

T.R.
POLICE ACADEMY
INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

**NATO's ENLARGEMENT AND THE USA: A CRITICAL
ANALYSIS OF THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM
WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY**

**MASTER'S THESIS
Fatih TUNA**

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Bayram Ali SONER

ANKARA- 2019

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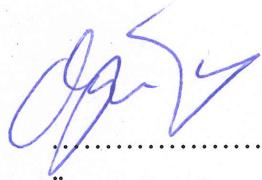
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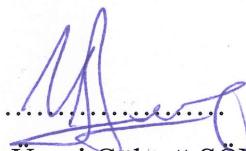
Fatih TUNA tarafından hazırlanan “NATO’s Enlargement and the USA: A Critical Analysis of the Liberal Internationalism within the Context of International Security” başlıklı bu çalışma, 27/12//2019 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda (oybirliği / oycokluğu) ile başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Uluslararası Güvenlik Anabilim Dalı İngilizce programında Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.



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27/12/2019

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ABSTRACT
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NATO's Enlargement and the USA: A Critical Analysis of the Liberal Internationalism within the Context of International Security

Fatih TUNA

Master's Thesis

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Bayram Ali SONER

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Although there are many different liberal theories covering different spheres, all of them prioritizes the freedom of individual, type of state and international system that ensures the liberty of all individuals throughout the world. The USA is a deeply liberal country that emerged as victorious power both in the aftermath of Second World War and the Cold War. In other words, the USA defeated the fascism and communism, ideologies against liberalism, in the 20th century. As it was a conventional wisdom in the USA that lack of liberalism was the main reason behind the First and Second World Wars, the first thing the USA has done after the Second World War was to create liberal international organizations, such as UN, World Bank, IMF, and GATT, to facilitate cooperation between nations and to provide peace to world. In this understanding, liberal internationalism was the only formula for the world peace. However, another great power Soviet Union had not adopted the same foreign policy but started to follow an assertive and expansionist foreign policy. Therefore, largely under the leadership of US, NATO was founded in 1949 to protect the Western liberal world from the Soviet threat. End of the Cold War, with the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, marked the success of NATO but at the same time sparked a debate on the future of NATO. While realists argued for reformulation of NATO, liberals supported NATO enlargement. Liberal foreign policy prevailed in Washington and NATO started to enlarge. NATO enlargement was just an example of the liberal internationalism. According to this grand strategy, which has its roots in the liberal theory, the USA should promote liberal democracy in the rest of the world, embed the democratized countries into liberal international organizations created under the

leadership of the USA, and support international liberal economy. Main objectives behind embracing liberal internationalism is to end human rights violations, ensure the world peace and to make world a safer place for democracy. Liberal internationalism has worked for a certain time period in the post-Cold War era but in the recent years there is a rising opposition to implementation of liberal internationalism from rest of the world. In this thesis, opposition of great powers having both international influence and hard power to liberal internationalism will be analyzed with a special emphasis to international security. In this regard, Russian reaction to NATO enlargement by invading another country for the first time after the Cold War will be examined as a case study. This thesis defends that while it was expected to deliver peace to world, ironically liberal internationalism caused the resurgence of realism in the international relations.

Key Words: the USA, Russia, NATO, Liberal Internationalism, Realism.

ÖZET

T.C.

Polis Akademisi

Güvenlik Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Uluslararası Güvenlik (İngilizce) Anabilim Dalı

NATO'nun Genişlemesi ve ABD: Liberal Uluslararası Güvenlik Bağlamında Eleştirel Analizi

Hazırlayan: Fatih TUNA

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Çeşitli alanlarda birçok farklı liberal teori olmasına rağmen, tüm liberal teoriler bireysel özgürlüğü ve bu özgürlüğü koruyan devlet ve uluslararası sistem yapısını önceliklendirmektedir. Liberal bir ülke olan ABD, hem 2. Dünya Savaşı hem de Soğuk Savaş sonrasında galip gelmiştir. Bir başka deyişle, ABD liberalizme karşı olan faşizm ve komünizm ideolojilerini 20. Yüzyılda yenilgiye uğratmıştır. ABD'deki yaygın inanışa göre Birinci ve İkinci Dünya Savaşlarının arkasındaki ana sebep dünyada liberalizmin yaygın olmamasıdır. Bu sepeble, ABD'nin 2. Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra yaptığı ilk şey milletler arası işbirliğini geliştirmek ve dünya barışını sağlamak amacıyla BM, Dünya Bankası, IMF ve GATT gibi liberal uluslararası örgütler kurmak oldu. Bu anlayışa göre, dünya barışı için tek formül liberal uluslararasılığı. Ancak, bir başka büyük güç olan Sovyetler Birliği aynı dış politikaya uymadı ve agresif ve yayılmacı bir dış politika izledi. Bu nedenle, Batılı liberal dünyayı Sovyet tehdidinden korumak için büyük ölçüde ABD liderliğinde 1949 yılında NATO kuruldu. 1991 yılında Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla sona eren Soğuk Savaş NATO'nun başarısına işaret ederken aynı zamanda NATO'nun geleceğe ilgili bir tartışma başlattı. Realistler NATO'nun yapısının yeniden düzenlenmesi gerektiğini savunurken, liberaller NATO'nun genişlemesini destekledi. Liberal dış politika Washington'da galip geldi ve NATO genişlemeye başladı. NATO'nun genişlemesi liberal uluslararasılığın bir örneğidir. Kökleri liberal teoriden gelen bu grand

stratejiye göre, ABD'nin dünyanın geri kalanında liberal demokrasiyi desteklemesi, demokratikleşen ülkelerin ABD önderliğinde kurulmuş uluslararası örgütlere dahil edilmesi, ve uluslararası liberal ekonominin desteklenmesi gerekmektedir. Liberal uluslararasılığın ana hedefleri dünyada insan hakları ihlallerini sona erdirmek, dünya barışını sağlamak ve dünyayı demokrasi için daha güvenliği bir hale getirmektir. Liberal uluslararasıcılık Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde bir süre başarılı olmuş olsa da son yıllarda liberal uluslararasılığın uygulanmasına karşı başkaldırılar başlamıştır. Bu tezde, uluslararası güvenliğe özel bir vurgu yapmak suretiyle hem uluslararası nüfuz hem de sert güç sahip olan büyük güçlerin liberal uluslararasılığa karşı çıkışı analiz edilecektir. Bu bağlamda, Rusya'nın Soğuk Savaş sonrası ilk defa bir başka ülkeyi işgal ederek NATO'nun genişlemesine karşı gösterdiği reaksiyon vaka çalışması olarak incelenecaktır. Bu tez, dünyaya barış getirmesi beklenirken, liberal uluslararasılığın ironik olarak uluslararası ilişkilerde realizmin tekrar canlanmasına neden olduğunu savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ABD, Rusya, NATO, Liberal Uluslararasıcılık, Realizm.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ONAY	iii
COPYRIGHT DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZET.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS and ACRONYMS	x
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Literature Review	3
Research Questions	7
Methodology	9

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. LIBERALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY	12
1.2. REALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT IN POST-WAR PERIOD.....	19
1.3. THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM AFTER THE COLD WAR	24
1.4. CONCLUSION.....	27

CHAPTER TWO

LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM AND THE UNITED STATES

2.1. CONCEPT OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM	30
2.2. STRATEGY AND THE GRAND STRATEGY	31
2.2.1. Neo-isolationism	32
2.2.2. Selective Engagement.....	34
2.2.3. Cooperative Security.....	36
2.2.4. Primacy	38
2.3. EVALUATION OF GRAND STRATEGY TYPES.....	41
2.4. LIBERAL HEGEMONY OF THE USA AFTER THE COLD WAR .	43
2.4.1. George H. W. Bush and the Liberal Hegemony.....	46
2.4.2. Bill Clinton and the Liberal Hegemony	48
2.4.3. George Bush and the Liberal Hegemony.....	52
2.4.4. Barack Obama and the Liberal Hegemony.....	55
2.5. CONCLUSION.....	57

CHAPTER THREE

LIBERAL DREAMS FACE WITH REALITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

3.1. REACTIONS AGAINST LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM	60
3.2. A CASE ANALYSIS: 2008 RUSSIA-GEORGIA WAR.....	65
3.3. CONCLUSION.....	75
CONCLUSION.....	79
REFERENCES.....	88
CV	99

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS and ACRONYMS

CFSP	: Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	: Common Security and Defense Policy
EI2	: European Intervention Initiative
EU	: European Union
GATT	: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	: Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe
PESCO	: Permanent Structured Cooperation
UK	: United Kingdom
UN	: United Nations
UNSC	: United Nations Security Council
USA	: The United States of America
USSR	: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WB	: World Bank
WTO	: World Trade Organizations
WW1	: First World War
WW2	: Second World War

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to critically analyze the liberal hegemony of the United States of America (the USA) within the context of international security in the post-Cold War period. From the realist point of view, it is reasonably obvious that the trajectory of the global politics is designated by the nature of the relations among the powerful countries. Thus, this thesis intends to provide explanations for understanding great power politics and contributing the literature of the international relations theories.

Great powers are the countries that have significant impact on the global politics and have formidable military power. In the nuclear age, it is unimaginable to become great power without having nuclear weapons. However, it is not enough to have nuclear weapon for being a great power. A great power should have important diplomatic influence in the international politics as well. Having veto power over every resolution of the UN, the most inclusionary international organization of the world, could be described as significant international influence because any country having veto power could affect the decisions to be applied by the UN (Sterio, 2013). As only the permanent members of the UN Security Council have the veto power, and these member states also have formidable military capabilities, including nuclear weapons, at their disposal, it is safe to say that these countries are the great powers of the current international system.

It could be argued that countries like Germany and Japan should also be identified as great powers because of their advanced and industrialized economic might or Pakistan and India for their nuclear power. However, Germany and Japan do not have significant military power, such as nuclear weapons; whereas India and Pakistan do not have veto powers in the UN Security Council. Therefore, it would be reasonable to make an inference that 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council, namely the USA, UK, France, Russia and China, are the great powers because these 5 countries both have profound military power and influence in the international relations (Sterio, 2013).

As there is no central authority or a world government in the international system, every state has military power and no state can be sure about the intentions of other states, each of the great powers are doomed to compete with each other firstly for ensuring and then maximizing their interests in the international relations. Thus, this research defends that the arguments suggesting world has entered into different period after the end of the Cold War, there will be no security competition or war between the great powers, great powers are not each other's enemies but rather parts of the international community that will prosper together and achieve perpetual peace as we have reached the end of the history do not seem to be valid. Power competition between the great powers has not ended but overshadowed by the American hegemony. Tens of thousands of the USA troops are still present in Europe and Asia-Pacific region even after the end of the Cold War. This is because many European states, including UK and France as great powers, are concerned with whether Germany start to behave an assertive role as it did before the First and Second World Wars. The same is valid for Japan and in the Asia-Pacific region there is also a threat of rising China, which should be balanced by the USA to keep its hegemonic role in the system (Mearsheimer; 2001, 1-2). Thereby, it seems that contrary to Fukuyama's (1992) conceptualization of the end of the history or to the USA President Bill Clinton (1992), who claimed that "In a world where freedom, not tyranny, is on the march, the cynical calculus of pure power politics simply does not compute. It is ill suited to new era", the power competition or security dilemma between the great powers has not ended but overshadowed on a large scale by the overextended power of liberal hegemon USA.

In the current post-Cold War world order, the USA remained to be the only superpower of this unipolar structure. Even though some scholars argued otherwise, the USA is the unmatchable superpower in terms of being both hard and soft power. In order to ensure its safety and security within the system, the USA tries to spread liberal and democratic ideas, which are also intensely promoted domestically in the USA. To exemplify, the USA took and is taking an active part in spreading liberalism and democracy in South-Eastern Europe, former Soviet Russian sphere of influence, through NATO enlargement. The USA is doing so to integrate former Soviet Republics into the Western liberal democratic system, by using an international

organization NATO. However, the other great powers who have the potential capabilities to challenge the USA started to show resistance to the preeminent role played by the USA in the international relations. Though it is true that there is a rivalry between EU and Russia in the Balkans and the Black Sea region, this thesis will be focused on the international security realm. Therefore, one can assume that, for Russia, NATO enlargement, championed by the USA, to Russian periphery is more concerning than EU. Thereby, in this research, it is intended to analyze the relations between the USA and the other illiberal great power Russia from the international security perspective by employing theories of liberal internationalism and realism to develop an understanding about the trajectory of the world politics. One can argue that this research is important as it tries to provide explanations for understanding the great power politics and contribute to the literature of the international relations theories.

Literature Review

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 not only marked the end of the Cold War period but also left the USA as the only remaining superpower in the world politics. In other words, the USA had become the hegemonic power of the new unipolar world (Layne, 1993). Some scholars underlined the importance of the USA's primary role in the international relations and even claimed that this unique situation could contribute to stability and security of the world (Huntington, 1993). Becoming the world greatest military spender, dominating international trade, security, and politics as well as promoting internationally shared values and finding no other power to balance against the current dominance of the USA clearly manifests that the USA is the only hegemon of the world (Posen, 2006). Even the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, in other words, interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, clearly showed the capability of the USA superpower to fight with any enemy, including non-state actors and rogue regimes, that poses a threat to its national security (Layne, 2002). As a real hegemon and unmatchable superpower, the USA formulated a multi-national coalition against terrorists and their sponsors, annihilated rogue regimes from thousands of kilometers away in a relatively short period of time and swiftly recovered from the tumultuous condition in the wake of terror attacks (Krauthammer, 2002).

The USA policymakers believe that spreading liberal democracy to other countries will also contribute to peace, security, and prosperity of the USA government and its people (Dueck, 2003). Thusly, one can assume that the USA is not spreading liberal democracy just only for the sake of liberal universal values but also to ensure its own national security. By spreading liberal democracy, liberalizing the economies of other countries, and enhancing the influence of international organizations, the USA follows the principles of liberal internationalism strategy which is actually based upon the realist point of view that tries to protect and guarantee the national security interests of the USA (Ikenberry, 1999).

The USA's liberal internationalist project closely coincides with the democratic peace theory. Democratic peace theory postulates that democratic countries do not go to war against each other since all of them embrace the same liberal international values and beliefs that drive them closely and hinder them from fighting with each other (Ray, 1998). Likewise, the USA experts suggest that the USA should spread democracy because democratic countries would not wage war against the USA, there would be no need for the USA intervention to other countries due to fundamental human rights violation problems as democratized countries would respect the basic rights and law, refugees would not flow from other illiberal countries to the USA, there will be no illiberal regimes supporting terrorist organizations that targeting the USA, and other liberal democratic countries would be attractive trading partners that could maximize the USA's economic interests (Lynn-Jones, 1998).

All of the USA presidents, including George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, after the Cold War have pursued essentially the same grand strategy that is based upon the claim that the USA should foster transparent and democratic regimes as well as liberal systems that ensure the theories of economic interdependence and democratic peace are in practice (Miller, 2012). These liberal internationalist principles, which are initially propounded by the former president Wilson, explicitly aim at constituting a new liberal world order comprising of liberal democratic and interdependent countries and implicitly ensure the protection of the USA's interests and national security.

Ikenberry (2009) argues that the USA hegemony would likely to last longer than former hegemonic powers such as Napoleonic France or Nazi Germany, which were threatening the other countries, because the USA is sending positive signals to other countries and they do not see the current hegemonic power, the USA, as a threat to their own existence. Even some claim that other states are satisfied with the hegemonic role of the USA because it is the most generous great power in the history in terms of preserving the interests of other countries (Kagan, 1998). Also, the USA exercises its preeminent role in the global politics by cooperating with other countries through international organizations, which makes the USA's dominance legitimate in the eye of other states (Nye, 2003). Besides, the USA is governed by the liberal elites and these elites are actively cooperating with liberal elites of other countries in different spheres as they are embracing the same norms and values. This international convergence of interests among liberal elites would likely to ensure that supremacy of the USA will last longer (Owen, 2002). Provision of security to European and Asian allies of the USA is also another contributing factor for international acceptance of the USA's supremacy. Instead of concerning with the possible future security risks, these countries opt for remaining under the USA security umbrella, contribute to the operations and military exercises led by the USA, and let the USA use their military bases (Selden, 2013). Despite the soft power point of view, as a matter of fact, the USA is militarily far stronger than its closest rivals, and it can rapidly project its military power to the different corners of the world in a quite short time. This unrestrainable military capability, which intimidates other powers that have hegemonic intentions and pushes them to bandwagon with the USA, minimizes the possibility of wars and emboldens the duration of the undisputable hegemonic position of the USA (Wohlforth, 1999).

There are also many counter arguments against to assumption that the USA's hegemonic role will provide safety and stability to the international environment as no one can truly anticipate the intention of any state in the future even if it claims to be a peaceful democracy bringer for today. Not only third world countries that will not be able to acquire capabilities to balance the USA in the foreseeable future, but also countries that possess a significant amount of military and diplomatic power, like China and Russia, are trying to constrain the hegemonic influence of the USA in this

unipolar international structure (Rodman, 2000). Even after the end of the Cold War, there is a divergence of interests between the USA and some other powers that hold permanent seats in United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the critical international subjects. Lately, this fracture has become more exposed as many Security Council resolution drafts prepared by the USA or its allies on the issue of Syrian Civil War have been vetoed by China and Russia, in an attempt to equalize the balance of power dynamics which is highly in favor of the USA in the international scene (Chaziza, 2014).

After becoming economic archrival of the USA in the international markets, China seemed to be concerned with the actions of the USA in its own region. Thereby, China started to implement both domestic and international strategies to counterbalance the USA in case of possible future aggression. In domestic field, China aims to allocate its financial resources to stabilize its relatively slowing economy and empower the capability of its military technology. In the international relations, it tries to fend off the influence of the USA on its several neighbors by using international and regional organizations as well as empowering bilateral ties (Layne, 2008). Also, in order to restrain and maybe challenge the unchecked power of the USA, China is now strengthening its naval forces which will enable it to project its military power to its peripheral regions, in addition to the mounting risk of possible conflicts with the USA around Chinese territorial waters (Mearsheimer, 2010). Although the USA claims that its increasing military presence in South East Asia primarily aims at protecting its own liberal democratic allies, China is extremely worried about potential encirclement strategy of superpower, the USA. In such situation, China follows aggressive policies in the regional disputes to send signals to its neighbors that are in close alliance with the USA. China is also looking for other regions to challenge the dominant role of the USA. In recent years Chinese investments in Africa have boomed. Despite the Chinese claims that empowering relations with African countries aims at developing lucrative business ties with the continent, many argue that China could use its ascending influence in Africa to open a new front against the USA dominance in the future (Campbell, 2008).

Likewise, Russia also shows its resentment towards current existing order in the international relations, which is predominantly based upon the USA primacy.

While China uses far away geographies, such as Africa, to find itself new options to increase its presence in the global arena, Russia rather seeks to re-consolidate its influence over the Eurasia region. Considering the historical, cultural and social ties between Russia and other countries in this region, Russia employs both hard and soft power strategies to cement its power in neighboring geography. Bringing new initiatives with the partnership of regional states covering the spheres of politics, economy, and history could be seen as a soft power tool of Russia to recalibrate the balance of power in Eurasia against the USA (Tsygankov, 2013). However, it does not mean that Russia would hesitate to use hard power to protect its broader interests in the region. Georgian conflict, which took place in 2008, clearly indicated that Russia will not be reluctant to militarily interfere with other countries in its own region to show resilience against the hegemonic expansionist power of the USA. As NATO members agreed in 2008 that Georgia will become member of NATO, Russia invaded another country for the first time after the Cold War to avert NATO enlargement, which is seen as an encirclement in the eye of Russian decision makers (Karagiannis, 2013).

Research Questions

At this point, it is important to state that this inquiry aims to provide sufficient and satisfactory answers to the questions of “Does the liberal internationalism contribute to the world peace as it was intended? How the other illiberal great power, namely Russia, responds the liberal hegemonic power of the USA in the aftermath of the 2008 Bucharest NATO Summit, in which including Georgia to NATO was accepted, and what are the reasons behind its responses? Does the other illiberal great power, Russia, see the spread of liberal democracy as part of liberal internationalism to other countries as a threat to itself? If so, why?”.

Even though some pundits who were mentioned above have claimed that other powers will not challenge the hegemonic role of the USA after the end of the Cold War because it has benevolent nature supporting democracy and liberalism, some states that have significant amount of resources that can enable them to employ soft and hard power instruments against dominant role of the USA have already started to show discontent against the current status quo in the international system. Clearly,

China and Russia, countries that have the abilities such as veto power in the Security Council and nuclear weapons to challenge the USA dominance, are two conspicuous examples of this new trend. Whilst it has not been mentioned above, it is also important to point out that even the European allies of the USA have started to develop their independent defense and security policies that will minimize their dependence to the USA (Posen, 2006). This new initiative openly demonstrates that even the closest allies of the USA have realized the fact that defense and security are two essentially integral concepts that ensure the survival. Therefore, no state should rely on others in terms of safety and security.

Conceivably, Francis Fukuyama's (1992) ideas about the triumph of the Western liberal democracy and idealization of this system as the ultimate stage of the human government, which have been quite popular among the social scientists right after the end of the Cold War, are remained to be inadequate to explain the backlash of the spread of liberalism internationally. Even the resurrection of the China and Russia started to be described as the end of the end of history because the rise of these powers could seriously challenge the USA and dissuade other states to come and join to their block against the hegemonic power (Gat, 2007). It is very curious to see that realism in the international relations, which has fallen into disfavor due to the end of the Cold War, is now in the process of coming back due to the expansion of the liberalism. Even if the post-Cold War era the USA presidents have favored the spreading liberalism such as through enlargement of NATO to protect the USA national security, outstanding American realist thinkers, including the former USA diplomat George Kennan, characterized the NATO enlargement as one the most critical errors of the USA foreign policy at the post-Cold War period because they forecasted that this situation will most likely to whet the appetite of nationalist and anti-Western sentiments inside Russia. In such case, Russia would counteract, the spread of liberal democracy will be interrupted, and balance of power politics as part of former Cold War rivalry will be reintroduced (Gaddis, 1998). While premises of liberalism offer peaceful and prosperous life based upon personal inalienable rights and tolerance, one could assume that the liberal internationalism in the international relations has started to undermine the liberal values, given the bloody conflicts in which tens of thousands of people have lost their lives during and after the military

operations carried out in the name of liberal internationalism. Even though some suggest that people should get rid of Cold War mind-set, in the light of recent incidents in the world politics it is safe to say that realism is still there in the international relations.

Methodology

This research aims to inquire about if there is a relationship among certain phenomena. Independent variable is the liberal internationalism, pursued by the USA, which emphasizes the importance of the spread of liberalism to other countries to create a liberal world order. The dependent variable is the actions of the other illiberal great power, Russia, to rebalance the scale which is currently highly favorable for the USA. In other words, Russia follows balance of power, which is one of the fundamental principles of the realism theory. To realize the goal of this research, 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit and its aftermath, the Georgian Conflict, will be analyzed as a case study.

The relationship between variables will be measured through case study as part of qualitative research method. Neuman (2014) describes the case study as the following:

Case study research examines many features of a few cases. The data on the case are detailed, varied, and extensive. It examines both details of each case's internal features as well as the surrounding situation. Case studies enable us to link micro level to the macro level, or large-scale structures and processes. In addition, case studies provide evidence that more effectively depicts complex, multiple-factor events/situations and processes that occur over time and space. Case-study research also can incorporate an entire situation and multiple perspectives within it (p. 42).

It seems that case study research method is highly suitable for this research in terms of linking hypothesis to solid particulars of the case.

“Case studies can provide decisive evidence for or against theories of the international relations because tests performed with case studies are often strong as the predictions tested are quite unique. Inferring and testing explanations that define how the independent causes the dependent variable are often easier with case-study than large-n methods” (Van Evera, 1997: 54).

As part of qualitative research, the method of case study will be employed in an attempt to verify the hypothesis of the research, which suggests that the liberal internationalism causes resurge of the realism and balance of power in terms of international security relations between the hegemonic power and the other great powers. In fact, it does not mean that other illiberal powers want to balance the USA in the security field only. However, this master thesis will be focused on only or primarily the international security field. In this regard, it is safe to say that 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit and its aftermath, Georgian War, will be used as a case for critical analysis of the liberal internationalist theory. After that Summit, in the final communique, it was declared that Georgia and Ukraine will be part of NATO: "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO" (Bucharest Summit Declaration, 2008). While this situation was interpreted as the spread of liberalism as part of liberal internationalism by the USA, Russia perceived the enlargement of NATO to its backyard as encirclement. To elude possible encirclement and avoid the upset of balance of power dynamics against itself, Russia invaded Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia and this invasion also caused a crisis in Ukraine right after the NATO Bucharest Summit. Thusly, by analyzing significant case study with using theoretical lenses, this research could provide a contribution to the literature by showing the contradiction of the liberal internationalism and this outcome can pave the way for future search. At this point, it is important to note that contradiction of the liberal internationalism does not mean the collapse or the failure of the liberal internationalism. On the contrary, in this research project, it is planned to demonstrate the fact that the USA is operating in the international relations by implementing realism in the shape of the liberal internationalism. As the case study of this thesis clearly illustrates enlargement of the NATO by including Georgia and Ukraine was large part supported by the USA to enlarge the liberal world under the leadership of itself and to minimize the risks arising from the illiberal regimes. Considering the fact that the enlargement of liberal internationalist world by enlarging NATO also minimizes risks threatening the national security of the USA, it is safe to say that the USA is following realist foreign policy

under the name of liberal internationalism and this situation triggers acts of balancing from other great powers, such as Russia in the case of Georgia War.

In the first chapter, international security environment of this and previous century will be analyzed by using the theories of liberalism and realism in a comparative manner to form a theoretical and contextual framework. In second chapter, role of the USA in terms of liberal internationalism will be analyzed in detail. Concepts of strategy and grand strategy will be compared. Types of grand strategy in the existing literature will be explained and evaluated. Liberal hegemony of the USA after the end of the Cold War will be pointed out in terms of foreign policies of post-Cold War USA Presidents. In the third chapter, reactions of other great powers, including European powers within the framework of EU, China, and Russia, to liberal hegemony of the USA will be elaborated. Russia's reaction to NATO enlargement, championed by the USA in the post-Cold War era, will be explained in detail as a case study in this chapter. Overall assessments and recommendations will be made in the conclusions and recommendations chapter. Primary sources, including the USA Grand Strategy documents, and secondary sources from the academic literature will be used in this master thesis.

By both employing the theoretical framework of liberal internationalism and realism, as well as using practical case about NATO enlargement and Russia's harsh reaction, this research aims to critically analyze the liberal internationalism championed by the USA in the post-Cold War international relations. Although, as an alternative explanation, some scholars might argue that the USA is pursuing liberal internationalism for the sake of liberal values and principles, it would be so naive to believe this explanation. The strong commitment of the USA to Saudi Arabia, the USA support for General el-Sisi of Egypt who came to power as a result of the coup, supporting terrorist organization YPG in Syria are among the dozens of examples showing that not in all cases the USA is strongly devoted to liberalism. On the contrary, this research is intended to indicate that realist foreign policy behaviors of the USA in the form of liberal internationalism leads other illiberal great powers, most notably Russia, to balance the scale, rather than the common belief of post-Cold War period, which is illiberal great powers resisting liberal internationalism.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. LIBERALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

In order to critically analyze liberal internationalism, it is an imperative to develop an understanding about the theory of liberalism in the international relations. Liberal theory asserts that human nature is basically good, social progress is possible, and the human behavior is perfectible through institutions. According to liberals, corrupt institutions and misunderstanding among leaders are the main reasons behind the war, injustice and aggressions. These problems are not unavoidable and can be eliminated by reformation of the institutions and the collective action. It can be argued that one of the core beliefs of the liberalism is to achieve human freedom by the way of democracy and free market economy (Karns & Mingst, 2010: 35, 36).

Although according to some accounts origins of liberalism can be dated back as early as Ancient Greece, it is safe to say that the works of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant about the world peace could be described as the foundation of the liberal thought in international relations. Despite the fact that enlightenment philosopher Kant is known for his arguments on ethics, he also carried out studies about the good state and its international relations. Kant claims that the republican government, in which not only the ordinary citizens but even the monarchs are subjected to the rule of law based on constitution, is the only justifiable type of government. Good laws are tested in terms of their universalizability. In other words, only good laws are those one could wish everyone obeyed. In such condition, those laws become categorical imperatives that every citizen, without any exception, are bind to them (Kant, 1903; Navari, 2008: 30).

Kant describes republican states as the peace producers as they show more tendency to peaceful behavior in the international relations than the other type of states. There are two reasons behind this behavior and those are consultation and the legal foundation. Republican states' obligation to consult their citizens before would make

it less likely to declare a war so easily. Also, a republican state, based upon true legal principles, is less likely to follow lawless behavior in the international relations (Kant, 1903; Navari, 2008: 30).

In terms of international politics, being solely a republican state is not enough to secure peace. Ever present possibility of war, lawless condition of the international relations as well as the unstable power balances make it difficult for republican states to preserve their liberal political order. As republican states cannot remain to be liberal by themselves, they ought to strive towards regulated international system based on law (Kant, 1991). Kant also refuted the idea describing the balance of power, one of the main features of the realist theory, as the peacekeeper and claimed that this idea is fallacious. He argued that “It is the desire of every state, or of its ruler, to arrive at a condition of perpetual peace by conquering the whole world, if that were possible” (as cited in Navari, 2008: 31). Kant also agreed with renowned Genevan philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau’s negative arguments on the balance of power concept, claiming that states’ tendencies to balance their power relative to each other do not cause peace but provocation (Navari, 2008: 32). Clearly, even the early thinkers, whose ideas are regarded as cornerstone of the liberalism, underestimate and discredit the balance of power in terms of achieving peace in the international politics.

According to Kant’s peace plan, every state, regardless of being liberal or not, should establish certain unprecedented conditions, including but not limited to abolition of their standing armies, not interfering in other states’ affairs, and ending imperial ventures to put an end to the state of nature, which is described as a war of all against all, in which life is nasty, brutish and short (Hobbes, 1998; Kant, 1991). After this initial step, republican constitutions should be spread to all states, federation of free states should be founded to provide collective security, and the cosmopolitan community should be gradually formed based on universal hospitality (Howard, 2000: 31).

Kant also focused on the link between the peace and democracy. Possibility of achieving perpetual peace is among the core elements of his writings. Kantian way of liberal theory does not rule out possibility of war against non-democratic states but

according to his argument avoiding war is a reachable objective for free and democratic states by cooperation and protecting their sovereignty at the same time (Kant, 1903).

In the light of liberal theory, international institutions play a significant role in terms of facilitating cooperation between the states. Even though the existence of anarchy in the international system puts some limits to cooperation, states can work together with the assistance of the international organizations (Keohane and Nye, 1977). Neoliberal institutionalist tends to emphasize important role played by international organization and cooperation of the states under these organizations. Indeed, international organizations are instrumental in solving problems related to cooperation because they provide valuable information helping decisionmakers and reducing the costs of transaction to achieve a consensus among a vast number of states (Keohane and Martin, 1995).

It could be argued that the NATO was originated from Kant's arguments about federation of free states providing collective security. However, an in-depth analysis provides a completely different picture. Although it seems that the NATO is providing collective security to its members, actually NATO serves for the realist national security interest of the USA (Mearsheimer, 2018). The USA is the most powerful state of the NATO and it provides nuclear security umbrella to its other members. Under the leadership of the USA, NATO has enlarged several times and it still aims to enlarge further. The reason behind this ambition is to create liberal secure zone in which no threat targeting the USA will be originated.

Throughout the 19th century, liberalism, in line with Kant's ideas about reaching ever lasting peace, remained to be a significant international relations theory. In the wake of the First World War, averting the conflict was the top priority of the international community as the large-scale destruction of the war shocked and affected millions of people. In this regard, to realize a peaceful and just international structure and to promote cooperative and peaceful relations among the countries the League of Nations was established with liberal ideas. To provide peace, collective security and stability to the international system as well as to deter aggressor states League of Nation was formed in 1920 in London. Should one of the League's member faces with

the aggression of a powerful country, remaining League members would join together to deter the aggressor state. It was aimed that the violence should be made an illegitimate policy option for the states. To guarantee the success of the League, the USA, the country that played a key role in ending the Great War by its late participation to the Allies side, was needed to join this organization and play a determinant role in the international relations by ending its isolation. Regardless of the USA President Woodrow Wilson's critical role in the planning process of the League, the USA could not be able to join this organization as the USA Senate declined to ratify the Covenant of the League of Nations. Despite the fact that the League played an important role as a diplomatic forum during the interwar period, prevention of the USA membership by the Senate was a crucial blow. In the 1930s, idealist expectations were started to be frustrated because of the several major aggressions in the international relations and the League's inability of deterrence. Japan attacked China in 1931. Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935. Germany, under the leadership of Hitler, invaded demilitarized Rhineland region. None of these aggressions were punished by the League of Nations, making it effectively useless in terms of protecting the international peace. Power politics of realist tradition outcompeted the liberal idealization. One of the deadliest wars that the world experienced, the Second World War (WWII), was started shortly after, in 1939 (Diez, El-Anis, Pettiford & Steans, 2010: 34).

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, world entered into a new period known as the Cold War, indirect confrontation between the USA and Soviet Union, superpowers that have played a significant role in defeating the Nazi Germany at the Second World War. As realism seemed to provide a better explanation of Cold War's power politics, liberalism fell out of favor for a long time period. Although it has lost its popularity, liberalism still remained to be a significant theory in terms of explaining relations between the Western countries during the post-war period. In 1944, when Second World War was come to an end, representatives of the Western countries gathered at the Bretton Woods, the USA, to decide the future of the international economy in accordance with the liberal principles, free market economy with limited government intervention only as a regulatory role. It was believed that the economic crisis of the 1930s created an undesirable climate in which militaristic and

nationalist regimes emerged. When the international economic outlook is not favorable, states tend to protect their own economies and domestic markets by increasing tariffs. This situation causes a slowdown in the international trade and world enters into an economic crisis. In this regard, a new system is designated to end this vicious circle by helping countries facing with economic problems and discouraging economic practices that slow the international trade, such as protectionism. As part of Bretton Woods System (BWS) several international organizations were introduced in order to ensure the stability of the international economy and trade, and to facilitate economic growth as well as development. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), known as the World Bank (WB), was formed in 1944 to provide loans to countries for their infrastructure development. International Monetary Fund (IMF) was founded in 1945 to provide liquidity for the international economy by lending money to countries having balance of payment difficulties. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was transformed into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, was founded in 1945 to reduce the tariffs, quotas, and barriers in an attempt to stimulate the world trade. All of these institutions have contributed significantly to the world economy but the system's linchpin was and still is the USA dollar. Dollar is used as the major currency in the international trade. Values of the other currencies are measured in accordance with the USA dollar and the USA has the largest economy in the world since the end of the Second World War (WWII) (Diez et al., 2010: 29).

As one can see a new system was designed in the Western world at the beginning of the post-war period. Although this system can be explained with the liberal values, including harmony of interests among the different states as well as cooperation between different nations to preserve the peace in the international system, it is also important to note that the USA has become the predominant actor of this new system by having the sole power to print the dollar, which is used as the world's main reserve currency, and the largest and the strongest economy of this new international system. According to realism, states are the key actors in the international relations and the USA is the state that dominates this newly designed international system (Diez et al., 2010: 57). Though it might seem a bit complicated, one can assert that this new

liberal international order is at the same time well suited to the realist national interests of the USA, the state that has the dominant role in the system.

Indeed, the aforementioned international institutions have played an important role specifically in the fields of trade and economy as liberalism claims that economically liberal states incline to peace rather than conflict. Moravcsik says that ‘trade is generally a less costly means of accumulating wealth than war, sanctions or other coercive means’ (2001: 50). Furthermore, Van Evera argues that the more diversified and complex the existing transnational commercial links, the less cost-effective coercion is likely to be (1994). However, without the security of the system these institutions would be meaningless because it is obvious that security ensures the survival and persistence of the system. Security firstly defined as the absence of threats to acquired values and, later, reformulated as a low probability of damage to acquired values (Baldwin, 1997: 13). From the USA’s point of view, resurgence of Germany and the expansion of the Soviet Union are the two main threats to the security of the Western international system, created in accordance with the liberal principles, after the Second World War. These two significant threats are clearly reflecting the reasons behind the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as the first Secretary General of NATO Lord Hastings Ismay described the purpose of the NATO as to “keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down” (as cited in Nye, 2002: 33).

It is quite obvious that security is an indispensable element for the well-being of any individual. In this regard, purpose of the NATO is to safeguard the liberty and security of its members through political and military instruments. In terms of politics, NATO promotes democratic values and encourages its members to consult and cooperate with each other on defense and security related subjects to solve problems, build trust and to prevent conflict. In terms of military, even if the NATO is committed to solve the disputes in peaceful manner, it also has the capability to undertake military operations. NATO’s military operations are carried out in accordance with the Article 5 of the Washington treaty, which is the collective defense clause of the founding treaty. As NATO is committed to safety, security and prosperity of all of its members

as a whole, it principally sees an attack against one or several of its members as an attack against all liberal democratic community of NATO members. This principle of collective defense is clearly articulated in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty (1949):

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Within the context of NATO, its members consult and cooperate with each other in the fields of defense and security, as well as conduct international military operations to deal with the issues threatening liberal community of NATO members. NATO protects liberal democratic values and principles of its members through collective defense and cooperative security (Washington Treaty, 1949).

In 1948, the USA started to implement the Marshall program to provide military and economic aid to devastated Europe, in an attempt to rebuild the continent and to assure further cooperation between Europe and the USA. Soviet Union did not allow its Eastern European satellites to benefit from the program, an action contributed the mounting tensions between the USA and the Soviets. In 1948, Soviets orchestrated a coup in Czechoslovakia, which resulted in the establishment of a communist government bordering Germany. In the same year, Communist Party had gained significant number of votes in the Italian elections. In the middle of 1948, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin decided to blockade Allies from accessing Berlin, which was under the Soviet occupation. Stalin's move came just after the introduction of the new Deutsche Mark by the Allies as a step to create an economically stable western Germany. As a countermeasure, Allies started to airlift supply of provisions to Berlin. Because the Allies did not withdraw the new Deutsche Mark and continued the airlifting, Soviets had no other option but to lift the land blockade in 1949. All of these events showed Western Europe and the USA that the security threats originating from the assertive behaviors of the Soviet Union are extremely concerning for the Western community and this problem is had to be dealt with ("North Atlantic Treaty Organization", n.d.).

Seemingly, the USA faced with two significant and interrelated tasks in such situation: creating a new international security arrangement in the Western Europe to curb the influence of the expansionist Soviet Union and reconstructing the Western Europe which was completely destroyed due to the Second World War. In the following part, creation of NATO under the leadership of the USA as part of the USA's attempt to fulfill those aforementioned tasks will be analyzed from the international security perspective.

1.2. REALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT IN POST-WAR PERIOD

Due to the increasing security risks and mounting tensions mentioned above, the Western European countries gathered together to form a military alliance. In 1948, Great Britain, France, Luxembourg, Belgium and Netherlands signed Brussels Treaty. The treaty aimed to provide collective security solution to the signatory parties. In fact, this treaty was in line with the theory of liberalism. Liberalism theory suggests that cooperation is possible in the international system. States sharing the same values and principles can cooperate and achieve collective security so that they can provide peace and prosperity to the nations of the world thanks to interdependence among each other (Keohane, 1984). However, signing of Brussels Treaty was not enough to provide security for the Western European countries as the destruction of the WW2 frustrated the members of the treaty. They did not have sufficient military power to defend themselves in case of Soviet incursion so they were in need of direct military assistance and large-scale military aid from the USA in order to reconstruct their security capabilities. At the same time, leaving the Western Europe at the hands of the Soviet Union will not serve the interests of the USA as the expansion of the communism to the entire European continent will definitely upset the global balance of power dynamics at the expense of USA's security concerns. In such a case, the USA and its Western European counterparts, as well as Canada, started to negotiate for a better and more inclusive mutual defense agreement. In 1949, the USA, UK, France, Canada, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Portugal signed the North Atlantic Treaty, and so the NATO was created. All member countries

agreed to exchange views on the security threats and to accept attack against one as an attack against all:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area (Washington Treaty, 1949).

Immediately after signing the treaty, in the very same year, European countries started to receive hundreds of millions of dollars provided by the USA as a military assistance to rebuild their defenses against a possible Soviet aggression. As the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 with Soviet supported North Korea attacking to the South Korea seen as part of global communist aggression, the USA increased both numbers and capabilities of its military presence at the Europe in an attempt to provide assurance against Soviet aggression to the continent. In 1952, 3 years after its creation, NATO started to enlarge by including Turkey and Greece to its ranks. In 1955, Federal Republic of Germany, known as the Western Germany, was included to NATO. To retaliate this situation, Soviet Union created the Warsaw Pact and the Eastern European countries under the Soviet influence became the members of this organization. Thanks to NATO, Western Europe was placed under the nuclear umbrella of the USA. To deter the Soviet Union from attacking the region, the USA declared in the 1950s that if NATO members were attacked, it would reciprocate with a large-scale nuclear assault. Although the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, and the Warsaw Pact with it, NATO survived from the Cold War and still remains to be largest security institution in today's world ("North Atlantic Treaty Organization", n.d.).

Although students of the international relations or the international security tend to characterize the NATO in accordance with the liberal principles, a closer look at the formulation of this institution shows quite a different picture. In line with liberalism, NATO seems to provide collective security to its members by uniting different states sharing the same liberal principles. However, in 1948, one year before

the creation of NATO, several liberal Western countries had already come together within the umbrella of Brussels Treaty, which also had articles about security cooperation, but failed to provide collective security to the signatories. They have failed because they were lacking material resources in the aftermath of WWII's destruction and desperately needed help of the USA. Without the guarantor role of the USA, nothing seemed to be stopping Soviet takeover of the entire European continent. Besides, it was the USA that provided hundreds of millions of dollars to the Western European countries for the reconstruction after the WW2. The USA provided aid to Europe within the framework of the European Recovery Program, which is known as the Marshall Plan. As part of the Marshall Plan, the USA gave around 12 billion US dollars, which is equal to inflation adjusted 100 billion US dollars in 2018, economic aid for the reconstruction of Western European countries that were utterly devastated as a result of the WWII (Smith, 200). European countries, in return, only were able to open their borders to the USA military machine to receive security guarantee against possible Soviet incursion. They were also protected by the nuclear umbrella of the USA. Actually, need of the USA was nothing new. In the aftermath of the First World War, several nations came together and formed the League of Nations but the League, just like the Brussels Treaty, could not be able provide safety and security to the international system because the USA, the country that played significant role in defeating the German Empire and ending the Great War, did not participate to that international organization due to the decision of the USA senate. However, the post-war period was different. This time the USA started to play a preeminent role in the international system by ending its isolation. As a matter of fact, neo-realists employ the concept of hegemony in describing the preeminent role of the USA. While the concept of hegemony refers to dominant social forces and ideas in the international relations according to the critical theory, neo-realist underscores the dominant states in the international system by using the concept of hegemony (Diez et al., 2010: 66). In other words, hegemony is the dominance of a single power. It has been used to understand how the international order is possible even under the anarchical international system. According to the neo-realists, there are two main phases of hegemonic domination in the recent history and those are 19th and early 20th century British domination and post-Second World War the USA domination. According to

the neo-realist tradition, if the condition of hegemony prevails, the possibility of establishing effectively functioning international institutions is highly likely, as it was seen in the success of NATO. In the absence of hegemonic power, however, institutions tend to be less effective and fragile, as it was seen in the failure of the League of Nations and Brussels Treaty. Introduction of the international institutions does not sideline the theory of realism. By emphasizing the central role of the states in the world politics, realists argue that states can create or join international organizations in order to maximize their interests. Likewise, states also can leave these international bodies if they are no longer serving their national interests (Diez et al., 2010: 66, 67).

Though it is tended to refer NATO as an alliance, it is actually an international organization. The main difference between an alliance and an international organization is that an alliance is formed against a common threat whereas an international organization is created for coping with risks (Navari, 2008: 42). In other words, it could be said that alliances are formed to realize narrower goals but international organizations cover a broader subject area. If NATO was to be an alliance, it should have been dissolved after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, NATO has persisted and even expanded after the end of the Cold War by including several new member countries. Therefore, one could argue that NATO is an international security organization rather than a simple alliance. However, existence of such international organization in the field of security does not cause a theoretical puzzle for realism nor empower neoliberal institutionalism. While the liberals believe that international organizations maximize shared interests of states, realists argue that these organizations providing opportunity to powerful states to maintain hegemony. John Mearsheimer claims that 'The most powerful states in the system create and shape institutions so that they can maintain their share of world power, or even increase it' (1994/95: 13). Likewise, relatively less powerful states do have less control over the decisions of the international organizations and do not benefit from them as much as the powerful ones (Gruber, 2000). Mearsheimer summarizes the role of the international institutions from the realist and great power perspective as 'Realism maintains that institutions are a reflection of the distribution of power in the world.

They are based on the self-interested calculations of the great powers, and they have no independent effect on state behavior' (1994/95: 7). Jervis argues that 'Security regimes rarely seem attractive to the decision makers' (1982: 360). However, Jervis also does not rule out the possibility of international organizations providing benefits under the anarchy by saying that 'States establish institutions only if they seek the goals that the institution will help them reach' (1999: 54). Basically, realists perceive international organizations as tools helping states, the most relevant and the main actors of the international relations, to reach their goals under the anarchical world system. According to this view, only the balance of power determines the war and peace and the power balances reflect to the international organizations. In this regard, NATO is a significant example of the international organizations' role according to realist tradition. It is true that NATO played an important role in terms of preventing a new world war as well as contributing the Western world under the leadership of the USA to win the Cold War. However, NATO was just an indicator of the bipolar balance of power between the two superpowers, namely the USA and the Soviet Union, in the continent of Europe. In other words, it was the balance of power between the two superpowers that maintained the stability in the Europe, not was NATO. In fact, NATO was actually an American tool for managing power in the face of the Soviet threat (Mearsheimer, 1994/95: 14). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, realists started to claim that NATO should reformulate itself in accordance with the new reality (Hellman and Wolf, 1993). It was a common belief among the realists that it can no longer remain as it was in the Cold War.

1.3. THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM AFTER THE COLD WAR

‘The USA is a deeply liberal country that emerged from the Cold War as by far the most powerful state in the international system’ (Mearsheimer, 2018; 14). Collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 provided the USA an unprecedented opportunity to pursue liberal hegemony (Smith, 1994). As the fascism and later the communism both overcame by the liberalism, there is no other alternative ideology remained. It was alleged in Fukuyama’s “End of the History” that the world shall be comprised of liberal democracies and these countries and the great powers would not go to war against each other anymore (1989). During that period, it was commonly believed that spread of liberalism will put an end to realism and the balance of power politics. Even Bill Clinton said in 1992 at the presidential elections campaign that

‘In a world where freedom, not tyranny, is on the march, the cynical calculus of pure power politics simply does not compute. It is ill-suited to a new era in which ideas and information are broadcast around the globe before ambassadors can read their cables’ (New York Times, 1992).

In this regard, it is an imperative to note that NATO was an important organization in terms of liberal internationalism as it is mentioned at the beginning of The North Atlantic Treaty that

‘They (The parties to this Treaty) are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They (The parties to this Treaty) are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security’ (The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949).

Indeed, NATO played a pivotal role both for encouraging Central and Eastern European countries to carry out political and economic reforms in order be part of the USA led Western liberal international community through NATO membership as well as protecting newly democratized former Soviet countries from a possible Russian threat in the future. At his visit to Prague, capital city of Czechoslovakia, in 1994, the USA President Bill Clinton openly declared that ‘the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members but when and how’ (as cited in Goldgeiger, 1999: 20).

NATO has already enlarged three times at the Cold War, by including Turkey and Greece in 1952, West Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982. While discussing Turkey's accession to the NATO, countries like Denmark, Netherlands and Norway opposed to this idea because they thought that this would turn NATO into an anti-Soviet organization rather than league of liberal democracies. On the one hand, British and French side proposed that new defense pacts covering the regions of Mediterranean and the Middle East should be created and Turkey should be included into these pacts rather than direct NATO membership. However, due to persistence of American military strategic planners because of highly favorable geostrategic location of the country, Turkey included into the NATO, a move also showed hegemonic role played by the USA in terms of influencing NATO countries in adopting a decision (Smith, 2000).

1950 Turkey's general elections, in which opposition Democratic Party came to power with a landslide victory, played a symbolic role in Turkey's accession to the NATO. New process of leadership selection as well as broader popular participation to political life, in line with liberal democratic ideas, was observed (Karpat, 1972).

In line with the liberal internationalist rhetoric of the USA, NATO enlarged much more ambitiously after the Cold War. In 1999, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland became the members of this organization. In 2004, NATO enlarged further eastwards by including Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. In 2009, Albania and Croatia joined NATO. In 2017, Montenegro became the newest member (Member countries, 2018). However, not in all cases NATO's actions were peaceful. NATO also used force in 1995 by carrying out bombardment campaign against Serbia. Although NATO's Operation Deliberate Force campaign started after the humanitarian tragedies such as Srebrenica and Markale massacres, NATO's use of force started to cause concern in Russia. During the NATO's campaign, Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated that 'This is the first sign of what could happen when NATO comes right up to the Russian Federation's borders. ... The flame of war could burst out across the whole of Europe' (As cited in Mearhseimer, 2014). Nevertheless, Russia could not be able to stop or deter NATO as it did not have enough power to do so.

After the September 11 attacks, the USA President George W. Bush blamed the failure of democracy in the Middle Eastern countries, including Afghanistan and Iraq, for emboldening the terrorists threatening millions of people around the world (President Bush's Speech, 2003). According to his logic, in order to end the terrorism, Middle Eastern countries, from which the terrorism has been originated, should be liberalized and democratized with the efforts of the USA. Thereby, to spread democracy and liberalism the USA invaded Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. NATO countries and NATO missions played important role to contribute to this process specifically in the aftermath of the invasions (NATO and Afghanistan, 2018). Despite the fact that both of these invasions costed the lives of thousands of people, the real problem emerged only after the 2008 NATO Bucharest summit, which was held in Romania. It was declared after this summit that Georgia and Ukraine, both countries that were under the Russian influence during the time of Soviet Union, will be part of NATO in the future (Bucharest Summit Declaration, 2008). After the NATO's Bucharest Summit declaration, Russia invaded Georgia and this situation caused a political crisis in Ukraine. Although, 2008 Russian-Georgian conflict will be examined in detail as a case study in this thesis, it could be briefly mentioned that Russia did not want Georgia and Ukraine to be part of NATO, led by its main Cold War rival the USA, because this situation would upset the balance of power dynamics against the interest of Russia in the region. It seems that liberal policy makers who adopt liberal internationalism in the Washington underestimated the concept of balance of power, which caused a serious problem. Regardless of the rhetoric, it is understood that liberal internationalist foreign policy of the USA aiming at restoring world peace has not succeed given that the USA has been fighting wars for two out of three years since the end of the Cold War period.

1.4. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, theoretical and conceptual framework of the thesis has been put forward. It is tended to characterize the theory of liberalism as peace maker in the international relations. However, as it was seen in the examples of League of Nations after the WW1 and the Treaty of Brussels in the aftermath of WW2, these liberal institutions were doomed to fail in terms of providing peace in the absence of the hegemonic power, which is the USA. In line with the neo-realist arguments, international organizations function properly only under the leadership of hegemonic power of the international system. While the NATO served as a significant institution during the Cold War, in reality it was a tool for the USA to further ensure its military presence and to manage the continental power politics in Europe. It is proved that the balance of power, one of the fundamental principles of realism, between the USA and the Soviet Union ensured the peace and stability in the system. Although Fukuyama argued that the end of the Cold War also marked the end of history, and there will be no wars in the future, incidents of the following period suggested otherwise. Despite the fact that the USA remained the only super power in the unipolar system, and found a suitable international environment to spread liberalism in order to ensure world peace as well as its own security, this strategy proved to be disastrous. While the liberal internationalist foreign policy aims peace and cooperation, it has only caused more conflicts and instability in the international system. At this point, it is important to note that while this understanding closely coincides with Mearsheimer arguments, there is a significant difference between this thesis and his arguments. Mearsheimer argues that liberalism is a good thing but the liberal internationalism is causing trouble and even harming liberalism (2018). However, it would be problematic to describe something as good or bad from the scientific point of view. In other words, these concepts are relativistic. Besides, the early texts about the liberalism written by Kant and Rousseau, which were mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, are suggesting that liberal states should strive for spreading liberalism to create an international community sharing the same values and that the concept of balance of power does not provide peace in the international relations. Accordingly, striving for enlarging an international organization embracing liberal values to the borders of another illiberal great power without considering the balance of power, as it was seen in the case of

2008 Russia-Georgia conflict, complies not only with the liberal internationalism but also with the early texts of liberalism. In other words, ignoring the balance of power as the main element that ensures peace is not just derived from the liberal internationalism but also originated from the early texts of liberalism. Therefore, this thesis does not agree with Mearsheimer's differentiation between liberalism and the liberal internationalism. On the contrary, this thesis argues that liberal internationalism causing conflicts in the system follows the ideas that were produced by the early liberal thinkers. Ironically, spread of liberalism under the leadership of the USA, within the context of liberal internationalism that supposedly intends to provide peace to world, caused the reintroduction of realism in the international relations.



CHAPTER TWO

LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM AND THE UNITED STATES

After analyzing theoretical and contextual framework in the previous chapter, conceptual framework will be established in this second chapter. The argument will be started with the ongoing deficiencies about the very definition of the concept of liberal internationalism in the academic literature. These shortcomings will propel reader to another subject, which are the concepts of strategy and grand strategy. In this regard, the concept of grand strategy and the most accepted grand strategy options in the academic literature in terms of foreign policy will be analyzed comparatively in order to make sense of the USA foreign policy specifically after the Cold War. In other words, grand strategy types of Neo-isolationism, Selective Engagement, Cooperative Security and Primacy will be discussed. After making such analysis, it will be evaluated that which type of grand strategy is well suited to describe the USA foreign policy in terms of enlarging NATO as part of maximizing realist foreign policy interests of the USA under the cover of liberal internationalist rhetoric. After making such evaluation in line with the main argument of this thesis, which suggests that the USA follows realist foreign policy in the form of liberal internationalism after the Cold War and the NATO enlargement is just one aspect of this hidden realism under the cover of liberal internationalism, liberal hegemony of the USA after the Cold War will be discussed from the international security perspective. Even the concept of liberal hegemony itself demonstrates that the USA is following realism in the form of liberal internationalism. Concept of liberal hegemony is employed to show that the USA ensures its hegemony in the liberal world under its leadership by promoting liberal democracy in the rest of the world, embedding the democratized countries into the liberal international organizations created under the leadership of the USA, such as the NATO, and supporting international liberal economy. In this sense, main theme of this chapter will be analysis of enlargement of the NATO under the leadership of the USA from the grand strategy perspective.

2.1. CONCEPT OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

It is tended to characterize the foreign policy behavior of the USA as liberal internationalist after the end of the Cold War, yet it is surprising to see that there are conflicting accounts about what is liberal internationalism in the literature. On the one hand, Jahn (2013: 13) argues that “Understanding liberalism’s prominent, yet fickle, role in world politics requires, first of all, a definition of liberal internationalism. Yet, such a definition is not readily available”. Concept of liberal internationalism has been used to define variety of phenomena in the international relations, including to explicate liberal foreign policies, application of liberal practices and principles in the global affairs, and the foreign policies of the liberal states (Jahn, 2013: 13). On the other hand, prominent realist thinker Mearsheimer (2018: 12) embraces a more straightforward definition in identifying liberal internationalism:

“Liberal hegemony is an ambitious strategy in which a state aims to turn as many countries as possible into liberal democracies like itself while also promoting an open international economy and building international institutions”

Because the collapse of the Soviet Union left the USA as the only hegemonic great power in the international system after the Cold War, he more often uses the concept of liberal hegemony instead of liberal internationalism. Jahn’s arguments (2013: 13) about there is no specific definition of liberal internationalism and yet it is used to define wide range of liberal implementations in the international relations as well as Mearsheimer’s (2018: 12) preference to define liberal internationalism, or liberal hegemony, as a strategy clearly suggests that the concept of liberal internationalism has not been narrowed down to be used only in a particular area in the international relations. Although the concept of liberal internationalism has been used in a far-reaching manner, as demonstrated above, it is important to once more note the fact that in this research the primary focus is the impact of liberal internationalism in the international security relations.

2.2. STRATEGY AND THE GRAND STRATEGY

It could be argued that all states have certain aims and intentions in the international relations, with their limited material and soft power capabilities. Generally, states' method to realize their goals by employing their resources in the global politics is explained by the concept of strategy. Deibel defines strategy as "a plan of applying resources for reaching the objectives" (2007: 5). Similarly, Strachan argues that strategy is "directing means to achieve the ends set by policy" (2005: 33). However, the key problem of these definitions is that they are mostly focusing on the means. Such restricted definitions are not well suited for explaining the states' systematic moves in the international affairs.

At this point, concept of grand strategy is introduced in order to characterize the behaviors of the states to realize their long-term goals in an attempt to maximize their interests. While the strategy primarily focuses on application of resources to achieve the goals set by the policy-makers, grand strategy rather covers wider range of arena, including development and allocation of the resources that will be used in the strategy. Grand strategy tries to develop and sustain the required means, including money, manpower and other material resources. Required resources could be gathered from national or international level, from public, private sector of the nation concerned, or even from the mixture of both. However, grand strategy not only covers the development of the resources but also the application of these resources in a comprehensive and integrative manner. While the strategy focuses on a single type of instrument to achieve policy goal, grand strategy uses wide range of interdependent elements in an integrative and coherent way (Layton, 2012: 58).

Grand strategy could be described as developing a blueprint to reach the foreign policy goals by using existing resources (Dueck, 2004). According to Layne, the grand strategy is a process in which states prioritize their interests, detect possible security threats to their interests, and mobilize their political, military and economic capabilities to secure and maximize their interests (Layne, 1998). Thereby, it could be stated that while strategy focuses on only one type of instrument at the disposal of a nation to materialize one goal in the international politics, grand strategy covers wide

range of instruments in a more detailed and integrative way to ensure and maximize long-term security goals of a nation.

Howard (2010) describes the grand strategy as the mobilization of national, as well as those of allied, resources of wealth, manpower and industrial capacity to achieve the national policy goals in wartime. Whereas Captain Liddell Hart (1929) makes a distinction between strategy and grand strategy as such: “Horizon of strategy is bounded by the war but grand strategy looks for the subsequent peace. Grand strategy not only combines several instruments, but also regulate their use for hindering damage to future peace, prosperity and security”.

To analyze the post-Cold War USA grand strategy in general one should comprehend the grand strategy options debated among the foreign policy community. According to Posen and Ross (1996/97: 5), there are four competing types of grand strategy options and those are neo-isolationism, selective engagement, cooperative security, and primacy.

2.2.1. Neo-isolationism

While the USA advocated NATO enlargement as part of creating liberal world system, deployed thousands of troops to the NATO bases, promoted liberal democracy internationally, Neo-isolationism defends that the USA should stop its active involvement in the rest of the world. Turning other countries into liberal democracy and giving them military assurances within the framework of the NATO actually pacify the other countries from the international security perspective as liberal democracies follow the principles of the rule based international order. From that perspective, following liberal internationalist foreign policy is also serving the national interest of the USA because enlargement of the liberal world through liberal internationalist instruments, including but not limited to the NATO enlargement, would turn any country into peace loving liberal democracy do no constitute any threat to the USA. Considering active liberal internationalist agenda of the USA after the Cold War, Neo-isolationism does not seem the best grand strategy that explains the foreign policy behavior of the USA in that period as contrary to the NATO

enlargement under the leadership of the USA, neo-isolationism defends that the USA should leave NATO because this international organization makes it obligatory for the USA to play an active role in defending other members of the organization.

Neo-isolationism is regarded as the least popular and the least ambitious type of grand strategy (Ravenal 1990/91). In fact, it could be said that the neo-isolationism is originated from the Monroe Doctrine, which strongly opposed further colonization and intervention efforts of European powers in the Northern and Southern American continent, and, in return, gave assurance that the United States will not involve into the European politics (Monroe Doctrine, n. d). According to Neo-isolationists, the primary crucial interest of the USA is to protect the security, liberty and property of the American people (Bandow, 1994: 10). There is no power in the world that threatens the safety and security of the USA (Tonelson, 1993: 179). If any state is to create a strong military power in Europe or in Asia, the other states would contain the potential revisionist state. As the northern and southern neighbors of the USA are weak countries from the military perspective, the USA is a highly secure power (Layne, 1993: 48). Having nuclear weapons assures the security of the USA because it makes it harder for any country to defeat the USA in a battle. Moreover, UK, France, China and Russia also have nuclear weapons and this situation leads them to balance each other and do not let any country to dominate Europe and Asia (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 11).

According to Neo-isolationists, the USA is not responsible to maintain the world order. Promoting liberal values, including liberal democracy and human rights, by the way of intervention causes negative reaction towards the USA. If the USA would not involve in the affairs of the Middle Eastern countries, terrorists coming from the Middle East region will not be targeting the USA. The USA should leave NATO because it makes it an obligation for the USA to take part in protection of the other members of this organization. The USA should not concern itself with the conflicts taking place at overseas. The USA should have limited but strong military power, including strong nuclear capability to deter any power, strong intelligence community to forestall any threat against the country, capable navy with a special operation forces

that secures international commercial activities of the USA (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 13).

It is possible that the USA can go alone but disappearance of the USA from the international platform would lead to new arm race globally. States aiming at becoming hegemonic powers in their regions would increase their military capabilities and even look for to acquire nuclear weapons, or other kinds of weapons of mass destructions. Also, states formerly protected by the USA, such as having the USA bases on their territories, would start to assure their own security by empowering their military forces. Thereby, possibility of regional and perhaps international conflicts would be highly probable. Also, it would be much harder for the USA to project its power once again in case of preventing future international scale war, after the neo-isolationist period (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 14).

2.2.2. Selective Engagement

Although the USA have been actively engaging with the rest of the world within the context of its liberal internationalist agenda, selective engagement grand strategy suggests that the USA should focus on great powers politics. It is true that the USA have been focusing on the great power politics since the early days of the Cold War. However, the selective engagement would be insufficient to characterize the USA foreign policy in the period after the Cold War as USA actively promotes democracy in other countries whether they are great power or not. Besides, in large part under the leadership of the USA liberal international institutions such as the NATO enlarged several times after the end of the Cold War by including new countries from Eastern Europe. Those countries were not high standard liberal democracies then but thanks to active contribution of the USA within the framework of NATO they were included into the Western liberal international community. Even though selective engagement favors the preservation of NATO, it does not support its enlargement. Clearly, selective engagement only partly explains the USA foreign policy in the post-Cold War period but it does not concur with the USA's active involvement in the NATO enlargement as part of liberal internationalism.

As the most dangerous wars will be the wars among the powers that have significant economic and military capabilities, the selective engagement aims at preserving the peace between the great powers (Art, 1991). Russia, China and strong European countries are important concerns in this grand strategy option because any war between these powers could also lead to another large-scale conflict, which could affect the security of the USA. Whilst neo-isolationists claim that the geopolitical location and the nuclear weapons would ensure the security of the USA from any European or Asian hegemon, followers of the selective engagement believe that any war between the great powers in the rest of the world would endanger the national security of the USA (Evera, 1990: 8). Unlike the neo-isolationist belief, selective engagement suggests that the USA should engage itself abroad in order to prevent any war between the great powers. The USA should balance against any possible aggressor by deploying nuclear weapons to the status quo countries. According to selective engagement grand strategy the USA should show to rest of the world that it will not tolerate any war among great powers nor it would allow the aggressor state to claim victory thanks to its advanced military capability (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 16).

Selective engagement strategists concerned with the proliferation of nuclear weapons but it depends on the situation of the relevant country. While they are not strongly opposing the USA allies acquiring nuclear weapons, they are against ambitious and revisionist countries, including North Korea and Iran, having nuclear weapons (Art, 1991: 23). Conflict between small states should be prevented if it would lead to a war between the great powers. In this regard, Persian Gulf region is highly essential for the national security interest of the USA. Oil produced at the Persian Gulf is significant for the economy of many great powers. Therefore, if one ambitious state gains the control of entire natural resources in the region, it could pose a threat to many countries, including the great powers. This rationale explains why the USA intervened against Iraq in 1990 (Art, 1991: 47). In addition, NATO should be preserved in order to protect the interests of the USA, but it should not be enlarged. The USA should have strong nuclear power to deter any aggressor. Stability in Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East serves the national security interest of the USA. As it is possible to have conflict more than one of the mentioned regions at the same time, the USA should

have sufficient land, air and naval forces that it could sustain two regional battles simultaneously (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 19).

Selective engagement is a narrowly defined grand strategy that only underscores the preventing conflict among the great powers. It says it engages selectively but it covers wide range geography including, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Besides, Neo-isolationists state that even if a war takes place between the great powers in these regions, there is no clear evidence reflecting that the outcome of the great power war will upset the balance of power dynamics against the USA. However selective engagement followers' counter arguments are that the USA was forced to involve 2 major great power wars started in the Eurasia and its active foreign policy at the Cold War managed to contain Soviet Union and prevented another great power war (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 21).

2.2.3. Cooperative Security

Even if the cooperative security seems to be one of the well suited grand strategy options in terms of explaining post-Cold War foreign policy of the USA, it does not fully reveal the main argument of this thesis which defends that the USA is following realism in the form of liberal internationalism after the end of the Cold War. Cooperative security emphasizes the significance of the international cooperation within the framework of the international institutions such as NATO. However, if only the cooperation between the states within the framework of international organizations ensures the international peace and stability, creation of the NATO was unnecessary because Brussels Treaty was signed one year before the North Atlantic Treaty, or Washington Treaty. Also, several nations came together and founded League of Nations after the end of the WWI. However, both of these organizations were not able to provide peace and security. Both of these international organizations were lacking a strong power that will ensure the implementation of the decision applied by them. NATO is a durable organization because it is supported by the liberal internationalist foreign policy of the USA. Therefore, cooperative security grand strategy does not completely explain the USA foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. While this

grand strategy focuses on importance of the international organizations, this thesis which emphasizes realism defends that it is the power of the states that gives importance to the international organizations, not the other way around.

Advocates of the cooperative security strongly believes the fact that peace is an indivisible phenomenon (Baker III, 1994: 300). In other words, cooperative security postulates that peace and security in the world largely serves the national security interests of the USA. States should cooperate with each other through international organizations in order to ensure the international peace and security. Having more than one great powers in the world does not necessarily constitute a problem as majority of them are either democracies or in the process of becoming a democracy and democracies do not go to war against each other (Ullman, 1991: 76). Russia and China may cause a problem but it is best way to engage with them to lead them towards democracy. Cooperative security also tries to remove the shortcomings of the traditional collective security by emphasizing the importance of international organizations, including the United Nations and NATO, rather than following the path of spontaneous power balancing (Carter, Perry & Steinbruner, 1992).

Due to the introduction of the weapons of mass destruction, any conflict, regardless of its scale, in any part of the world could cause a global large-scale war. As cooperative security claims that peace in the world also ensures the security and stability of the USA, non-proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction as well as nuclear arms control is indispensable for the cooperative security. Cooperative security suggests that there is a strategic interdependence between the countries, most notably between the USA and its allies. One conflict at the one corner of the world can easily affect other countries, such as refugees escaping from indiscriminate violence at war moving to another country and causing xenophobia in the host country. In such an interconnected international system, the USA should not ignore the problems occurring in the remote regions (Albright, 1994). Thereby, according to followers of the cooperative security, proliferation of the nuclear weapons and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction should be prevented, international organizations such as NATO should be strengthened in order to ensure the

international peace and security as well as to deter the possible aggressor states, regional and even the small scale conflicts should be prevented possibly in the early phase to avoid larger confrontation, and military intervention should not be ruled out for humanitarian purposes. In this regard, with its powerful and technologically advanced military force, the USA should play a pivotal role in terms of international cooperation to reach the goals of the grand strategy of cooperative security (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 26).

2.2.4. Primacy

The USA is regarded as the liberal hegemon because it enlarges liberal world with its liberal internationalist foreign policy and ensures its primacy in this liberal world that expanded in large part thanks to democracy promotion and including democratized countries into the structure of the liberal international organizations, such as NATO, created thanks to the leadership of the USA. Primacy grand strategy suggests that the NATO should be empowered and enlarged because it both further amplifies the liberal international world from which no threat will arise to target the USA as liberal democracies are peace loving countries that do not go to war against each other, and no other power would emerge at Europe to dominate the continent. By both averting the emergence of revisionist power in the Europe and ensure its primary role in the European power politics USA will further consolidate its national security within the liberal world that was created thanks to primary role played by itself. Therefore, primacy seems to be best suited grand strategy in explaining the USA's foreign policy in the period after the Cold War.

Grand strategy of primacy holds that only the dominance of the USA power guarantees the peace and security in the international system. Imbalance between the advanced the USA military capabilities and the potential revisionists ensures the peace and security, rather than looking for alliances to muster a force. In this regard, to maintain the world order and to ensure the national security, the USA should remain as the prime actor of the unipolar world emerged after the end of the Cold War (Gilpin,

1981). Unlike the grand strategy option of selective engagement, main goal of primacy is not simply to ensure peace among the great powers but to cement the dominance of the USA in the fields of global politics, economics and military, in an attempt to deter any potential power that could challenge the superior role of the USA in the international arena (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 30).

Defense Planning Guidance of the George H. W. Bush administration carries the features of the primacy grand strategy. To ensure the role of the USA as the only superpower of the international politics in the post-Cold War period, Defense Planning Guidance served as an important draft for hindering the rise of any possible new power to challenge the role of the USA:

‘Our first goal is to prevent the reemergence of a new rival that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union. This is a dominant consideration that requires to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would be sufficient to generate a global power. Our strategy must now refocus on precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor’ (New York Times, 1992: 14).

Emergence of new hegemon or hegemonic powers in the regions of Europe, Southeast Asia, former Soviet territories, and the Middle East should be prevented for ensuring the primacy of the USA at the world theater. Architects of this grand strategy believe that the USA is a benign hegemon. Thus, primacy grand strategy will be supported internationally and no country will oppose or try to balance against the USA as its primacy would signal positively to the rest of the world (Muravchik, 1996). In accordance with the benign hegemon logic, the USA should create and maintain a new international system that even the potential revisionist powers must be convinced that in this system their interests would be protected thanks to the hegemonic role of the USA. Also, in other non-military spheres, interests of the economically advanced states should be respected so that they would not challenge the leading role of the USA, nor create another alternative form of political or economic system. Not only the potential threats targeting the interests of the USA, but also those targeting the interests of the USA allies should be addressed (New York Times, 1992).

To forestall potential challengers from investing in political, economic and military means to compete with the benign hegemon, the USA promotes and

empowers the liberal democracy, rule of international law, free-market economy in line with the liberal internationalist logic. Despite the fact that the grand strategy of primacy strongly focuses on the preeminent hegemonic role of the USA in the world politics, it also aims at empowering the liberal ideas throughout the world. According to this understanding, if countries like Russia are to be supported in their route to political and economic liberalism, they will not show any tendency towards expansionism or any kind of aggression in the international relations. Also, the USA should assure its outstanding role in the European security politics in terms of assuring NATO's primary role in the continental security. Moreover, Eastern and Central European countries should be integrated into the international political, economic and security organizations of Western Europe. Likewise, the USA should have sufficient amount of military power in the Asia and Middle East to deter any power from becoming a hegemon in the mentioned regions. In short, according to the primacy grand strategy, the USA should prevent any power to become regional or global hegemon, and promote liberal democratic principles in the international relations in an attempt to satisfy powers, particularly those who have the ability to challenge the hegemonic role of the USA, in a world system which has been designed in liberal ideology to assure them that there is no reason to oppose the existing order (Posen & Ross, 1996/97: 32).

Although as the only superpower USA enjoys hegemonic influence in the international relations, according to some analysts Russia and China are still regarded as dangerous adversaries (Brzezinski, 1994: 76). It is true that the Soviet Union collapsed but the Russia still has strategic power to affect countries located in its periphery, significant natural resources, and the biggest homogeneous population in Europe. Brzezinski even claims that Russian culture carries the seeds of expansion (Brzezinski, 1994: 71). To encounter Russian threat, NATO should be enlarged eastwards by including Central and Eastern European countries. If NATO was not to be enlarged to east, there will be a security vacuum in these regions which could be filled by Russia (Kissinger, 1994). Even though advocates of NATO enlargement often concern with the threat of Russia, at the same time they believe that Russia's anxiety towards NATO enlargement can be eased and a deal can be made with Russia with a

diplomatic approach (Brzezinski, 1994: 81). However, these arguments seem to be inconsistent because the advocates of the NATO enlargement, in line with primacy, claimed that the Russian aggression is concerning in the first place. If it is possible to make a diplomatic deal with the Russia, then it is not reasonable to enlarge NATO to contain Russia. Even the re-armed Russia would not reach the level of the Soviet Union in terms of military power but only would constitute a regional size threat which is quite different than Warsaw Pact at the time of the Cold War (Asmus, Kugler; and Larrabee, 1995: 32). Therefore, one could argue that there was no imminent threat to the Eastern or Central European countries from Russia after the end of Cold War. However, one would wonder the rationale behind the supporters of NATO enlargement claiming Russian threat should be addressed. In fact, there are two main reasons behind their position. First one is to further strengthen and widen the pivotal role of the US in the European international security relations. Second one is to prevent any independent Western European approach, without the USA influence, towards the Eastern Europe (Asmus, Kugler; and Larrabee, 1993: 34). Clearly, containment of Russia via the NATO enlargement is seen as part of primacy grand strategy which protects the primacy of the USA and forestalls any power to emerge as a regional hegemon.

2.3. EVALUATION OF GRAND STRATEGY TYPES

After briefly putting forward the grand strategy types, it is important to evaluate them in terms of international security relations to understand whether the USA has followed liberal internationalism in the post-Cold War period. All grand strategy options have distinct features and characteristics but in this section each of them will be analyzed only from the international security perspective. Neo-isolationism suggests that the USA should not play an active or leading role in the international relations and the USA should leave the NATO. Selective engagement claims that NATO should be preserved but not be enlarged. Cooperative security also favors the international organizations including NATO but not elaborate on the NATO enlargement. Advocates of the primacy grand strategy sees NATO, and the other international organizations, as a tool to further empower the hegemonic role of the USA in the

international security relations which provides peace and stability. In addition, according to some followers of primacy, NATO could be enlarged in order to contain Russia even in the aftermath of the Cold War.

After the end of the Cold War, US invaded countries like Iraq and Afghanistan to topple the authoritarian regimes in an attempt to spread democracy, keep itself committed to international liberal free market economy, and has enlarged the NATO, an international security organization which was created thanks to leadership of the USA. The main reason behind this orientation is explained by the liberal internationalist logic that sees the reason behind the conflicts and wars as the absence of liberal democracy internationally. In other words, to achieve global peace and prosperity, the entire world should be populated with the liberal democracies fully abiding liberal and democratic principles both domestically and internationally (Hoffmann, 1995). In the realm of economy and trade, liberal internationalism suggest that international free trade and liberal free market economy should be supported and promoted throughout the world. Thanks to international free trade, liberal democratic countries will be interdependent to each other, another important motivation hindering them from going to war against each other. Liberal internationalism sees democratic peace theory and economic interdependence as important factors leading world to peace and prosperity (Jahn, 2013). In terms of international cooperation and spreading liberal values and ideas, according to the liberal internationalism, international organizations, from the United Nations to IMF and World Bank, including NATO, should play an active role not only in terms of facilitating and increasing cooperation between liberal countries but also in spreading liberal principles to illiberal countries (Jahn, 2013: 80).

After the end of the Cold War, under the leadership of the USA, authoritarian regimes, like in the ones in Afghanistan and Iraq, were toppled throughout the world, liberal democracies were spread and promoted, international free market economy was strongly supported and countries all around the globe were deeply included to the international organizations, like UN, which were created by the leadership of the USA after the Second World War. Main reasons behind these policies of the USA is to

eliminate human rights violations in the world as liberal democracies do not violate human rights, to have global peace as liberal democracies will not go to war against each other, and to make the world a safer place for the democracy (Mearsheimer, 2018). These reasons also serve realist national security interests of the USA because if there is no human rights violations no refugees will come to seek asylum in the USA, the USA will not be forced to intervene illiberal regimes violating liberal values, and the spread of liberal democracy will mean that no threat will be originated from the liberal democratic countries to the security and stability of the USA. Therefore, it is seen that after the end of the Cold War, liberal internationalism has been implemented under the primacy of the USA as it was left as the only superpower in the post-Cold War period. While in the liberal internationalism, it is not clear that who will implement the liberal policies in the international relations, in the post-Cold War period liberal internationalism has been implemented by the hegemon USA. Mearsheimer (2018) describes this fact as liberal hegemony, implementation of the liberal internationalism by the current hegemonic power the USA. These two concepts, liberal internationalism and liberal hegemony, are essentially similar to each other, despite the fact that liberal hegemony shows the agent, the hegemon, which is currently the USA, implementing liberal internationalist project whereas liberal internationalism mainly shows the objective, making world populated with liberal democracies to achieve international peace.

2.4. LIBERAL HEGEMONY OF THE USA AFTER THE COLD WAR

As the collapse of the Soviet Union, marked the end of the Cold War, largely regarded as ushering in a liberal world order, it is safe to say that liberal internationalism experienced a striking comeback in 1990s (Gardner, 1990). Victory of the liberalism further supported main principles of the liberalism, including individual freedoms, progressive development, prosperity, peace and cooperation at the domestic and international level (Fukuyama, 1989). Triumph of the liberalism under the leadership of the USA led to a liberal hegemony in the global system (Ikenberry, 2006: 146).

Liberal hegemony of the USA after the Cold War period revealed a significant potential in terms of realizing a liberal vision in the international relations (Richardson, 2001: 2). In this context, George H. W. Bush announced after the end of the Cold War that “UN will fulfill the historical vision of its founders” (Bush, 1991). In terms of politics, spread of liberal democracy, prioritizing human rights, and proactive role of the international organizations to reach liberal goals were underscored. In terms of economics, introduction of liberal free market economy to the former second world economies, liberalization, privatization and the integration of the overall global economy were among the main objectives. As the liberalism promised more freedom and better life for all individuals, and thanks to the hegemonic position of the liberal superpower of the USA, there was a broad optimism after the end of the Cold War (Sorensen, 2000: 287). In such a suitable international environment, the liberal hegemon USA started to follow a proactive foreign policy throughout the world in an attempt to realize the liberal promises.

While it is true that the USA has prioritized the liberal universal values such as liberal democracy and human rights in the international relations, it is not defending these values just for the sake of the liberalism. In line with the liberal internationalism, populating the world with the liberal democratic countries will also safeguards the national security interests of the USA itself (Dueck, 2003). Thusly, one could argue that implementation of liberal internationalism in the international relations is at the same time implementation of realist foreign policy as ensuring the peace and stability also protects the USA. Spreading liberal democracy, promoting free trade, empowering international organizations that has been founded thanks to the leadership of the USA are among the principles of liberal internationalism, which intends to provide peace, security and stability to world, therefore to the USA (Ikenberry, 1999).

Main reason behind spreading democracy and populating the world with liberal democratic countries is to end war and get the peace internationally. This situation is explained with the democratic peace thesis, which primarily indicates that the democracies do not go to war against each other. According to the historical record,

democratic countries do not go to war against each other (Doyle, 1983). As the liberal democracies follow lawful behavior domestically without violating human rights, they also tend to follow the same policy in the international relations. Therefore, liberal democratic countries tend not to follow unlawful behavior in the world politics. As liberal democratic countries embrace similar values, their interests are in harmony and they do not need to declare war against one another. Furthermore, with the end of the illiberal regimes, thanks to the spread of democracy, no country will support the terrorist organizations targeting liberal democratic countries, including the USA. In terms of economy, world comprising of liberal democratic countries will further ensure economic interests of the USA because liberal democracies incline to follow principles of the free market and thus becoming lucrative trading partners for the USA (Lynn-Jones, 1998).

Apart from the assumptions of the democratic peace theory, economic interdependency is also another significant part of the liberal internationalist logic. Actually, economic interdependency is closely related to the democratic peace theory because only liberal democratic states can freely and internationally trade with each other by emphasizing liberal dynamics of the market economy. Because of the Great Depression which took place in the USA in 1939, and later spread to the rest of the world, countries started to implement protectionist measures, including quotas, tariffs and barriers, furthering the deterioration of the economic outlook. In such a delicate situation, authoritarian leaders, coming to power in the several European countries, started to follow assertive behaviors resulted in WWII. Therefore, it seems that one of the main reasons behind the war is the lack of economic interdependency among the countries. To avoid war, countries should freely trade with each other, creating interdependence among them. In such international environment, countries acquiring wealth and prosperity thanks to liberal international trade will not prefer to go to war against each other and will solve issues in a peaceful manner (Oneal & Russett, 1997).

Although from Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Roosevelt many USA leaders had followed the same liberal internationalist idea in the international relations embracing the spread of liberal democracy, promoting global interdependent world economy,

empowering international organizations preserving liberal internationalist values, the USA has gained a historic opportunity after the Cold War to realize liberal internationalist dreams thanks to its hegemony in this new unipolar world (Mearsheimer, 2018).

2.4.1. George H. W. Bush and the Liberal Hegemony

George H. W. Bush was elected in 1989 and remained as president until 1993. He was at the office when the Soviet Union collapsed and the period of Cold War ended. He has followed principles of liberal internationalism in international relations. He skillfully managed the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union, main threat to the liberal democratic free world under the leadership of the USA, and supported the unification of Germany (Goldgeler, 2018). George H. W. Bush did not enlarge the NATO in terms number of the member countries but in terms of size as after the unification East Germany became the part of West Germany and the unified Germany remained to be a NATO member. In the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, George H. W. Bush met with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. After the meeting, Gorbachev declared that “Soviet Union would never start a war against the USA. We would like to develop our relations and cooperation. We are at the beginning of a long-lasting peaceful era” (BBC News, 1989). In 1991, two leaders again came together to sign Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, in an attempt to reduce the mistrust between the two superpowers and leading the world one more step towards peace. According to the treaty, both parties reduced around 35 percent of their nuclear capabilities (BBC News, 1991). Furthermore, in line with the liberal internationalist logic, George H. W. Bush liberated Kuwait from the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein’s invasion. UN Security Council resolution 678, giving deadline for Saddam regime to pull back from Kuwait or face with the USA led international coalition, passed in 1990. Even countries like Soviet Union and China supported this resolution, providing further legitimacy to the USA’s liberal hegemony at the time. The USA swiftly defeated Iraqi forces and liberated Kuwait from Saddam Hussein’s invasion. The USA carried out this operation to ensure a peaceful international order and to hinder Saddam Hussein from becoming a regional hegemon in the natural resources rich Middle East region. Peaceful

international order also protects the national security interests of the USA because any conflict taking place in any place of the world could directly or indirectly affect national security of the USA. Also, preventing any power from becoming a hegemon in any region is vital for the USA because any country becoming regional hegemon could threaten the national security of the USA in the future by the way of competing with the USA for international hegemony. In this context, it seems logical to defeat Saddam Hussein for the USA but, quite surprisingly, George H. W. Bush left Saddam Hussein remained in power, an issue that will also cause troubles for the subsequent USA presidents (Goldgeler, 2018).

George H. W. Bush's approval ratings have suddenly peaked to around 90 percent after the USA victory over the Gulf War (Reinhard, 2018). However, he was defeated by Bill Clinton in 1992 presidential elections. Before leaving the office to Clinton, George H. W. Bush administration issued a national security strategy document, suggesting that in this new post-Cold War period the USA has obtained a significant opportunity to materialize its liberal internationalist vision by assuming the leadership role in the fields of international politics, economy and security. While defining the preeminent, perhaps the liberal hegemonic role of the USA in the new era document uses the following definition: "No other nation has the same combination of moral, cultural, political, economic, and military credibility. No other has won such confidence, respect, and trust. No other has the same potential and indeed responsibility for world leadership" (National Security of the United States, 1993: 21). In terms of achieving peace in the way of the implementation of the liberal internationalism, the document also revealed the fact that democratic peace theory and the economic interdependence theory are two main pillars of the liberal internationalism:

"We have a vision for the future. We seek a world of cooperation and progress, not confrontation; a world no longer divided, but a community of independent and interdependent nations joined together by shared values; a world in which the United States role is defined by what we stand for — freedom, human rights, economic prosperity, the rule of law, peace — rather than what we stand against... It will also take dialogue and debate, for that too is what democracy is 'all about... Let us work together to lead the world toward the

21st Century, the Age of Democratic Peace. There is no more important goal to which we could aspire" (National Security of the United States, 1993: 21).

By analyzing the main tenets of the George H. W. Bush Administration's National Security Strategy, it could be argued that this strategy strongly coincides with the liberal internationalism together with the leadership role of the USA. Therefore, it is safe to say that many of the main principles of the liberal hegemony that will be followed by almost all of the USA presidents after the end of the Cold War, apart from current President Donald Trump, have been propounded by this early strategy document.

2.4.2. Bill Clinton and the Liberal Hegemony

Bill Clinton was elected as the president of the United States in 1992 and came to power in 1993. During that period, thanks to collapse of the Soviet Union, the USA became the most powerful state in the world. In such suitable condition, President Clinton and his administration followed liberal hegemony from the beginning. When the Cold War came to an end, Soviet Union supported the USA military forces remaining on the European land and maintaining of the NATO. Soviet leadership supported the USA military presence together with the continuation of NATO because they knew that these two important factors were keeping Germany, a country that caused two world wars, under control. Just before the end of the Cold War, Germany was unified and became even more mighty. Therefore, it was logical for Soviet Union to support the USA military presence as well as remaining of NATO to pacify Germany because during the Cold War period this strategy was successful. However, Soviets also made it clear that they are against to enlargement of NATO in the highest degree. Russian leaders thought that the Western leaders comprehended their concerns and that the NATO will not be expanding towards eastwards (Sarotte, 2014). However, Bill Clinton administration believed that the world is entering into a completely different period based on liberal values, which could not be explained with realism anymore, and started push for enlargement of NATO. In 1999, during the Clinton administration, former Soviet countries of Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland became the members of the NATO, enlarging its borders around 400 miles towards

Russia (BBC News, 2012). Most of the political immigrants from these countries living in the USA supported the NATO enlargement for enjoying NATO protection. Realist strategic thinkers like George Kennan, on the other hand, did not support the NATO enlargement by saying that “Russians will gradually react quite adversely and it will affect their policies. I think it (NATO enlargement) is a tragic mistake” (as cited in Friedman, 1998). Although liberal internationalism is an ambitious foreign policy that prioritizes the eliminate any threat arising from illiberal countries, and at the same time serving well to realist national security interests of the USA by securing it through turning rest of the world into liberal democracies that follows peaceful behavior in the global politics, it seems that the USA is neglecting one of the main tenets of the realism, which is balance of power, in its realist foreign policy which is sugarcoated with liberal internationalism. However, during that period Clinton administration was dominated by liberals who were deeply supporting the NATO enlargement. According to their view, the Cold War was over, so was the realist logic in the international politics. In this new liberal world order, Clinton administration’s Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said “United States is not only the indispensable nation but also a force for good that should not strike fear in the heart of any rational leader” (as cited in Mearsheimer, 2018: 166). In addition, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott stated that

“Embedding Eastern European countries in both NATO and the EU was the key to produce stability in the region. NATO enlargement would ensure the rule of law in Europe’s new democracies. NATO enlargement would promote democratic and free market values that further contribute to peace” (Tallbott, 1995).

European allies of the USA also supported the NATO enlargement because another liberal internationalist project, the European Union, was quite successful during that period. As it was believed that the liberal internationalist order would ensure long lasting peace, the USA and its Western European liberal allies started to spread democracy to Eastern European countries, enhance economic interdependence between them, and include them to the liberal internationalist institutions (Mearsheimer, 2018: 167).

During the USA President Bill Clinton's period the NATO carried out military operations and used force in the name of liberal internationalism. In the year 1991, Yugoslavia started to collapse with the breakaway of Croatia and Slovenia. In 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina also declared independence but this move not supported and violently rejected by the Bosnian Serbs. In the same year, Bosnian Serbs under the leadership of Radovan Karadzic, who was supported by the Serbia, which was under Slobodan Milosevic's government then, one of the key allies of Russia in the Eastern Europe, started to indiscriminately attack, torture, rape, and kill Bosnian Muslims in front of the eyes of Western liberal international community (Schinella, 2019). After three years of large-scale atrocities carried out by the Serbian forces targeting Bosnian Muslim, the President of the USA Bill Clinton gave authorization to the Operation Deliberate Force. After the Srebrenica and Marcale massacres of Bosnian Muslims perpetrated by the Serbs the Operation Deliberate Force was started. Although the operation carried out in cooperation with the NATO and the UN, the Operation Deliberate Force was commanded by the USA Admiral Leighton W. Smith Jr. The USA further cemented its liberal hegemonic power in the continental Europe thanks to the operation which was carried out within the framework of the UN and the NATO. Inalienable rights of the Bosnian Muslims, such as right to live or right to self-govern, have been extremely violated by the Serbs during that time. By not only protecting the liberal inalienable rights of the Bosnian Muslims but also destroying the military capabilities and the military infrastructure of the Serbs, who may constitute threat to the USA influence in Europe because of their link to Russia, the USA further consolidated its hegemonic power in Europe. Boris Yeltsin, President of Russian Federation having historical alliance relation with Serbs, criticized the Operation Deliberate Force. However, the operation was carried out in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In such case, Russia did not have any formidable power to change the outcome of the conflict. As a result of the Operation Deliberate Force, Serbs were forced to agree the terms of the Dayton Agreement, which provided certain level of stability to the region after the bloody conflict that posed a threat to the safety and security of the liberal international community, and NATO-led peacekeeping force deployed to Bosnia shortly after (Mearsheimer, 2018; Schinella, 2019).

In year 1999, Yugoslavian army dominated by Serbs tried to prevent ethnic Albanians' aspiration for independence by using hard power and also targeting civilians indiscriminately in Kosovo. Such brutal military actions of Serbs are described as threat to its liberal foreign policy and national security by the USA administration (Norris, 2005). Under the leadership of the USA, the Operation Allied Force was carried out to deter Serbian forces committing crimes against humanity, such as ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Kosovo. The operation was commanded by American General Wesley Clark who was the Supreme Allied Commander Europe of NATO. As a result of an American led NATO campaign, Serbian forces agreed to withdraw all of their military presence from Kosovo. While curbing Serbian influence in Kosovo by military campaign under the NATO umbrella, NATO also opened mission named the Kosovo Force under the leadership of the USA (Norris, 2005). After reducing military capabilities of the Serbs threatening its liberal internationalist foreign policy and national interests, the USA opened by large part its leadership new NATO missions in these regions not only to protect the liberal inalienable rights of the people targeted by the Serbian forces but also to widen its influence eastwards in Europe in order to ensure that any power that could constitute a threat to American national interests and hegemonic power of the USA in the region will be eliminated.

Same liberal internationalist logic also could be seen in the national security strategy documents published by the Clinton administration. According to National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, which was published in 1994, central goals of the new national security strategy for the new post-Cold War era are defined as "To sustain our security with military forces that are ready to fight, to bolster America's economic revitalization, and to promote democracy abroad" (Clinton, 1994: I). It was argued that these objectives are mutually supportive because the secure countries tend to empower international liberal economy and democracy. Democratic countries do not threaten American interests and cooperate with the USA to deal with the new security threats of the new era. In this regard, to reach to goals defined in the strategy document in terms of maintaining international security, NATO initiated Partnership for Peace program. Within the context of this program, to bind the former communist countries to the Western liberal democratic Europe, security relationships

have been provided to these countries and 21 countries, including Russia, have joined the Partnership for Peace program (Clinton, 1994: 2). The main intention behind this program is to prepare countries for direct NATO membership. The main goal of NATO enlargement by including new member countries from Eastern European countries is to expand democracy, stability, prosperity and security cooperation to an ever-broader integrated Europe. History's greatest political-military alliance, NATO, must be central to Europe's integration (Clinton, 1994: 22). In 1996, Clinton administration published another national security strategy document with the same title of "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement". Again, in this document, crucial role of the NATO further emphasized not only in terms of ensuring to meet the European and transatlantic security problems of the post-Cold War world but also in terms of protecting democracy and free market economy in Europe since the end of the Cold War that would also contribute the security and prosperity of the USA as an integrated liberal Europe is significant political and economic partner for the USA (Clinton, 1996: 5).

2.4.3. George Bush and the Liberal Hegemony

After Clinton, George Bush has been elected as the President of the USA in year 2001. In the same year on September 11, terrorist organization al-Qaeda carried out a terror attack on the USA soil, killing thousands of people. In the aftermath of the September 11 terror attacks, Bush administration blamed non-democratic countries across the world, most notably those located in the Middle East region, as the main source of terrorism. Rogue states such as Iraq, Iran, and Syria were having relations with terrorist organizations targeting the USA, including al-Qaeda, and were trying to develop nuclear weapons that could even be given to these terrorist groups (Bush, 2003). According to Bush Doctrine, which was prioritizing not only global war on terror but also democratizing rogue regimes in the Middle East region, the USA should use its military power to turn these regimes into liberal democracies. In this regard, before attacking Iraq, President Bush declared that "We will make this an age of progress and liberty. Free people will set the course of history, and free people will keep the peace of the world" (Monten, 2005). In the eye of the USA administration,

Saddam Hussein's Iraq was illiberal and undemocratic, harming the rights of its own citizens, having relations with terrorist organizations targeting the USA, and trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction. None of these factors could be tolerated. To deal with this issue, the best solution, according to Bush administration, was to turn all of the Middle Eastern countries into liberal democracies because turning them into liberal democracies would pacify them and turn the Middle East region into area of peace as Bush claims "Stable and free nations do not breed ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit of a better life. The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values (Bush, 2003)".

Before invading Iraq, Bush administration firstly targeted Afghanistan only around 1 month after September 11 terror attacks. It seemed that in a quite short period of time the USA had won a victory and installed Karzai as the leader of the new regime which was expected to be more liberal democrat. Because of this easy and quick victory, Bush administration swiftly invaded Iraq as well. However, while the USA administration was dealing with Iraq, Taliban reappeared and started to gain ground in Afghanistan. Likewise, in year 2004, things started to get out of control in Iraq as well. Both Afghanistan and Iraq have turned into battle grounds and still they are far from achieving peace, security, stability, and prosperity, which were among the main intentions of the USA in invading these countries in an attempt to turn them into liberal democracies (Mearsheimer, 2018: 155).

President Bush's foreign policy actions show all aspects of the liberal internationalism under the leadership of the liberal hegemonic power of the USA. Liberals having strong military capabilities are tended to go to war to save the inalienable right of individuals around the globe and to spread democracy because they believe it is the best way to protect the individuals internationally and to address the possible security threats.

Regardless of failing in terms of restoring democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, real problem for liberal hegemony of the USA in terms of great power politics occurred in the NATO enlargement process. In 2004, during the George W. Bush's

administration time, NATO enlarged by including Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Russian leaders have always been against NATO enlargement. However, it was also true that NATO and Russia established NATO-Russia Council in 2002, and in year 2004 two parties have signed an agreement to open Russian military liaison offices at the NATO headquarters. Whilst it might seem that Russia and NATO started to work closely during that period to reach lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic region, Russia was having pressing concerns over the NATO enlargement towards its territories. At the Munich security conference in 2007, Russian president Vladimir Putin expressed his outrage towards the NATO enlargement and said:

“I think it is obvious that NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernization of the Alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them. But I will allow myself to remind this audience what was said. I would like to quote the speech of NATO General Secretary Mr Woerner in Brussels on 17 May 1990. He said at the time that: ‘the fact that we are ready not to place a NATO army outside of German territory gives the Soviet Union a firm security guarantee’. Where are these guarantees?” (Putin, 2007).

Despite Putin’s warnings, the USA administration under the leadership of President Bush was determined to enlarge NATO further towards Russia. Although they were not officially invited to join NATO, in the final declaration of the 2008 NATO Summit which took place in Bucharest, capital city of Romania, it was declared that “NATO welcomes Ukraine’s and Georgia’s Euro Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO” (Bucharest Summit Declaration, 2008). Moscow enraged because it saw this move as a direct security threat against itself and reacted by invading some regions of the Georgia. Georgia case will be analyzed in the following section as a case study with more detail.

The same liberal internationalist sentiment also could be easily seen in the national security strategy document of the George Bush administration. To spread liberalism for making the world more peaceful under the leadership of the USA, it was

openly stating that “We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world” (Bush, 2002: 4). Liberal internationalism suggests that if the world populated with liberal democracies following free international trade, there will be economic interdependence which will largely reduce the possibility of the conflict. Likewise, in the same national security strategy document, democracy and the liberal economy were described as the best foundations for the domestic stability and the international order (Bush, 2002: 4). This international order should be under the leadership of the USA as the hegemonic power of the system as “The United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence” (Bush, 2002: 3). With this unrivalled influence, the USA will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent. (Bush, 2002, 3). In terms spreading liberal internationalism, NATO was depicted as a key international organization because it is the fulcrum of transatlantic and inter-European security. In this regard, expanding NATO’s membership towards democratic nations was seen as a must in the strategy document as NATO enlargement would strongly contribute to the international peace and stability thanks to its crucial role in terms of providing security to the transatlantic democracies (Bush, 2002: 25).

2.4.4. Barack Obama and the Liberal Hegemony

After George Bush, Barack Obama became the president of the USA in 2009. Although he was more cautious than his predecessors, Obama followed the same liberal internationalist agenda as well. During his time NATO was enlarged for the sixth time by including Albania and Croatia. He promised to pull back the USA troops both from Iraq and Afghanistan but when he was leaving the office there were still the USA troops stationed on the Iraqi and Afghan lands. Again, during the Obama administration’s period, the liberal internationalist USA foreign policy faced with the Russian realism in the 2014 Ukraine crisis, in which pro-Russian President Victor Yanukovych toppled from the power and, in the aftermath, pro-Western and pro-liberal Petro Poroshenko was restored as the President of Ukraine. Putin was enraged with this situation and he could not tolerate integration of Ukraine to the Western

liberal institutions, including NATO. He responded by annexing Crimea, which serves as strategically important naval base for Russia, and eastern part of Ukraine that have significant amount of Russian population (Mearsheimer, 2014: 1). During the crisis, Obama administration defended the ideal goals of the liberal internationalist world view, together with accusing old-fashioned power politics style view towards international relations. Secretary of State John Kerry said that “You just don’t in the twenty-first century behave in nineteenth-century fashion by invading another country on completely trumped up pretext” (Dunham, 2014). However, Kerry’s statement, just like the other liberal internationalists in the Obama administration, did not change the reality that Russia is controlling strategic Crimean Peninsula as well as eastern part of the Ukraine. Although in Obama administration’s national security strategy it was pointed out that “Just as America helped to determine the course of the 20th century, we must now build the sources of American strength and influence, and shape and international order capable of overcoming the challenges of the 21st century” (Obama, 2010: 1) and that

“The United States supports the expansion of democracy and human rights abroad because governments that respect these values are more just, peaceful and legitimate. We also do so because their success abroad fosters an environment that supports America’s national interests” (Obama, 2010: 37).

The USA and its western liberal allies could not be able to solve the Ukraine crisis. As of 2019, Crimea and eastern parts of Ukraine are still under Russian occupation. It seems that liberal internationalist ideas of American and other western powers are lacking capability because they either don’t or don’t want to believe that realism, which has been employed by the Russia, is still matters in the international relations.

Donald Trump and his administration are not included in this research. Trump administration has not ended yet so it would be problematic to analyze this administration without their term is ended. Also, Trumps arguments about “America First” and “Make America Great Again” clearly suggest that Trump administration would follow realist, interest based foreign policy rather than dwelling with liberal internationalist ideas about the world politics, which has been strongly criticized by Trump during the campaign period. Besides, on February, 5, 2019, at his State of the

Union Address, President Trump openly declared that “Our approach is based on principle, realism, not discredited theories that have failed for decades to yield progress” (Law, 2019).

2.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter it was elaborated that actually there is no clear cut difference between the liberalism and the liberal internationalism because liberalism itself is an internationalist theory. The concept of the liberal internationalism is used to define the liberal foreign policies, implementation of liberal practices in the international politics, and the foreign policies of the liberal states. Apart from this main trend, realist thinkers, like Mearsheimer, are preferring to use liberal hegemony rather than liberal internationalism. Concept of liberal hegemony refers to the agent that implements the liberal internationalism in the global politics. In this understanding, the USA, the hegemonic power of the system in the post-Cold War period, has been implementing the liberal internationalism. The USA is a deeply liberal country and it is trying to turn the rest of the world into its own image. In this regard, the USA is trying to spread liberal democracy to other countries, to promote open liberal global economy, and to embed other countries into the international organizations created under the leadership of the USA. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, liberal hegemony is defined as an ambitious strategy. However, in this sense, using the concept of strategy is problematic. While it has many different definitions, strategy could be mainly described as directing means to achieve the ends set by policy. However, the concept of strategy is so inadequate to make sense of the states’ behavior because it mostly focuses on a single type of instrument and neglects even how to develop this instrument. Therefore, concept of grand strategy has been introduced to understand foreign policy goals of the states by developing and using resources in an integrative and coherent way to secure and maximize the state interests. Grand strategy covers wide range of instruments, including political, economic, military, and international tools, to maximize and secure the national interests of the state.

As demonstrated above, there are four main grand strategy types and they are neo-isolationism, selective engagement, cooperative security, and primacy. Each aforementioned grand strategy types have been discussed in detail as part of this chapter so in this conclusion part they will be briefly mentioned with special emphasis on international security relations. Neo-isolationism suggests that the USA should leave NATO and should not play an active and leading role in the international relations. Being a member of NATO make it an obligation for the USA to help other member countries facing aggression but the USA should not involve any unnecessary conflicts in any corner of the world. While the selective engagement is focusing on preventing any war between the great powers, it is also favoring the keeping NATO but not enlarging it. According to cooperative security, international institutions, such as NATO, are important for cooperation and ensuring peace globally but this grand strategy option does not provide any detailed account on whether to enlarge NATO. According to primacy, NATO serves well for the USA in terms of maintaining its hegemonic role in the international system. Besides, NATO could be enlarged in order to contain possible aggressor states, such as Russia, in the post-Cold War period. Clearly, the USA not only enlarged the NATO in the post-Cold War era, but also invaded authoritarian countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, to change their regimes into liberal democracy. Apart from enlarging NATO and using military force to democratize other countries, the USA also promoted liberal international free trade and included countries into the liberal international organizations founded in large part under its preeminent role. Populating the world with liberal democracies that historically do not go to war against each other and creating economic interdependence among them would lead the world to ever lasting peace. International peace would also contribute to the national security of the USA because in such situation it could easily sustain its hegemonic role without any challenge as no country would need to challenge it. Therefore, it could be argued that the USA has been following liberal internationalism and primacy as its grand strategy in the era after the end of the Cold War. In this regard, realists, like Mearsheimer, are defining this situation as liberal hegemony, implementation of liberal internationalist agenda by the hegemonic power enjoying primacy in the currently existing system, by the way of spreading democracy,

promoting liberal free market economy to create interdependence among the countries to prosper and to hinder them from going to war against each other.

All of the USA presidents after the Cold War, regardless of their background, both democratic and republican, have implemented the same liberal internationalist or liberal hegemonic grand strategy, which is also protecting national security interests of the USA. As explained in this chapter, George Bush the senior, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama are the post-Cold War presidents who advocated the enlargement of NATO, by including new members from Eastern Europe to expand liberal democratic trans-Atlantic community under the leadership of the USA, and the promotion of the international free trade, and empowerment of the international institutions which have been created by the leadership role of the USA after the end of Second World War. All of the post-Cold War USA presidents and their administrations believed that the liberal democracy is the best form of state system that ensures peace in the domestic as well as international level. It is the reason behind all of these liberal internationalist implementations of the USA, including usage of military power to topple autocratic regimes and restore liberal ones. However, it is important to note that world is far away from peace regardless of liberal internationalists' intentions. Since the end of the Cold War, the USA has spent its two out of every three years for fighting different wars in the different concerns of the world. Whilst liberal internationalism anticipated peace and prosperity, it only brought more conflict and uncertainty to the international system.

CHAPTER THREE

LIBERAL DREAMS FACE WITH REALITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

3.1. REACTIONS AGAINST LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

While the previous two chapters focused on theoretical and strategic framework of the liberal internationalism's implementation, or the current liberal hegemony of the USA, reactions of the other powers towards the liberal hegemony of the USA will be discussed in this chapter. Also, 2008 Russian-Georgian war will be analyzed as a case as part of the qualitative research to build a capacity for delivering satisfactory answers to the questions of this research.

The end of the Cold War, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, left the USA as the only super power in the international politics. Thanks to its grand strategy of liberal internationalism and primacy, the USA has managed to maintain its liberal hegemonic role since the end of the Cold War. Just like the USA, other powers like Napoleonic France or Hitler's Germany enjoyed certain level of hegemony but for a relatively short period of time because other countries came together and balanced against such hegemonic powers in the history. However, supporters of the USA hegemony claim that the USA is different than aforementioned countries because it is a benign hegemon which is also caring for the interests of the others. Besides, the USA is a democratic country, it has transparent and open structure, and having relations with other countries based upon democratic values. As the USA also act internationally by making cooperation with other countries through international organizations created with the liberal spirit, other countries believe that leaving the USA as the liberal hegemon of the current existing order would also contribute their interest as well. All of these peculiarities assume that not only its unmatched hard power but also its soft power and diplomatic influence make the USA as the only legitimate hegemonic power in the eye of the other states for their safety, security and interests (Nye, 2003).

As a matter of fact, the USA provided security assurance to the Western liberal Europe after the end of the Second World War with the creation of NATO. Thanks to security assurance of the liberal hegemonic USA, another liberal international organization, EU, flourished in the continent. Thanks to provision of security by the USA, and to implementation of liberal principles, not a major large-scale conflict took place in the Europe since then. Therefore, it could be argued that implementation of liberal internationalism by the liberal hegemon USA, long lasting peace has been achieved in the continent and this situation also supports the legitimacy of the liberal hegemon USA as a peace maker (Snidal, 1985).

Although it has been argued that the benign hegemony of the liberal USA would also safeguard the interests of the other states, there are also some counter arguments towards this understanding. It is true that the USA is providing security to many of its allies however the rationality of being dependent on another state for achieving safety and security is a debatable issue. As the security is a vital concept which is directly related to survival, no state should depend on another on this critical subject. Besides, it would be so naive to solely trust the good behavior of another state for achieving security because behaviors of states in the international politics are open to change in the future and no one can guarantee what would happen in the future. Therefore, widening power gap between the hegemonic power of the USA and the others might make weak side or sides more sensitive in terms of international security because the other parties might be concerned about what would the USA do with its unmatched military power in the future. Although the USA characterizes itself as the champion of liberal and democratic values as well as protector of the inalienable human rights internationally, it does not mean that other sides characterize the USA in the same manner (Huntington, 1999).

Recent call by the French leader Emmanuel Macron for the creation of the European Army is a significant example demonstrating the fact that even the Western liberal Europeans, one of the closest allies and trading partners of the USA, do not want to let their security at the hands of the USA. Even the countries embracing the same liberal democratic values with the USA do not want the concentration of so much

power at the disposal of only one country. Upon the Macron's call, European Intervention Initiative (EI2) has been created on June 25, 2018. Finland, Portugal, Spain, Estonia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom are the members of the European Intervention Initiative. This initiative intends to enhance Europe's strategic autonomy in defense and security. Apart from the EI2, EU also initiated Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in 2017, in an attempt to structurally integrate the national armies of the member countries. In line with the objective of empowering the autonomy of Europe in the security, Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) has been founded in 2009. CSDP is regarded as the essential part of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which covers the foreign and security relations of the EU and rest of the world (Nicolas, 2018). All of the mentioned bodies and structures introduced by EU clearly suggest that member countries do not want to leave their safety and security to another power, the USA, but rather seek autonomy to a certain degree to ensure their own security because the security is the top priority for the states and it might be too risky to be dependent to another power in the field of security even if it is your current ally.

Even the closest Western European liberal allies of the USA are seeking strategic autonomy to certain extent rather than leaving their security arrangements completely to the USA because it seems that NATO is not a simple military alliance but an international organization under strong influence of the liberal hegemonic power of the USA. In terms of becoming a member of the NATO, according to the article 10 of the Washington Treaty, "Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America" (The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949: Article 10). Even though NATO seems to be an alliance, candidates' application to the government of the USA rather than NATO headquarters clearly indicates that the USA has the upper hand in terms of controlling who will become the party of the treaty, or, in other words, NATO member. Similarly, any NATO member who wishes to leave the NATO can leave the organization only after informing the USA as the Article 13 reads "After the Treaty has been in force for twenty years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the United States of

“America” (The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949: Article 13). Apart from its political preponderance, the USA also dominates NATO militarily. In this regard, it is an imperative to note that since the creation of the NATO all 18 Supreme Allied Commanders Europe commanding Allied Command Operations and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe have always been an American general (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, n. d.). Supreme Allied Commander Europe directs and controls all worldwide NATO military operations. However, it is more surprising to see the fact that Supreme Allied Commander of Europe is at the same time working for the USA as the Commander of the United States European Command (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, n. d.). Commander of the NATO’s all military operations have always been an American general who is at the same time the commander of the European forces of the USA. As the President of the USA is the commander of chief of the USA military, one could easily deduce that an American general whose commander of chief is the USA president has always been in charge of the all military operations of NATO. Therefore, it could be argued that all of the NATO’s military operations are under the control of the USA. Besides, currently around 60 thousand USA troops are stationed in Europe serving under the United States European Command, all of them are located in the NATO countries (Bialik, 2017). As aforementioned examples of this paragraph show the fact that the USA is dominating the NATO politically and military, it is not shocking to see that European allies of the USA are seeking strategic autonomy in the field of security by creating alternative structures.

Hegemonic role played by the USA in terms of affecting the decisions applied by the NATO propel European powers to create alternative security bodies in order to reach certain level of strategic autonomy in the fields of security and defense. Germany and France opposed to invasion of Iraq in 2003 but the USA and its other allies in the NATO, Canada and UK, invaded Iraq, toppled Saddam Hussein regime, and even opened NATO mission in Iraq. During the 1995 NATO’s Bosnia operation, namely Operation Deliberate Force, and NATO’s Kosovo Operation, namely Operation Allied Force, European powers realized that they need their own military capabilities and infrastructure rather than relying on the USA. European powers, most notably

Germany and France, want to play a leading role with their own military and defense forces and project their powers to the different corners of the world in order to protect their interests as well as promote the values they embrace at home. In order to achieve these goals, they need to form a strategically autonomous defense structure (Robert and Schulz, 2019).

Another great power, China, also started to show grievance towards the liberal hegemony of the USA as one former Chinese admiral compared American navy operating at the Southeast Asia waters as a man with a criminal record wandering outside the door of a family house (Economist, 2009: 45). It seems that just like the USA employed the Monroe Doctrine by outcompeting any power in its region to achieve regional hegemony, China is trying to apply the same strategy and to curb the influence of the liberal hegemon USA in the Southeast Asia region. It is true that there is no NATO member country located in the region but still the USA and the NATO have been cooperating with some of the regional countries. Japan has provided 200 million USA dollars for the peace efforts in Afghanistan, including but not limited to reintegration and disarmament of insurgent militants and other relevant NATO activities, Australia has deployed more one thousand troops committed to NATO operations in Afghanistan and the Middle East, New Zealand has shown that it is a significant contributor to the NATO's maritime operations, and South Korea also deployed around 500 troops Afghanistan with 500 million funding for the reconstruction of the country (Atlantic Treaty Association, 2017). Likewise, Singapore, another regional country concerned with the China, upgraded the conditions of its Changi Naval Base in order to provide a safe space for the USA navy in case of any operation regarding the regionally and strategically important Malacca Strait. Similarly, to encounter China and to keep itself under the security umbrella provided by the USA, Japan adopted a decision to keep the USA Marines at Okinawa base (Mearsheimer, Winter, 2010: 391). All of these developments further enraged China because the military cooperation between a great power, the USA, and several countries located in its region upset the balance of power dynamics against itself. In this regard, in 2010, Chinese officials articulated to their American counterparts that the USA is no longer allowed to interfere in South China Sea because China sees it as

a vital interest. Furthermore, Chinese effort to curb the USA influence in the region also reached to the Yellow Sea. In the very same year, the USA and South Korea decided to conduct a joint naval exercise to counteract North Korea's sinking a South Korean vessel. Although the naval exercise was planned to be conduct in the Yellow Sea, two countries were forced to change the location to Sea of Japan due to the fierce opposition of China (Mearsheimer, Winter, 2010: 389). As Chinese economy is consistently booming, it wants to be the leader, or at least one of the significant players, of its region. However, the USA military presence and its cooperation with other regional countries, specifically in the field of the international security, concern the Chinese side. To achieve the regional hegemony, China knows that it has to minimize the USA influence in the region. Therefore, Chinese challenge towards the liberal hegemony of the USA might turn into a military confrontation in the future.

3.2. A CASE ANALYSIS: 2008 RUSSIA-GEORGIA WAR

It is evident that both the European countries and China are showing resentment towards the hegemony and the unmatchable power of the USA to the certain degree. However, none of them showed this resentment in a level of military confrontation as it was in the Russian case. Therefore, in this section, 2008 Russia – Georgia War will be analyzed as a case study to verify the hypothesis of this research, which asserts that spread of liberalism as part of liberal internationalism, or as part of liberal hegemony, causes the resurge of realism and balance of power in terms of international security relations between the hegemonic power, the USA, and the other great powers of the international system.

In line with the liberal internationalism implemented by the prime role of the USA, it was declared in the NATO Summit final declaration in 2008 that Ukraine and Georgia will be part of the NATO in the future. The reason behind is no different than the other waves of NATO enlargement. The USA wanted enlarge the liberal democratic world under its leadership by including new members which were Ukraine and Georgia in the case of 2008 NATO declaration which was issues by the persistence of USA against France's and Germany's reservations.

With the enlargement of NATO, liberal internationalist world would be expanded, new members will be independent and interdependent to the other members of the liberal international world. As they, Ukraine and Georgia, will become western style democracy, they will not cause security problem to the USA as well as other members of the liberal international world because democratic countries do not follow unlawful behavior in the international relations, such as invading other countries, and they do not go to war against other democracies. New members inclusion to international institutions in large part created by the USA leadership would also increase the level of cooperation among the liberal democracies. They, Ukraine and Georgia, will also become important trading partner for the rest of the liberal international community, including the USA, as free international trade is a significant component of the liberal internationalism implemented under the leadership of the USA. Thereby, including Georgia and Ukraine into the NATO, would at the same time means that integrating them into the liberal international world created by the leadership of the USA and serving for the national security interest of the USA.

At the beginning of this research it was mentioned that “Case studies enable us to link micro level to the macro level, or large-scale structures and processes. In addition, case studies provide evidence that more effectively depicts complex, multiple-factor events, situations and processes that occur over time and space” (Neuman, 2014: 42). In this regard, by analyzing 2008 Russia – Georgia War as a case study, it is intended that the hypothesis of this research can be tested and research questions can be satisfactorily answered.

As it was previously mentioned in this thesis, definition of security is a low probability of damage to acquired values (Baldwin, 1997: 13). Advocates of the liberal internationalism have always believed that enlargement of the European Union and NATO by including eastern countries from the Baltic to the Black Sea region recreated a better, more liberal democratic and secure Europe. In this regard, developing a strong partnership with Moscow would be a significant step in terms of making Europe as whole, liberal and secure. From the USA perspective, spread of liberal democracy to eastwards would pacify these countries and make them dependent to the Western liberal free world. In such condition, they will not constitute any threat to the USA or

its allies in accordance with the democratic peace and interdependence theories. Therefore, spread of liberal democracy by including new members to the Western liberal democratic community in the form of NATO and EU enlargement would reduce the probability of conflict and increase the level of security for the USA and its allies embracing the same liberal democratic principles. However, this situation makes things secure only from the Western, American, or Trans-Atlantic point of view. Although Western strategy of enlarging NATO and EU and even linking these organizations to Russia by building new partnerships would make the region more secure, Russia thinks that these efforts do not serve for the security of itself. While in the post-Cold War period NATO and EU enlarged by including new members from the Eastern Europe, even from the former Soviet Republics, and creating a zone of security for Trans-Atlantic countries, Russia perceived this process as West is humiliating itself and taking advantage of Russia's weakness (Asmus, 2009: 14). Thereby, Russia-Georgia war can be interpreted as revisionist Russia's revolt against the Trans-Atlantic security system, which is not serving for national security interest of Russia, under the leadership of the liberal hegemon USA.

The USA not only directly targeted Russia but also neighboring countries as well. The USA administration diligently supported Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003, and Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004. These two revolutions are known as color revolutions dedicated to turn Ukraine and Georgia, two significant countries that were under Russian influence during the Cold War period, into the liberal democracies. From the Russian perspective political situation in these countries are highly vital for Russian interests because they are bordering Russia. Besides, Russia perceived color revolutions as overthrown of the governments at two neighboring countries by the USA, rather than as a victory of liberal democracy or liberal internationalism. While this situation further increased the concerns at the Russian side, the USA signaled that color revolutions will spread to Russia. Carl Gershman, President of the National Endowment for Democracy, which has been bankrolled by the USA administration, claimed that Russian President Vladimir Putin's days in office might be numbered on September, 2013 (Gershman, 2013).

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, who came to power in the wake of Rose Revolution, in 2004, made it clear that his sole priority is to liberate Georgia from the Russian oppression and lead Georgia to become a member of NATO and EU. His role models were Mustafa Kemal Atatürk of Turkey for Westernization and democratization, Mannerheim of Finland who fought against Soviet Army at the beginning of the WW2, and King David the Builder who reunited Georgia by defeating the separatists (Asmus, 2009: 56). Even from his role models one could easily deduce that Saakashvili's main intention is to curb Russian influence on Georgia, embed his country to the West by participating the Western liberal institutions, namely NATO and EU, and to reunite separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as NATO membership requires resolution for territorial disputes. On the other side, Russian leader Putin had personally warned Saakashvili for several times that his pro-Western attitude would have grave consequences (Asmus, 2009: 24, 54).

It has been already mentioned in this research that Kremlin vehemently opposed the enlargement of NATO since the beginning. Things became much more conspicuous during the speech of Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Munich Security Conference in 2007, one year before 2008 Russia – Georgia War:

‘I think it is obvious that NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernization of the Alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them. But I will allow myself to remind this audience what was said. I would like to quote the speech of NATO Secretary General Mr. Woerner in Brussels on May 17, 1990. He said at the time that: “the fact that we are ready not to place a NATO army outside of German territory gives the Soviet Union a firm security guarantee”. Where are these guarantees? (Putin, 2007).

Regarding the democracy and NATO enlargement, Putin said the following at the same conference:

‘NATO is not a universal organization, as opposed to the UN. It is first and foremost a military and political alliance. Ensuring one’s own security is the right of any sovereign state. We are not arguing against this. But why is it necessary to put military infrastructure on our borders during this expansion? Can someone answer this question? Expanding military infrastructure to our borders is not connected in any way with the democratic choices of individual states. Do not mix these two concepts’ (Putin, 2007).

While Russian administration was opposing NATO enlargement, Georgian leader Saakashvili started a new reform agenda after becoming leader in the wake of the Rose Revolution in Georgia. Thanks to the economic assistance provided by the USA administration, he started to restructure the country’s economy, attracted tremendous amount of foreign capital, making Georgia one of the fastest growing economies in the region. Crackdown of corruption and some of the organized crime groups having links to Russia further emboldened Saakashvili’s popularity in Georgia. He also had a vision to bypass Russia in the energy sector by making Tbilisi as the center of new alternative energy route transferring Caspian energy resources to Europe. All of these factors lead Kremlin to despise this pro-American leader of Georgia (Asmus, 2009: 57, 58).

In fact, there has been an uneasy relationship between Russia and Georgia. When Georgians demanded independence from the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, Russians felt betrayed because they were considering Georgia as an integral part of the Russian culture, history and civilization. As a reaction, certain elements of the Russian military and intelligence started to arm, advise and even fight with Abkhaz and South Ossetian separatist forces against Georgians demanding independence in early 1990s. When the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms were failed to sustain the Soviet Union, one of the greatest supporters of the dissolution of the Soviet Union was foreign minister of Gorbachev, Eduard Shevardnadze (Asmus, 2009: 56). Shevardnadze was a Georgian and he later became the 2. President of the independent Georgia, which was founded after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Conversely, Russian President Vladimir Putin described the collapse of the Soviet Union as a major geopolitical disaster of the 20th century at his speech to the Russian Parliament (2005). It seems that Russian and Georgian leadership were looking at things from two different

opposite perspectives. Russian administration, including Putin, were hating Shevardnadze, because he was the one of the chief architects of the Georgian independence, and the independent Georgia itself. Russian intelligence even tried to assassinate Shevardnadze in several attempts (Asmus, 2009: viii, 56).

During the time of the Soviet Union, Abkhazia and South Ossetia had certain level of autonomy. However, while the Soviet Union was collapsing and the independent Georgia was founding, Georgian leaders wanted to incorporate Abkhazia and South Ossetia into Georgia by ending their autonomy. However, at the beginning of the 1990s, during the time of Soviet Union's dissolution, both Abkhazia and South Ossetia declared independence too. Georgia saw these actions as creation of two satellite states under strong influence of Kremlin. To end these aspirations and to curtail Russian influence in its region, Georgia send armies to both Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Unfortunately for Georgia, this would end with an anti-climax. Thanks to support from Russian military and intelligence, Georgian forces have been defeated and pushed back from both Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Asmus, 2009: 60-62).

Right after these conflicts, United Nations opened a mission in Abkhazia, whereas OSCE opened another mission in South Ossetia to defuse the tensions and to resolve the conflict. However, quite interestingly, with the support of the Western countries, Russia has been commissioned to lead and provide troops to the peacekeeping forces at the Abkhazia and South Ossetia. While it was common belief among the international community that during that period Russia under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin was pro-Western and would ensure the peace and stability in these separatist regions, things started to get complicated in the course of time. Russian military and intelligence further cemented their presence and military infrastructure in these separatist regions after the conflict. Increasing Russian military influence in the region encouraged Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and empowered their inspiration of independence from Georgia. Russia also vetoed any resolution regarding the change of the peace keeping forces' structure in Abkhazia and South Ossetia at the UN, further ensuring its military presence in the region in terms of diplomatic power (Asmus, 2009: 64, 65).

While offers for peaceful resolution for the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions were made from the Georgian and Western side, Russia did not show any interest (Asmus, 2009: 11). Keeping the status quo intact would help Russia to project its influence to North Caucasus and to the eastern part of the Black sea region. Moreover, most importantly, keeping Abkhazia and South Ossetia issues without any solution would keep Georgia within the Russian orbit and avert Georgia from integrating itself to the Western international community comprising of liberal democracies.

After coming to power as a result of Rose revolution, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili tried to solve the problem of separatist regions, as part of his country's quest to the West. Saakashvili wanted to integrate Georgia into the Western liberal international community. According to this plan, making Georgia a member of the NATO would mean taking part in the international community following the principles and values of liberal internationalism and democracy. NATO membership would include Georgia into the giant peace and security zone of Trans-Atlantic under the leadership of the USA. After becoming part of the NATO, every aspect of Georgia would be integrated into the liberal democratic world, its economy would be flourished thanks to the investments of other Western liberal democratic countries, it would embrace internationally shared universal values. However, most significantly, Georgia would obtain security and protection from liberal democratic Trans-Atlantic community against Russia.

Georgia's plan is to integrate itself into the international political and economic structure of liberal internationalism under the leadership of the USA, embed itself into the liberal internationalist institutions, including the NATO and the EU, and to implement liberal democratic system of the Western world. By following these steps, Georgia would become a member of liberal internationalist community and ensure peace and security as well as economic and political development.

While Georgia under the leadership of Saakashvili seriously headed towards the liberal international system which is under the hegemony of the USA, Russia

interpreted this situation from a different perspective. The problem came in the year of 2008. Kosovo declared independence on February, 2008, a move that was largely supported by the USA and the EU. Kosovo separated itself from Serbia and Serbia is an important ally of Russia. Russian President Putin acted against the West on the subject of Kosovo by declaring on March, 2008 that Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) sanctions imposed on Abkhazia, a separatist region located on the northern part of Georgia and bordering Russia, were lifted (Asmus, 2009: 108). By this move Russia did not only encounter the West but also further project its influence over the separatist region and to further integrate Abkhazia into the Russian orbit.

Even though Georgian President Saakashvili claimed that there is no relation between the situation in Georgia and the Kosovo's independence, Russia regarded the issues of Kosovo and Georgia as parts of the same picture (Asmus, 2009: 106). According to Kremlin administration, implementation of liberal internationalism under the name of democracy promotion leads the liberal hegemon USA to expand its sphere of influence in the international relations while reducing the international influence of Russia. In a sense, liberal internationalism was a tool used by the liberal hegemon USA to humiliate Russia particularly after the end of the Cold War.

NATO's Bucharest summit which was held in April, 2008 was the chief reason behind the 2008 Russia – Georgia War. During the summit, member states started to discuss the membership of Ukraine and Georgia to NATO. Upon hearing this, Russian President Putin sent letters to the leaders of Abkhazia and S. Ossetia, pledging that Russian support to these two separatist regions will be not declarative but practical (Asmus, 2009: 146). Regardless of Putin's reaction, the USA, under the Bush leadership, strongly supported to include Ukraine and Georgia to NATO. However, Germany and France opposed to Ukraine's and Georgia's NATO membership, concerned with Russia's retribution more than the USA apparently because of their geographical proximity to Russia and Russia's upper hand in the energy politics, given the Europe's high level of dependence to Russian natural gas. Whilst Germany and France opposed to NATO membership of Ukraine and Georgia, in the final declaration of the summit NATO sent positive signals supporting these two countries NATO

accession, demonstrating the fact that the USA is certainly playing a leading and hegemonic role in this organization and affecting the final decisions regardless of the other members' reservations (Mearhseimer, 2018: 162).

In the Bucharest Summit Declaration, it has been announced that "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro – Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO" (Bucharest Summit Declaration, 2008). While other technical steps were elaborated in the same declaration of the direct way to NATO membership for both Ukraine and Georgia, Moscow reacted with threatening statements. Russia's deputy foreign minister described Ukraine's and Georgia's NATO membership as a strategic mistake that could have consequences for Trans – Atlantic security. Putin told President Bush that if Ukraine was accepted into alliance, it would cease to exist (Mearhseimer, 2018: 162). During his speech at NATO Bucharest Summit, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that "The emergence of a powerful military bloc at our borders will be seen as a direct threat to Russian security. The efficiency of our cooperation will depend on whether NATO members take Russia's interests into account" (Blomfield and Kirkup, 2008).

After the NATO's Bucharest Summit, Russia started to send more and more troops to S. Ossetia and Abkhazia under the cover of reconstructing railway and road infrastructure, which will be used by Russian army in the war against Georgia (Asmus, 2009: 150). It is an imperative to solve the territorial disputes to become a NATO member because the territorial disputes could turn into a major confrontation which would be an extra burden for other member states for defending the NATO country having territorial disputes. Separatist regions of Abkhazia and S. Ossetia were constituting around 20 percent of the overall Georgia's land and day by day Russia was increasing its military presence at these regions since the aftermath of 2008 NATO summit (Mearsheimer, 2018: 162). Georgia was seeing that step by step it is losing Abkhazia and S. Ossetia to Russia. Tbilisi could not tolerate this anymore because this situation would hinder its NATO accession. Around 4 months after the NATO Summit, in August, Saakashvili sent its army to Abkhazia and S. Ossetia to incorporate

these regions under the direct rule of Georgia. However, it seems that he did not calculate any reaction would be coming from President Putin. In response, Russia send 20 thousand soldiers to Abkhazia and another 20 thousand to S. Ossetia. In August, 2008 total number of 40 thousand Russian troops were tripling the overall Georgian army (Asmus, 2009: 165). Just like it happened in the early 1990s, Abkhazia and S. Ossetia remained their autonomies with the help of Russian hard power.

Georgia was defeated. Saakashvili administration failed to reach their objectives, which was becoming a NATO member after regaining the control of Abkhazia and S. Ossetia. It was a major blow for Georgian government and army. On the contrary, Russia reached its objective. Georgia's and Ukraine's NATO accession were averted. Thereby, Russia prevent the USA from project its influence at its region by integrating its neighbors into the USA led alliance within the context of Western liberal system. Even though some Western sources affirm that spreading liberal democracy within the framework of liberal internationalism to countries located at the Russia's border and at Russia's region would at the same time positively contribute Russia by providing stability to its neighbors, Russia perceives these developments as a threat to its own security (Asmus, 2009; Hamilton, 2016; Mearsheimer, 2018). According to Russia, the real intention of the color revolutions is to establish pro American regimes by overthrowing Russian allies in its region, and even to instigate a regime change inside Russia, rather than simply establishing liberal democracies with open societies in the Eurasia region. Again, in the field of economics, the West under the leadership of the liberal hegemon USA is attacking to Russia by imposing sanctions. In the cultural field, liberal Western values, including homosexuality, gender roles and other relevant social issues are harming traditional Russian culture and customs (Hamilton, 2016).

In short, the USA's security perception which is based upon spreading liberal democracy diverges with another great power Russia's security perception. As a great power, Russia's resistance towards the liberal hegemon USA's security perspective by using its hard and soft power capabilities and defending its own security perception causes crises in the international security relations. Therefore, it is safe to say that,

when analyzed from the great power perspective, contrary to expectations, liberal internationalism has not brought peace and security to the world.

The main difference between this case study and the other relevant analyses on the 2008 Russia – Georgia war (Asmus, 2009; Hamilton, 2016; Mearsheimer, 2018) is that this case study does not prioritizes the concept of nationalism in terms of making sense of this particular conflict. In 2008 war, Russia invaded Abkhazia and S. Ossetia regions of Georgia. In S. Ossetia, around 70 percent of the population is Ossetian and around 30 percent of the population is Georgian. In Abkhazia, Abkhaz themselves are around 20 percent of the population as a minority group while Georgians are more than 50 percent of the population (Asmus, 2009: 61). It is easily understandable from the figures that overall existence of Russian population in two regions combined is very tiny. Concept of nationalism could be used in making sense of Russia's annexation of Crimea and eastern parts of Ukraine because considerable numbers of ethnic Russians are living both in Crimea and eastern parts of Ukraine. However, in this research only 2008 Russia – Georgia war has been examined as a case study. That war was the display of Russia's realist foreign policy's triumph. In this regard, nationalism could only be seen as a tool used by Kremlin administration to muster domestic support from Russian people for its realist foreign policy and 2008 war.

3.3. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, reactions of other great powers towards the liberal hegemony of the USA have been investigated. Because it is a striking example and reached to the level of military confrontation against the liberal hegemony of the USA, albeit indirect, another great power Russia's reaction has been analyzed as a case study in detail. Political, technological and military power of the liberal hegemon USA had reached to an unmatchable level and this situation worries other great powers. Even other great powers like UK and France, defending same liberal democratic universal values just like the USA, are trying to form alternative international security arrangement under the EU framework. Just like other Western European liberal democracies, UK and France are allies of the USA as members of the NATO. Although they know that

within the context of North Atlantic Treaty, the USA had made a commitment to come to their help in case of any threat jeopardizing their security as part of collective defense, UK's and France's participation to alternative security structures such as the European Army, which is officially known as European Intervention Initiative (EI2), Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) shows that liberal internationalism that has been implemented by the liberal hegemon USA is problematic. Even the Western European allies of the liberal hegemon USA are forming alternative security structures because the USA is an unmatched military power and even though currently it claims that it is a benign hegemon championing liberal democratic and universal principles, no one can know what would happen in the future.

Security is a vital concept and it is about survival. Therefore, it is not a rational choice to leave your security at the hands of an external power, within the framework of NATO, even if it is your ally at the moment. Even the Western European allies sharing same liberal democratic values with the USA are founding alternative security structures because they need and want to ensure their own safety and security as the future risks are unknown and security ensures their survival. This does not mean that they will face with American aggression in the near or medium term but rather they need to establish a strategically autonomous security body in case of the USA would not come to contribute their security while facing with an alarming threat.

China is another great power showing grievances to liberal hegemony of the USA. Unlike UK and France, China is regarded as an illiberal country so it is not paying much regard to same liberal democratic values with the liberal hegemon USA. The USA is cooperating with countries located in the Asia – Pacific region including but not limited to South Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand via NATO Asia – Pacific dialogue initiative. These countries are actively contributing and participating the NATO missions and military exercises throughout the world and the USA is having military bases in some of them. China concerns with this situation and shows resentment to the growing USA influence in its region by following assertive policies

specifically in the South China Sea and Yellow Sea. Though China is trying to maintain its own influence as a great power against the USA in the Asia – Pacific region, this rivalry has not come to level of war with the USA or any of its allies in the region.

In the case of another illiberal great power Russia's defiance against the liberal hegemony of the USA, however, a war took place. After 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, it has been declared that Georgia and Ukraine will be members of NATO, after taking necessary steps. From the USA perspective, it was not just the enlargement of NATO but the enlargement of the liberal democratic world build upon internationally shared universal values. However, from the perspective of Russia, which is another great power, it meant spread of the USA influence to its own region both politically and militarily. Besides, it also meant that its own neighbor Georgia will be integrated into the USA led Western liberal world, getting out from the Russian orbit. Russia could not tolerate another great power, the USA, increasing its influence via enlargement of an international organization at its region. However, direct military confrontation with the USA would be catastrophic as both sides possessing nuclear weapons. Therefore, Russia preferred to send an indirect message to the USA by invading two separatist regions of Georgia, which was less costly. For the first time after the collapse of the Soviet Union, after the end of the Cold War, Russia invaded another country. Although there have been problematic historical relations between Russia and Georgia, this symbolically important move was against to Western liberal world under the influence of the USA hegemony.

The USA saw no problem with enlarging NATO eastwards, to the doorstep of Russia. The USA believed that the world had entered into a different stage after the Cold War, in which realism and power politics do not compute. According to this logic, enlargement of NATO means enlargement of liberal democracies. The USA foreign policy makers even naively believed that promotion of liberal democracy in the Russia's neighbors would also help Russia because democracy promotion will provide stability to the region and Russia would benefit from this stability. This logic also summarizes the international security understanding of the USA in the post-Cold

War period. Spread of liberal democracy, embedding democratized countries into the international organizations largely created under the USA leadership, and promoting free economic interactions between the liberal democratic countries would create a sense of international community sharing same universal values and reducing the risk of conflict. However, Russia has different kind of international security understanding. According to this understanding, all of these liberal internationalist implementations, through NATO and other organizations, diminishes the Russian international security interests. Promotion of liberal democracy at its neighbors means overthrowing allies of Russia, and perhaps someday overthrowing Kremlin administration itself. Thus, spread of liberal democracy does not aim at providing stability but to contain Russia with liberal democratic regimes under the influence of the USA. Enlargement of NATO eastwards does not mean the enlargement of liberal democratic world but rather opening of new NATO bases with American military presence and moving American military infrastructures to the Russian border. Apparently, source of security for the USA is a source of insecurity for Russia. Both countries are great powers having significant hard and soft power capabilities but their international security perceptions are opposing each other. This is the core reason behind the crisis of liberal internationalism and it would continue to be so as long as these two great powers see the international security environment from completely different perspectives.

CONCLUSION

The singular goal of this research was to analyze liberal internationalism from the great power perspective. Making this analysis from the great power perspective is important because in most cases state of affairs in the global politics has been determined by the nature of relations among the great powers. During the Cold War period, for example, relations between Soviet Union and the USA, two great powers leading their poles opposing each other, was a determinant factor shaping the trajectory of the international politics. It is obvious that the great power perspective is looking at the international relations from realism lenses as it is a must to have formidable military force, including nuclear weapons, for becoming a great power. In other words, in this research, liberal internationalism had been critically analyzed from the realist point of view.

As a matter of fact, there is no significant difference between the liberalism and the liberal internationalism as liberalism itself is an internationalist theory. However, it is easy to understand from the name of the concept that the liberal internationalism particularly focuses on the international dimension of liberalism. Still, just like the concept of terrorism, there is no one single definition of liberalism. There are many definitions of different liberal theories covering different issues, including but not limited to politics, international relations, economics and philosophy. Whilst it is evident that there are many different definitions of liberal theory, it does not mean that these definitions do not share anything in common. All of the liberal theories prioritizes the freedom of individuals as core units of the international system, seeks type of government in the national level that ensures the safety, security and liberty of the individuals, and tries to establish an international regime that paves the way for free social, cultural and economic interaction and cooperation between individuals throughout the world. It seems that these main tenets of all liberal theories are rooted in the ideas of novel enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant, whose liberal ideas have been discussed and elaborated in this research, and his endeavor to create a sense of international community comprising of individuals sharing same liberal

international values. In this regard, liberal internationalism emphasizes the establishment of a liberal international community, through democratizing the illiberal countries, via use of force as an option, embedding them to the liberal international organizations to make things easier for cooperation between the liberal countries, and facilitation of free international trade as trading nations will become interdependent to each other and, therefore, avoid to go to war against each other.

In the recent decades the USA has been seen as the chief practitioner implementing liberal internationalism in the international relations. The USA is a deeply liberal country that was emerged as a victorious power in the aftermath of WW2. According to the USA policy, main reason behind wars and conflicts in the international stage is the lack of liberalism. Therefore, world should be liberalized in order to put an end to wars and to ensure the world peace and international security. In light with this liberal internationalist logic, liberal international organizations, such as UN, IMF, World Bank, GATT, which will be transformed into WTO, were founded in the wake of WW2, largely under the leadership of the USA. Main aims of these organizations were to protect individual rights and freedoms, ensuring the world peace, facilitating interaction and interdependence between the countries in the international politics, economics and trade.

While it was laying the foundation of the liberal internationalist world, the USA would face with another grave danger. Another great power, Soviet Union, which was also emerged as a victorious power after the WW2, did not follow this liberal internationalist strategy but rather started to pursue assertive and interventionist policies in Europe, and also in other regions as well.

To protect the Western Europe against Soviet aggression, to play an active role in European power politics and to ensure the safety of the liberal international community in general, NATO was founded in 1949 under the leading role of the USA. Indeed, NATO served as a useful tool for the USA to deter Soviet expansionism, to cement American influence over European power politics, and to hinder Germany, which has been seen as main responsible country for two world wars, from re-

emerging as a regional hegemon, which was a major concern for many European countries.

After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, the USA became the only superpower of the international politics. At that period many realists thought that the USA should disband NATO as its main enemy, Soviet Union, had collapsed. However, the USA chose another option. Contrary to realist thought, the USA started to enlarge NATO in the post-Cold War period. It was popularly believed that the world had entered into completely different period that has not been seen before. Fukuyama defined this as end of the history, there will be no wars anymore and the only problem for human beings will be boredom. According to Bill Clinton, power politics, meaning realism, would not work in this new era. Indeed, apart from declarations and speeches no real reaction came from the Russian side against NATO enlargement. Actually, Russia had no problem with the continuation of NATO in the Western Europe because American presence in the region would forestall Germany from dominating continental Europe. However, Russia strictly opposed NATO enlargement eastwards, to its doorsteps. Regardless of its strong opposition, Russia could not take any real action against NATO enlargements and operations in the Eastern Europe because it was so weak then.

The USA remained as the only great power in the post-Cold War period and it was implementing liberal internationalism. As the sole superpower shaping the outset of world politics in the post-Cold War period, the USA was also described as hegemon. Because of this reason, the USA is also identified as the liberal hegemon, and its liberal internationalist policy as the liberal hegemony. These two concepts are essentially the same but liberal internationalism refers to policy itself whereas liberal hegemony refers to the agent implementing the liberal internationalism, which is the liberal hegemon USA.

It seems that liberal internationalism implemented by the USA had worked to a certain extent. NATO was enlarged several times. Number of its members has grown from 12 to 29, with the recent participation of Montenegro in 2017. Similarly, the USA did not let any power to emerge as a regional hegemon because any regional hegemon

would be a potential challenger to the USA hegemony in the global scale. However, as a matter of fact, the reason behind why the liberal internationalist project of the USA worked is not that the liberal internationalism is a good thing or the USA is a benign hegemon but rather there was not any formidable great power to resist the policies of the USA during the post-Cold War period. In other words, it could be argued that unmatchable power of the USA had overshadowed great power politics, or the great power rivalry, for a certain period of time during the post-Cold War era. Since the end of the Cold War, American foreign policy elites have believed that the liberal internationalist policies would legitimize the global leadership of the USA in the eye of other countries, as the defender of democracy, liberal global economy and international cooperation. While it was believed that the liberal hegemony is achievable and sustainable for the USA, present condition of the international relations reflects the fact that the liberal internationalism has not achieved a substantial success at all. To achieve the fundamental goals of the liberal internationalism, including democracy promotion, free international trade, facilitating international cooperation through international organizations, it is required that the formidable great powers should also accept and support the liberal internationalist project. However, China and Russia have not turned into liberal democracies and they do not incline to embrace the principle of the liberal internationalism. On the contrary, they are currently investing in their military capabilities and infrastructures to balance against the USA and to challenge the liberal internationalist world that is under the leadership of the liberal hegemon USA.

In addition to the resistance arising from illiberal great powers, developments even within the liberal international community show that the liberal internationalist policies of the USA failed. As it was mentioned in this research, European powers do not want to rely on the USA hegemony in the realm of security through NATO. Therefore, they are establishing alternative international security structures to ensure their own safety and security. Creation of the European Army, whose official name is the European Intervention Initiative (EI2), Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) are the most notable evidences indicating that European powers set to

form a European Army to limit their dependence to the USA in terms international security. This is due to the fact that the vital concept of security is directly about survival and it is not logical option to depend on the USA, or any other outsider power, regardless of its liberal and benign attitude at the moment as no one can tell what would happen in the future.

Apart from the alternative security arrangements in spite of NATO, which was founded with the intention of securing the Western liberal world, there are also significant developments in the liberal international community threatening liberalism itself. In the recent years, Hungary, a member of both NATO and EU as liberal international organizations, has been ruling by an authoritarian and populist government that also has strict anti-immigration stance. In Poland, which also has both NATO and EU membership, recent reforms implemented by the populist and authoritarian government undermined the independence of judiciary. In addition, Brexit referendum is regarded as another critical blow to the liberal internationalism as for the first time one of the members of EU, a symbol of the liberal internationalism and the USA victory against anti-liberal forces led by the Soviet Union, decided to leave the international organization. Authoritarian, populist and racist movements are gaining ground in both side of the Atlantic. This region had been seen as the cradle of the liberal internationalism for a long time. Emergence of such illiberal and undemocratic movements throughout this region is another example expressing that both in the international and national level, liberal internationalism, championed by the liberal hegemon USA, has failed to protect the democracy, and to ensure international cooperation and the world peace.

In the light of liberal theory and liberal internationalist grand strategy, the USA has carried out many military interventions in cooperation with other NATO countries and used force to topple authoritarian illiberal elements and to promote democracy throughout the world. In these operations, hundreds of thousands of people have been mutilated and lost their lives. Since the end of the Cold War, the liberal hegemon USA has spent two out of each three years at wars to reach the goals of the liberal internationalism. During that period, trillions of dollars of American taxpayers' money

have been spent for overseas military campaigns and restructuring of the same countries where the campaigns took place for the liberal internationalism. Spending such amount of sum for foreign countries rather than well-being of American people and the country's infrastructure also causes grievances domestically in the USA. In many instances of the USA led military operations, human rights violations become more apparent, harming the image of liberal internationalism. All of these shortcomings expose that the liberal internationalism is far from bringing peace to the world as it has intended.

Rather than providing peace to world, liberal internationalism implemented by the USA caused the resurgence of realism in the post-Cold War period. In a sense, it could be argued that the USA has also embraced a kind of realist foreign policy in the form of liberal internationalism in the post-Cold War era because the main aims of liberal internationalism strongly coincide with the national security interests of the USA. By democratizing all countries in the international system, embedding them to liberal international organizations, and by facilitating liberal international trade would stop any power to emerge as a threat to the USA because all liberal democratic countries would be peaceful and interdependent to each other. Therefore, no country would go to war against the USA or support illiberal elements, such as terrorist organizations, threatening the USA interests. It is safe to say that the USA has not pursued liberal internationalist foreign policy just for the sake of the values of liberal internationalism but also for maximizing its national security interests by eradicating any illiberal and undemocratic forces threatening American national, economic, political security.

As it was seen in the year 2008, another illiberal great power Russia resisted against liberal internationalism implemented by the USA. In the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, it was declared, due to largely the USA influence, that Ukraine and Georgia will become members of NATO. From the the USA perspective, it was the enlargement of liberal international community by including new members to family. However, from the Russian perspective, the situation was quite different and problematic. Russia did not see that as the enlargement of liberal democracy but rather

enlargement of the USA hegemony. From the Russian perspective, NATO was not about democracy but an international military organization under the leadership of the USA. In other words, the USA was in the course of maximizing its interests and influence at the doorsteps of Russia by pulling two of its neighbors into an international organization under its strong influence but trying to show it as the enlargement of liberal democracy. Russia could not accept this because rising the USA influence in Ukraine and Georgia by including them into NATO would curb Russian influence over these countries. However, it would be unreasonable to directly aim at the USA because both Russia and the USA have nuclear weapons, a war between them might mean end of the world. Thus, Russia invaded two separatist regions of Georgia, Abkhazia and S. Ossetia. Georgian army tried to fend off Russian forces there only to lose battle. Georgia was struck with territorial disputes, a factor hindering it from NATO accession. This war also caused a political crisis in Ukraine but in this thesis only one case study, 2008 Russia-Georgia War, is used to analyze the main argument of this research which claims that the USA has been following realist foreign policy under the cover of liberal internationalism in the post-Cold War period. Aims of liberal internationalism strongly coincides with the realist national security interests of the USA. This situation causes reactions from rest of the world. Reactions of the great powers are most relevant because from their actions directly affects the state of affairs in the world politics. In the 2008 Russia-Georgia War, Russia invaded two separatist regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, of Georgia in an attempt to recalibrate the balance of power dynamics in its region. Georgia's membership to the NATO would lead to opening up military bases with the USA military infrastructure and capabilities in the doorsteps of Russia. As a great power, Russia did not tolerate this and took an action. Russia succeeded to prevent Georgia's and Ukraine's NATO membership. Russia saw the realist motives behind the implementation of liberal internationalism by the USA, such as trying to increase the USA influence over former Soviet territories, limit Russia from projecting its power over its neighbors, even change the regime in Moscow itself as it was openly declared by some of the NGOs promoting democracy in ex-Soviet countries. Thereby, it hindered Georgia and Ukraine from becoming NATO members, which would upset the balance of power dynamics against Russia and in favor of the USA in Russia's own region.

In this research only 2008 Russia-Georgia war was examined as a case study. Although there have been uneasy relations between Russia and Georgia, 2008 War was directly against Georgia itself but indirectly against the USA and its liberal internationalist policies. Actually, Russia has long seen the spread of liberal democracy as part of liberal internationalism to other countries as a threat to itself. There are many reasons behind this threat perception. From political perspective, Russia sees promotion of democracy and regime changes in its neighbors as encirclement of Russia by the regimes under the USA influence. In terms of economy, Russia sees the Western world in general, and the USA in particular, as a force devastating Russian economy, making it easily vulnerable and fragile by outside shocks and influence. From social and cultural perspective, Russia sees West and the USA as a force corrupting its socio-cultural fabric by introducing homosexuality, different gender roles and other relevant social problems harming Russian traditions.

2008 Russia-Georgia War, which was examined as a case study in this research, was just one example of rising opposition against the liberal internationalism by other powers. It was a conspicuous example because for the first time after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian army invaded the territories of another country in that war. However, it should be also noted that both liberal and illiberal great powers, as well as medium and small powers, are showing different kinds of resistance against the USA hegemony and its liberal internationalist policies throughout the world as it was articulated above in this research. Creation of alternative defense structures by European powers and Chinese efforts to develop more formidable military force are among the examples coming from other great powers showing opposition to unmatchable power of the USA hegemony in different levels. It becomes more evident that unipolar world is increasingly heading towards multipolar structure. While illiberal great powers of Russia and China openly standing up against the USA hegemony and its liberal internationalism; European powers also try to ensure their strategic autonomy, independent from the USA. Conflicts between the great powers do not only affect these countries but also risk the entire globe. Therefore, in this new

era the USA would need to consider the priorities and interests of other great powers to minimize the international crises and conflicts in order to ensure world peace and the international security. Results of the liberal internationalism proved to be devastating and disastrous for both the USA and the rest of the world. Though current President Donald Trump's administration declared that they would follow realist foreign policy in the international relations, it certainly needs time to see and comprehend their real policy. Still, it seems that the best way to ensure peace is finding a balance between the great powers in the international politics. In all probability, both war and peace, stability and conflict in the international stage would be decided by the great powers' policy preferences. All in all, with the rising opposition to the USA hegemony from other great powers, it seems that realist thinking once again would dominate the coming era. In such case, it seems to be that all policy makers will need to seriously consider the dictates of realism in order to ensure the safety and security in the international relations.

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