis is to look at whether the nominations, predications and argumentations are articulated straight forwardly, and if, in what way they are strengthened or alleviated (this means, that the topics and arguments stay largely the same as under the previous categories, only their mode differs). Linking these categories to PDT, the intensification of the nominations, predications, arguments, and perspectives endorses the construction of the excluded other through the attempt to fill the empty signifier(s) and hegemonize the discourse towards a confrontational and exclusive stance against Japan and China. Mitigation in turn stands for the aim to dissolve the antagonisms through articulating the accommodating perspective in terms of the logics/chains of difference and an inclusive identity. The internal chains of equivalence (i.e. Congress versus the executive or pro and contra free trade) are also articulated in an intensified, or a mitigated way. The mitigations aim at turning them into chains of difference, mostly through the (inclusive, but also universalist) perspective of the liberal theory of history as common ground.

7.1. Intensifications towards Japan – *this is Pearl Harbor without bombs*

With Japan the main line of intensified articulations in all categories and throughout the whole timeframe speaks of an economic war between Japan and the U.S.³⁴², as expressed in statements like *we are in an economic battle to keep the world trading with each other* (P71:105), *let us move on the war and remain competitive [...] we are in a vicious trade war that demands aggressive action [...] we must pass that war chase bill* (P33:21). It is argued that Japan is practicing *gunboat economics* (P45:22) and the situation is described as *a ticking time bomb [...] this trade conflict is liable to explode* (P20:4). America is articulated as being *up in arms [...] retaliation and possibly full-blown trade warfare lie just around the corner* (P25:47). *We are in a war. This is only the first shot [...] we are going to load the gun and put some real bullets in it [...] We are not just pointing* (P27:10), *this is just the first salvo in a long battle* (P27:10). Accordingly, those negotiating with Japan are nominated as “soldiers”: *Today we will be hearing from the two members of the administration most immediately involved in negotiating with the Japanese on trade issues. As frontline soldiers in the battle [...]* (P44:6). These kinds of war allegories were also especially popular in the media, that used for example cartoons but also historical pictures referring to WWII and Pearl Harbor (Dower 2001; cf. N. Morris 2010, 28; see also Wampler 2001, 254).

Through the intensified expressions, Japan is frequently referred to as the ‘old’ treacherous WWII enemy (see also Zeiler 2001, 223f.) as in following statements: *I thought we defeated the Japanese some 30 or 40 years ago* (P22:13). It is claimed that *the Japanese philosophy and psychology is, they are still at war, except it is economic* (P45:23). For the U.S. (and here in the second statement also laying blame on the executive) this is articulated to mean that

we ended up winning the war, losing hundreds of thousands of brave Americans, and then in the end losing it economically [...] they [Japan and other countries] are now taking away from those Americans who fought and died for victory their economic ability to compete (P50:9). Or: *There are brave and valiant bodies laying in Arlington today that are rolling over in their graves because they thought they won the war. They never thought they would see the government allow the Japanese businessmen to come over and take America from under them* (P71:5).

³⁴² This articulation of Japan waging an economic war was also put forward by the revisionists (see for instance the article by Theodore White cited in the introduction) and other prominent scholars such as Huntington (Huntington 1993, 75), but also in popular culture, like novels (cf. N. Morris 2010, 28).

Not as intense as the rhetoric following in this chapter, but still remarkable, is following characterization in the introduction to the 1992 CRS report on trade policy toward Japan: “U.S. trade policy toward Japan is like a machete. You can do a lot of things with it. You can use it to cut through a jungle of debate, to waive in the air to rally public opinion, to provide a leading edge for overall U.S. trade policymaking, or to cut off your own foot. But one thing you cannot do is just sit on it” (Nanto 1992, 1).

A common manner to draw the parallel between the economic situation and WWII is an expression like: *'Son, it sounds to me like this is Pearl Harbor without bombs'* (P92:30). Although the WWII and Pearl Harbor references are not always explicitly stated, they are always implicitly present when speaking of war in relation to Japan. 'War' in this context stands for Pearl Harbor as the ultimate absence of fairness, or metaphor for unfairness, as it alludes to the historical discourse of being unfairly attacked out of the blue by Japan. As a metaphor, Pearl Harbor thus is an attempt to fill the equally empty signifier of 'unfairness', signifying the literal absence or lack of 'fairness'.³⁴³

Maintaining the war-rhetoric, most voices articulate the U.S. as being 'on the defensive' in an *economic attack* (P71:109), as having no other choice but to react, and again, as being on the short end: *They are declaring a war on us, and we are hoisting the white flag* (P28:3), *hopefully the Japanese will heed our warnings [...] to help prevent such a trade war* (P28:4). *When the other guy is shooting at you (taking your jobs) aren't you allowed to shoot back?* (P29:35). Again, the long timeframe of the unchanging situation with Japan is pointed out: *American industry and American workers have been at war for more than two decades* (P40:23). *For nearly 20 years, the U.S. has been at war. A silent war. One fought not with weapons but with wares. The struggle is economic, not military. It is a trade war. And, we are losing it* (P40:23; P42:30; P80:4; P105:63). The Japanese are articulated as having *struck a damaging blow to the cause of fair and free trade* (P42:37), and in consequence the U.S. 'has to' react: *this resolution is not a first strike by the United States in a trade war with Japan [...] today's action is the beginning of our retaliation* (P42:41).³⁴⁴ *We have a dynamic situation, a real red-hot trade war [...] we are about 20 years late; definitely 10 years late [...] That war is out there* (P47:47). And again, the U.S. is articulated as 'surrounded by enemies': *First Japan, then other nations, primarily in the western Pacific, attacked and penetrated American textile industry* (P50:9). Japan is repeatedly accused of having launched *an assault [...] on industries in America* (P88:2). *The question is whether we, including both the executive branch and the Congress, along with American industry are all prepared to stick to our guns and take action* (P122:1).

Being on the short end vis-à-vis Japan is further expressed in intensified statements like: *We are now begging them for things. It has got to end. We must be the masters of our own fate* (P22:13); *we have been waiting while the Japanese bureaucrats [...] eat us alive at the negotiating table*

³⁴³ Narrelle Morris also points out that 'Pearl Harbor' as a term had acquired the 'official' meaning (i.e. in form of a dictionary entry) of "any significant or crippling defeat, betrayal, loss, etc., that comes unexpectedly" (N. Morris 2010, 28, 155). For (recurring) historical images of Japan as 'yellow peril' see also N. Morris (2010, 14–23) and Dower (2001, 304f.).

³⁴⁴ What was debated here was the so-called "Export Promotion and Economic Growth Act of 1985" introduced in the Senate, but finally not passed.

(P25:46). U.S. passiveness is criticized, as in: *American firms cannot continue to watch ships come in with goods marked “made in Japan”, and sent back filled with “promises, made by Japan”* (P28:4). Relating to the recurring disputes on autos and auto parts it is argued that: *The car business will go to hell [...] You’ve got no options left...and we’re dead!* (P29:34). Referring to the debates on the scope of the extension of the so-called voluntary export restrictions (VERs) in 1984/1985, it is claimed that *we took the quotas off Japanese cars unilaterally, out of the goodness of our hearts, and got nothing in return* (P68:25). The situation is described as a *threat to U.S. world leadership and standard of living* (P39:48) or in more figurative terms as in *[...] the land of the rising sun is beginning to cast a great shadow over America [...]* (P71:5). The U.S.-Japanese relationship is described in terms of not being a partnership anymore, *but a boxing match in which we tie one hand behind our backs. We are faced with an economic attack, but we have responded by negotiating with Japan like greenhorns instead of as shrewd Yankee traders* (P71:78).

In this sense, the U.S. is again self-criticized as not being assertive enough with Japan:

We seem to roll out the red carpet whenever anybody from Japan comes over. We say, ‘Here, take what you want out of our country and go’. They go and take it [...] they come in and take more [...] we are being taken down the road to the cleaners by the Japanese (P80:5). *We are helping them bury us technologically and economically [...] we are shooting ourselves in our own foot* (P83:12).

And first and foremost this criticism is directed towards the executive: *When dealing with Tokyo on trade issues the United States is a pussy cat [...] in our anxiety to offend the Japanese we are giving away the store* (P102:3). Referring to Japan financing the U.S. budget deficit, it is maintained that: *We are losing. The poor President goes out [...] with a \$150 billion hole in his pocket and a tin cup, begging the Japanese to finance the debt. [...] This is not competing, this particular government here, that we are all part of* (P105:21). The Japanese in turn are articulated as being more successful in statements like: *We ought to make them our arms control advisers. They do not give up anything. They are totally successful* (P47:47), while the U.S. in turn should become more ‘realistic’: *The Japanese are as good at making promises as they are at making exports, and it may be time the United States started buying less of both* (P68:8), or as in *the only goods [Japan] trades freely and fairly are words – but unfortunately, the Commerce Department does not factor words into its monthly trade figures* (P71:121).

In the debates on the FSX-plane the security-relationship with Japan is even put in question: *why do we refer to Japan as an ally? What military or strategic services have they ever*

performed for us? (P73:121); American interests are being sold for peanuts [...] it's an elevator ride to the top for the Japanese, in our elevator (P73:125). And it is argued that Japan is taking advantage of the U.S.: But Japan knows it can count on Uncle Sam to keep the sea lanes open, to keep the oil flowing from the Persian Gulf – so why not take another free ride – which is exactly what they are doing (P71:100; P95:7). An extreme articulation in this vein is that of comparing Japanese business practices to a praying mantis that is described as opportunistic, tackling anything that looks edible. The mantis fools its prey because it raises its front legs as if praying [...] Once the mantis stops praying and starts eating, everything disappears from view. That's what is happening on the FSX [...] (P73:155). One of the major arguments with the FSX was, that Japan was benefitting economically without having to pay a price, which in turn provided them with relative economic gains and corresponding losses to the U.S. (cf. Spar 1992, 284).

Intensified self-criticisms – forget Pearl Harbor. The enemy is us.

Even the voices arguing against retaliatory measures towards Japan, or those being self-critical, to a large extent also tend to employ 'war rhetoric' or references to WWII as intensifications of their arguments. On the one hand, U.S. 'protectionist' measures are articulated as posing a viable danger, starting already in the 1980s through articulations like: *The problem is that protectionism has once again reared its ugly head (P21:11)*, or even more explicitly like in

protectionism could lead to WWII (P38:32), [we] must remind us of the march of events which took Japan from being a peaceful trader in 1919 to taking the road to military conquest in 1931. American and European protectionism was a major cause of this tragedy (P38:33).

Describing the situation in 1985, it is argued that *the fate of the 300 protectionist bills in the U.S.-Congress may hold the answer to the question which we failed to ask ourselves in the 1930s – "can protectionism lead to war" (P38:33)*, as well as that *some of us remember the 1930s, when the most destructive trade bill in history, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, helped plunge this nation and the world into a decade of depression and despair (P67:15).*

On the other hand, also the intensifications directed against the U.S. itself in calling for action, use different historical 'examples'. For instance, the U.S. is articulated as *becoming a colony again (P68:24; P92:30)*, with a new "mother country" this time around. *It's not England, it's Japan! (P29:33), England has gone down sadly, to a second-rate nation [...] It is "small Britain" and "great Japan" (P47:50)*, or as in a statement like *we know why the Indians roused themselves in rage and*

threw the British out. It is time that the United States recognizes that our interests demand no less (P18:43; P41:23). In this context, the inferiority of the U.S. is expressed as “definition of a colony”: *Our three major exports to Japan are corn, soybeans and coal. Japan's three major exports to us are cars, trucks, and video recorders* (P68:24).

In this sense the U.S. is also articulated as ‘giving away the game’ in statements like: *I am going to look out for our capacity to maintain ourselves as a world power* (P47:48), or as in:

Why do we not try and buoy up the interest of Uncle Sam instead of trying to find ways of justifying how we can go about giving our country away? Why do we not start looking at America and taking care of our own business? Take care of America first (P71:5).

Within these statements there are also again allusions made to WWII: *Forget Pearl Harbor. The enemy is us* (P6:36; P83:11; P109:1), and: *If the United States is not to be deindustrialized, producing a situation comparable to [...] the Morgenthau Plan [...] U.S. trade policy must be changed* (P20:37), *[...] we are giving them the rope with which to hang ourselves* (P71:36). The war rhetoric and allegations are also maintained in statements like: *So we roll up our sleeves, we get cracking, we improve our quality [...] and the yen/dollar wipes it all out. Now, what do I tell the troops?* (P29:34). And, pointing to the internal disputes on trade policies: *Right now, a lot of you are fighting each other! The hell with “free trade” and “fair trade” [...] Except nobody's fighting for the country!* (P29:35). In this sense, it is also again maintained, that the U.S. is not well organized when it comes to dealing with trade issues: *we have many ‘trade warriors’ in the U.S. Government, but no general – no department head – in charge* (P74:3, once more in contrast to the Japanese MITI).³⁴⁵

The intensified internal chains of equivalence are again articulated against the executive that is allegedly not acting tough enough towards Japan. Repeatedly it is even maintained that it does not have a trade policy at all (e.g. P42:39), or (only) a fundamentally inadequate one: *The new 5-year plan in Japan is: Yes, we are sorry, we will open our markets [...] our mistaken trade policies are going to ruin our country, wreck our economy* (P115:2). The executive is called to ‘wake up to reality’ (P73:57), and the U.S. are even nominated as *a bunch of suckers* that is being *offered rhetoric and platitudes by our Government* (P48:26). *What is inadequate, downright dumb, is us, the Government, right here* (P105:20). In this respect it is argued that *our trading partners are continuing to play us for the saps we have been in the trading arena* (P50:18). U.S. policies are

³⁴⁵ See also for example book titles such as “Trade warriors: USTR and the American crusade for free trade” (Steve Dryden in 1995) or “Trade Wars. Japan versus the West” (Phillip Oppenheim in 1992), to only name a few.

described as being in favor of Japan: *In our resolution*³⁴⁶ *it says that we are to blame; we have done it, please forgive us. If I were the Japanese Trade Minister, I would write a resolution the way we have written it and the way we are passing it tonight* (P28:2). In this sense, the U.S. are seen as naive: *Should we be surprised, if the Japanese should say; "Look, our way enables us to beat you out"? Should we be surprised that we have the monstrous deficit? What cupidity to even act surprised* (P41:24).

In this context, it is also claimed that the anger is not directed against Japan itself, but against the executive: *We are not anti-Japanese. I am trying to bash Washington. The Japanese did what I would do [...] or what any competitive country arising from the ashes after World War II would do* (P47:46), *it is the Government in Washington which is not producing and not competing* (P47:48). In this sense, 'Washington' is made responsible for *what has developed is what you might call a trade war. And [...] the enemy is not Japan. [...] I am bashing Washington* (P105:63). Which is why, repeatedly over the whole timeframe, there are calls for the president to *take off the gloves* (P25:46), and to announce that *the time for table talk negotiations has ended. The president must tell our Japanese trading partner that this nation can no longer sit idly by [...]* (P27:12).

Especially president Reagan is criticized for his handling of the issues³⁴⁷, sometimes in a slightly 'humorous' way as in: *the President is obviously looking at our economy thorough rose-colored glasses – probably imported from Japan* (P50:23). But the overall tone is more harsh:

It was this failed trade policy that vaulted Japan to a position of world industrial and financial leadership while making the United States the world's greatest debtor Nation in a mere 8 years [...] Reagan is in Japan to receive chrysanthemums while we are left with the faded flowers of our wilted economy and a trade deficit that threatens to destroy our position as leader of the free world. Congratulations are due to Mr. Reagan for a job well done the Japanese could not have done it better themselves (P81:1).

But also for example Clinton, who then finally undertook a policy change, is criticized from both sides: *He could emulate the Japanese and require their products to undergo the same Mickey Mouse inspections to which American products sold in Japan are subjected* (P108:3), or, as in *for the last 6*

³⁴⁶ H. Con. Res.107, 1985, "Expressing Sense Of Congress That The President Take Action Relating To Trade Deficit And Unfair International Trade Practices Of Japan".

³⁴⁷ As already referred to, in the year 1985 Congress debated more than 300 'protectionist' bills leading to President Reagan getting 'tougher' on trade issues not only with Japan, but also with Europe and other emerging economies (cf. Kolkmann 2005, 41). One of the initiatives were the bilateral Market-Oriented Sector-Selective (MOSS) trade talks with Japan that were also taken up in 1985, while however not producing a significant long-term outcome (cf. N. Morris 2010, 56; Schoppa 1997, 66). See introduction and the introduction to the analysis.

years he has pussyfooted with all these protectionists (P132:14). Also, in terms of building up further internal chains of equivalence, the Department of State is addressed in the internal criticisms: We are being taken for a ride, and its about time that our own State Department woke up. Whose side are you on, State Department, America's or Japan's? (P71:121). It is claimed that the United States has plenty of leverage to use in any negotiation but we tippy toe, tippy toe, tippy toe when it comes to Japan (P73:53). In this respect State Department diplomats are repeatedly criticized as being wimpy and spineless, when it comes to standing up for the best interests of the United States of America (P73:54), this coddling of the Japanese is not the attitude that made our Nation great (P73:123). Sometimes Congress itself is included as well in the criticisms as in Congress has been a bunch of wimps (P130:1).

Criticisms of free trade– *It's right up there with "goodness" and "mercy" and "charity for all"*

Furthermore, also with the intensified articulations, blames of the executive again often go hand in hand with general criticisms of free trade (as it is also the case with China), as in *if there is anything free about the administration's trade policy – it's the case and freedom by which trading partners around the globe are getting away with economic murder (P29:5). In the case of Japan free trade is for example articulated as myth and fairy tale, and 'out of touch with reality': neither do I believe in myths or fairy tales – and that is what the international practice of free trade is today, a fairy tale. We must get tough on trade (P40:23). Do not sit here and talk to us about principles of free trade when the world operates differently (P50:15). In some statements it is even described almost in terms of an empty signifier:*

Instead of a realistic trade policy in this country, all we've got is this lofty ideal called "free trade". Who's going to argue against it? It's right up there with "goodness" and "mercy" and "charity for all". I think it's time to break out of our idealistic shell and look at the rest of the world [...] Free trade is not one of the Ten Commandments. And "managed trade" is not a sin. You don't go blind or get warts from it (P68:23).

Hence, the U.S. are again articulated as suffering from the 'hostile world': *They [the administration] believe in the "invisible hand" that will reach down and right all wrongs. Well, it's become an iron fist, and it's pounding us into the ground (P29:35).*

These intensifications, in combination with being further enhanced through the articulations of a prospective 'U.S. decline' (e.g. P105:21) if nothing is done to change the situation, shall serve to finally lead to action towards Japan: *It is time we stood up and got tough with the Japanese [...] we should retaliate [...] we should stop telling our competitors how serious we are about free and fair trade and start showing them* (P29:7, 9f.; P44:11). It is emphasized that *Uncle Sam is tired of being the sucker* (P73:65), *if we are to survive as a great Nation, we must take a stand [...] it's about whether we have the courage to fight for American interests in the face of Japanese intransigence* (P73:125). Repeatedly it is maintained that *unless we break out of our rut in trade, we may find ourselves in a vicious cycle of economic decline* (P74:2), as in this line of intensified argumentation, the stakes could not be higher: *we are at a critical juncture in our history. The decisions we as a people make today will decide whether, in the 21st century, America declines into a second rate power, or emerges as a leader of a freer, more prosperous world* (P74:8), and more concretely, when it comes to Japanese imports: *we cannot allow them to dump their Toyotas [...] over here while they continue to disallow us access to their markets* (P80:8). It is even argued, that *Japan in America will become a way of life* (P88:4), *as our debt grows, we are losing the capacity to control our own destiny* (P89:3), and *'we're all going to wind up working for the Japanese'* (P100:5, citing Lester Thurow in a Newsweek report on Japan in early March 1989). Also, in the context of the FSX-question as well the concrete issue is elevated to a higher level than for instance airplane technology in this case: *this debate [FSX] is about our national future* (P92:5), as it is argued that *if we are not careful, we will have a defense industry that will be based in Japan and maybe they will let us produce some of the things [...]* (P95:34). In connection to a debate on patent laws an intensified argumentation claims that *if we change our laws to be like Japan's, those economic shoguns, those economic gangsters that run that economy will be right here in the United States of America doing to our people what they do to their own people* (P134:8).

In this setting of calls for action, again, Japan (and others, which once more alludes to the feature of American exceptionalism of 'being surrounded by a hostile world') are once more articulated as leaving no choice: *Sadly we watch foreign government after government manipulate imports into our economy, robbing Americans from jobs* (P29:5). The U.S. is articulated as sole fair player: *You are not living in a fantasy world [...] the real world is that the rest of the world is restricting our goods and demanding we leave our markets open* (P50:15). And in the concrete case of Japan: *I am not in favor of protectionist legislation, but I refuse to sit idly by and watch important industries [...] be destroyed by a nation who plays by its own rules* (P44:11). As with China, it is also argued that the 'Japan Problem' extends beyond U.S.-Japan relations: *[...] other parts of the Japanese system pose a destructive threat not only to the U.S. economy but to the entire*

world trading system (P68:10).

In this vein, also the arguments about Japan being 'culturally different' are once more articulated in an intensified way, conveying the meaning that nothing with Japan will ever change, because it is *a people (some have used the word clan) who have lived by themselves on a set of islands for nearly 2,000 years of recorded time do not buy readily from outsiders. There is no GATT, there is no law, there is no treaty, there is no negotiation that is going to change that* (P31:37). Allegedly, in this view *there is an inbred predisposition among the Japanese to buy Japanese made goods [...] Culturally the Japanese aren't moved by the concept of fair trade and open markets when it comes to their own buying decisions [...] I wish more Americans felt the same way about our own products* (P38:21). And historical allegations are made to the time prior to the 'opening' of Japan: *in 1816 an American businessman tried to sell products in Japan, but failed [...] Unfortunately, things haven't changed much* (P42:29). Referring to the ensuing so-called 'open door policy' (see chapter 1.3) it is maintained that *an open door trade policy does not mean trading with Japan through a crack in the door* (P42:42). Furthermore, Japan in its 'difference' is once more articulated as lacking a consumer culture and practicing consumer bashing (P88:3), while using their 'uniqueness' argument:

The word they use is 'unique.' Let us talk about uniqueness for a moment. This is the same argument the Japanese used to exclude our commercial products, uniqueness. The mud in Kansai Bay is unique, so American construction firms cannot help at Kansai airport. They are over here building ours. They will not let us get over there because the mud must be unique. Japanese rice is unique, so they cannot import United States rice. Japanese stomachs are unique, so they cannot eat United States beef (P92:4). *The list is endless and the arguments are all bunk* (P121:5).

However, there remain self-critical voices aiming at dissolving the antagonism, but also – in contrast to the mitigating self-criticisms treated in the following subchapter – maintaining an intensified tone. For instance, they point out that *for America, protectionism would now be economic hari-kari [meaning hara-kiri], and deep down we know it. Looking beyond Congressional rhetoric, moreover, there is a dwindling constituency for closing our borders. The United States has become totally hooked on imports* (P21:11).

In 1994, the situation is described as follows:

Today, the United States is the world's largest debtor nation, and many critics insist that we have become a second-class power. Our decline in self-esteem puzzles both our allies and rivals. Many of us

search for a scapegoat to blame for our manifold ills. But the bitter truth is that we have no one to blame for our condition but ourselves. For the wounds to our economic health and to our national pride have been largely self-inflicted. Our recent economic history is a story of blunder, mismanagement, stupidity, and irresponsibility by officials whose obligation to govern the nation was betrayed by their embrace of policies misconceived and ineptly applied (P109:24).

7.2. Mitigations towards Japan – other problems than Japan

The mitigating articulations in turn emphasize the role of the own policies when it comes to what otherwise is articulated as the main ‘problem’ that has to be dealt with. Namely, when it comes to the trade deficit, especially the impact of the value of the dollar and the fiscal deficit are emphasized (P27:10; P42:44; P46:27; P50:44; P52:30; P77:2f.; P82:3f.; P92:11; P95:48; P118:1), and the aim is to point to other ‘problems’ than Japan by dissolving the chains of equivalence through chains of difference (i.e. the internal differential positions). In this sense, it is argued already in the 1980s that the problem is not only the dollar, but also the fiscal policies and even the consumer habits, in terms of overspending:

But the real problem [...] is our economic policy [...] Our dollar is not overvalued; it is just highly inflated [...] We are living on borrowed capital [...] flailing a foreigner is not going to do anything to cure the basic problems of America [...] let us not kid ourselves: If they open their markets wide open, it would not solve the American problem (P28:1; P52:31).

And, referring to the causes of the high dollar: *These setbacks are caused by the strong dollar, demanding domestic fiscal action, not retaliation against those who merely profit from our own macroeconomic policies (P34:10).* Once more it is emphasized that *the real source of this tremendous trade deficit is right in our own backyard. The United States is on a reckless course of borrowing and spending (P34:10).* Accordingly, it is stressed that the U.S. has to act domestically: *We have to [...] get our house in order [...] (P42:29), there is also a lot to be done right here at home (P42:39).* And more explicitly, linking global and domestic politics: *The country’s trade problems cannot really be solved until we understand the global impact of our domestic policies, put our economy on solid ground and live within our means (P52:30).*

In this respect, there are explicit arguments voiced against making Japan a scapegoat:

We must also shoulder our own share of blame (P53:7). It is rather easy to make the Japanese a scapegoat, but it seems to me we have much more of a dollar problem than we have a yen problem

(P55:34), *the U.S. had permanent trade deficits with Japan for the past 20 years, regardless of what was happening to the dollar/yen exchange rate during that time span* (P55:138).

In terms of market access to Japan it is argued that *restricted access to the Japanese market is a problem, but it is not a major one [...] most of our competitive problems are home-grown made in America* (P65:7; P71:104). Referring to own 'bad habits' it is claimed that *we need to lower our voices and pull up our socks. 'Japan-bashing' is no prescription for future success in industrial competition* (P73:110), and *as long as we consume more than we save, we will need to draw in goods from abroad* (P106:1).

In this sense, especially in the first half of the 1990ies in connection with the auto talks, and in contrast to calls for the executive to finally get tough with Japan, from the mitigating perspective the executive is even criticized for its 'confrontational' (i.e. results oriented) approach towards Japan, and it is accused of managing trade, which contradicts U.S. identity as a free trader: *These countries are all going to the Japanese saying, 'Don't give in. Don't accept managed trade'. [...] they support Japan, which in this case ironically has the opportunity to portray itself as a free-trader standing firm against American efforts at managed trade* (P106:4). The negotiations are described as *a dangerous game of chicken with Japan. Tonight we will know whether we are going over the cliff or if one or both sides are going to blink in this dispute [...] everyone knows that Japan-bashing is popular [...] What happens if the other side retaliates?* (P117:1). It is claimed that *this administration wants our Government, our Government to manage the Japanese automakers* (P120:5). And, referring to the results-oriented approach and quantifiable, numerical targets:

I understand that there is a constituency here in the United States that favors standing up to Japan [...] you do not pick needless fights with your closest allies [...] 'the most important relationship we have is with Japan'. It has become a mantra, not a policy. Yet we see at the same time a policy that I would call trust but quantify. What does that sound like? Trust, but verify, the Reagan era cold war refrain [...] Without United-States-Japan cooperation, we will not be successful [...] (P106:4).

These statements point to the identity conflict in the sense of the retaliatory measures, or the results-oriented approach, standing against the principles of free trade the U.S. otherwise claims to stand for.

Self-criticisms

Once more, the 'war rhetoric' is also employed as 'intensifier' in mitigating articulations, as in *it is very important not to take steps [...] in the heat of the battle* (P4:5). It is claimed that *we do not advocate trade war* (P25:46; P27:12), and that *I do not want to get involved in a sense of economic nationalism here that says, We want to fire the first salvo in a trade war; the worst thing in the world that could happen to this country is any kind of trade war* (P28:3), as it is argued that *the trade wars [...] are damaging the political relationship. It does sound like war: the Finance Committee Chairman has said, "an eye for an eye"* (P31:37). It is for example criticized, that *the American auto-industry hailed Lee A. Iacocca of Chrysler as a national hero who had single-handedly driven out the villainous Japanese auto invaders* (P46:29). And, self-critically: *Protectionism puts a Democrat in a different posture. For once he or she sounds aggressive and nationalistic. [...] we're telling the Japanese to take their Toyotas and ... let them rot on the docks in Yokohama* (P47:45). *America is wrong in today's trade war, which is not to say Japan is right* (P118:2).

Through some statements however, on the other hand the employment of war rhetoric is also even explicitly criticized: *Listening to the U.S.-trade representative these days evokes sounds of battle, of the adversary's conning and one's own self-righteousness* (P118:1), as is the rhetoric towards Japan in more general terms:

the rhetoric between the United States and Japan, which has been a substitute for any kind of effective action to deal with the real problem, has gotten inflammatory, overheated, and, oftentimes, nasty. I think that is demeaning to us and insulting to Japan. Japan should be viewed as a friend and ally of the United States (P42:38).

In this respect the criticisms are also directed explicitly towards Congress: *Members of this body [...] engage in unrestricted castigation of Japan. There is a danger of going too far in our rhetoric* (P42:44). Furthermore, it is critically pointed out that

Asian-Americans [see also in what follows] often become, also, a convenient scapegoat. Take Japan-bashing for example [...] Americans are understandably feeling vulnerable [...] But making Japan our scapegoat is not the answer. Inflammatory rhetoric helps no one. The Japan-bashing phenomenon becomes more and more disturbing with each politician's slip of the tongue and each Honda-bashing party that the media covers (P110:5, 33).

And, referring again to 'Asian-Americans': *this singling out of one ethnic group has lead to the unfair characterization that all Asian-Pacific American political contributors are 'Asian foreigners buying up America' [...]* (P190:8). Then, more explicitly, the anger towards Japan is also explained by racism: *There is a little of racist tinge occasionally to some of the remarks [...] there is an understandable but not healthy response on the part of some: We were attacked at Pearl Harbor, we have to get some revenge* (P95:46, not referring to the Senate, but to voices "out there", in 1989).³⁴⁸

The voices in turn aiming at dissolving the chains of equivalence through articulating chains of difference argue for example that: *This House [...] resolution does not make Japan a single scapegoat [...] the issue is aggressive competition, and not unfair trade practices. It identifies the Japan problem for what it is: restricted market access* (P27:9). In the sense of weakening the antagonism towards Japan, the ground of argumentation is extended: *Japan of course, is not the only trading partner with which we have had difficulties [...] [there are] Canada [and the] European Community [...]* (P27:9). *We run trade deficits with Korea, Taiwan, Mexico, the European Community – virtually every country in the world* (P42:44). It is also argued that contrary to the common view of the U.S. as 'victim' or on the short end, the U.S. in the end profits from these partners and their policies: *Japan and others that have a trade surplus with us don't dump our money into some black hole. It gets reinvested, much of it in the United States thereby providing more jobs for us* (P35:46; P120:4f., and as it is also emphasized, sometimes this even comes with great losses for the investors, cf. also Kataoka 1995, 7). And, there is an attempt to articulate historical allegations in a different, critical way: *Just as Japanese trade practices have bred hostility toward Japan among some in this country, restrictive and retaliatory American trade measures will likely breed similar anti-American sentiment abroad [...] anti-Japanese feeling today rivals that of the 1940's [...]* (P50:47). In this sense, both, Japan and the U.S. are criticized:

since World War II, the Japanese have continued to think of themselves as a vulnerable, semi-developed and resource-poor country pushing intensely to keep up. And further, [...] Japan has nurtured a semi-dependent attitude towards the United States that sacrifices a great deal in the relationship in return for American tolerance of Japanese marketing successes [...] America's self-images are no less illusory [...] we have been so impressed with our position and importance that we have neglected the hard work necessary to stay in that position (P52:30).

³⁴⁸ For the issue of racism in U.S. policies towards Asia, see for instance Buzas 2014. Cf. also Packard (1987, 2), Dower (2001) and Wampler (2001), who quotes Ezra Vogel on the dangers of focusing on Japan as root cause of America's economic problems: "For a yellow race to outcompete us is a wound to the Western psyche" (ibid., 252). In the congressional debates analyzed in this dissertation, racism was not brought up very frequently.

And, referring to the 'fairness'/'unfairness' debates in this context:

The term 'unfair' is widely used to describe Japanese practices. This is a point-less position, since it will shock not a single Japanese into politically translatable guilt and only raises the level of animosity. Americans would seem 'fairer' toward their perplexing ally if they jettisoned the conceits that after 1945 Japan was remade in the free-market American image and that it is guided by the U.S.-inspired constitution. To prevent a serious further deterioration in the Japan-U.S. relationship, a major shift in the way that Americans view Japan is a minimum requirement (P79:7).

In this sense, balanced views also address the 'free trade vs. protectionism' arguments:

While the trade deficit soars, a somewhat sterile debate continues over "free trade vs. protectionism" and the desirability of an "industrial policy" vs. a non-interventionist federal attitude of laissez faire. This debate is unhelpful in the task of reinvigorating U.S. trade efforts. The debate offers at one extreme the myth of a perfectly free trading system, a system which does not exist in the world today where government intervention and bilateral marketing arrangements are the rule. At the other extreme, it accepts the so-called "fallacy of the last move"- the naïve notion that if America erected more protectionist barriers against foreign products, we would not face mutually harmful retaliation from abroad (68:14).

On these terms, the U.S. are encouraged to think about the broader picture: *I urge my colleagues not to see this amendment as retribution for the Toshiba sale, for the potential involvement which we are not even sure of with Mitsubishi in the Libyan Desert and the chemical plant, or for the transgressions of the Japanese on past trade issues. (P71:146)*, as it is emphasized that times have changed: *Let me submit that post-Toshiba, the Japanese put in an export-control system that is superior to the Germans or the French (P73:61)*. The line of argumentation articulating the U.S. as 'inferior' is criticized as well: *we all know that the Japanese have a history of unfair practices and protectionism [...] implicit in this argument is that American workers cannot compete with their Japanese counterparts (P73:120)*, or, referring to the skills of U.S. negotiators: *these arguments [...] reflect an image of Japanese negotiators as supermen and an equally unhealthy view that assumes America cannot hold its own at the negotiation table (P93:35).*³⁴⁹

Finally, there are attempts at articulating the 'Japan problem' in relation with U.S. domestic policies in a balanced way: *much of our 'Japan problem' is really an 'America problem'*

³⁴⁹ On the 'image' of *Superhuman Japan* see Thorsten (2012).

that we ought to be capable of solving by ourselves (P77:8). However, it is maintained that Japan also bears responsibility for the situation and U.S. reactions: Nevertheless, there is an extremely important 'Japan' part of the 'Japan problem.' In my assessment, forces within Japan today are not only not helping the situation, but worsening it and hastening the day when an American political backlash is finally triggered (P77:8). Japan is called upon to 'understand the situation':

I strongly believe that we do need to debate our economic and military relations with Japan. I believe that Japan needs to act to help offset the current trade deficit, and needs to understand--as do the other newly industrialized nations of Asia--that the United States cannot indefinitely finance the economic growth of other States at the cost of a massive trade deficit and its own economy (P83:8).

Finally, the Americans are also encouraged to see the broader picture in more positive terms:

I understand the concern of those Americans who fear the impact of the growing economic reach of Japan and other Pacific rim countries [...] Many American observers interpret those figures as a danger to the American economy [...] But to let our legitimate concerns blind us to the potential for clear benefits to the United States from her growing relationship with Japan would be shortsighted (P97:1).

Against U.S. hypocrisy and turning Japan from an ally to an enemy

In the sense of aiming at dissolving the antagonisms, the articulation of Japan as ally is brought forward in terms of a positive characteristic of the relationship, for instance through pointing not to differences, but to similarities – standing against chains of equivalence, but for inclusiveness – between the U.S. and Japan: *Do we doubt that [...] the U.S.-Japan alliance is still the linchpin of East Asian security? The two greatest industrial democracies in the world have shown the world the way to prosperity, stability, freedom and peace in the region (P71:57). And in this sense it is emphasized that [this is] a debate about relations between friends, two countries which must nurture that friendship and insure that the friendship thrives (P71:71, 73; P84:3; P86:1f.; P91:6). It is repeatedly underlined that we are good friends with Japan. It is not Japanese bashing (P71:119). Though Japan may be an economic competitor [...] Japan is also one of our strongest and most important political and military allies (P73:29).*

Hence, the similarities are first and foremost seen in 'ideology' (in contrast to the case of China) as for example in:

I have never, however, endorsed Japan bashing and I will not endorse it now. Japan has emerged as one of our most important allies. It is a stable democracy and a major economic power. The differences between us must be dealt with by debating and discussing the real issues involved, not by using a single major negotiation as a foil for asking Japan to accept terms we would never accept ourselves, and which we would never ask of any other ally (P83:9).

Also, the common view on the unbalanced character of the relationship in terms of economic and security issues is criticized: *[Japan's] progress with regard to burden sharing – both military and economic – has often been overlooked [...] contrary to popular assumptions, there is a surprising level of mutuality to the United-States-Japan relationship (P97:2), as it is emphasized that our relationship with Japan as a comparable economic power is new (P97:3). As if arguing against the deterministic view, that a rising and an established power 'must' clash, it is maintained that our goal should be to share global power with a stronger Japan and Germany, instead of concluding that we must collide (P109:5), it is imperative that the United-States start viewing Japan as an equal, rather than continue the little brother treatment (P113:3), as it is pointed out that from this view the trading situation has generated unneeded frictions (P122:3), in terms of blaming solely Japan: I regret that there are many who are too quick to point a finger at Japan, to blame Japan for all our trade woes (P73:110).*

In this context, and contrary to the internal chains of equivalence, Congress itself is explicitly criticized: *I am aware that most Members can hardly wait to cast an anti-Japan vote (P27:9). In opposition to this it is argued that Japan should not be blamed for our trading ills (P30:10), as much of the trade problem is America's fault. We got careless and sloppy and the quality of our products has not always been what it should (P31:37). In this sense, there are calls to*

start treating Japan as an equal nation. [...] To listen to many of my colleagues in Congress [...] you would think Japan is the same as Grenada.³⁵⁰ Japan is not Grenada. Japan is a major world power [...] Can you imagine the reaction of Americans if a foreign nation wanted us to translate our telephone regulations – say Judge Green's opinions – into Japanese at our expense? [...] Can you imagine the reaction if the Diet passed a resolution 500 to zip threatening the United States with trade retaliation? We'd go nuts. Yet that is what we are demanding of the Japanese [...] "No American effort since the Occupation has dug into the guts of the Japanese system as we have done in the past year" [...] Let's stop tearing apart the guts of an ally [...] Let's admit that the Japanese are lousy importers and we can't make them buy from us (P31:37).

³⁵⁰ The U.S. orchestrated and led an invasion to Grenada in 1983.

The U.S. is also criticized as hypocritical when it comes to the practice of free trade: *as free trade bastion, United States isn't half as pure as many people think [...] it is indeed hypocritical to preach what we don't practice* (P35:48; P37:19; P40:13; P63:19; P151:15), and more explicitly: *it is an old trick to look at other countries and judge them by their actions while we judge ourselves by our motives* (P55:138), and in this sense it is even maintained that *all too often in this debate the term "fair" has been a code word for protectionism* (P37:18) which again almost sounds like articulating free trade as an empty signifier. Furthermore it is argued that *we tend to forget that Americans buy Japanese products because they prefer them. We should devote more time to finding out why the Japanese consumer [...] does not prefer American products* (P42:44). It is critiqued that *the United States is proposing to undermine confidence in the revolutionary world economic system it did so much to create [...] trade wars not only endanger the consumer [...] but also tend to endanger us all* (P49:15). In this sense, it is argued that *the ironic consequence of Japan-bashing in this body today [on the FSX issue] is in effect America-bashing* (P71:33).

In this respect, the mitigating voices also explicitly criticize the WWII allusions, as in statements like: *World War II ended nearly 45 years ago. This is not a trade war issue* (P73:118). Or: *It is so easy to paint with a broad brush and say because the Japanese were as they were in World War II [...] that they will always be that way* (P71:65). Accordingly, references to history with Japan are also made in another way: *Let us also not forget history. One of the causes of World War II was the trade isolation that the rest of the world forced upon Japan. Are we not wise to learn the lessons of history and draw the Japanese to us, instead of spurning them again into supernationalism?* (P71:77).

The quite farsighted argument is even brought up, that Japan should not be turned into 'just another enemy':

Ever since that time we have known which side we were on. We were against Imperial Japan, the Nazis, Communist China, and the Communist Soviet Union. But, Mr. President, what if things really are changing? What if the threat from the Soviet Union is decreasing? Then we can no longer define ourselves by saying what we are not. We have to begin to say what we are, and I know there are a lot of people in the political process in this country who will find that very disquieting. They will be reaching for an enemy somewhere. I hope that they will not be looking at Japan (P73:62, in 1989).

On the same line it is further emphasized that *I also know there remains in America strains of the anti-Japanese virus created during World War II [...] We must be careful not to excuse our own failures by laying them at the doors of competitors* (P92:27).

Balanced views on emotions in Congress

The most thoughtful voices take an introspective view on the fervor of the debates on Japan already in the 1980s, and articulate Congress itself as overly emotional, which is criticized for its potential of unreasonably triggering protectionist measures and a trade conflict:

If we unleash protectionist actions based on emotional response, we will hurt ourselves and the world trading system (P27:10). I was frankly appalled that Congress could be so hasty, so shortsighted, and so irresponsible [...] instead of facing its responsibilities and acting to correct the trade deficit, Congress chose to lash out at U.S. allies, hanging the blame for our dilemma around their necks (P30:10).

It is argued that *this frustration is the wrong way to go [...] we are not setting an example for the world. We are following the example of Japan (P50:14, 39)*. Again, references are made to the 1930s: *Yesterday's Wall Street Journal contains the best analysis [...] of the dangers which lurk in the current mindless itch in Congress to start a worldwide trade war [...] "Toying with Depression" [...] (P67:15)*. 'Japan-bashing' is explicitly criticized in the context of the FSX-debates: *If I allowed my frustration [...] to dictate opposition to the agreement [the FSX] [...] I would simply be engaging in the popular sport of 'Japan bashing' (P71:70)*. Quite figuratively the U.S. is criticized as overreacting: *We ought not to behave like a bull in the ring, charging mindlessly every time we see the Japanese flag waved before us (P71:112)*. *It [a vote contra the FSX-agreement] may give Members an opportunity to cast an anti-Japan vote, but it does not do anything because it only expresses the sense of Congress [...] (P71:114)*.

In turn, arguments are voiced for staying with 'pure economics': *we certainly should, under no circumstances in this country – we settled that 100 years ago – let prejudice enter into our thoughts in our public affairs, or even personal dealings, this is an economic matter (P93:11)*, as it is pointed out that *the contentiousness and suspicion which has been brought in our economic and commercial relations has clearly infected our political and security relationship (P95:2)*.

On the other side there are also attempts at understanding the emotions, as in this exemplary statement worth quoting at length:

As far as Congress is concerned Japan accounts for virtually 100% of the worry and frustration prompted by the imbalance. The result is an increasingly angry and even ugly congressional mood that threatens not only to damage U.S.-Japan relations but to bring considerable harm to American consumers as well. If the mood that these attitudes reflect is not entirely rational, least of

all in urging punitive actions, neither is it entirely unprovoked. Japan has indeed stubbornly resisted the kind of liberalization of its import policies that could ease the trade imbalance. That resistance, though, hardly makes what Congress is threatening to do any more sensible or any more beneficial to Americans. Congress, upset about the overall size of the trade deficit but unsure of what to do about it, has become especially agitated by Japan's posture in trade negotiations. But in its alarm Congress is cranking up to force measures that, while they would certainly harm Japan, would be unmistakably self-wounding to America. The deficit has swollen to its current size mainly because the dollar is so strong. That strength makes American goods more expensive abroad and foreign cheaper here. Bashing Japan is clearly not an effective or responsible way to address this larger issue (P30:10).

And it is generally conceded throughout the whole timeframe that *there is a lot of resentment in this Chamber about Japan (P71:103; P83:5),*

many of the speeches today understandably have been filled with emotion [...] I understand the sense of their frustration and their emotion [but] this is not the time to reorder the entire relationship with Japan [...] that [...] will be historically a very bad mistake and very shortsighted at a time when Senators want to vent their emotions [...] (P73:65f.).

But finally, even in these quite balanced statements, Japan's alleged unfairness is often attributed not only to the government, but to 'the Japanese people':

Congress is reacting more out of anger and frustration than on the basis of economic logic. But the Japanese should understand that the true basis of this frustration is the sense that Japan as a government and as a people are being unfair in their support of policies that restrict American products from Japanese markets (P48:23).

And, more critically towards Japan, but still calling for negotiations: *The Hill's exploding animosity is understandable. The Japanese have indeed behaved selfishly, even arrogantly; their bland insouciance is insufferable [...] Before we enact retaliatory laws, let us talk a little longer (P63:19).*

Summary of intensifications and mitigations towards Japan

The intensifications and mitigations – i.e. the aims at strengthening or weakening the chains of equivalence and difference – in the case of Japan both are for the most part articulated through 'war rhetoric'. The intensifications evoke an economic war with Japan being in the role of the

WWII-Pearl Harbor enemy, Pearl Harbor becoming both a metaphor for war, as well as for 'unfairness'. The U.S. short hand perspective is repeated in war terms as well, like in expressions about 'being on the defensive or 'hoisting the white flag". The mitigating arguments too are to some extent voiced through war rhetoric, either by warning of a future 'WWIII' as consequence of protectionist retaliation, or in terms of warnings about taking unwise decisions 'in the heat of the battle' etc. The internal criticisms both towards Congress itself and the executive are likewise in part voiced in an intensified, war-like manner. In terms of content, as follows from the 'definition' of the categories of intensification and mitigation, the arguments remain the same as in the other categories, for instance the executive is critiqued for not being assertive enough in acting against a U.S. decline, Japan in its 'difference' would leave no choice but to retaliate etc. On the other hand, the rhetoric in U.S.-Japan relations is also explicitly criticized in general for its unnecessarily inflammatory character, and there are calls for an end to WWII allusions and articulations of Japan as enemy. Meanwhile, there remain attempts at understanding and explaining or contextualizing this outburst of emotions, by calling for both sides to show understanding for the perspective of the other one, and recognizing reasons and responsibilities for the economic situation on both sides.

7.3. Intensifications towards China – *evil knows no resting place*

Towards China one of the major lines of intensifications is voiced in statements that contrast the 'liberal' U.S. with 'communist' China, as will be shown in the following subchapters. This mostly happens in connection with a criticism of the U.S. itself, by emphasizing U.S. 'liberal' values on the one hand, and contrasting them with 'commercial interests', and criticizing the latter. This not only strengthens the external chains of equivalence towards China, but also the internal ones in the values versus interests debates, that are aimed at critiquing the liberal theory of history-perspective. In line with this view, U.S. identity towards China is articulated as confrontational and exclusive.

In the most intensified statements China is designated straight forwardly as 'evil' to an extent that was not the case with Japan. However, again it is always the 'Chinese regime' that is addressed, not 'the Chinese people', as when China is designated as *a remorseless, ambitious, amoral, self-confident, even cocky, communist dictatorship that is bent on achieving regional dominance throughout the Far East [...] a China which is not at peace with its own people will not*

be at peace with America (P126:11). China is articulated as not trustworthy and potential change is ruled out: *These things don't change, and unfortunately, neither has the People's Republic of China. Despite all their words, despite all their promises, their actions speak louder* (P137:58). Statements like *they are the enemy of every freedom-loving person in the world* (P137:68) aim at extending the perspective the U.S. is articulating itself from, as well as the actual 'problem', beyond U.S.-China relations. The Chinese government is nominated as *these butchers of Beijing* (P162:2), and *this rogue, vicious dictatorship [that] commits murder [...] And the proponents of engagement are worried about us making unfriendly acts* (P176:32). China is ascribed the *desire to wage economic warfare against America* (P181:1). The end of the Cold War as 'progress of liberty' is contrasted with China's 'backwardness':

But evil knows no resting place. The cold war is over. And still how many have yet to taste the fruit of freedom? For there is a regime in the world today that runs against the tide of history; that denies liberty and human dignity to its people; a regime whose brutal repression at home betrays its intentions abroad; a regime that aspires to superpower status. I am speaking of Communist China (P186:1).

When it comes to China as an economic counterpart, it is articulated as *the dragon stands knocking at our door [...] do we permanently give it free access inside, when in the past it has broken its promises, stolen our technology, compromised our security? [...] China has been promising economic concessions to buy its way into the WTO* (P137:88).

The parallels to the WWII allegations with respect to Japan are articulations of China being like or even 'worse' than the Nazis³⁵¹, that come to stand as "universal symbol of evil" (cf. Hoenicke Moore 2015, 143), and more concretely as a metaphor for the ultimate absence of anything having to do with 'liberalism' in connection to China: *This policy [...] is eerily reminiscent of the Nazi eugenic program [...] The Chinese Laogai [...] are forced labor camps similar to the Nazi work camps of another era* (P145:22f.; P201:4).³⁵² *There is no moral or practical difference between trading with the PRC dictatorship and trading with the Nazis* (P125:13). And, in an even

³⁵¹ For the omnipresence of 'the Nazis' in foreign policy debates and in 'American culture' in general, see Hoenicke Moore (2015).

³⁵² The issue of the use of prison labor for manufacturing export goods was frequently criticized for both, being an unfair trade practice – as it disadvantaged U.S. goods produced by paid workers – as well as for human rights concerns. The prohibition of the import of prison-made goods goes back to the (Smoot-Hawley) Tariff Act of 1930 and its Section 307. The 'Laogai' ('reform through labor') in China can detain individuals for up to three years without a trial or court action. They received considerable notice in the U.S. particularly after a prisoner – Wu Hongda who later became an American citizen under the name Harry Wu – escaped and published a book in which he compared the Laogai to the Soviet Gulags and Nazi concentration camps. While approving PNTR for China in 2000, Congress for instance also mandated a task force to annually report on the export of prison labor goods (cf. Gagliano 2014, 140, 145).

more intensified way: *Most of us have seen the movie, 'Schindler's List'. What is going on in China is similar: factories churn out goods made with slave labor (P125:91). We may be seeing in China the first true fascist society on the model of Nazi Germany (P206:1).* In this vein the liberal theory of history and its allegedly 'liberalizing' effects, that are however missing with China, are called into question in an intensified way:

[...] we do not treat bloody dictatorships in the same way that we treat democratic nations. Those people who are suggesting that we continue MFN-status [...] tell us that something will happen by magic, all of a sudden we will reach a critical mass because there has been so much trade going on, and the prosperity has increased that the people then will demand freedom, and communism and dictatorship will crumble. That is absolute nonsense [...] Nazi Germany did not have a great human rights program simply because they were a prosperous Western country (P145:39).

And parallels are also drawn not only to Germany, but also to pre-WWII Japan: *[...] as Japan and Germany bloodily illustrated in this century, nationalism plus economic might without human rights is not the road to democracy; it is the road to fascism (P162:9). We do not make a liberal by hugging a Nazi (P195:7).* These kinds of intensified statements aim at recalling how Japan became an enemy of the U.S., and how that allegedly would be the course of China in the future: *Did this [becoming highly westernized] make Japan and Germany any less a threat to world peace? No. Today, China is, yes, advancing economically, but the money is being used by the militaristic elite to prepare for war and to attack the United States (P138:17).* And referring to Japan in the 1920s more concretely:

In many ways, we are repeating history. In the 1920s, Japanese militarists wiped out Japan's fledgling democratic movement. That it did. In doing so, it set a course for Japan. Japan then was a racist power which believed it, too, had a right to dominate Asia. Japanese militarists also knew that only the United States of America stood in their way. This is deja vu all over again [...]. The Communist Chinese, too, are militarists who seek to dominate Asia. They think they are racially superior to everyone (P202:9).

Another frequent intensification in terms of China's 'evilness' – besides comparisons to Nazi-Germany – is to liken China to the, illiberal, *and* also communist, Soviet Union: *But what is our excuse now? Now that the Soviet Union has collapsed, what is the urgency of maintaining business-as-usual with the likes of Beijing? (P126:11, here also referring to the argument of China as a potential 'ally' against the Soviet Union).* In this sense, it is claimed that *if during the Reagan years*

we had done with the former Soviet Union what we are doing with China, communism would still be alive and well because we would give Communist dictators in the former Soviet Union the money to stay in business (P138:9). As these statements show, as much as they aim at articulating a denunciation of communist China, they are also directed towards the internal proponents of engagement through trade, as it is brought up in the debates on MFN:

[...] no MFN was given to the Soviets under Ronald Reagan (P176:33). Would these people have wanted to give MFN to the Soviet Union when they were persecuting those of the Jewish faith and shutting down dissidents and doing all the bad things they were doing? [...] Yet they want to give MFN to China when they are doing all these terrible things in the 1990's, in the year 1997 (P180:2). We would never have given MFN to the Soviet Union [...] In the 1980's, Ronald Reagan called the Soviet Union the evil empire (P180:3).

These issues are further addressed in the following passages on self-criticism and criticism of the liberal theory of history.

Intensified self-criticisms – as violating both, *values* and *interests*

These self-criticisms address the values versus interests debates when it comes to the question of how to preserve U.S. identity as promoter of human rights, as well as as an economic power and role model. On the one hand, U.S. ideals are contrasted with China's 'evilness': *It is time for us to apply our long-held ideals regarding human rights [...] to our relationship with this Communist dictatorship whose deadly atheistic philosophy has no respect for human rights, indeed, no respect even for human life itself (P145:3).* On the other hand, U.S. business interests are criticized for betraying those ideals: *[...] many U.S. corporations collude with a communist tyranny to exploit workforce [...] our investments only serve to bolster a regime that is in direct contradiction to the funding principles of our Nation (P162:6).* In this intensified view, U.S. business practices are claimed to even hurt the Chinese people themselves, instead of helping them: *We should not sell the Chinese people into slavery just to bring trading profits into our district (P125:54).* In this respect the U.S. is criticized for potential hypocrisy (see also in what follows under the category of mitigation in chapter 7.4): *We should not reward a totalitarian regime that is run by a Communist party, a dictatorship [...] So let us not abandon our patriotic morals in favor of corporate profits (P137:56).* In this sense it is asked: *Is the United States truly the leader of the*

Free World? Or are we merely the 'moneybag democracy' the Chinese rulers contemptuously call us? (P176:18).

In relation to the question of MFN/PNTR it is argued that granting them to China contradicts both, values *and* interests: *This whole idea of PNTR with China is against the interest of the people of the United States, against our moral position* (P195:6f.). And when it comes to business interests: *This vote is whether we should be subsidizing big business to close down American factories and give that subsidy to them to open up factories in Communist China. It is an insult to the people of the United States* (P200:6). In this line of intensified argumentation the crackdown on Tiananmen square in 1989 is also brought up:

Our shortsighted policy of subsidized one-way trade crushes that goddess of liberty every bit as much as those Red Army tanks did 12 years ago (P202:11). *Let us reexamine our souls. Let us reexamine our policies [...]* *And when we recognize that and reach out with honesty and not for a quick buck, not just to make a quick buck and then get out [...]* (P202:12),

even though and especially as China is also seen as *a fantastic place to do business* (P204:8). Hence, these articulations antagonize China, but they also foster the internal chains of equivalence against 'pure business interests'.

On the other hand, like with Japan, the own trade policies are criticized for economic reasons, that are however rooted in 'communist' China's unfairness that the U.S. has failed to realize:

I have met the enemy, and he is us' [...] *I do not blame them. It is us, the United States. It is because of stupid trade policy by the U.S. Congress, this administration and past administrations [...]* *are these our newfound friends? Are we to fear China or are we to stand up for the American worker?* (P145:20).

And as with Japan it is argued that China is 'enjoying' at the U.S.' expense: *Pass the Bereuter bill and all Members will hear from the Communist will be laughs of doddering old rulers who will once again have put one over on Uncle Sam* (P125:53).³⁵³ Likewise, as with Japan, a potential future WWII is brought up, however, with China it is pictured not as a consequence of protectionism, but of 'free trade policy':

³⁵³ The Bereuter bill was aiming at an internal compromise in the debates on MFN in 1995, see Dumbaugh 1998, 27.

[...] the Congress of the United States, with American taxpayer dollars, is funding World War III [...] The last I heard, we were referred to around the world as Uncle Sam [...] the world is beginning to look at America as Uncle Sucker [...] And what we have done in the last 3 years, we not only reinvented Communism, we are now starting to subsidize it (P138:13).

Also, more broadly speaking, U.S. overspending is scrutinized, as it was referring to the trade deficit with Japan: *A Nation that buys more than they sell will go bankrupt, and a Nation that allows illegal trade destroys all American industry (P139:1)*. However, the general emphasis remains on China's unfairness: *How can we have normal trade relations with the most unfair trading nation on Earth? (P176:58)*. And this attribution, 'the most unfair trading nation on Earth' – that was also frequently voiced towards Japan – to China is linked back to the establishment of diplomatic relations with China by President Nixon: *Nixon, on his death bed, told writer William Safire that his China strategy may have created a Frankenstein [...] Our policy of MFN status or NTR has created a monster (P137:38)*. In this respect, the liberal theory of history and its proclamation of the transformative impact of economic policy are once more criticized (see also in what follows in the next sub-chapter): *If you have capitalism and Communists existing in China, it is the political death warrant of the Communist regime? I disagree (P137:68)*. *Our economic relationship with Communist China has been a disaster [...] (P195:5)*.

As with Japan, these intensified arguments are supposed to stand for calls for action (cf. Hoenicke Moore 143), both in terms of doing something about the trade situation, as in: *when are we going to sober up and get a competitive trade policy? (P136:19)*. *[...] it is time to put up or shut up (P146:4)*. But it is also about the challenge to U.S. identity: *We must make a decision today and it should be on the right side of history [...] Are we prepared to sell our souls? Are we prepared to butcher our conscience? Are we prepared to deny our shared values of freedom, justice and democracy? (P176:67)*. Reminiscent of the arguments about Japan leaving no other choice than retaliation for the U.S., it is claimed that: *It is time for America to take a stand and say no. We have suffered too much (P207:7)*.

It is upheld that otherwise, again as with Japan, according to this line of argumentation, the U.S. might be facing decline in a 'real' and in an 'ideal' sense: *We cannot even purchase anything without the label 'China' on it. I was offended July 4 when I took out of my pocket an American flag, and on it it said 'Made in China'. That is an outrage. We need to stop trading with these guys (P125:69)*. And referring to the 'moral authority of the U.S. it is claimed that:

Today China's economic power makes United States lectures about human rights imprudent. Within a decade, it will make them irrelevant. Within two decades, it will make them laughable. By then the Chinese may threaten to withhold MFN status from the United States unless we do more to improve living conditions in Detroit, Harlem, and South Central Los Angeles (P160:4).

And the U.S. itself is seen as contributing to this development: *We are, in fact, empowering a super dragon that is powerful enough some day to eat our assets (P176:37)*, while it is claimed that [...] *China is on record, according to the Pentagon, as referring to Uncle Sam as imperialist and, quote-unquote, "the enemy" (P200:13)*. Hence, China is explicitly articulated as an external threat: *A couple of things that I believe to be the most significant threats this Nation faces; one is an external threat, and that threat is the People's Republic of China (P201:1)*.

With regard to the argument on the U.S. 'contributing' to its own decline, this is also linked to articulating the threat of the buildup of the Chinese military with 'American trade dollars': *How many American jobs does this trade imbalance destroy, Mr. Speaker? And how much military weaponry does it buy for the rogue dictatorship in China? (P145:2)*. This argument is also brought forward in connection with the debates on MFN: *By granting MFN, we are granting China a built-in trade surplus with which China is embarking on a massive and dangerous military buildup which could someday threaten the lives of United States soldiers (P145:2)*, as it is claimed that *the Communist Chinese have used their \$80 billion that they have in annual trade surplus with the United States to modernize their military [...] They use that \$80 billion to buy technology to kill Americans (P138:5)*. In consequence: *We have essentially been arming and equipping our worst potential enemy and financing our own destruction (P202:3)*.

Criticisms of free trade and the liberal theory of history – appeasement towards China?

In line with the intensified criticisms of putting (commercial) interests first, those arguing for engagement in terms of the liberal theory of history are likened to policies of appeasement before WWII (P213:12)³⁵⁴, which is a strong internal intensification or part of the chains of equivalence, as – in order to establish the view of China as 'excluded other' in terms of the ultimate negation of U.S. liberal identity – it aims at articulating the proponents of engagement

³⁵⁴ In the context of U.S. policies towards Japan, Samuel Huntington draws this kind of parallel by arguing that Japan was waging an economic cold war against the U.S., and that "in the 1930s Chamberlain and Daladier did not take seriously what Hitler said in *Mein Kampf*. [...] Americans would do well to take [...] seriously both Japanese declarations of their goal of achieving dominance and the strategy they are pursuing to achieve that goal" (Huntington 1993, 76).

On the appeasement metaphor see also Hoenicke Moore (2015, 142).

in line with missing attempts at preventing the rise of Adolf Hitler in Europe: [...] *I am not suggesting that the People's Republic of China in the 1994 version of the genocidal Nazi Germany. But [...] [t]he world should not be silent in 1994 as it was in 1933* (P146:52). And arguing explicitly against the thought that free trade would lead to political liberalization:

*Do I believe that business is necessarily going to change them? [...] I am not a mercantile Republican Cato libertarian [...]*³⁵⁵ *I have been to the Holocaust Museum and I saw the people that made the same argument with Nazi Germany in 1933 and 1935 and 1937. Do a little more business and maybe it will change them* (P126:12).

The exemplary argument related to appeasement is usually put as follows (for this reason, quoted at full length from statements in the years 2000 and 2001):

I mentioned at the outset Winston Churchill, who took his stand against his country's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain who had visited with Adolf Hitler in Munich, then returning to London proclaiming there would be "peace in our time" and that Britain need not fear Nazi Germany. There was that one man who stood up and said no, Winston Churchill, who was to lead the free world into combat in one of the worst tyrannies history has ever known. We must not repeat the mistake of Britain's Prime Minister seven decades ago (P136:50). *We are doing exactly what happened prior to World War II [...] They gave more commerce to Germany, while Hitler built up his military [...] We are doing the same thing with China* (P137:71). *Trade does not bring freedom [...] Trade does not bring peace. Before World War II, the largest trading relationship in the world was not Nazi Germany's with England. Did that stop totalitarianism's rise?* (P137:127). [...] *this reminds me of the time when Winston Churchill used to rise in the House of Commons to talk about the threat of Nazi Germany. They did not listen to Winston Churchill; and frankly, I do not think the country is listening today* (P138:20). [...] *I read nowhere in history that if we treat the Nazis or the Japanese militarists as anything but dictatorships and threats where it turns out beneficial to the democratic countries of the world. I do not read where trade with dictatorships has lead to peace* (P138:53).

In addition to criticizing the faith in any pacifying, democratizing or liberalizing effects of trade, the alleged strive for profits is also condemned in terms of 'profits for every sake': *There is money to be made by buying cheap in China and selling dear in the rest of the world. Well, let us test the theory of the modern day Chamberlains that rely on the accommodating rather than confronting China* (P201:2). And again it is argued that *we will be on the wrong side of the American people,*

³⁵⁵ Referring to the Cato Institute, a self-declared non-partisan (market) liberal/libertarian U.S. think tank.

and we will be on the wrong side of history, and we [...] will have the same feelings that Chamberlain had when he returned from Nazi Germany and said, "We have peace in our times, go home and get a good sleep," and then the bombs began (P195:20).

The liberal theory of history is also criticized more generally, by contrasting its goals of liberalizing China with what is articulated as 'reality' of China:

We have been told that if we engage with China, that we will liberalize China. We will make them more like us. They will become more Democratic [...] It has gone the opposite direction. We have been dealing with gangsters, and right now we are talking about putting gangsters into the chamber of commerce (P195:6).

As with Japan, it is argued that time has already proven the 'engagement theory' to be wrong: *Wake up, America [...] How much proof do we need that the so-called engagement theory is a total failure? [...] The mainland of China is controlled by a rigid, Stalinistic Communist party (P202:1). Today, many are told that the communist Chinese regime will one day change. We've heard this for 19 years (P218:1).*

While the red line of the intensifications towards China is also directed internally against the proponents of the LTH-perspective, as the following subchapter shows, the main line of the mitigations in turn endorses this view as ultimately preserving U.S. identity – that is articulated as accommodating and inclusive – through eventually changing China.

7.4. Mitigations towards China – *China is not the enemy*

The mitigations are first and foremost articulated for or from the perspective of the proponents of the liberal theory of history, hence calling for engagement and emphasizing the U.S.' inclusive role and 'mission' in it. In terms of aiming at dissolving the antagonisms, the mitigations are mostly coupled with self-criticism, calling for a fair treatment of China with reference to history, and emphasizing the importance of the Sino-U.S. relationship.

Generally those voices arguing for or from the perspective of the liberal theory of history criticize the linkage between human rights and trade policy in terms of revoking MFN to improve human rights as counter productive:

Some Members in Congress have pointed accusing fingers at China, criticizing her for the lack of individual freedoms and democracy that we in the West take as God-given rights. Some have moved for economic punishment of China for alleged human rights shortfalls by withdrawing her most-favored-nation [MFN] trading status. I join those Members of Congress that question the wisdom of a China policy linking trade with human rights. Restricting trade and access to the United States will not promote--but instead, undercut--efforts supporting democracy in China. It is of paramount importance that China's awe-inspiring progress toward a free market economy be supported by the United States. History has proven time and time again that economic success is a precursor to the growth of democratic reform, political pluralism and protection of individual rights. [...]They know that free trade fosters the creation of a superhighway of information, ideas and communication--whereby western values shall inevitably replace Communist ideology (P113:3f., in 1994).

The necessary connection, or inevitability of economic liberalization leading to political one as well, is frequently articulated over the whole time frame, in order to strengthen the 'theory' and argument: [...] *the best way to promote progress is to stay engaged, to encourage China's economic reform and integration into the world economy. History has shown that economic freedom inevitably leads to personal freedom (P114:8, in 1994).* It is maintained that [...] *business plays a positive role in exposing the Chinese people to ideas and skills necessary to succeed in a free market. Prosperity and expanded contact with American citizens is the best way to nurture the growth of democracy in China (P146:23, in 1994).* Trade is linked to the promotion of U.S. values in statements like: [...] *trade between our countries does more than enrich business [...] they are exposed to our political ideas and our democratic values [...] The link between economic reform and democratic progress is not an illusory one (P157:1, in 1994).* Furthermore, it is claimed that *economic success fires the engine of reform that inevitably leads to greater political liberalization and improved human rights (P158:2, in 1994),* and trade is called a facilitator of 'ideas': *Let's keep the lines of free ideas open through trade (P125:75, in 1995). It is our belief that in a world in which they are free to trade is a world in which they can find greater freedom, greater peace, greater prosperity (P126:3, in 1995).* And in this context China's progress is also linked to the spread of 'U.S. consumer culture': *Twelve years ago, the images we saw from China were of students standing in front of tanks. Now the images we see on our TV screens are of students standing in front of Internet cafes and McDonalds (P200:7, in 2001).*

In line with this accommodating argumentation it is maintained that the U.S. should further engage China and act as a guide for its development. This line of understanding would also preserve U.S. (inclusive and accommodating) identity, in terms of the liberal theory of history and American exceptionalism, beyond the Sino-U.S. relationship:

Rather than continue to hold China hostage to threats of isolation, the United States should strive to form a closer relationship based upon mutual respect and mutual benefit. Forging stronger, comprehensive ties between the West and China is in the best interests of the world community, and is the most effective way to promote democracy and protection of human rights in China (P113:5; P145:4).

Accordingly, the U.S. would act as facilitator of China's liberalization:

We need to develop a long-term vision of what our relationship should be [...] it has to be rooted in a goal of being a friend, of helping China transform itself into a full-fledged modern, free market economy [...] the U.S. has to stay engaged in China [...] We should have an expanding commercial relationship (P114:7).

In this respect, in order to foster the perspective of engagement, the mitigations are sometimes articulated in an intensified way, as in: *China is not the enemy. Instead of threatening Beijing with the trade equivalent of a nuclear strike, we should be promoting measures to build confidence into the relationship as well as throughout the region (P152:1, the 'nuclear strike' referring to revoking MFN). And, in a more balanced way: The United States must develop a policy that encourages China to be a friend and a valued trading partner, rather than an adversary isolated by comprehensive economic sanctions (P176:3).*

In this sense, China and its future is at times also articulated as 'dependent' on the U.S., so as to once more maintain or preserve U.S. identity as guide and role model: *A rising China need not threaten United States interests. In fact, China cannot achieve the economic growth, international respect, and regional stability it seeks without a workable relationship with the United States [...] (P182:1). Furthermore, in this view the U.S. should face the situation and make the best out of it: China is emerging as a great power. We could not halt that evolution if we wanted to. But we can and should try to shape the kind of power China will become (P188:1). In this sense granting China MFN/PNTR is also articulated as 'business as usual': *Granting China normal trading status – as we have done for 17 years – is a natural consequence of our policy of engagement. It is the routine way nations conduct trade (P188:3).**

In line with American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, the global role of the U.S. in relation to its policies towards China is emphasized:

This is about America in the next century. As I believe the last century was about the United States and the Soviet Union and the military powers that existed then, the Cold War, this new century is

about trade and about our relationship with China, leading the world toward human rights through openness and engagement (P137:56).

In this sense, the global importance of the U.S.-Chinese relationship and the constructive potential of the U.S. role in it are underlined: *If we alienate China today, we will regret it for decades (P156:1). [...] we can never turn China into a model of constitutional democracy if we isolate them economically (P194:3)*, as it is maintained that:

The world's most important relationship over the next 20 years will be between the United States, the world's greatest military power and economic power, and China, the world's oldest culture and largest population [...] The forces of change and reform will win out sooner if the United States is engaged [...] (P195:14).

Even the controversial case of Unocal (see chapter 6.2) is from this perspective seen in line with the economic-interdependence-leading-to-peace-argument:

Some have raised concerns that the purchase of Unocal by a company tied to the Chinese government will create security problems for the United States. I would argue the opposite. International trade and economic activity tends to diminish, not increase tensions between countries. Increased economic relationships between the United States and China make military conflict much less likely, as it becomes in neither country's interest to allow tensions to get out of hand (P207:17).

Self-criticisms

From the accommodating perspective, the own policies are criticized in several respects, again aimed at dissolving the chains of equivalence by emphasizing or articulating the chains of difference and an engaging approach towards China:

We need to encourage, cajole and coax the Chinese forward, instead of blustering, threatening and shouting at them in public. Above all, we need to treat our Chinese friends – as we would any friends – with dignity and fairness [...] They fear the U.S. will not be a constant and consistent partner and will not treat them with the dignity and fairness they feel they deserve (P114:7).

When it comes to the issue of trade, for example in the context of the MFN-debates in 1994, it is argued that *[...] we are the only country in the world considering trade sanctions [...] Could you*

imagine if another country sought to impose trade sanctions on us because of our nagging crime problem? At the very last, we would laugh at them (P145:36).

There are also attempts at differentiating and not seeing China as ‘monolithic communist regime’: *By threatening China overtly, we play into the hands of the hard-liners there [...] No Chinese leader could survive for a day if they were to be viewed as kowtowing to United States pressure (P146:6).* In this respect, MFN is elevated to the status of the cornerstone of Sino-American relations: *This administration and this Congress should stop playing games with MFN. It is time to stop toying with the linchpin of Sino-American relations and make decisions that advance the national interest of the American people as well as the humanitarian well-being of the Chinese people (P146:17).* And it is even self critically maintained that *during the debate on the MFN status of China, statements were made on the floor of the House which claimed that although China needs us, we don’t need them [...] In this globally interdependent economy, it is highly likely we will need China in the future (P146:74).*

Also, while not ‘bashing’ the liberal theory of history-perspective and its proponents – what is also happening through the intensified perspective – some voices try to articulate it in a more moderate, contextual, and again also universal way, in terms of trying to accommodate for the differential positions on it:

Of course, United States policy on MFN will not determine China’s future, despite continuing illusions of American omnipotence in some quarters [...] (P147:1). We cannot let the extraordinarily important and complex Chinese-American relationship be dominated by a single factor [...] [it] needs to be placed on the balance beam, not just our commercial interests, important as those are [...] (P147:2). [...] why [is it] that most Asians take China’s side in the matter of human rights. Perhaps it is in part because other nations resent American preaching [...] the United States should not be moralizing about human rights in other nations [...] (P147:2). Revoking MFN-status will only be counterproductive to America’s long-term interests and push China back into a pre-Boxer rebellion resistance to Western interaction (P148:2). MFN only guarantees China the same low tariff rates that are enjoyed by nearly every nation in the world, including Iran and Iraq – not exactly the world’s best practitioners of human rights (P148:2). [...] let us understand that we can promote our values and ideals without destroying our interests or disrespecting a proud culture [...] the Chinese-American relationship will be the most crucial bilateral relationship the United States will have in the 21st century. We should now construct a policy worthy of both nations (P157:4).

In this sense, the intentions of those aiming at revoking MFN if there was no improvement on human rights are articulated as well-meaning, although ‘outdated’:

[...] the policy of linkage, although rooted in the best of intentions, is outdated and ill-suited to the promotion of the totality of our interests in China. It is [...] principally a policy shaped by the image of tanks and protesters in Tiananmen Square [...] It ignores [...] our need to have a viable relationship with China in the post-cold war period, not a cold war relationship (P149:5; P152:1).

An 'updated' policy in this view would consist of treating China as a partner: *But treating China as an equal partner of the world will give us much greater moral authority to improve their domestic human rights that the current policy being proposed by many people throughout this country (P152:2).* Which finally in this line of reasoning comes back to promoting the economic relationship:

If the United States wants political reform, it should promote Chinese economic reform. Economic growth does not necessarily nourish individual rights and the rule of law, but at least it creates the economic conditions in which progress toward political change might be possible. Reconsideration of the MFN issue to avoid injuring U.S. exports to China oversimplifies these issues and also invites moralizers to argue that the issue is one of greed against morality (P153:2).

Against U.S. hypocrisy and bashing China

At times, as with Japan, the U.S. is also generally criticized for being hypocritical in upholding its identity as a free trader and promoter of human rights: *We want, today, to target China, because we want to have eight bills bashing China so we can achieve some political mileage out of it (P175:9, in 1997), as on the other hand: It is just hard to see what our history of doing business with dictators in South America and around the world, including the former Soviet Union, than how with China we find this new high moral standard in dealing with them (P176:45).* Examples are for instance the debates on prohibiting the imports of Chinese goods produced in Laogais (see chapter 7.3):

I love all this discussion about slave labor, and I hope some of the people are listening to this. I do not know of any State in the United States that does not have slave labor. All of us in our States produce goods that are sold in commerce that we Americans consume that were made by slave labor in our own prisons. It has been against the law so long as I can remember to import any of those kinds of goods in the United States (P167:8).

In this sense it is argued that [...] *this body and this Nation must also carry the same standards of human rights for other nations with which we deal [...] As a nation we can demand no less of ourselves and with those who are members of the United Nations and with whom we conduct business* (P172:2). Another self-criticism concerning hypocrisy addresses the context of the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997: *While China is undergoing accusations of undermining democracy in Hong Kong, I find it ironic that no one said anything during the 150 years of British Imperial rule when democracy never existed in Hong Kong* (P190:2ff.; P193:8).

Furthermore, these mitigating voices call for viewing China's development in its timeframe and historical context, and for not forgetting about U.S.-history and the development of individual liberties: *So when people are upset over a 10- or 20- or a 30-year period of the failure of China to take a foreign concept, the inherent worth of the individual, and fundamentally restructure their society, I would say, take a look at our history* (P137:51, referring to the subsequent introduction of the end of slavery, women's voting rights and 'one man, one vote'). In this sense it is emphasized that [...] *in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. It does no good to evaluate progress toward freedom in China by comparing it with the United States or any other democracy. Instead, a historical perspective is needed* (P179:2). Also, as it was argued that 'Japan is not Grenada', now it is maintained that [...] *China is not Cuba [...] It is senseless for the United States to treat the Asian colossus as anything else than a superpower likely to emerge later this century* (P195:38).

As for the role of the U.S. government in economic policies like currency and trade issues, its interference is also criticized as hypocritical, as in the earlier arguments about the Plaza Accords of 1985 with Japan: [...] *there are often unforeseen consequences when we demand that foreign governments manipulate their currency to U.S. 'advantage'* (P142:35). And also in the debates on Unocal criticisms are voiced that remind of the debate on the U.S. executive being accused of 'managing' the Japanese auto industry:

[...] Why is the federal government involving itself in the sale of a private American company? Do we really believe we have this kind of authority? I would remind my colleagues that Unocal is a private company with shareholders and a board of directors. That is the governance of the company--not the U.S. Congress. Do we really believe that we should be the real board of governors of Unocal? If in the United States a private company does not have the right to be sold on the free market, should we really be criticizing the lack of freedom in China? [...] I do not support subsidizing the Chinese government's economic activities. But I also do not support the U.S. Congress involving itself in the private economic transactions of U.S. companies [...]we should not criticize a lack of economic

freedom in China when Congress, as evidenced in this legislation, attempts to restrict the economic freedom of American citizens (P207:16f).

In terms of China's WTO membership it is argued that China had to shoulder a big burden: *Since China joined the WTO, do my colleagues know how many laws we had to change and pass in America to go there? Zero. Do my colleagues know how many laws China had to change, laws and regulations, to enter the WTO? 1,100. To get into the WTO, to join countries of fair trade, China had to change 1,100 laws (P209:23).* In this sense, the own (lacking) policies are criticized: *[...] the best that my friends in the majority can do is bash China a little bit and not do anything about our oil addiction, not do anything about diversifying our sources of energy, not do anything about the reckless fiscal policy that puts us at their mercy (P207:8).*

Balanced views on engagement and containment

The balanced voices on the one hand criticize the confrontational perspective, while again trying to articulate the liberal theory of history as accommodating both aspects of U.S. identity: its commitment to values as well as to economic principles and goals.

In line with this view, treating China in an antagonizing way is articulated as potentially self-fulfilling prophecy: *If we treat China as an enemy, it will react as an enemy (P167:49). Americans are vigorously advocating the 'China threat theory' (P168:1).* In this context 'the Americans' in general become the target of criticism: *Americans have a tendency to tell China what to do instead of trying to understand what China needs and how it is to China's interests to do some things. And it is time we learned that this will not be the most effective method of encouraging change in China (P170:3).* In this sense it is argued against an 'either or' policy, but for an inclusive one: *The choice is often framed, simplistically, as one between two mutually exclusive paths: containment or engagement. But the relationship between these two great nations is far more complicated than that (P182:1).* And as earlier with Japan, now with China the 'China-bashing' is explicitly critiqued:

Our two countries, despite our differences, share many interests [...] This is the most difficult bilateral relationship to understand and to manage, even in the best of times – and right now we are in the midst of another China-bashing season [...] politicians and pundits have identified China as America's next adversary. They have concluded that China will never play by the rules, and it is useless to try to integrate it into global political, security, and economic regimes. But is China a threat? [...] China is simply not in our league (P188:2).

The latter statement is in line with attempts at preserving the U.S. superior standing, but also with a critique of an exclusive and antagonizing view on China ('that will never play by the rules'), as: *history is littered with the uninformed and ineffective responses of an established power towards a rising power, and vice versa* (P193:3). *Should the United States look upon China as an enemy and therefore seek to weaken or divide it, thereby creating a reality we seek to avoid? [...] To move in this direction would become a self-fulfilling prophecy* (P193:9). As with Japan, the balanced view criticizes the at times heated character of the debates: *[...] It is not to turn a trade vote into a referendum on how we feel about China* (P136:6). Once more as with Japan, it is argued that the picture is more complex: *[...] I think one of the things that really frustrates us is that we are accustomed to quick fixes. In our political culture, we expect to be able to fix problems overnight [...] Throughout its 4000 year history, China has resisted outside influences. As much as we would like to, we can't change China overnight* (P136:6). In this sense it is conceded that *Chinese society will never look just like American society* (P136:11). Furthermore, like with Japan there are calls to stick to 'economic issues':

Many of these are good faith amendments. Many of these I agree with totally in principle. I voted against every single one of them [...] Because, frankly, they don't belong on this bill. This is a trade bill. Let us address the issues of human rights, workers, environmental concerns, and proliferation by China through a variety of other approaches (P136:31).

And in this sense the view is put forward that *[...] we should not let our frustration with the benefits of engagement lead us to undermine that policy by delaying or denying PNTR in a vain quest to change China overnight. PNTR is not a "reward" as the opponents of PNTR suggest* (P136:64, 97, 116). And again as with Japan it is argued that *most of this is tinted with "protect America" as the argument. America does not really need protection. America needs the opening of markets around the world [...]* (P209:18).

Like the voices criticizing drawing parallels with Japan in WWII, the chains of equivalence likening China to the Soviet Union are also explicitly critiqued: *China does not pose the threat to us that the Soviet Union did* (P149:10), and the U.S. are called upon to update their assessments of China and the end of the Cold War:

[...] the linkage of MFN and human rights [...] embodies two aspects of what I call 'old-think', both of which should join the cold war on the dust heap of history [...] The Soviet Union is gone, and Jackson-

*Vanik*³⁵⁶ should have gone with it [...] George Bush has left office, and the human rights-MFN linkage should have left with him (P150:2, in 1994).

In this line of reasoning, the past with the Soviet Union should not be invoked in the relationship with China: *There are those in this country [...] who are unconsciously pushing Sino-American relations into an adversarial position, reminiscent of the days of the Soviet Union* (P170:4). And more explicitly:

The argument du jour is that China is our next Cold War adversary, and since the United States used trade sanctions against the Soviet Union in a successful Cold War campaign, the same strategy should be applied to China. This line of thinking is fundamentally flawed [...] The Soviet Union earned the Ronald Reagan label, 'evil empire'. Chinese foreign policy, even with its distressing proliferation policies, is in a different league altogether (P179:3, in 1997). *China is not what the former Soviet Union was – an ideological and military expansionist threat to democracies around the world, that was also closed to external trade* (P190:2).

In a sense, what in the arguments against confrontation with Japan is the metaphor of 'Smoot Hawley' is the Cold War with China: *The last thing we need is a new Cold War with China* (P136:59; P204:8). *I do not want to go back to the Cold War [...] I do not think the United States should be the Big Brother of the world. I do not think we have all the answers in the world, as well* (P138:20). And again it is emphasized that also for 'technological' reasons, China is not the Soviet Union:

Those voices in the U.S. now calling for America to "stick it to China" and to "teach them a lesson" sound as silly as the China People's Daily hectoring America [...] A cold war with Russia, a country that made tractors that were more valuable as scrap steel and TV's that blew up when you turned them on, was one thing. A cold war with one-fifth of humanity, with an economy growing at 10 percent a year, is another (P203:2, in 2001).

Furthermore, as with the historical arguments about Japan, also with China there are voices that criticize the 'use' of history in these debates:

Americans also need to use the right historical model. China is not bent on international conquest. Beijing may wish to dominate the region, but it does not wish to raise the Chinese flag over Jakarta or Tokyo. Rather, it is like Germany in the run-up to World War I, yearning for greater importance and

³⁵⁶ This refers to the Jackson Vanick amendment of the Trade Act of 1974, see explanation in the introduction to the analysis.

testing to see what it can get away with. There could be a major war with China, but if so, it will be because of ignorance and miscalculation – in substantial part on the western rim of the Pacific (P123:4). [...] a new cold war, this time with the PRC, is not entirely impossible – but it is avoidable [...] we [...] should not aim to isolate or demonize China or foster the attitude in this country that China is an enemy. They are not an enemy (P125:5, in 1995).

Finally, some ‘farsighted’ mitigating voices also draw parallels between the reactions to Japan and to China: *As with Japan, America must exhibit greater diplomatic sensitivity and learn to negotiate with China as equal (P113:4).* And in this context the broader picture of U.S. trade policies as not being isolated from global developments is emphasized: *Currently, there is a sizable trade imbalance between our nations. To some extent that reflects unfair trade practices that we have to resolve, just as is the case with Japan and other nations. But to a very large extent this is more a reflection of shifting trends among East Asian exporters since our overall trade picture with the region has not dramatically changed (P146:71, in 1994).* In this sense, arguments are brought forward against misinterpreting the trade deficit: *Much has been heard about our bilateral trade deficit with China. It is the same argument that protectionists use as a reason not to trade with Japan [...] In the 1980’s, Japan was the culprit. Today it is China [...] (P176:60, in 1997).* Once more referring to the Plaza Accords, it is stated that

[...] we should be careful what we demand of the Chinese Government. Take the demand that the Government “revalue” its currency, for example “[...] the Japanese yen’s value has more than tripled since the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system, yet Japan’s trade surplus remains huge. Why should the unpegging of the Chinese yuan have a greater impact?” (P142:34, in 2005).

And in the context of the debates on Unocal it is pointed out that:

I remember when Japanese investors moved to buy Rockefeller Center, at inflated prices, and many in this body wanted to stop that deal. We did not. And only a few years later the Japanese sold it back to the United States for pennies on the dollar. Bottom line, we made a killing. And Americans are better off for letting the market work. If we take this action, China could rightfully cancel American investments in China now totaling \$25 billion. Wal-Mart, Conoco, Motorola, United Air Lines all bought companies in China and should be allowed to do so (P207:10).

Summary of intensifications and mitigations towards China

The most outspoken intensifications towards China designate it as 'evil', and liken it to Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. However, and in contrast to the intensifications towards Japan, with China they once more stay on the level of criticisms towards the 'regime', and not the 'Chinese people', who are often articulated as victims of their 'evil' government themselves. Maintaining this line, the intensified internal criticisms articulate a non-confrontational approach towards 'the Communist regime' as 'appeasement' like towards Germany before WWII. Also, China's rise is not only compared to Nazi-Germany, but also to pre-WWII-Japan. These parallels are also brought forward to criticize the liberal theory of history, in terms of arguing that well developed economies do not necessarily evolve towards political liberalization. The intensified self-criticisms are also directed against the executive and its 'naïve' and not 'tough' enough policies, but also against 'bad habits', as in the case with Japan, when for instance referring to the trade deficit and the tendency to live and spend beyond ones means. In the MFN-debates those arguing for granting them to China are accused of putting business interests over values, while this is also articulated as standing against U.S. identity as promoter of human rights.

The mitigations towards China in turn are mostly put forward from the accommodating and inclusive perspective of the liberal theory of history, that in this perspective can account for both, values and interests, through calling for (economic) engagement through the U.S. as guiding example, which is in line with American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history. In terms of aiming at dissolving the antagonisms, the mitigations are mostly coupled with self-criticism of U.S. hypocrisy, calling for a fair treatment of China with reference to history, and emphasizing the importance of the Sino-U.S. relationship for the future of both countries. From this view the parallels to Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union are also dismissed. Generally, those voices arguing for the liberal theory of history criticize the linkage between human rights and trade policy in terms of revoking MFN to improve human rights as counter productive. Finally, a few statements even do draw parallels to the case of Japan, in the sense of taking the way the U.S. dealt with it as a negative example of scapegoating and distracting from domestic problems.

Summary of Intensifications and Mitigations

The intensifications towards Japan and China are aimed at endorsing the chains of equivalence and the hegemonization of the discourses towards 'excluding' Japan and China through the filling of the (absent) empty signifiers 'fairness' and 'liberty'. The intensifications also reflect the confrontational and exclusive features of U.S. liberal identity in terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history. The mitigations in turn aim at dissolving antagonisms with Japan and China through articulating chains of difference in line with the accommodating and inclusive features of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history. Both categories flesh out internal differences that are dealt with in different ways, aimed at preserving or rearticulating U.S. identity, which in turn influences the way Japan and China are articulated as 'different', and to what extent difference is turned into otherness.

Japan

The intensified expressions towards Japan are dominated by war rhetoric, WWII allegories and articulations of Japan as enemy who attacked the U.S. at Pearl Harbor. The language used to describe the economic relationship constantly articulates it as 'war' with the U.S. 'on the defensive' (in line with the inferior perspective, see chapter 6.1) and 'losing', while having no other choice than to defend itself against Japan's 'aggression'. Even though Pearl Harbor is not always directly mentioned, speaking of WWII in relation to Japan becomes the central intensified metaphor standing for 'unfairness' (and the lack of fairness) because of Japan's policies, as WWII invokes the memory of Pearl Harbor as unfair surprise attack by Japan on the U.S.. The aim behind these intensifications is to articulate Japan as excluded other that has to be dealt with more assertively than it has been the case. In this view, because of Japan's '(cultural) difference', there has and will be no change of and in Japan towards a 'truly' liberal economy (and society). In this sense, according to one line of argumentation, the extent to which the U.S. might have to compromise its identity as a free trader can also be attributed to the unfairness of Japan, as it leaves the U.S. no other choice to react (see chapter 6.1). On the other hand, it also enables a rearticulation of U.S. identity by those voices that criticize 'free trade' as a principle and call for a more 'security' and 'world order' oriented focus. In this context, even the relationship to Japan as an ally is put in question, and intensified internal criticisms/chains of equivalence are directed against the executive. The intensified self-criticisms calling for questioning the own policies and not blaming (only) Japan also maintain the war rhetoric, i.e. when invoking Smoot Hawley and its

consequences in the 1930s in the sense of arguing that renewed U.S. protectionism could lead to a future WWII.

The mitigations towards Japan are mostly expressed via chains of difference against antagonizing Japan through making it a scapegoat for domestic problems or own failed or insufficient policies. In this sense, the U.S. is also criticized for being hypocritical in terms of 'not practicing what it preaches' when it comes to free trade. Japan is articulated as an important ally also because of its similarities with the U.S. as 'democracy' and 'free world economy', and the WWII allegations are condemned as short sighted and narrow minded. Congress is at times also scrutinized for the heated debates, hence for being 'overly emotional' and not 'rational' in the sense of losing the sight on 'the economic issues' themselves. However, balanced statements also aim at explaining the emotions in a non-intensified way, in terms of them being the result of the long period of unresolved trade issues with Japan, hence emphasizing also Japan's part in them. Nonetheless, the war rhetoric is not completely absent from the mitigating statements either, as becomes clear from statements in terms of warning of taking action 'in the heat of the battle', or against 'firing the first salvo'.

China

The intensified criticisms of China are also voiced as WWII allegories, in the form of likening China and what is articulated as its 'evilness' – that is not brought up as such as a 'characteristic' of Japan – to the Nazis, as metaphor for 'illiberalism' or ultimate signifier of the lack of 'liberalism'. The Nazi parallel being quite frequent, however, China is also compared to the Soviet Union. In this context, in the most intensified statements that are aimed at articulating China – always on the level of the 'regime', not its people – as the 'excluded other' that has to be confronted, the liberal theory of history and its proponents are articulated as appeasement/appeasers like Britain and France before WWII, and the 'theory' is criticized for never having worked. In this sense, internal chains of equivalence are drawn between its proponents and opponents. However, the more general intensifications im- or explicitly relating to the liberal theory of history are more obviously than with Japan coupled with a self-criticism, as it comes to contrasting the U.S.' 'well meaning' – but ultimately also naïve – policies with the evilness of 'communist China'. As with Japan, China is articulated as unfair and the U.S. as on the 'short end', and in self-criticisms as not adequately dealing with this, thus calling for action to prevent U.S. decline.

The mitigations towards China are mostly voiced from the liberal theory of history-perspective that criticizes the linkage of MFN and human rights as counterproductive. In this view, free trade is articulated as key to the liberalization of China also in political terms (see chapter 6.2). For these reasons, in this view the U.S. should further engage China and act as a guide for its development, as otherwise antagonizing China might become a self-fulfilling prophecy. In this context, the likening and drawing parallels to the Soviet Union is also critiqued. The U.S., like with Japan, is also scrutinized for its hypocrisy and 'China-bashing', while also voicing balanced statements on the partly emotional, but not as heated arguments as with Japan, over engagement or containment. In their criticisms, some voices even draw parallels to earlier 'scapegoating' of Japan, that in their view should be avoided towards China.

In both cases, it becomes clear again through the mitigating expressions, that 'liberal identity' can be articulated in both ways, providing also for accommodation, not only antagonism. However, here the crucial question arises, as to how far accommodation in line with American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history is possible, as also the cooperative articulations imply a 'measuring' of the other versus the self, in terms of the potential of the other to evolve and become like the self. It seems like the red line is reached when there is no prospect anymore of Japan and China becoming like the U.S., as in that case the inherent universalism would have proved not to be universal, or in other words, within the tension between exclusivity and universality of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, the exclusive features come to dominate. I come back to this question in the summary of the analysis and in the conclusion.

Table 4: Summary of Intensifications and Mitigations

	chains of difference	chains of equivalence
Japan	criticizing war rhetoric: U.S. must overcome WWII images of Japan; treat Japan like an ally and potentially share power with it	war rhetoric: Japan = old WWII enemy, Pearl Harbor and (economic) 'war' stand for Japan's unfairness; Japan is 'different', no change in sight
China	criticizing Nazi and Soviet Union parallels; China not an enemy, but potential partner; China should not be made a scapegoat like Japan earlier; LTH-perspective	China = 'evil', like (or worse than) Nazis (illiberal) and Soviet Union (communist); building up its military; no liberalization in sight; contra MFN
U.S. vs. Japan	protectionism does not help; U.S. should not be hypocritical and practice what it preaches; balanced view on emotions	U.S. = victim, on defensive, attacked by Japan, needs to retaliate, Japan leaving no other choice BUT ALSO: intensified self-criticisms: 'the enemy is us' → war rhetoric maintained in mitigations
U.S. vs. China	against self-fulfilling prophecy; LTH can accommodate values and interests and ultimately change China;	U.S. = victim, needs to take up challenge; LTH (and MFN) articulated as appeasement BUT ALSO: intensified self-criticisms: commercial interests over values

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS

The analysis of the congressional debates on Japan, China and economic policies first and foremost shows that the economic rise of Japan and China challenges universalism as central feature of U.S. identity. This feature is crystallized in American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history – standing for the universality of human nature and American (political) values (within both strands of exceptionalism, see chapter 1.3), with the necessary interrelatedness of economic and political liberty being part of them, and for a ‘universal path’ towards the liberal capitalist political model with the U.S. as its ‘owner, ‘operator’ and ‘promoter’ – and finds its expression in the discourses on ‘free trade’ as “synonymous with U.S. foreign policy internationalism and the ascendancy of the United States as a global superpower” (cf. Kunkel 2003, 24; Kolkmann 2005, 43). After the end of the Cold War, free trade – in terms of bringing about the political change and liberty as predicted by the liberal theory of history – seemed to have fulfilled its promises, in spite of the ongoing challenge of its principles through Japan in the view of the revisionists and ‘hard-liners’, that however did not lead to its immediate ‘dislocation’ at that point in time (cf. Uriu 2009, 253). These ‘universals’ of ‘free trade’ and ‘liberty’ were and still are generally articulated and understood as universal ‘common goods’, i.e. as ahistorical and context independent societal interests (cf. Wullweber 2014, 8). In other words, ‘free trade’ as principle of foreign economic policy had acquired what can be called a ‘hegemonic status’ (cf. i.e. Hummel 2000, 190; Schoppa 1997, 70; Kunkel 2003, 24; J. Goldstein 1993, 247), that became first challenged through the ‘Japan problem’, while the challenge through ‘communist China’ more obviously added the component of ‘philosophical challenge’ to the ‘theory’ in broader terms. American exceptionalism played and plays a role in both cases, as broader framework of the liberal theory of history, but also as being a central feature of U.S. identity, in terms of a self-understanding of being always superior, in general.

As laid out in chapter two, a dislocation (on the ontical level, as on the ontological level every identity always already is ‘structurally dislocated’) manifests itself when the self-identity – always incomplete but in constant strive for fullness, see chapter two – is challenged or blocked through the encounter with an other, that is articulated as not adhering or responding to the hegemonic discourse. Here it is again important to remember, that while identity is always differential in the sense of being only conceivable through differentiating the self from an other, the other not necessarily needs to be turned into an ‘excluded other’ in terms of an antagonist.

My analysis shows that in the case of Japan and China, U.S. identity as the preeminent economic (and subsequently, global) power is challenged through the trade deficit and the U.S. becoming a

debtor, with first Japan, then China as its biggest creditor. This dislocates U.S. identity conceived of in the terms of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history first and foremost for following reasons, that differ slightly in both cases: the most obvious dislocation is the disadvantageous standing of the U.S. vis-à-vis its principal economic competitor, as this should not happen to a country that is 'always superior'. Hence, in both cases the question ensues, what the economic situation means for the U.S. as 'global power'. Furthermore, through the 'different' form of organization of their economy (and society), Japan and China challenge the universalist claims of U.S. liberal identity. In both cases, as they do not 'function' (exactly) according to the principles of liberal democratic capitalism as held up by the U.S., their economic success despite of their deviance becomes even more perplexing.

To summarize, with Japan, the deviance is first and foremost seen in the organization or 'planning' of its economic policies in a way that promotes and guards or 'targets' certain industries that focus on exporting, while allowing for very little imports, hence contradicting the principles of free trade (cf. i.e. Huntington 1993, 73f.) and market capitalism. In a search for 'explanations' for Japan's success in spite of its 'deviance', the 'cultural difference' of 'the Japanese' and their society became a point of focus, and ultimately, from the confrontational and exclusive point of view (resonating with the revisionist view on Japan), the major reason for Japan's success was claimed to lie in Japan's 'unfairness' that emanates out of its 'difference'. With China, the argument is about export promotion and import barriers (also in the form of 'currency manipulation') and China's alleged unfairness as well. But what adds to the dislocation with China from the beginning on is its missing political liberalization that should have followed faster/to a larger extent according to the liberal theory of history, as this was a major long-term principle and argument of the proponents of a policy of engagement towards China.

However, I argue that the way the articulated challenge or dislocation to U.S. liberal identity is dealt with, needs not necessarily to be predetermined by either American exceptionalism or the liberal theory of history as leading to confrontation. As the analysis shows, these 'frameworks' provide for the articulation of the self as being able to 'accommodate' the other without being necessarily weakened – and Japan and China as 'different' but not adversarial – but also for antagonizing and turning them into hostile and 'excluded others'. This can be seen from looking at the chains of equivalence and difference through the categories of argumentation and perspectivation.

In the discourses the chains of equivalence (captured here in the analysis through argumentation and perspectivation, while being sustained or weakened through intensification and mitigation), serve to uphold or preserve the self's identity through articulating it as fundamentally different

from the external other that in this sense blocks the self's identity (in terms of rendering its 'structural dislocation' visible). The chains of equivalence shall lead to the internal differences or different positions becoming equivalent towards the excluded other. The chains of equivalence are formed around the empty signifiers 'fair' (and 'liberal') with Japan and 'liberal/democratic' (and 'fair') with China, that are both 'lacking', and in the discourses only present through their literal absence by being articulated first and foremost through the emphasis on their opposite: 'unfair' (i.e. mercantilist, protectionist, intransigent, greedy etc.) Japan and 'communist' (regime, dictatorship, brutal, cheating, unfair etc.) China. With Japan, the 'illiberalness' is equally present through its literal absence, also articulated through the opposites of 'fairness', i.e. mercantilist, protectionist etc. With China, the unfairness is on the one hand implicitly present in the way 'communist' is articulated, but also in explicit attributions of the predication itself. Cancelling out the internal differences means that facing the unfairness (and illiberalism) of Japan and the illiberalism (and unfairness) of China, any internal disagreements are minimized to an extent that they are outweighed by the difference towards the other. This equivalential articulation of U.S.-identity formulates it in an exclusive mode, in order to preserve it: the U.S. is fair and liberal, and Japan and China are not, and cannot be or become so, because of Japan's 'cultural difference' and China's communism. Hence, the only way to deal with the lack – once more, that is 'structural' on an ontological level, but manifests itself through dislocations on the ontical level – in this line of argumentation is to take a more confrontational approach towards Japan and China.

In both cases, in general the intensifications (see chapter seven) are expressed through 'war rhetoric'. More specifically, Japan is articulated in terms of the WWII enemy that attacked the U.S. at Pearl Harbor. In this sense, WWII becomes the central metaphor for the ultimate absence of fairness through the 'unfairness' of Japan. In the case of China, it is referred to as 'as evil' or worse than WWII Nazi Germany or the Cold War Soviet Union. These articulations stand for the ultimate absence of 'liberty'/'liberalism' through the 'illiberalism' of 'Nazi' or 'Communist' China. Furthermore, in the Nazi context the U.S. policies and the liberal theory of history approach towards China are articulated as pre-WWII 'appeasement'. These are examples aimed at hegemonizing the discourse in the sense of establishing Japan and China as excluded others

On the other side the chains of difference (here also read through the categories of argumentation and perspectivation, as well as mitigation) aimed at preserving or rearticulating U.S. identity through dissolving the antagonism stand for the 'accommodating' or inclusive features of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, and in turn also allow for self-criticisms of the U.S. and (sometimes differentiated) Congress itself. In the case of Japan this means to point at own domestic problems and to the fact that Japan actually is an ally, as well as

aiming at mediating between the black and white view of 'fair'/unfair' through acknowledging internal economic problems, but also restrictive economic policies on the Japanese side. The emotional mode of articulation towards Japan, that is not present to this extent with China, is present in both the confrontational and accommodating statements. The confrontational ones simply express 'anger' and 'frustration' with Japan, while the accommodating ones aim at 'contextualizing' the expressions and point first and foremost to the long timeframe of not so unproblematic experiences with Japan and trade policy. In other words, with Japan the 'lack of enjoyment' (see chapter 6.1) is greater than with China. However, in some cases the chains of difference towards Japan are at the same time articulated not through real mitigations, but they become internal chains of equivalence vis-à-vis the executive or proponents of 'free trade', in the sense of them being held responsible for 'the problem', that Japan then is taking advantage of. In the case of China, the accommodating arguments are mostly voiced from the liberal theory of history-perspective, in terms of articulating it as an inclusive and universal common ground for both sides of the 'values versus interests' debate (i.e. the question whether MFN should be given 'only' for economic reasons, or whether it should be revoked to stand in for U.S. principles on human rights), which is an example of an attempt to dissolve the antagonisms and internal chains of equivalence. The main drive behind accommodation or inclusiveness in terms of the liberal theory of history however, is the expectation for China to ultimately change and evolve to become more like the U.S., hence ultimately inclusiveness falls back on the universalist aspirations or understandings of how everything and everyone should function 'like us'. With Japan in turn, the 'hope for change' seems to have exhausted itself.

Finally, the analysis then brings up the question of a 'limit of accommodation' within American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, and hence a 'limit of tolerance' of liberalism, as discussed earlier in chapter 1.3, in broader terms. It seems that ultimately Japan and China have to be articulated as 'different' in order to preserve U.S. 'liberal identity', which at the same time however contradicts universality to the extent U.S. identity is articulated as 'exclusive' in this context. The 'solution' might be, that 'difference' can be conceived of in non-antagonistic terms as long as there remains a prospect for ultimately turning that difference into 'sameness'. This would explain the emotional response and frustration in the case of Japan, as the possibilities for Japan – that originally had been regarded as less different than it then apparently turned out to be – finally changing seemed less likely the more time passed. With China, the process is still regarded as open ended. However, this would leave the question unanswered, of what 'the end of hope for change' means for American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, and how

to deal with it in this 'framework'. It might constitute the sort of crisis liberalism/liberal identity cannot accommodate. The question then becomes, if and when the relationship with China might possibly reach this point, and what the consequences for U.S.-Chinese (economic) relations would be. I come back to these questions in the conclusion.

Word Frequencies³⁵⁷

As laid out in chapter 3.4, the word frequencies should not be taken to convey a meaning of their own, but instead have to be read as 'only' illustrative, and as supplement to and in context of the analysis (also because of the limitations of the coding software, see footnote). In general, they are in line with the findings summarized in this chapter, which is why they are only briefly addressed in what follows.

For instance, in the case of Japan (table five) among the most frequent expressions are 'unfair', 'war', 'different', but also 'friend(s)', which – together with the highest frequencies mostly in the year 1989 – points to the general intensity and controversial nature of the debates, as exemplified in the FSX-fighter plane question in the year 1989 (see introduction to the analysis and the analysis itself). The highest frequency of 'closed' in the years 1994 and 1995 in turn is likely related to the auto-talks during those years (see introduction and introduction to the analysis).

³⁵⁷ To repeat from what was mentioned in chapter 4.2, for the year 1985 on Japan only the coded passages, not the entire documents were included, as atlas.ti was not able to perform a word count for the documents from the bound Congressional Record. The coded passages were exported into MS Word, and then the words were counted. While for the other years and for China the entire coded documents were included, I discerned the expressions that came up most frequently in the analysis, and that allowed for comparing the two cases, for the tables five to eight. It also turned out that atlas.ti (at least in the version available for this project) is not the best software for working with word frequencies, as for example it does not give the percentage of words in relation to the respective year or the total, which would be useful if the frequencies were a more central part of the analysis.

Table 5: Word frequencies Japan

Japan	unfair	different	creditor	closed	war	scape-goat	ally	partner	friend(s)
1985	49	12	2	4	71	1	10	9	16
1989	86	65	17	0	76	3	0	44	188
1994	50	55	1	19	73	3	1	6	45
1995	25	14	2	23	29	0	2	5	21
1997	15	20	27	8	44	1	0	4	11
2000/01	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	30	5	0	3	10	0	0	1	13
Total	255	171	49	58	303	8	13	69	294

When it comes to the U.S. in relation to Japan (table six), among the most frequent expressions are ‘deficit’, ‘future’, ‘leadership’ and ‘decline’, with the highest frequencies as well mostly in the year 1989. The relatively high number for ‘retaliate’ in 1985 likely points to the increasing congressional pressure for action in that year (see introduction and introduction to the analysis).

Table 6: Word frequencies U.S.-Japan

U.S.-Japan	debtor	decline	retaliate	deficit	liberal	future	super-power	leader-(ship)
1985	22	6	12	106	7	13	4	13
1989	26	35	5	245	5	253	0	143
1994	13	33	6	106	4	85	0	70
1995	0	4	3	51	1	19	0	40
1997	32	24	2	137	2	59	0	55
2000/01	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
2005	0	0	0	28	0	29	0	11
Total	93	102	28	674	19	459	4	332

With China (table seven), among the most frequent expressions are ‘communist’, ‘war’, ‘friend(s)’ and ‘regime’, which is consistent with the controversial nature of the question of ‘how to deal with China’. The frequencies within the different years do not seem to give a picture as clear as with Japan. For instance, the high numbers for ‘unfair’ and ‘friend(s)’³⁵⁸ in the year 2000 may be connected to China replacing Japan as largest deficit trading partner (see introduction to the analysis), as well as to the campaign and debates on China’s membership in the WTO and the granting of PNTR. In general, the highest frequencies in the most prominent expressions on China seem to occur within the timeframe of the debates on MFN/PNTR and the WTO between 1994 (the year after Clinton ‘delinked’ MFN and human rights) and China’s WTO membership in 2001 (see overview on China).

Table 7: Word frequencies China

China	unfair	com- munist	creditor	regime	war	scapegoat	super- power	partner	friend (s)
1994	36	48	0	37	0	0	1	27	17
1995	18	34	0	26	81	0	3	4	22
1997	13	97	3	32	52	2	5	22	35
2000	43	79	0	41	39	0	5	20	54
2001	5	137	0	58	34	0	3	11	48
2005	38	23	0	3	16	0	7	5	28
2008	1	10	0	3	12	0	1	0	2
Total	154	428	3	200	234	2	25	89	206

When it comes to the expressions on the U.S. in relation to China, among the most frequent ones are ‘leader(ship)’, ‘deficit’, ‘future’ and ‘liberal’, with the highest frequencies of those terms again centering around the years 2000/2001, hence possibly also in connection to the largest trade deficit and the PNTR/WTO debates. Additionally, the high frequency of ‘leadership’ concurs with the prevalent open question on the future of U.S.-China relations.

³⁵⁸ However, friend(s) also often occurred in a negative context, for instance: “The Communist Chinese will never be our friends” (P137:68). A major shortcoming of atlas.ti is, that it does not show the words in their context when performing a word count (i.e. word crunch in the program’s language).

Table 8: Word frequencies U.S.-China

U.S.- China	debtor	decline	retaliate	deficit	liberal	future	super- power	leader- (ship)
1994	0	4	14	73	6	42	1	101
1995	0	6	1	25	8	49	3	64
1997	1	3	0	61	0	33	5	38
2000	0	4	3	122	7	128	5	114
2001	0	1	0	22	14	22	3	32
2005	0	1	1	35	0	53	7	23
2008	0	3	0	15	0	2	1	1
Total	1	22	19	353	35	329	25	373

Finally, the frequencies in both cases, Japan and China and the U.S. in relation to Japan and China, point to the commonalities and differences in ‘the rise of Japan’ and ‘the rise of China’ discourses as laid out through my analysis in this dissertation: in both cases the ambiguities between Japan as ‘unfair and different’ versus ‘friend(s)’, and China as ‘communist regime’ versus ‘friend(s)’ point to the highly controversial character of the debates. In both cases the ‘future’ and the ‘leadership’ question play an important role. On the other hand, it becomes also clear again that in the case of Japan the fact of the U.S. being a debtor and Japan the creditor was brought up more frequently than with China (most likely as with Japan it was the first time since WWI that the U.S. became a net debtor, see introduction to the analysis). Furthermore, with Japan the ‘decline’ question figures more prominently than with China, as once more in accordance with the analysis, this ‘problem’ is not seen as intensely with China (yet?) Most likely one reason is the connection to Japan’s competition in the high-technology field in the 1980s (see introduction to the analysis, overview on Japan and the analysis itself).

To repeat, as already pointed out, the frequencies (especially in the form presented here, i.e. without percentages in relation to the year and the total) alone are not representative for the analysis, but have to be considered as illustrative and supplementary to, and in the entire context of the discourse analysis.

CONCLUSION

“The story to be told has to begin somewhere. But it is not always easy to begin at the beginning, if only because the identification of a point of origin depends on where we think we are now. Thus, a practical convenience is always liable to turn into a powerful myth of origin. Other points of departure are closed off” (R.B.J. Walker 1989, 26).

The first inspiration for the topic of this dissertation came from the observation, that the U.S. discourse on ‘the Rise of China’ since the 1990s bears significant resemblances to the discourse on ‘the Rise of Japan’ since the 1970s/1980s,³⁵⁹ while these parallels are not taken into account neither by the majority of the academic, nor the political proponents concerning themselves with U.S.-China relations.

As surprising as this still is from my perspective, the answers I got from most U.S. scholars in conversations on the topic and the question of neglect, were basically twofold: either, the parallels were acknowledged in terms of conceding that the U.S. has always had ‘a short memory’, has ‘consciously forgotten about Japan’ or ‘was in constant need of enemies’ (i.e. first the Soviet Union, then Japan, then China), while the explanation for these phenomena was mostly considered as exceeding the field of political science, in the sense of it being seen rather as a concern for anthropologists or historians.³⁶⁰ On the other hand, the ‘cases’ of Japan and China were also often deemed as not being really comparable, as they were seen as too different in ‘substance’, i.e. in the bilateral relations, historical circumstances, and ‘character’ of Japan and China themselves, while the similarities in the discourses from this point of view were mostly dismissed as ‘mere rhetoric’, that did not matter when it came to the ‘actual issues’ at stake.

Obviously, my position differs from these answers, as I lay out in what follows. In this conclusion, I first discuss and summarize the aims and contributions of this dissertation. In the next section, I then address its limitations, and briefly lay out potential trajectories for future research in this respect. Finally, I conclude with an outlook on U.S.-Chinese economic relations in connection with the central findings of this study.

³⁵⁹ I am grateful to Marcus Conlé for initially drawing my attention to these parallels.

³⁶⁰ This was not the case for the comment on the U.S. ‘having consciously forgotten about Japan’, which was made by Daniel Dye, whom I also wish to thank for his comments given during my presentation in the faculty colloquium at the School of International Service (SIS) of American University in Washington D.C. in winter 2013.

Aims and contributions

From my perspective, both types of answers mentioned above point to a lack of conceptual, methodological and substantial ‘outside-of-the-box’, i.e. non-paradigmatic-thinking in the fields of IR and IPE (see chapters one and three), which I have sought to accomplish in this dissertation in several aspects.

First, there is no need to be or become a historian or anthropologist to deal with this topic and to study ‘identity’, as one can draw from approaches (and methodologies) that have taken insights from other disciplines into account, as is the case with poststructuralism in general and political discourse theory in particular. Furthermore, already looking at the Chinese case in light of the earlier Japanese one, enables taking a step back from ‘the topic’ (i.e. China’s economic rise) itself, while scrutinizing the discourse on the topic (i.e. how it is constituted in the first place), as scholars writing about ‘the Japan problem’ have already done to some extent (see chapter 1.2). In the field of U.S.-China studies in IR and IPE this kind of self-reflection on the discipline is still in its very beginnings, which also partly explains the second set of answers: a preoccupation with what are considered as ‘material givens’ to the detriment of what is commonly dismissed as ‘mere rhetoric’. What this view misses or misunderstands however, is that we have no access to a material ‘given’ or ‘reality’ in a pure and unmediated sense (which is different from the argument that ‘reality’ does not ‘exist’ outside of discourse! See chapter two), as – from the poststructuralist perspective put forward in this thesis – we encounter material objects always already in a particular context, hence never as ‘pure essence’ that would exhaust and ‘transmit’ its meaning in itself. Without meaning attributed in discourse (encompassing linguistic and non-linguistic elements), we would not be able to ‘make sense’ of ‘the material’. Likewise, discourse as speech is not ‘mere rhetoric’, as regardless of the intentions of the speakers, it has a productivity as well as constraints of its own, that in turn reverberates back on the speakers themselves (see chapters two and three and also in what follows).

As laid out in chapters two and three, discourse in this dissertation is understood not ‘only’ as social practice, but also as ontological horizon in the sense of being ‘coterminous with social life’, and the social as structured through difference, *analogous* to language in the sense of everything being meaningful, while meaning is established through systems of difference (see chapter 2.1). As meaning and sense-making is conferred not only, but primarily through language, a focus on language as a social act lies at the heart of a poststructuralist understanding of discourse (again, while never excluding non-linguistic practices, and also conceiving of language as practice itself). The central emphasis on rhetoric in the work of Ernesto Laclau and the Essex

School, while however not providing a concrete method for its analysis, led me to draw from Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA) to propose a possibility for using the PDT key concepts in research. Meanwhile, as pointed out in chapter three, I recognize that this proceeding is only one of many possibilities of how this can be accomplished. In my view, it enables the researcher to capture the key concepts of PDT (i.e. dislocation, chains of equivalence and difference, empty signifiers) through linguistic analytical categories without simply subsuming the textual material under them, but instead facilitating a reading of these categories and a structuring of the material to be analyzed, by a view through the theoretical lens.

As problematized in the first three chapters of this dissertation, the perennial dualism in terms of a 'Cartesian anxiety' in the fields of IR and IPE has not only lead to misunderstandings when it comes to differing (and mostly unacknowledged or neglected) philosophical premises between 'positivist' and 'post-positivist' approaches, but also to narrow understandings of methodology and methods. While the concerns of PDT or Essex School scholars in this regard to a large extent correspond to arguments by poststructuralists in IR (see chapter one and two), PDT is still only rarely taken into account in IR and IPE, especially when it comes to its potential of thinking beyond the persisting dichotomies of 'ideational' and 'material' or also 'ideational' and 'discursive'. As laid out in chapters two and three, these common dichotomizations are not something 'naturally given', but internal to discourse, which in turn does not mean to deny the existence of a 'material world', but instead once more that we cannot conceive of it outside of our aims of making sense of it. From this perspective it follows that we cannot separate 'the material' from our 'ideas' about it (as a dualist perspective does), but also that there is no such thing as a 'purely ideational' realm (again, as maintained by dualism and idealism). While the dualism/monism debate in philosophy of science has found its ways into IR (and IPE to a lesser extent), as such it plays no direct role in PDT itself, as its understanding goes beyond these persistent dichotomies. To reiterate in the words of Laclau and Mouffe:

"The main consequence of a break with the discursive/extra-discursive dichotomy is the abandonment of the thought/reality opposition [...].Rejection of the thought/reality dichotomy must go together with a rethinking and interpretation of the categories which have [...] been considered exclusive of one or the other" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 110).

In terms of categories and concepts this for instance means that while in IR-literature it has become common to classify discourse studies as 'qualitative' and 'interpretive' (see chapter three), PDT stresses that in fact there can be no strict separation between 'meaning' and

'interpretation', and that again the common dichotomizations between 'the natural' and 'the human' sciences and between 'explaining' and 'understanding' are concept-dependent as well. What follows for methodologies and methods is that the latter are not understood as free standing 'tool boxes' ready to be applied, but have to be chosen or developed in accordance with the theoretical and philosophical premises, as well as with respect to whether they serve at answering ones research questions (chapter 3.2). In this sense the whole research process in terms of the Logics of Critical Explanation is understood as a retroductive circle, where the 'case' or cases one aims to study are constituted by the problematization that is in turn already informed by the theoretical lens. For 'identity' as a concept or category in poststructuralist research this means that it has to be studied in its expressions in its actual context of articulation in discourse – not only, but mostly through language in its different forms – instead of applying it as a pre-fixed category on the cases to be analyzed (see chapters 1.4 and 2.2). It once more also means eschewing the 'ideational/material' dichotomization in IR and IPE that has lead to 'identity' being considered as located on the 'ideational' side of the presumed divide, which inter alia has led to issues presumably pertaining to the 'material' side – i.e. 'the economy' – being exempted from 'identity-questions'. One central aim of this dissertation has been to show that this is clearly not the case, but as the analysis has demonstrated, the economic debates in the U.S. Congress on the rise of Japan and China cannot be considered only in 'pure' economic terms.

Furthermore, the understanding of identity as (practice of) identification with subject positions points to the fact that from a PDT perspective an "abandonment of the thought/reality opposition" also means thinking 'beyond the mind' in terms of not conceiving of the subject as fully-conscious, self-sustained rational being and 'strategic actor'. The subject emerges, and identity as identification with always only temporary subject-positions is possible only because of its structural lack or incompleteness on the ontological level, that manifests itself through dislocations on the ontical level, when an encounter with an other renders this structural dislocation visible through antagonism, that is experienced as blocking the identity of the self as it is articulated according to the hegemonic discourse. This 'event' however is not necessarily 'negative', as it also stands for the productive lack in the structure that enables the subject to emerge (see chapter 2.2), hence it accounts for the possibility of rearticulation of identities and social structures, ultimately enabling challenges and changes to what has come to be experienced as 'normal'. In other words, dislocation reminds us of the entirely political, i.e. non-foundational character of the social world. The question of how to deal with these 'events', is ultimately a social and political matter, which brings me back to the cases of this dissertation.

The similarities in language used to label first Japan, then China as unfair and as a 'problem' for the U.S. economy and beyond, in spite of the differences in their bilateral relationships with the U.S. (as well as the different historical circumstances), led me to assume that in both cases U.S. liberal identity as forbearer of liberal democratic capitalism was or is initially dislocated through being economically in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis Japan and China. Accordingly and once more, I assumed that economic performance is not 'only' a matter of 'numbers', but also of 'identity', in terms of being a central component of the U.S. self-understanding rooted in American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history, that I conceive of as hegemonic discourses (see chapter 1.3). While these or related aspects have to some extent been taken into account and studied in the Japanese case (see chapter 1.1), and they are at times briefly alluded to in the Chinese case (see chapters 1.2 and 1.3), so far no comparison or historical perspective linking these two cases from an 'identity-perspective' is taken into consideration. Furthermore, as already pointed to, the common perspectives on 'the economy', especially in IPE, do not address its 'political' character, through for instance looking at the role identity plays in foreign economic policy.

Finally, contrary to the common assertions that a discursive understanding of identity – as well as of the social world in general – as discourse would amount to an 'anything goes' in both, social life but also in academia and politics, it has repeatedly been argued by proponents of this approach that this is clearly not the case. Poststructuralism is no anti-structuralism, and post-foundationalism does not equal the absence of foundations (see chapter 2.1). Foundations, paradigms, criteria, rules, norms etc. clearly do exist and persist, and in most cases they have become sedimented in a way that makes them seem 'natural'. However, a poststructuralist understanding points to their entirely social and 'political' – in the sense of non-essential or non-necessary – character. In this sense, while neither the understanding and/or conceptualization of 'everything as discourse', nor discourse as practice will change the world we live in from one day to the other, it matters not only whether we are aware of its enabling and constraining powers, but also how we deal with this awareness. As maintained by David Howarth and Jason Glynos, taking an ethical stance amounts to revealing attempts aimed at concealing the ultimate contingency of our social and political practices, which is why in this dissertation I start out with looking at how dislocations (or 'crises') are dealt with on a public level in elite political discourse (in this study and at this step taking the U.S. Congress as an example, see introduction) that at a first glance seems to be obviously aimed at attributing 'internal problems' to an external other. While the U.S. Congress accounts only for a small part of the picture, in terms of public discourse in general and its role in trade policy (once, more, which is a major source of friction between the

U.S. and Japan and the U.S. and China) in particular it has been and still is an important actor (see introduction).³⁶¹ On a more general level (also in terms of future research, see in what follows) one of the main questions ‘we in the West’ (but also elsewhere) face, is how to deal with ‘events’ that do not fit into our preexisting frameworks, and that lead to questioning our presupposed positions or statuses in them. I come back to these questions in the outlook at the end of the conclusion, after in the next section briefly discussing limitations and shortcomings of this dissertation, in connection with laying out how they could be addressed in future research.

Limitations and future research

While the main shortcomings and criticisms of discourse theory and analysis, as well as of poststructuralism more broadly speaking were addressed in the first three chapters, one aspect that in my view once more merits a particular focus is the treatment of the concept of causality, that has been scarcely addressed by poststructuralists so far, while it accounts for many of the misunderstandings about discourse analysis being ‘only descriptive’, not explanatory, and no ‘real method’.³⁶² While it is clear that poststructuralist scholars so far have elaborated on opposing a linear and mechanistic understanding of causality, and in most cases use the term ‘constitutive’ instead of causal, I do miss a thorough engagement with how the concept could be understood in different ways, in order not to leave this field alone to ‘positivists’ on the one hand and critical realists on the other hand (see chapter 1.4). This could also help getting poststructuralist research out of the ‘dissidents’ corner’ it is still often seen in (see chapter two), and potentially enable more dialogue on concepts, methodologies and methods among different approaches.³⁶³

Before concluding with an outlook on U.S.-China (economic) relations that connects to the central findings of this dissertation, I want to address the main limitations and in this sense shortcomings of this study, that first and foremost are connected to its scope in two main aspects: laying the focus ‘only’ on the U.S. Congress and ‘only’ on the articulation of identity. In my view

³⁶¹ And it has always understood how to use its leverage and to draw public attention, a last example being the open letter written by the Republican freshman Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas, and signed by 46 other Republican senators, to the Iranian leadership concerning the ongoing negotiations on Iran’s nuclear program (The Associated Press 2015).

³⁶² To briefly repeat, the other two main criticisms (apart from the misunderstandings addressed in chapter 3.1) are an extensive focus on ‘the other’ in terms of a necessarily adversarial relationship (see chapters 1.4 and two), as well as an ethical deficit (see chapter 3.2). Both in my view are however not ‘inherent’ to PDT or poststructuralism.

³⁶³ The concept of causality is for example taken up by William Connolly, and – drawing on him – for instance by Chris Methmann and Delf Rothe (so far only in a presentation at an international workshop at the GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies in November 2012: <http://www.giga-hamburg.de/de/veranstaltung/ontology-and-methodology-%E2%80%93-challenges-for-theory-and-practice-in-international>, last accessed March 27, 2015).

these are the major limitations that future research, i.e. a potential future expansion of this project, could and should overcome. As pointed out in the introduction, in this dissertation I do not look at concrete policy agendas or processes – for instance certain negotiations or initiatives – in terms of analyzing more closely what role ‘identity’ played in their formulation and implementation, in the form of conducting ‘case studies’. This could be pursued in a next step (for instance for ‘cases’ or ‘events’ selected from the three factors/fields Robert Uriu has mentioned relating to a déjà-vu of the ‘Japan problem’, see in what follows in the outlook), which would also include broadening the focus beyond Congress to comprise the executive level. Furthermore, the ‘elite public discourse’ on these ‘cases’ should ideally also include the media (where a selection according to types and products would have to be made), while the inclusion of think tanks could account for the possible interplay between (academic) experts and policy makers (see outlook). Additionally, the academic discourses on the rise of Japan and the rise of China themselves merit a more thorough ‘comparative’ analysis than it has been the case in this dissertation (see outlook).

A desirable broadening of the focus beyond the elite to ‘public discourse’ (see introduction) more generally in turn would encompass the media as well (in this case for instance popular newspapers and magazines), but potentially also opinion polls and surveys. Ideally, it would also look at ‘popular culture’, where for instance images of Japan and China – that have been occasionally studied individually (see chapter one) – are widely disseminated, but have not been compared so far. This would also mean to include non-textual material (i.e. images) into the analysis.³⁶⁴

While this dissertation focused on the economic realm, especially with China the role of identity can be expected to be very present when it comes to security issues, which was also the case with Japan, but to a different extent, as addressed in the overviews. This aspect brings up another possibility to broaden the focus, in this case either beyond the U.S. (i.e. to look at responses to Japan’s and China’s rise in other ‘established’ economies) or to compare the U.S. approach to China to that to other (past and present) ‘rising powers’.³⁶⁵

However, all this having been said, these potential augmentations bring me to yet another limitation – potentially also for future research – which is the limitation on the amount of sources to be included in the study when aiming at conducting a very detailed discourse

³⁶⁴ Images do also appear in the ‘elite discourse’, for instance on magazine covers such as Time, Newsweek or Business Week, as well as in cartoons in newspapers like the New York Times. Furthermore, ‘popular media’ ideally would include for instance talk shows and TV-news, possibly also series and movies.

³⁶⁵ For instance Jarod Hayes in his book *Constructing National Security: U.S. Relations with India and China* (published in 2013 by Cambridge University Press) looks at U.S. responses to ‘rising’ China and India.

analysis as in this dissertation. Of course, this always also depends on the time available for conducting the research, but considering the input of time needed and the output in terms of 'results', in my experience there certainly is a 'mismatch'. It could potentially be addressed either through a combination with quantitative tools for textual analysis, not necessarily (only) in terms of frequencies in textual (or textualized) material, but also for instance in terms of co-occurrences, and in a step ahead for discerning and pre-selecting the documents to be included in the analysis. Another (additional) possibility would be the collaboration with other researchers in a larger project.

Ultimately, I maintain that the topic, as well as the approach taken, is important and worthwhile pursuing in many aspects. In this respect, the final section of this conclusion comes back to the central findings of the dissertation and connects them to an outlook on U.S.-Chinese relations.

Main findings and outlook

In 1987 Robert Gilpin wrote on the 'Japan problem' that "Western liberal societies find Japanese economic success particularly threatening because it is the first non-Western and nonliberal society to outcompete them" (Gilpin 1987, 391), and also Stephen Cohen et al. (in 1996) emphasized that "[Japan] was the first non-Western society to become an international economic superpower" (Cohen, Paul, and Blecker 1996, 176). Gilpin specified his statement by continuing that: "Whereas Western economies are based on belief in the superior efficiency of the free market and individualism, the market and the individual in Japan are not relatively autonomous but are deeply embedded in a powerful nonliberal culture and social system" (ibid.).³⁶⁶ Taken together with Aaron Friedberg's statement on China, that "for Americans the success of a mainland regime that blends authoritarian rule with market-driven economics is a puzzle and an affront. Such a combination is not supposed to be possible, at least in the long run" (Friedberg 2011, 43), these assessments in my view epitomize the main findings of this dissertation (see summary of the analysis): the major issue at stake when looking at articulations of U.S. identity vis-à-vis Japan and China lies not (only) in what David Campbell identified as the major political challenge in dealing with the subjectivity of the U.S., i.e. that it is continually dependent on strategies of otherness (cf. Campbell 1994, 166), and that some scholars have attributed to an inherent 'intolerance' within liberalism (see chapter 1.3). While having shown through my analysis of the Congressional Record that 'liberalism' – in this study in the form of American

³⁶⁶ These assessments obviously also stand for a quite narrow, ahistorical view.

exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history – accounts for both, accommodating difference as well as turning it into ‘otherness’, I come to the conclusion that it is the (sometimes paradoxical) interplay and tension between universalism and exclusivity within these hegemonic discourses, that accounts for what I see as a major political challenge for (but also beyond) the U.S.: overcoming the dominant tendency to think and act exclusively in one’s own categories and concepts – which implies rendering other ones unthinkable (cf. Laclau 1988, 57; Marchart 1998, 14) – without even remotely considering their contestability or ‘applicability’ on a larger scale (cf. Mahbubani 2008, 4; cf. Stäheli 2000b, 20,22). Hence – coming back to the exemplary statements – Japan did not ‘fit’ into the hegemonic discourses of American exceptionalism and the liberal theory of history because it was economically overtaking the U.S. through practices that were regarded as ‘unfair’ and ‘illiberal’, and that were articulated into stemming from Japan’s ‘cultural difference’. With China, the initial dislocation lies in economic competition and ‘ideological difference’ (albeit to a different extent than with Japan) as well, while in both cases from the U.S. perspective there is a ‘misfit’ between economic, and societal and political development. While Japan and China on the one hand pursue capitalism as ‘the universal path to progress’, the components ‘liberal’ and ‘democratic’ are seen as lacking to the extent that they become articulated as potential obstacles to the other becoming more like the self (see summary of the analysis). While the ‘end of expectations’ or ‘hope for change’ with Japan was apparently reached in the mid 1990s – at least to the extent that the essentialized view of Japan put forward by the revisionists succeeded in filling the empty signifier in terms of articulating the problem (Japan’s difference) and the solution (numerical targets) – the route is still open ended with China. This becomes clear when looking at the congressional discourse in this analysis, where there is to a certain extent more ambivalence towards China than there was towards Japan. In this sense, for instance the 2014 report by the Congressional Research Service on *China’s Economic Rise: History, Trends, Challenges, and Implications for the United States*, concludes with the assessment that

“China’s growing economic power has made it a critical and influential player on the global stage on a number of issues important to U.S. interests, such as global economic cooperation, climate change, nuclear proliferation, and North Korean aggression. China is in a position to help advance U.S. interests or to frustrate them. China’s rising economy has also enabled it to boost its military capabilities. **U.S. policy makers face a number of complex challenges on how to deal with these issues.**”

The report then continues and ends with the following questions:

“Can the United States compel better behavior from China via quiet diplomacy or public confrontation? Has U.S. leverage over Beijing lessened in the wake of China’s economic rise, and has China’s leverage over Washington increased? Are China’s new leaders serious about undertaking comprehensive reforms as outlined in the Third Plenum? Does Chinese President Xi Jinping have the power to implement new economic reforms if they are opposed by other factions of the government that have a stake in maintaining the status quo? To what extent will the Chinese government be willing to reduce or eliminate preferential policies (such as subsidies and preferential bank loans) given to SOEs? Will the reforms result in a significant reduction in trade and investment barriers against U.S. firms?” (Morrison 2014, 38, emphases added).

Obviously, the U.S. (Congress) has no definite answers to these exemplary questions (yet).

In the conclusion of her study on *Japan-Bashing* Narrelle Morris states that China-bashing (until 2011) had only occasionally reached the same level of intensity as “its predecessor” Japan-bashing (N. Morris 2011, 141), and a similar kind of assessment was also made by a few scholars on U.S.-Japan relations in conversations I had with them in early 2014 (for instance Brad Glossermann and Len Schoppa). My analysis of the Congressional Record confirms these evaluations, also to the extent that in contrast to China, the allegations against Japan were also made on a level of negative personal characteristics, as well as through frequent allusions to Japan as ‘the old WWII enemy’ (see chapters four and seven). On the other hand however, the intensified articulations towards China on the ‘regime level’ attribute outright evilness to China (through likening it to Nazi Germany, see chapter seven) to an extent that was not the case with Japan, at least in the debates analyzed in this study. To some extent this can of course likely be explained by the overall antipathy towards communism in the U.S. Yet, in retrospect, when looking back at the Japanese case in comparison to the Chinese one, the intensity of ‘Japan-bashing’ in my view seems even more puzzling and in a sense also disquieting, as it begs the question where the situation with China might possible evolve, if even in the case of a close ally the trade frictions amounted to turning an issue of economic competition into an ‘ideological struggle’. On the other hand, the disappointment in the behavior of an ally may have contributed to the intensity, while in the case with ‘communist China’ the expectations of ‘U.S.-conform behavior’ were and are smaller from the first instance on. However, there exist different opinions on the question of whether the fact of China not being a U.S. military ally is an alleviating or aggravating factor, when it comes to a potential spillover of economic frictions into other areas.

Coming back to Robert Uriu’s assessment (in 2009) that for a replay of the U.S.-Japan tensions of the 1990s three factors in U.S.-Chinese economic relations would have to change – i.e.

Chinese investment in the U.S. would have to increase, China would have to be perceived as a threat to American high-tech industries and that there would have to be a unified ‘theory’, like revisionism (Uriu 2009, 244), one could ask what the situation in this respect looks like a couple of years later?

Looking at the first factor, in August 2012 for instance Curtis Milhaupt deliberated, whether Chinese investment constituted a case of *déjà-vu* for the U.S. (Milhaupt 2012), and in October 2013 the British magazine *The Economist* wondered, whether China had arrived at its Rockefeller Center moment (The Economist 2013) – referring to “the late 1980s as Japan’s miracle economy was soaring” and the purchase of the Rockefeller Center by the Mitsubishi Estate Company (see chapter 6.1). The article was discussing the increase in Chinese investment in real estate in the U.S., as well as in overseas direct investment (ODI) in general, also in terms of private Chinese firms – such as Alibaba and Lenovo – seeking brands and technology (Coblin 2014). In the same year the announced takeover of the U.S. pork producer Smithfield by China’s Shuanghui stirred a public debate about foreign takeovers (see also chapter 6.2 on the CNOOC case in 2005). In this context, a number of experts have been calling for an expansion of foreign investment reviews beyond ‘just’ national security (see overview on the U.S. Congress and Japan for the Exon-Florio provision), to include a wide range of public policy goals, including for instance food safety or labor rights (Rosen and Hanemann 2013). According to a survey of the same year, a majority of Americans were generally suspicious of Chinese investment (Holmes Report 2013).

On the positive side, the U.S. and China have been negotiating a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) since 2013 (Morrison 2015, 29), pointing to a potentially promising outcome in connection to Uriu’s second factor, the ‘threat’ to American high-tech industries, with respect to the also ongoing negotiations on an Information Technology Agreement (ITA) (L. Walker 2014). While in late 2013 negotiations to expand the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Information Technology Agreement (ITA) had collapsed over China’s and the U.S.’ conflicting demands (Tiezzi 2013), a breakthrough on the agreement was reached a year later. It is supposed to cut tariffs from 30 or 25 per cent to zero on items such as medical equipment, software media, GPS devices and semiconductors. However, negotiations across the entire ITA membership are not yet over (Bridges 2014; Needham 2014), while also the talks on the BIT are ongoing (The White House 2014),³⁶⁷ with internal opposition already being voiced against them (Wessel 2015).³⁶⁸

³⁶⁷ Furthermore, the U.S. and China have been holding an annual “Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) since 2009 (cf. i.e. Morrison 2015, 29). See also <http://www.treasury.gov/initiatives/Pages/china.aspx> (last accessed March 22, 2015).

With Uriu's third factor on the 'theory', in my view the question arises, whether the so-called 'China threat theory' (see chapter 1.2) might qualify as a 'new revisionism'. This factor is important, because as a potential 'analytical framework' or lens it can account for how the other two categories are assessed. I would not speak of a '*China threat theory*' in itself, as what goes under this label mostly comes down to power-transition theory and offensive realism 'applied' on the U.S.-Chinese relationship. However, the wide acceptance of using this lens for viewing the U.S.-Chinese relationship and its potential future – in spite of criticisms (see also chapter 1.2) – in combination with what for instance has been termed the 'assertive China narrative' by Björn Jerdén (2014, especially 76ff.), at least raises the question of whether there might be a tendency (and danger) in the predominantly used IR theories to view U.S.-Chinese relations in a deterministic and potentially conflictual way (cf. i.e. Ling 2013). Coming back to the poststructuralist understanding of 'theory as practice', the role and responsibility of academia in the production of what may come to be seen as 'social facts' cannot be sufficiently emphasized, in spite of the widely held belief that there exists a large gap between 'academic theorizing' and policymaking. Jerdén's analysis (and for instance also the work by Oliver Turner and Pan Chengxin cited earlier, see chapter 1.2) on the one hand points to an interplay of academic scholars, the media and policy experts when it comes to the discursive power of the 'narrative'. On the other hand, and coming back to the role of 'identity' in this dissertation, in Pan's words: "[...] what China's rise means cannot be independently assessed in isolation from what *we* already *mean* by China's rise [...] [and] what *we* see as 'China' cannot be detached from various discourses and representations of it" (Pan 2012, vii, first and third emphasis added). As the discourse analysis of the Congressional Record (chapters four to seven and summary) in this dissertation has shown, *we* (i.e. here the U.S. through Congress) articulated and continue to articulate Japan and China always in connection to how we conceive of ourselves, the 'world' and our role and position in it, and importantly, according to our expectations of how the other should act according to our understandings of him/her.

In his article on *The formation of American exceptional identities* Taesuh Cha concludes with a call to the U.S. to rethink the history of its relationship to others, as well as

"for a reflection on the exclusivist, monologic form of the American exceptionalist identity and foreign policy that, lacking the proper understanding of differences, is obsessed with the

³⁶⁸ For instance, "the methods and operations" of Chinese firms in the U.S. are questioned in following (familiar) terms: "Do they operate based on Western profit-making principles, or are they simply advancing the goals of the People's Republic's 12th Five Year Plan and China's leadership goals?" (ibid.).

representation of “inferior” Others and the necessity to change them in the American image” (Cha 2015, 19).

While my analysis showed that (even) an exceptionalist identity can accommodate difference to a certain extent, once more I see the problem in the universalist tendencies and features, that still rely on ‘the ultimate Americanization of the world’ (see chapter 1.3) and consider this a ‘universal’ goal everyone would or should accept as worthwhile pursuing. In this respect, I join Cha in his call not to forget and to pay attention to ‘history’³⁶⁹, here to the history of U.S.-Japan trade frictions and the discourse on ‘the Japan problem’, but also to the existing critical scholarship on it (see chapter 1.1). Both, the similarities and differences to the situation with China might help to move from dealing with the ‘Rise of China’ as a ‘historical event’ (cf. Lundborg 2012) in the sense of already having an ‘established’ meaning, to reflecting on what both, the ‘rise’ and ‘China’ actually mean for us, and where these understandings come from and may lead us to.

³⁶⁹ An example of ‘forgetfulness’ is for instance the already cited remark in Congress concerning China in the year 1994: *Never before has the competition among the world’s leading powers been concentrated on economic, as opposed to military and ideological, realities* (P155:2). Once more, this sounds rather like a remark on Japan after the end of the Cold War, as ‘ideology’ still plays a role in competition with China. However, the Japanese case seems to have been forgotten by this speaker.

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SUMMARY IN GERMAN/DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Einführung

Seit den 1970er Jahren kreisen die wirtschaftspolitischen Debatten in den USA um die Frage eines vermeintlichen Ausverkaufs amerikanischer Interessen, sowie eines möglichen globalen Abstiegs oder Niedergangs der USA, im Angesicht von steigendem Handelsbilanzdefizit und steigender Verschuldung gegenüber dem größten wirtschaftlichen Konkurrenten (Nymalm 2011). In den 1980er Jahren wurde diese Debatte zum Ausgangspunkt und Katalysator des Diskurses um den „Aufstieg Japans“ als potentielle Herausforderung der liberalen Welt(wirtschafts)ordnung samt ihrem Vorreiter, den USA. Der Diskurs um das sogenannte „Japan-Problem“ in den USA bis Mitte der 1990er Jahre (vgl. Van Wolferen 1986) – welcher eine schwere Krise im U.S.-japanischen Verhältnis verursachte – weist erhebliche Ähnlichkeiten mit den Diskursen um den „Aufstieg Chinas“ und eine mögliche chinesische Bedrohung seit Mitte der 1990er auf. Die Hauptcharakteristika in beiden Diskursen bestehen in den Vorwürfen „unfairer Praktiken“ an Japan und China – in Gestalt von „Währungsmanipulation“ und „verschlossenen Märkten“ – die zu Wettbewerbsnachteilen und negativen Konsequenzen für die U.S.- und Weltwirtschaft führten (Curtis 2000; Evenett 2010; Ge 2013; cf. Hummel 1997, 38; Keidel 2011; Otte and Grimes 1993, 121). Besonders beachtenswert sind hierbei die rhetorischen Ähnlichkeiten in der Bezeichnung zunächst Japans, dann Chinas als ‚anders‘ und demzufolge feindlich und bedrohlich; dieses insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund der Unterschiedlichkeiten zwischen dem so artikulierten „demokratischen Japan“ und dem „kommunistischen China“, sowie in ihren bilateralen Beziehungen zu den USA. Die zur jeweiligen Zeit omnipräsenten Diskurse um Japans bzw. Chinas Aufstieg, in beiden Fällen im Zusammenhang mit gleichzeitigen wirtschaftlichen Problemen der USA, knüpfen an die Thesen um einen Abstieg oder Bedeutungsverlust der USA oder des gesamten „Westens“ an, die von Politik, Medien und Wissenschaft in verschiedenen Formen – als Fragestellung, Prognose oder Diagnose – diskutiert werden.

Während sowohl Japans als auch Chinas wirtschaftlicher Aufstieg zunächst begrüßt und als „wirtschaftliches Wunder“ bezeichnet wurden, entwickelten sich in beiden Fällen handels- und währungspolitische Fragen zu den umstrittensten Themen in den Wirtschaftsbeziehungen mit den USA. Seit den 1980er Jahren (mit Bezug auf Japan) bzw. seit 2000 (mit Bezug auf China) wird vor allem im U.S. Kongress, aber auch in der öffentlichen politischen Diskussion und in den Medien von der jeweiligen Regierung ein härteres Vorgehen gegenüber dem Konkurrenten

gefordert, während diese in der Regel generell eher zurückhaltend ist, wenn es um den Beschluss konkreter handels- oder währungspolitischer Gegenmaßnahmen geht.

In den innenpolitischen Auseinandersetzungen kreist eine zentrale Frage um einen der Leitgedanken der U.S.-Außenhandelspolitik: den transformativen Effekt liberaler Handelspolitik nicht nur auf das wirtschaftliche, sondern auch und gerade auf das politische System des Handelspartners – ein Hauptargument der Befürworter von Chinas (in den USA heftig umstrittenen) Beitritt zur WTO 2001 (New York Times 2000). Insbesondere der damalige Präsident Clinton argumentierte, dass die Öffnung der chinesischen Märkte – zusätzlich zu den erwarteten Vorteilen für die U.S.-Wirtschaft – die Stellung der Kommunistischen Partei untergraben würde (Sanger 2000). Dahingegen wurde mit der Zeit dieser Leitgedanke und die damit im Einklang stehende Politik zunehmend als Hauptursache des wirtschaftspolitischen Ungleichgewichts zwischen China und den USA ausgemacht und kritisiert, in dessen Folge das Handelsbilanzdefizit zum „Symbol des amerikanischen Niedergangs, welches den Glauben vieler Amerikaner in den Freihandel vergiftet hat“, geworden ist (Lightizer 2010).

Ebenso wie der Erfolg der „Freihandelsagenda“ mit Bezug auf China angezweifelt wird, so glaubten auch die sogenannten Revisionisten im Falle Japans nicht an ihre Wirkung (Hummel 1997, 35f.).³⁷¹ Sie argumentierten seit den 1980er Jahren, dass Japan und seine Wirtschaft „anders, verschlossen und feindlich“ gegenüber den USA seien, und Japan darum auch nicht – wie bisher allgemein angenommen – den von den USA vorgesehenen Weg der marktwirtschaftlichen Liberalisierung beschreiten würde (Uriu 2000, 214).³⁷² Die Revisionisten gewannen zu Beginn der Clinton-Regierung erheblichen politischen Einfluss, und ihre Argumente leisteten schließlich dem sogenannten ergebnisorientierten („results oriented“) Ansatz in den Handelsgesprächen mit Japan Vorschub, welcher sich jedoch als Fehlschlag herausstellen sollte und nach einem gescheiterten Gipfeltreffen 1994 wieder verworfen wurde (vgl. Hummel 1997, 23). Zu diesem Zeitpunkt hatten der Politikwechsel und die damit einhergehenden Debatten um Japans „Andersartigkeit“ und Unfairness in den USA bereits erheblich zur bisher schwersten Krise in den bilateralen Beziehungen beigetragen, der das Potential beigemessen wurde, die Basis der Beziehungen dauerhaft zu beschädigen (Curtis 2000, 19; Otte and Grimes 1993, 138). Im Kontext der Asien-Krise und den Schwierigkeiten der japanischen Wirtschaft verschwand das „Japan-Problem“ spätestens mit dem in den 1990er Jahren beginnenden rasanten wirtschaftlichen

³⁷¹ Die bekanntesten Vertreter der revisionistischen Auffassung waren James Fallows, Chalmers Johnson, Clyde Prestowitz und Karel van Wolferen, zu ihrer Zeit auch als „Gang of Four“ bezeichnet. Für eine Selbstcharakterisierung (vgl. Fallows et al. 1990), für eine Zusammenfassung ihrer wichtigsten Positionen (Hummel 1997, 25ff.; Otte und Grimes 1993, 119ff.).

³⁷² In der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung in den USA galt Japans wirtschaftliche Stärke zeitweise als größere Bedrohung als die sowjetische Militärmacht (Campbell 1994, 147).

Wachstum Chinas quasi von selbst von der Tagesordnung, bzw. die Aufmerksamkeit der USA verlagerte sich rasch von Tokio nach Peking (Bob 2001, 95; Curtis 2000, 32; Kirshner 2008, 247).³⁷³

Während bislang kein derartiger „Ausweg“ aus den U.S.-chinesischen Handels- und Währungsstreitigkeiten in Sicht ist – wobei sich die Stimmen, die eine chinesische Krise befürchten, mehren – kommt man nicht umhin, sich zu fragen, was der historische Fall Japans für die China-Politik der USA seit den 1990er Jahren bedeuten könnte, eine Frage, die bislang nahezu komplett von der Forschung zu U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen ausgespart wurde.

Ausgangspunkt und Forschungsfragen

In meiner Arbeit gehe ich von der Annahme aus, dass die Formulierung der U.S.-Außenwirtschaftspolitik gegenüber Japan und China über wirtschaftspolitische Fragen im engeren Sinne hinausgeht, und Prozesse der Artikulation und Konstitution kollektiver und/oder nationaler Identität im Zusammenhang wirtschaftlicher und politischer Ordnung impliziert (vgl. Nymalm 2011b, 6f.). Diese Einschätzung basiert auf vor allem durch den Poststrukturalismus inspirierten Theorien, die davon ausgehen, dass jegliche Identität nur in Differenz zu dem besteht, was sie nicht ist, d.h. dass sich die Identität des ‚Selbst‘ nur über den ‚Anderen‘ konstituiert. In diesem Zusammenhang problematisiere ich die Diskurse in den USA als Ausdruck einer ‚Identitätskrise‘ – in Folge des Aufstiegs und wirtschaftlichen Erfolges von Ländern, die sich nicht nach dem „liberalen Modell“ der USA entwickeln – die sich in der Artikulation des wirtschaftlichen Hauptkonkurrenten als Bedrohung äußert, und nach entsprechenden politischen Maßnahmen verlangt.

Nach meinem Verständnis lässt sich das Selbstbild oder Selbstverständnis³⁷⁴ der USA als Vorreiter des „liberalen Modells“ in erster Linie auf die Gedankenstränge der sogenannten „liberal theory of history“ und des „American exceptionalism“ zurückführen. Erstere geht vom unbedingten Zusammenhang zwischen wirtschaftlicher und politischer Liberalisierung aus, letztere von der Mission der USA als Vorreiter und Wegweiser dieser Entwicklung (vgl. Krause 2008; Mandelbaum 2002, 6; McEvoy-Levy 2001, 23ff.; Nabers und Patman 2008), im Sinne eines „Endes der Geschichte“ (vgl. Fukuyama 1989). In den Diskursen um Japans und Chinas

³⁷³ Uriu diagnostiziert darüber hinaus eine „Japan-Müdigkeit“ in der Clinton-Administration, d.h. man wollte so wenig mit Japan zu tun haben wie möglich – was in Japan selbst auch so wahrgenommen wurde (Uriu 2009, 240).

³⁷⁴ Die Verwendung dieses Ausdrucks geht nicht mit einem Verständnis des Subjekts als in sich abgeschlossener, rationaler und strategischer Akteur einher, wie am Konzept der ‚Identität‘ im Sinne der PDT deutlich gemacht wird.

wirtschaftlichen Aufstieg werden Japan und China als Herausforderung für dieses Modell, und damit auch für die Rolle und das Selbstverständnis der USA, artikuliert (vgl. N. Morris 2010, 2), da sie wirtschaftliches Wachstum ohne marktwirtschaftliche (Japan) bzw. politische (China) Liberalisierung³⁷⁵ nach dem Vorbild der USA erreichen. Demgegenüber können die USA ihre weltwirtschaftliche Vorreiterrolle in dem Maße nicht mehr erfüllen, als dass sie zum weltweit größten Schuldner zunächst gegenüber Japan, seit 2008 gegenüber China geworden sind, und das weltweit größte bilaterale Handelsbilanzdefizit zunächst mit Japan, und seit 2000 mit China haben. Im Vokabular der Politischen Diskurstheorie gesprochen: die Identitätskrise manifestiert sich in der Dislokation des bisherigen hegemonialen Diskurses der „liberal theory of history“ und des „American exceptionalism“ in ihrer Bedeutung für die liberale Identität der USA. Dieser Herausforderung an die eigene Identität begegnet man in den USA mit einer Externalisierung des Problems, d.h. seiner Zuschreibung an äußere Gründe und Akteure, was überwiegend in einem Bedrohungsdiskurs gegenüber „dem externen Anderen“ mündet (Campbell 1998, 62).

Mein Hauptanliegen in dieser Arbeit ist es demnach, den Fokus auf die Frage zu legen, wie amerikanische Identität in den wirtschaftspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen gegenüber Japan und China artikuliert wird, und was Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten über meine Annahmen bezüglich ihrer Herausforderung bedeuten. Die Leitfragen bestehen demzufolge darin, ob und wie Japan und China im Kontext der handels- und währungspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen nicht nur als wirtschaftliche Konkurrenten, sondern als Bedrohung artikuliert wurden, was dieses über liberale amerikanische Identität aussagt, und welche Rolle der Zusammenhang zur Diskussion um einen möglichen Abstieg der USA/des Westens spielt.

Der Fokus auf wirtschaftspolitische Fragen bietet sich im Hinblick auf drei Gründe an: der Dreh- und Angelpunkt für die Diskurse um Japans und Chinas Aufstieg liegt in ihrer wirtschaftlichen Performanz begründet, Handels- (und Währungs)fragen gehörten und gehören zu den wichtigsten und gleichzeitig umstrittensten Themen in den bilateralen Beziehungen, und schließlich ist der wirtschaftliche Erfolg in puncto Durchsetzung des liberal-demokratisch-kapitalistischen Modells eines der Hauptmerkmale wenn es um das Selbstverständnis der USA als Vorreiter dieser Entwicklung geht.

Das Thema berührt somit die Disziplinen Internationale Beziehungen (IB) und Internationale Politische Ökonomie (IPÖ). Gleichzeitig weicht der auf poststrukturalistischer und politischer Diskurstheorie basierende Ansatz von der theoretischen und methodologischen Hauptausrichtung der Disziplinen im allgemeinen, und der Forschung zu U.S.-chinesischen

³⁷⁵ In diesem Zusammenhang stehen die Diskussionen um einen „Beijing Consensus“ oder einen autoritären, illiberalen, oder Staatskapitalismus (vgl. Gat 2007; Halper 2010; Rachman 2008; Wooldridge 2012).

Wirtschaftsbeziehungen im speziellen ab, und eröffnet somit eine neue Forschungsperspektive auf ein aktuelles Thema von politischer Relevanz.

Bisherige Forschung und Relevanz des Projektes

In der bisherigen Forschung zu den U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen wird eine historische Perspektive mit Bezug auf den Japan-Fall hinsichtlich des Diskurses um den Aufstieg Chinas und einen 'Bedeutungsverlust' oder gar Abstieg der USA weitgehend außer Acht gelassen. Es gibt nur sehr wenige umfangreichere Studien zu U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen im allgemeinen, oder zu Wirtschaftsbeziehungen im spezielleren, die generell einen post-positivistischen, oder im Einzelnen einen diskurstheoretischen oder –analytischen Ansatz verfolgen.³⁷⁶ Dies ist umso überraschender, da es im Bereich U.S.-japanischer (Wirtschafts)beziehungen durchaus Arbeiten gibt, an die sich anknüpfen ließe (z.B. Campbell 1994; Hummel 1997, 2000; N. Morris 2010; Tuathail 1993).

Der Revisionismus wird in den meisten Arbeiten zu U.S.-japanischen Beziehungen behandelt (Curtis 2000; Schoppa 1997), wobei die Untersuchung von Robert M. Uriu sich am detailliertesten mit dem „revisionistischen Umschwung“ der U.S.-Politik gegenüber Japan auseinandersetzt (Uriu 2009). Dabei ist sein Ansatz auch charakteristisch für die Thematisierung von „Ideen“ in den IB und der IPÖ. In seinem Analyserahmen geht es darum, den Einfluss „nicht-materieller Variablen – neuer Ideen“ zu untersuchen, um „Wandel in Interessen und Entscheidungen“ zu erklären. Uriu argumentiert dabei, dass es die „revisionistische Idee“ von Japan als anders, feindlich und verschlossen war, die zu Beginn der Clinton-Administration zu einem Politikwechsel gegenüber Japan geführt habe (Uriu 2000, 214,221, 2009). Im Zuge seiner Konzeptualisierung des Revisionismus als „policy assumption“ schreibt Uriu den Einfluss dieser „nicht-materiellen Variable“ bestimmten Akteuren zu, deren entscheidende und zentrale Rolle zur Durchsetzung des Revisionismus bei der Clinton-Regierung geführt habe (Uriu 2009, 10).³⁷⁷ Meiner Ansicht nach geht er damit nicht weit genug, da er sich nicht mit der Frage auseinandersetzt, wie diese „Annahmen“ auf eine Art und Weise artikuliert wurden, die andere Auffassungen ausschlossen bzw. widerlegten, wie also der Revisionismus in der konkreten Praxis zu einem hegemonialen Diskurs wurde. Dieser Frage lässt sich mit einer Diskursanalyse, die

³⁷⁶ Nennenswerte Ausnahmen sind beispielsweise Goh (2005), Pan (2004, 2012), Blanchard (2012), und Turner (2013, 2014).

³⁷⁷ Uriu definiert „policy assumptions“ als “prior accepted beliefs about the nature of a policy issue and the interests involved in that issue”, in diesem Sinne als “a more concrete, tangible, and visible manifestation of ideas or beliefs” (Uriu 2009, 10).

weniger auf die ‚Akteure‘, als auf den Diskurs selbst als ‚speech and action‘ fokussiert, Rechnung tragen.

Des Weiteren lässt sich der Hauptanteil an Untersuchungen zu U.S.-chinesischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen, insbesondere zu Handelsfragen, als themen- und policy-fokussiert charakterisieren, d.h. ohne explizite Anbindung/Annahme einer bestimmten (IB-) theoretischen Perspektive (Bergsten et al. 2008; Hufbauer, Wong, and Sheth 2006; Morrison 2006). Keine Untersuchung beschäftigt sich systematisch mit einer über die klassische ökonomische Sichtweise hinaus gehenden Bedeutung von Handels- und Währungsungleichgewichten, obwohl es im Bereich der Forschungsperspektive der „cultural political economy“ durchaus Ansätze hierfür gibt (Abdelal, Blyth, and Parsons 2010; Best und Paterson 2010; De Goede 2006a). Die Literatur zu Außenwirtschaftsbeziehungen lässt sich mit Bezug auf diese Ansätze und Aspekte generell als unter-theoretisiert charakterisieren (vgl. Christensen, Johnston, and Ross 2006, 390; Hummel 1997, 9), während die Untersuchungen zum „American exceptionalism“ oder der „liberal theory of history“ nur vereinzelt den Bezug zur China-, und noch weniger der Japan-Politik der USA herstellen (vgl. Chen 1992; Halper 2010; Lampton 2001; Mandelbaum 2002). Es bleibt also eine Lücke zwischen themenorientierter Forschung (im Sinne von policy analysis), und solcher, die sich mit „Ideen“ und „Identität“ beschäftigt.

Berücksichtigt man hingegen die Literatur zu U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen über die Wirtschaftsbeziehungen hinausgehend, so gibt es eine wachsende Anzahl von Studien, die sich (nicht nur aus IB-konstruktivistischer Perspektive) mit „nicht-materiellen Aspekten“ wie Ideen, gegenseitigen Wahrnehmungen und Bildern, Einstellungen, Auffassungen, Identitäten, Diskursen, Meinungen etc. beschäftigen (vgl. Fewsmith und Rosen 2001; Goh 2005; Gries 2006; Alastair Ian Johnston 2006; Lampton 2001; Wang 2000).³⁷⁸ Der sogenannte „ideational turn“ in der Sozial- bzw. Politikwissenschaft hat zu einer breiten Debatte und Auseinandersetzung darüber geführt, ob und warum „nicht-materielle Aspekte“ wie Ideen „materielle Aspekte“ beeinflussen und wie man diesen Einfluss untersuchen sollte (vgl. Gofas and Hay 2010; J. Goldstein und Keohane 1993; Jackson 2011; Jacobsen 1995). Die Hauptströmung der (konstruktivistischen) Ansätze untersucht den Einfluss von Ideen und Identität als Variablen, während sog. radikale oder post-positivistische Konstruktivisten Ideen im Sinne von Sprache und Diskursen konzeptualisieren und analysieren (vgl. Hülse 2003, 214, 225). Obwohl es in der breiten Literatur diskurstheoretischer und –analytischer Ansätze verschiedene Positionen, Argumentationen und Konzepte zum Begriff Diskurs sowie zur Frage, ob man zwischen diskursiv und nicht-diskursiv

³⁷⁸ Der Großteil der IB-Literatur zu den U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen bewegt sich ansonsten (im- oder explizit) im Rahmen der Machttransitionstheorie (Power Transition Theory) (vgl. Chan 2008; Friedberg 2005; Friedman 2011; Jeffery 2009; Alastair I Johnston and Ross 1999; Lemke and Tammen 2003; Ross and Zhu 2008).

unterteilen kann, gibt, haben diese Debatten die IB (vgl. Dalby 1988; Epstein 2010b; George 1994; Hansen 2006; Milliken 1999; Weldes and Saco 1996) und die IPÖ (vgl. Abdelal, Blyth, und Parsons 2010; Epstein 2010a; De Goede 2006b; Maxwell 2001) nur in begrenztem Maße erreicht. Die Hauptausrichtung begreift Diskurse als „nicht-materiell“ und als von „konkreten Fakten und Handlungen“ zu trennendem Konzept (vgl. Schmidt 2008).

Meiner Ansicht nach sind diese Debatten von zwei grundlegenden Missverständnissen geprägt, die mitunter zu einem „lost in translation“ führen, und die beide mit der Vernachlässigung ontologischer und methodologischer Aspekte auf der einen Seite, sowie einer Methoden-Fixiertheit auf der anderen Seite, zusammenhängen. Diese Problematik wurde für den Bereich der IB zuletzt prominent von Patrick T. Jackson (2011) und Benjamin Herborth (2011) aufgegriffen, und beispielsweise von Warren J. Samuels für die IPÖ (Samuels 1996). Diesen Autoren zufolge beschäftigen wir uns zu wenig mit der Frage, warum wir bestimmte Phänomene – und nicht andere – untersuchen und warum auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise und nicht auf eine andere. Für den Bereich U.S.-chinesische (Wirtschafts)beziehungen bedeutet dieses, dass die Kategorien „materiell“ vs. „nicht-materiell“ nicht näher hinterfragt bzw. definiert werden. In meinen Augen liegt dies v.a. an drei Gründen: ihre Bedeutung wird als selbstverständlich vorausgesetzt, diese Art methodologische Überlegungen werden als für die Empirie nicht relevante „Metatheorie“ abgetan und/oder die Autoren bleiben bzw. wollen den größtenteils etablierten, bzw. den von einer neo-positivistisch geprägten Hauptausrichtung „vorgegebenen“ Methoden verhaftet bleiben (vgl. Hülsse 2003, 214; Jackson 2011, 203).³⁷⁹ Ideen, Identitäten und Diskurse werden also als Variablen und potentielle kausale Faktoren im positivistischen Sinne behandelt (vgl. Gofas und Hay 2010, 4ff.; Gries 2006, 311; Alastair Ian Johnston 2006, 349ff.; Kang 2007, 8f.,80ff.; Rousseau 2006; Wang 2000, 29ff.). Dies ist an und für sich weniger problematisch, allerdings birgt es Gefahren für die Konsistenz eines Ansatzes, wenn – wie im überwiegenden Falle der Untersuchungen zu U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen – die Prämissen nicht offen gelegt werden, oder – wie im Falle einer Vielzahl von konstruktivistischen Ansätzen in den IB generell – die angewandten neo-positivistischen Methoden mit den ursprünglichen Prämissen des Sozialen Konstruktivismus im Widerspruch stehen (vgl. Hynek and Teti 2010; Jackson 2011, 203f. ; Zehfuss 2006).³⁸⁰ Die Problematik dieser Art von Untersuchungen tritt zu Tage, wenn sie nicht in der Lage sind bzw. es versäumen, Antworten auf die Standardfragen nach dem „Einfluss nicht-materieller Faktoren“ auf „die (materielle) Realität“ zu geben, da sie zu der postulierten Dichotomie zwischen „materieller Realität“ und

³⁷⁹ Zur Definition des Neo-Positivismus siehe beispielsweise Howard (2010, 400) und Jackson (2011, 42ff.).

³⁸⁰ Zur Unterscheidung zwischen Sozialem Konstruktivismus und Konstruktivismus in den IB vgl. Jackson (2011, 141f., 202–204).

„Ideen“ keine Aussagen machen, sie Aufrecht erhalten oder zumindest keine Gegenargumente liefern (vgl. Adcock 2006, 60; vgl. Wæver 2005, 35; z.B. Wang 2000).

In diesem Kontext möchte ich mit meinem Ansatz zeigen, dass man zur Überwindung der Lücke zwischen „Themen und Ideen“ nicht auf (neo-positivistische) Methoden als „Mittelweg“ rekurren muss. Dazu problematisiere ich die Frage „Realität vs. Ideen“ – bzw. nach meinem Ansatz Diskurse – im Rahmen der Politischen Diskurstheorie und Rhetorikanalyse.

Theoretische und methodologische Herangehensweise

Die sogenannte Politische (oder auch Poststrukturalistische) Diskurstheorie (PDT) geht auf die Essex School und die in ihrem Zentrum stehenden Arbeiten von Ernesto Laclau und Chantal Mouffe zurück. Ihren Vertretern geht es darum, die Kontingenz und Historizität jeglicher vermeintlichen Objektivität aufzuzeigen, indem sie der Rolle von Macht und Politik im Zusammenhang ihrer Konstituierung nachgehen. Der Schwerpunkt liegt auf der Analyse von Repräsentationen und Transformationen von Ordnungen und Praktiken, die für unser Wissen und unsere Kategorisierungen der Welt stehen, indem ihr „natürlicher“ oder hegemonialer Charakter problematisiert bzw. in Frage gestellt wird. „Diskurs“ steht für eine durch Bedeutungsgenerierung und -zuschreibung ebendiese Kategorisierungen produzierende Praxis. Ziel einer Diskursanalyse ist es, die Prozesse der Generierung und Fixierung von Bedeutung, sowie ihrer „normalisierenden“ oder hegemonialen Institutionalisierung zu untersuchen (Glynos und Howarth 2007, 5; vgl. Howarth 2005, 317; Jørgensen und Phillips 2002, 5f.).

In aller Kürze lässt sich die PDT in vier zentralen Punkten zum Diskursbegriff wiedergeben, der auf Ludwig Wittgensteins „Sprachspiel“ zurückgeht (vgl. Glynos et al. 2009, 8f.):

1. Diskurs ist eine sinnhafte bzw. Sinn und Bedeutung generierende Tätigkeit, welche die Welt verstehbar macht. Demnach wird nicht zwischen diskursiven und nicht-diskursiven Phänomenen unterschieden, da jedes Phänomen sich erst im und durch den Diskurs konstituiert. Dieses ist nicht mit einer Verneinung einer „externen Realität“ gleichzusetzen,³⁸¹ sondern widerspricht lediglich der Auffassung, dass sich ein Objekt als Objekt außerhalb des Diskurses konstituieren könnte (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 107ff.). Wir begegnen Objekten/Phänomenen immer schon mit Bedeutung behaftet und in einem Kontext, aus dem wir weder sie noch uns herauslösen können (Glynos and Howarth 2008, 8).

³⁸¹ Zu diesem dualistischen Verständnis, welches sich v.a. auf die nach Richard Bernstein so benannte „Cartesian anxiety“ im Zusammenhang mit dem „mind-body-dualism“ nach René Descartes zurückführen lässt, siehe Bernstein (1976, 1983).

2. Diskurs ist gleichzeitig eine ontologische Kategorie, d.h. Wirklichkeit und Gesellschaft werden als diskursives Verhältnis begriffen, im Sinne eines Beziehungsgeflechts von Akteuren, Sprache und Handlung, in welchem jedes Element seine Bedeutung nur in Beziehung und in Differenz zu den anderen Elementen erfährt.³⁸²

3. Die Betonung von Bedeutung und Sprache sowie das Verständnis von Diskurs als Differenzsystem soll nicht alle ‚Realität‘ auf Sprache oder Text reduzieren, sondern aufzeigen, dass Gesellschaft wie Sprache über Differenzen strukturiert ist (Stäheli 2000, 8). In diesem Sinne betont Laclau, dass Diskurs „gleichbedeutend mit dem Sozialen als solchem“ sei (Laclau 2006, 106).

4. Diskurse als Struktur des Sozialen sind niemals in sich abgeschlossen und permanent fixiert, sondern werden durch andere Diskurse beeinflusst und verändert, wobei ständig der Versuch besteht, eine bestimmte Perspektive als universalen und hegemonialen Horizont zu etablieren (Stäheli 2000, 34).

Für das in der PDT zentrale Verständnis von Identität bedeutet dieses, dass letztere niemals prä-diskursiv vorhanden sein kann, sondern sich durch Identifikation mit im Diskurs artikulierten temporären Subjektpositionen konstituiert. Jegliche Identität ist relational und kontingent, die Formierung individueller und kollektiver Identität findet im Zuge diskursiver Prozesse statt, die nie in eine komplette Abgeschlossenheit im Sinne einer Totalisierung oder ultimativen Fixierung münden (Jørgensen und Phillips 2002, 24ff.; Laclau und Mouffe 2001, 111f.) Das Selbst konstituiert sich immer nur in Differenz zum Anderen. In diesem Sinne gilt auch für Staaten, dass sie „keine prä-diskursive, stabile Identität besitzen“, in den Worten David Campbell’s: „No state is free from the tension between various domains that need to be aligned for a political community to come into being, an alignment that is a response to, rather than constitutive of, a prior and stable identity“ (Campbell 1998, 91). Und Campbell führt weiter aus: “The constitution of identity is achieved through the inscription of boundaries that serve to demarcate an ‘inside’ from an ‘outside’, a ‘self’ from an ‘other’, a ‘domestic’ from a ‘foreign’” (Campbell 1998, 9). In diesem Sinne lässt sich ein Staat als Produkt hegemonialer Auseinandersetzungen über die Verwirklichung von Gesellschaft begreifen (Howarth 2000, 120). Der Fokus meiner Arbeit liegt auf diesen hegemonialen Auseinandersetzungen in den USA.

Ein hegemonialer Diskurs wird durch Entwicklungen oder Ereignisse in Frage gestellt bzw. disloziert, die nicht in sein (Be)deutungsmuster passen oder sich nicht in dieses inkorporieren lassen (Glasze 2007, 661; Torfing 2005, 16). Im Falle einer Dislokation wird „der Andere“ zumeist für diese verantwortlich gemacht. Diesen Antagonismus beschreiben Laclau

³⁸² Dieses Konzept geht auf die strukturelle Linguistik Ferdinand de Saussures zurück.

und Mouffe mit der Logik der Äquivalenz und Differenz (Laclau 1990, 39, 50; vgl. Laclau und Mouffe 2001, 132). Nach der Logik der Äquivalenz konstituieren sich kollektive Identitäten als solche immer gegenüber einem Äußeren, d.h. die inneren Differenzen werden nur äquivalent in ihrer gemeinsamen äußeren Differenz zum Anderen. Nach der Logik der Differenz hingegen werden die (inneren) Äquivalenzen und somit der Antagonismus zum (äußeren) Anderen abgeschwächt. Diese beiden Logiken bedingen einander und funktionieren über die Artikulation von leeren Signifikanten, die einen gemeinsamen Referenzpunkt im Diskurs darstellen.³⁸³ Ein prominentes Beispiel von Laclau für einen leeren Signifikanten ist „Ordnung“ im Falle ihrer Ermangelung. „Ordnung“ an sich hat keinen bestimmten Inhalt bzw. keine fixierte Bedeutung, der Ausdruck steht lediglich für sein in dieser Situation eigenes Nicht-Vorhandensein (vgl. Laclau 2007, 44). Im Falle der wirtschaftspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen zwischen den USA und Japan und China ist beispielsweise „Fairness“ ein leerer Signifikant (vgl. Nymalm 2011b, 8). Im Diskurs geht es dann darum, den Signifikanten zu füllen bzw. eine bestimmte Umgangsweise zur Beseitigung des Fehlens von Fairness zu finden und in Form konkreter politischer Maßnahmen durchzusetzen. In diesem Zusammenhang wird der Andere – in diesem Falle das „illiberale Japan“ und das „kommunistische China“ für das Fehlen von Fairness verantwortlich gemacht.

Während die PDT zwar keine konkrete methodische Vorgehensweise in Bezug auf die Diskursanalyse vorschreibt, so lässt sich „Methode“ in ihrem Zusammenhang gleichwohl nicht als vom Untersuchungsgegenstand abgekoppelter, beliebig einsetzbarer Werkzeugkasten verstehen. Methodische Fragen stehen demnach sowohl in Verbindung zu den philosophischen/theoretischen Prämissen der PDT – die essentialistischen Theorien von Wissensproduktion entgegenstehen – als auch zur konkreten Fragestellung (Glynos und Howarth 2007, 6; Howarth 2000, 132, 2005, 317).³⁸⁴

Nach der PDT kommt der Untersuchung von Rhetorik sowohl auf der ontologischen, als auch auf der ontischen Ebene eine entscheidende Rolle zu, wenn es darum geht, Praktiken und Regime der Bedeutungsgenerierung und -fixierung zu charakterisieren. Laclau hebt nicht nur die zentrale Rolle der Rhetorik für die Strukturierung jeglicher Bedeutungssysteme hervor (vgl. Laclau 2006, 106), sondern begreift das Soziale als „rhetorischen Raum“ und rhetorische Mechanismen als „Anatomie des Sozialen“ (Laclau 2000, 79, 2005, 110). Es geht also darum,

³⁸³ Antagonismen sind allerdings nicht prädeterniert, d.h. es gibt keine ‚natürlichen Antagonismen‘ (Laclau 2009, 319; Norval 2000, 223; Stäheli 2009, 239).

³⁸⁴ Die „Logics of Critical Explanation“, von Jason Glynos und David Howarth als Anwendung der PDT in der empirischen Arbeit konzipiert, basieren demnach auf einem post-positivistischen Verständnis von Wissenschaft, dass die PDT als erklärende, interpretative und kritische Theorie begreift, die in ihrer Anwendung Subsumption, Empirismus und Eklektizismus zu vermeiden sucht (Glynos und Howarth 2011).

Rhetorik nicht als bloßen Zusatz oder sogar Gegensatz von Handlungen, oder als rein instrumentelles und strategisches Mittel der Kommunikation zu begreifen (Glynos et al. 2009, 13f.). Während sich die Rhetorikanalyse auf der empirischen Ebene mit der Strukturierung und dem Funktionieren von Diskursen befasst, so bedeutet dies für die ontologische Ebene, dass die untersuchten Phänomene gleichzeitig nicht als durch die Sprachpraxis repräsentiert, sondern konstituiert betrachtet werden (Stäheli 2000, 13f.). Alan Finlayson argumentiert im Sinne der Politischen Rhetorikanalyse (RPA), dass wir nicht „Ideen“ (wie z.B. in der erwähnten Untersuchung von Uriu), sondern „Argumente“ untersuchen sollten: „ [...] to analyze political persuasion and preference transformation we must reacquaint ourselves with the rhetorical tradition. [...] Rhetoric draws our attention to forms of argument and reasoning that exceed the strictures of syllogism yet manifestly operate and function in real-world contexts of argument“ (Finlayson 2007, 546, 553).

In meiner Arbeit mache ich für die Diskursanalyse von folgenden von Martin Reisigl für die RPA entwickelten heuristischen Kategorien Gebrauch (vgl. Nymalm 2013)³⁸⁵: Nomination (Benennung der Akteure), Prädikation (Zuschreibung von Eigenschaften), Argumentation (Begründung/Delegitimierung der Nominationen und Prädikationen), Perspektivierung (Blickwinkel der Äußerungen) und Intensivierung bzw. Abschwächung aller Kategorien (vgl. Reisigl 2008). Diese Kategorien eignen sich gut für die Übersetzung der theoretischen Kategorien von Ernesto Laclau und Chantal Mouffe für die Diskursanalyse: Nach den Logiken der Äquivalenz und Differenz konstituieren sich die Akteure (in meinem Fall die USA vs. Japan bzw. die USA vs. China) durch ihre Benennung und die Zuschreibung bestimmter Eigenschaften (z.B. „das amerikanische Volk“ vs. „kommunistisches Regime“). Damit aus diesen Charakterisierungen Äquivalenz- und Differenzketten werden können, argumentieren die Sprecher mit Begründungen bzw. Delegitimierungen der Nominationen und Prädikationen (z.B. dass China nur erfolgreich sei, weil es seine Währung manipuliere, demzufolge stünden die USA als Opfer der unfairen chinesischen Währungspolitik da). Um sich vom Anderen abzugrenzen, nehmen die jeweiligen Sprecher eine bestimmte Perspektive ein, sie positionieren sich gegenüber dem leeren Signifikanten (einerseits durch die genannte Opferperspektive, aber andererseits wird auch die Einstellung geäußert, dass die USA wegen ihres „blinden Glaubens an die Freihandelsagenda“ selbst an der Entwicklung Schuld seien). Die Intensivierung bzw. Abschwächung in allen Kategorien befördert (bzw. schwächt) die Artikulation bzw.

³⁸⁵ Reisigl beschäftigt sich in seiner Untersuchung nationalistischer politischer Rhetorik in Österreich mit Konstruktionen und Repräsentationen sozialer und kollektiver Identitäten, z.B. Nationen (Reisigl 2007).

Konstituierung des Anderen als Bedrohung (z.B. China als „Evil Empire“ gegenüber den USA als „Leading Nation“).

Quellen und Zeitrahmen der Untersuchung

In dieser Arbeit konzentriere ich mich auf die Analyse des öffentlichen Elitendiskurses in den USA am Beispiel einer Diskurs- und Rhetorikanalyse der wirtschaftspolitischen Debatten zu Japan und China im U.S.-Kongress von 1985 bis 2008. Als Datenmaterial liegt der Congressional Record zugrunde, welcher Berichte, Anhörungen, Abstimmungen etc. im Senat und im Repräsentantenhaus umfasst. Der Kongress spielte und spielt eine herausragende Rolle in den wirtschaftspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen um Japan und China, zum einen durch seine in der Verfassung verankerten Kompetenzen im Bereich der wirtschafts- und insbesondere der Handelspolitik, zum anderen durch seine öffentlichkeitswirksame Umsetzung dieser Kompetenzen (Morris 2010, 56–63; cf. i.e. Xie 2009, 58). Was den Zeitraum angeht, so werden die 1980er, insbesondere das Jahr 1985 überwiegend als Wendepunkt in den U.S.-japanischen Beziehungen betrachtet, da in dieser Zeit die Handels- und Währungsstreitigkeiten an Frequenz und Intensität deutlich zunahmten (cf. i.e. Hummel 2000, 142, 188, 219; Mastanduno 1992, 240), und die Handelspolitik zu einem sowohl überparteilich, als auch zwischen dem Kongress und der Exekutive umstrittenen, und zu einem Thema im Wahlkampf wurde (Hummel 2000, 140; Kunkel 2003, 52; Mastanduno 1992, 263). Darüber hinaus manifestierten sich in diesem Zeitraum negative Ansichten und eine harsche Rhetorik gegenüber Japan in der Öffentlichkeit (cf. Morris 2010, 23). Um das Jahr 1995 herum verlagerte sich die Aufmerksamkeit auf China, was mit einer zunehmenden Fokussierung auf ‚Chinas Aufstieg‘ in der akademischen Literatur einhergeht (A. Goldstein 1997, 3).

Der analytische Fokus auf ‚Text‘ in Form von verschriftlichter Rede bezieht sich lediglich auf die Form der Quellen und bedeutet keine ‚Reduktion von Wirklichkeit auf Sprache‘, was dem Diskursverständnis dieser Arbeit widersprechen würde (vgl. Nonhoff 2011, 96). Im Einklang hiermit ist der Fokus auf den Elitendiskurs als rein pragmatisch und analytisch, und ebenso im Einklang mit dem Diskursverständnis zu verstehen (vgl. Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 4).

In dieser Arbeit fokussiere ich die Diskursanalyse auf die Debatten in den Jahren ausgewählter Schlüsselereignisse: 1985 (Plaza-Abkommen; die USA werden zum ersten Mal nach dem 2. Weltkrieg zum Schuldner), 1989 (sog. „Structural Impediments Initiative“ mit Japan; Ende des Kalten Krieges), 1994/1995 (Handelsgespräche mit Japan; Debatten um Chinas „Most Favored Nation (MFN) Status“) 1997 (Finanzkrise in Asien), 2000/2001 (Chinas Beitritt zur

WTO; größtes Defizit der USA mit China), 2005 (China kündigt Ende der exklusiven Anbindung seiner Währung an den Dollar an; Debatten um die Übernahme einer kalifornischen Ölfirma (Unocal) durch chinesisches Unternehmen (CNOOC)) und 2008 (Ausbruch der globalen Finanzkrise; China wird zum größten Gläubiger der USA). Dabei geht es mir nicht um eine Untersuchung der Ereignisse an sich, sondern um die jeweiligen Jahre als Referenzpunkte einer Analyse von Kontinuitäten und Veränderungen in der Artikulation amerikanischer Identität über einen längeren Zeitraum hinweg.³⁸⁶

Überblick über die Kapitel der Arbeit

Im ersten Kapitel wird das Thema der Dissertation anhand eines Überblicks über die bisherige Forschung diskutiert. Dabei konzentriere ich mich zunächst auf Literatur zu U.S.-japanischen (Kapitel 1.1) und U.S.-chinesischen (Kapitel 1.2) (Wirtschafts-)Beziehungen, um diese dann in Verbindung zunächst mit der Forschung zur „liberal theory of history“ und „American exceptionalism“ (Kapitel 1.3), und schließlich zu den Konzepten Identität, Ideen und Diskurse in der IB- und IPÖ-Literatur (Kapitel 1.4) zu bringen. Im zweiten Kapitel geht es um die Politische (oder auch Poststrukturalistische) Diskurstheorie (PDT), zunächst in Verbindung zu verwandten Strömungen in den IB, dann über diese hinausgehend mit einem Fokus auf die zentralen Konzepte Diskurs, Hegemonie und Identität der PDT (Kapitel 2.1 bis 2.3). Der Fokus von Kapitel drei liegt auf methodologischen und methodischen Aspekten, zunächst in der Einordnung der Debatten um Diskursanalyse als Methode in den IB (Kapitel 3.1), gefolgt von einer Diskussion der „Logics of Critical Explanataion“ (Kapitel 3.2) und der Rhetorikanalyse (Kapitel 3.3), welche an die im ersten Kapitel aufgeworfenen Fragen anknüpft. Schließlich geht es um die analytischen Kategorien der PDT in Verbindung mit dem politisch-linguistischen Ansatz von Martin Reisigl, sowie um die Organisation und Strukturierung der Quellen und der Analyse anhand dieses Vorgehens (Kapitel 3.4).

Die Kapitel vier bis sieben bilden den diskursanalytischen Teil der Arbeit, strukturiert anhand der analytischen und theoretischen Kategorien und der Hauptthemen der Diskurse: dem Handelsbilanzdefizit und der Frage nach seinen Konsequenzen für die globale Rolle und Vormachstellung der USA. Die Zusammenfassung der Analyse präsentiert die wichtigsten Ergebnisse, während das Fazit diese in Verbindung mit dem Forschungsansatz und seiner Einordnung in den IB und der IPÖ wie in den ersten drei Kapiteln diskutiert bringt. Darüber

³⁸⁶ Die Suchbegriffe für die jeweiligen Jahre im Congressional Record, „Japan economy“ und „China economy“, waren demnach möglichst breit gehalten.

hinaus gehe ich auf Grenzen der Dissertation, sowie in diesem Zusammenhang auf zukünftige Forschung ein, und gebe einen Ausblick auf die U.S.-chinesischen Beziehungen im Lichte der Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit.

Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten Ergebnisse

Die Diskursanalyse der wirtschaftspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen um den Aufstieg Japans und Chinas im U.S.-Kongress zeigt in erster Linie, dass die liberale Identität der USA in ihrem Universalismus herausgefordert wird, welcher sich im „American exceptionalism“ und der „liberal theory of history“ kristallisiert. Nach diesem Selbstverständnis sind sowohl die menschliche Natur als auch die amerikanischen (politischen) Werte universell, sie beinhalten die notwendige Verknüpfung von wirtschaftlichem und politischem Liberalismus, und stehen für ein allgemeingültiges (und demnach allgemein erstrebenswertes) Fortschrittmuster mit den USA als Vorreiter und Vorbild für das liberaldemokratische kapitalistische Modell. In diesem Sinne steht Freihandel für den Internationalismus der U.S.-Außenpolitik und den Aufstieg der USA zur globalen Supermacht (cf. Kunkel 2003, 24). Nach dem Ende des Kalten Krieges schienen die Prinzipien des freien Handels und des liberalen Wirtschaftsmodells ihre Versprechungen im Sinne der „liberal theory of history“ erfüllt zu haben, ihre in Frage Stellung durch Japan nach Meinung der Revisionisten setzte sich erst Mitte der 1990er Jahre temporär durch. Freier Handel und (politische) Freiheit wurden und werden weiterhin als dem universellen Gemeinwohl zuträglich betrachtet, unabhängig von sozialem und historischem Kontext. In diesem Sinne können sie in den USA als hegemoniale Diskurse begriffen werden, die wiederholt – zunächst durch das ‚Japan Problem‘ – und seit den 1990ern durch das ‚kommunistische‘ China in Frage gestellt werden. Der „American exceptionalism“ spielt eine entscheidende Rolle in beiden Fällen, da er für das zentrale Charakteristikum des Selbstverständnisses der USA als außergewöhnlich und überlegen steht.

In beiden Fällen manifestiert sich die Dislokation (auf der ontischen Ebene; auf der ontologischen Ebene ist Identität permanent, im Sinne von strukturell, disloziert) der liberalen Identität der USA vor allem durch die Hauptfaktoren des größten Handelsbilanzdefizits, und den USA als weltweit größtem Schuldner zunächst gegenüber Japan und dann China. Beide Faktoren widersprechen sowohl dem „American exceptionalism“ als auch der „liberal theory of history“, und in beiden Fällen führt diese unvorteilhafte Stellung der USA gegenüber ihrem größten wirtschaftlichen Konkurrenten zur Frage nach der Bedeutung und den möglichen Folgen für ihre

globale Stellung. Darüber hinaus entsprechen Japan und China mit ihrer, wie in den Debatten in unterschiedlichen Nuancen artikuliert, ‚andersartigen‘ Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft nicht dem universellen Fortschrittsmodell mit den USA als Vorreiter. In diesem Zusammenhang wird ihr wirtschaftlicher Erfolg als zusätzlicher ‚Affront‘ artikuliert.

Indessen ist aber der Umgang mit der Dislokation weder durch den „American exceptionalism“, noch durch die „liberal theory of history“ prädeterniert, im Sinne von notwendiger Weise zu einem Antagonismus in Form einer Konfrontation führend. Wie durch die Analyse deutlich wird, haben beide Gedankenstränge das Potential für die Artikulation einer inklusiven, als auch einer exklusiven Identität. Das zeigen die Logiken der Äquivalenz und Differenz in den Diskursen, die sich zum Teil auch anhand interner Grenzziehungen abspielen. So werden beispielsweise interne Äquivalenzketten artikuliert, denen zufolge die eigene Regierung für die unvorteilhafte wirtschaftliche Situation der USA verantwortlich gemacht wird. Ein weiteres Beispiel für interne Äquivalenzen sind die intensivierten Äußerungen, die China mit Nazi-Deutschland und die Befürworter einer Politik der wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit mit der Appeasement-Politik Großbritanniens vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg gleichsetzen. Demgegenüber stehen Ketten der Differenz, in denen beispielsweise die „liberal theory of history“ als inklusiver gemeinsamer Nenner artikuliert wird, der sowohl den wirtschaftlichen Interessen, als auch den Werten der USA (i.e. Demokratie und Menschenrechten) Rechnung trage. Die Grenze der Inklusivität von liberaler Identität³⁸⁷ scheint allerdings erreicht, wenn es keine Aussicht mehr auf eine Veränderung des Anderen im Sinne des ‚Modells‘ oder Vorbildes des Selbst gibt, welches im Falle Japans nach den Argumenten der Revisionisten der Fall war, und im Falle Chinas größtenteils aber noch als offen gesehen wird (vgl. Morrison 2015). Insbesondere die Vertreter der „liberal theory of history“ setzten weiter auf den transformativen Effekt einer wirtschaftlichen Einbindung Chinas durch die USA.

Mit Hinblick auf zukünftige Entwicklungen gibt es in einigen wirtschaftspolitischen Feldern – beispielsweise im Bereich von Direktinvestitionen, welche im Verhältnis mit Japan zu den umstrittensten Themen gehörten – Fortschritte im Sinne von geplanten Abkommen, die eine Kooperation zwischen den USA und China ermöglichen sollen (vgl. Morrison 2015). Im Allgemeinen und über spezifische Politikfelder hinausgehend, wird aber vieles davon abhängen, in wie fern die USA und ‚der Westen‘ generell dazu in der Lage sind, auch außerhalb ihres eigenen Referenzrahmens zu denken. Für das akademische Feld bedeutet dieses als

³⁸⁷ Dieser Aspekt knüpft auch an die Thematik und Problematik der Frage eines notwendiger Weise ‚antagonistischen Anderen‘ in der PDT an.

Herausforderung, die Dominanz prominenter theoretischer Herangehens- und Sichtweisen, zum Beispiel der Machttransitionstheorie – nach welcher wirtschaftliches Wachstum notwendiger Weise mit einem generellen (Groß)machtstreben zusammen geht – zu hinterfragen bzw. sich ihrer deterministischen Tendenzen bewusst zu werden. Trotz einer oftmals postulierten Kommunikationslücke oder Barriere zwischen politischer Praxis und akademischer Wissenschaft sollte – wie das Beispiel des „Assertive China Narrative“ (vgl. Jerdén 2014) in seiner Konstituierung und Perpetuierung in und durch Wissenschaft, Medien und Politik zeigt – sich die Wissenschaft ihrer Rolle und ihres Einflusses in der Generierung und Festschreibung ‚empirischer Fakten‘ gewahr sein, und damit verantwortungsvoll umgehen. In diesem Sinne bezeichnen Jason Glynos und David Howarth (Glynos and Howarth 2007), die ansonsten keine bestimmte normative Haltung postulieren, eine ethische Haltung als Bestreben, die Praktiken aufzuzeigen und zu problematisieren, welche einer Verschleierung des kontingenten und kontextabhängigen Charakters von sozialer und politischer Realität und ihrer Kategorisierung Vorschub leisten. Poststrukturalistische Sichtweisen tragen einem kritischen Blick Rechnung, indem sie ihren Forschungsgegenstand nicht als ‚empirisch gegeben‘ hinnehmen – im Sinne von Chinas Aufstieg als ‚faktisches Phänomen‘ – sondern gleichzeitig den Diskurs betrachten, welcher das ‚Phänomen‘ als solches als ‚Ereignis‘ oder potentiellen Untersuchungsgegenstand konstituiert. Dadurch betont der Poststrukturalismus den politischen, im Sinne von kontextabhängigen und nicht-essentiellen, Charakter von Politik, Gesellschaft und ‚Wirklichkeit‘, deren Konstituierung zwar in sedimentierte Strukturen münden kann, welche aber wiederum problematisiert und unter Umständen auch verändert werden können. In diesem Sinne ist es auch von besonderer Bedeutung, ein historische Perspektive auf ‚aktuelle Phänomene‘ nicht außer Acht zu lassen.

Vita

Akademischer Werdegang

Oktober 2000 bis September 2008	Studium der Fächer Neuere und Neueste Geschichte, Sinologie und Teilgebiete des Rechts/Europarecht an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin und der Freien Universität Berlin, Abschluss Magistra Artium (M.A.)
Oktober 2009 bis September 2010	Postgraduiertenstudium am Institut für Friedensforschung und Sicherheitspolitik (IFSH) an der Universität Hamburg. Abschluss Master of Peace and Security Studies (M.P.S). Im Rahmen des Studiums viermonatiger Forschungsaufenthalt am GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Institut für Asienstudien in Hamburg
März 2011 bis Juli 2015	Doktorandin am Institut für Sozialwissenschaften, Institut für Internationale Politische Soziologie der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel (Prof. Dr. Dirk Nabers) und Doktorandin/Research Fellow am GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Institut für Asienstudien in Hamburg; Stipendiatin der Finnischen Kulturstiftung in Helsinki
Oktober 2013 bis Dezember 2013	Gastdoktorandin an der School of International Service (SIS), American University in Washington D.C.
Januar 2014 bis März 2014	Gastdoktorandin am Woodrow Wilson Department of Politics, University of Virginia in Charlottesville Virginia