

The Open-Door Policy and Geopolitics 1890-1910

Erik Nilsson

Student number:453424

MA in Global History and International Relations

Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam

MA supervisor: Ferry de Goey

Contents

1. Introduction	p. 3
1.1 General introduction	p. 3
1.2 Historiography of Open-Door policy.....	p. 4
1.3 Questions with sub questions.....	p. 7
1.4 Methodology and sources.....	p. 8
1.5 Main theoretical concepts.....	p. 9
1.6 Innovative aspects.....	p. 10
2. United States foreign policy in Asia	p. 12
2.1 General introduction.....	p. 12
2.2 First period (c. 1776 – 1840s) China.....	p. 12
2.3 Second period (c. 1840s – 1860s) Japan.....	p. 15
2.4 Third period (c. 1860s – 1890s) Philippines.....	p. 17
3. Geopolitics	p. 21
3.1 General introduction.....	p. 21
3.2 Mackinder (biography and major works on Asia)	p. 22
3.3 Mahan (biography and major works on Asia)	p. 24
3.4 Other geopoliticians	p. 27
4. The Open-Door policy and geopolitics	p. 30
4.1 General introduction.....	p. 30
4.2 FRUS Papers, Presidential Papers, the Open-Door Policy and Geopolitics	p. 33
4.3 The Open-Door Policy in the FRUS and Presidential Papers.....	p. 36
4.4 Trade, railroads, naval power, missionaries and geopolitics.....	p. 44
5. Conclusion	p. 53
5.1 Conclusion to US foreign policy in Asia c. 1776 – 1890.....	p. 53
5.2 Conclusion to geopolitical ideas.....	p. 53
5.3 Conclusion to the Open-Door policy and geopolitics.....	p. 54
5.4 Conclusion to trade, naval power, railroads, missionaries and geopolitics	p. 55
6. Sources	p. 56
6.1 Primary sources.....	p. 56
6.2 Secondary sources.....	p. 56
6.3 Internet sources.....	p. 60
7. Acknowledgements	p. 61

1. Introduction

1.1 General introduction

The recently elected President of the United States Donald Trump stated that “the money they’ve drained out of the United States has rebuilt China.”¹ With the threat of protectionist trade measures that could potentially damage US-Chinese economic and political ties, the relationship between the two giant nations seems more strained than from the 1950’s to the 1970’s. Chinese manipulation of their national currency the Yuan has caused complaints over unfair trade policies that have made American exports less competitive. However, despite these events, the United States economy is more linked than ever to the Chinese economy. China is the United States third largest trading partner with 7.7 percent of exports going East, worth around 116 billion USD in 2015. Additionally, China is the largest provider of American imports, totalling 482 billion USD in the same year.² In August 2016, China was also the largest foreign proprietor of US Treasury Securities, owning about 22% of the total amount.³

Having said that, geopolitics and trade in Asia have become more important than ever. While geopolitics and empire fell out of historical fashion in the 1980’s and 1990’s, they are important concepts in today’s world as geopolitics is playing an increasing role in both regional and global politics.⁴ China has recently been negotiating a new canal in Nicaragua headed by the Hong Kong Nicaragua Canal Development Investment Company (HKND Group).⁵ Similarly, the Chinese government has invested heavily in Central Asia under the ambitious “One Belt, One Road” project which would create closer economic links with the Eurasia based on the Old Silk Road.⁶ The growing military Chinese presence in the South China Sea and the creation of artificial islands echo similar earlier American extensions of power through the acquisition of strategically important islands in the Pacific Ocean (e.g. Hawaii and Guam).

The trade relationship between both states is not a new phenomenon. While the volumes and importance have greatly increased, American trade with China has its roots in 1783 with the voyage of the *Empress of China*. This was followed by a second period of renewed interests in East Asia concerning the American policy to open Japan in 1853-1854 by Commodore Matthew Perry. A third period followed after the Spanish-American War (1898), in which the USA attained all characteristics of an empire and gained several new territories: Cuba (temporarily), Puerto Rico, Guam and, more importantly for the topic of this thesis, the Philippines. During this latter period, the USA also presented its Open-Door Policy by the Secretary of State John Hay on the 6th of September 1899. The Open-Door Notes were issued to keep China open to free trade on equal terms for all states and to prevent any major western power from gaining too much control and influence in the region. The notes were important in

¹ Press Trust of India, “China rebuilt itself with money drained out of US: Donald Trump”, New York March 27, 2016, http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/china-rebuilt-itself-with-money-drained-out-of-us-donald-trump-116032700385_1.html 28/04/17.

² Office of the United States Trade Representative, “The Peoples Republic of China”, <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/china-mongolia-taiwan/peoples-republic-china> 28/04/17.

³ US Department of the Treasury, “Major Foreign Holders of Treasury Securities (in billions of dollars)”, <http://ticdata.treasury.gov/Publish/mfhhis01.txt> 28/04/17

⁴ C. Dale Walton, *Geopolitics and the Great Powers in the 21st Century: Multipolarity and the Revolution in Strategic Perspective*, 1st ed., (Routledge, 2007) p. 16.

⁵ Suzanne Daley, “Lost in Nicaragua, a Chinese Tycoon’s Canal Project”, New York Times, 3rd April 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/04/world/americas/nicaragua-canal-chinese-tycoon.html>

⁶ Jack Farhy, James Kynge, Chris Campbell and David Blood “One belt, one road A ribbon of road, rail and energy projects to help increase trade, Financial Times, 14th September 2016.” <https://ig.ft.com/sites/special-reports/one-belt-one-road/>

outlining US foreign policy in Asia, but were non-binding documents and merely guidelines for international conduct. The Open-Door policy only ceased to become relevant in 1949 after the Communist Revolution when China became a sovereign state once again.

While the Open-Door policy was largely the result of American commercial policy, it is possible that geopolitics was a factor in its formulation, implementation and continuation. Not only that, but it is also possible that geopolitics featured prominently in other areas of US foreign policy in China such as trade relations, naval power, the construction of railroads and the protection of missionaries. Coincidentally, in the 1890s and early 1910s several scholars published important books on geopolitics and Asia, the most prominent being the American Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan and the British scholar Sir Halford John Mackinder. Geopolitics was a new and emerging discipline in the late nineteenth century and at the time was thought of as “the new national science of the state, ... a doctrine on the spatial determinism of all political processes, based on the broad foundations of geography, especially of political geography.”⁷ Having said this, is it possible that these new geopolitical ideas shaped US foreign policy as contained in US foreign political documents, such as the Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) papers and the Presidential Papers? In order to fully explore the possibility of a connection a qualitative analysis of United States foreign policy, geopolitical ideas and relevant documents needs to be made in order to establish or even disprove any connection between these ideas and the formulation of the policy.

1.2 Historiography

This historiography will focus first on the Open-Door notes and thereafter on the importance of this policy for American foreign policy, with particular focus on geopolitics. The historiography of the Open-Door policy is relatively rich in scope, ranging from Wisconsin school interpretations based on economics to interpretations that refute the importance of the Open-Door policy as well as its success. Most of the historiography is American in nature and mainly written during the Cold War period of the 1950's and 1960's.

Alfred Whitney Griswold, an American historian, argues that the formulation of the Open-Door policy was “to a large extent influenced by forces extraneous to both the United States and the Far East.”⁸ He states that “from 1900 to 1932 American efforts in behalf of China's integrity had passed through a number of cycles, all ending in failure”, that jeopardized “the security of America's own territorial integrity. Furthermore, the United States was “obstructing the most profitable trend of American commerce and investment which, since 1900, had been toward Japan, not China.”⁹ This happened because US foreign policy deviated from the national interest and the will of the people, according to Griswold. George Kennan has argued that the Open-Door policy did not have “any clear applicability to actual situations in China”, meaning that there was no way to “indicate feasible and practical alternatives to all the special positions and interests of the powers in that country.”¹⁰ In summary, the United States had no real clear aim in China to justify the Open-Door as a segment of American foreign policy in the Far East. Kennan's arguments are rather critical of the Open-Door due its partial failures of not being able to guarantee the territorial sovereignty of China, as demonstrated in the First Sino-Japanese War of 1895.

⁷ Richard Hennig, *Geopolitik: Die Lehre vom Staat als Lebewesen*, (Teubner, 1928) p. 9.

⁸ Alfred W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938), p. 467

⁹ Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p. 467.

¹⁰ George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy: Sixtieth-Anniversary Expanded Edition*, (University of Chicago Press, 2012) p. 48.

In contrast, William Appleman Williams, American historian and author of the seminal work *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, argues that the Open-Door policy was “America’s version of the liberal policy of informal empire or free trade imperialism.”¹¹ The policy makers of the United States believed that new markets and the creation of an “informal empire” were the key for the economic wellbeing of the US.¹² The Open-Door was a strategy used to gain more access to the Chinese markets in a form of “imperial anti-colonialism.” American politicians believed that this expansion would lead to freedom and democracy due to the moral righteousness of the United States. Noteworthy to mention, an “informal empire” had already been created in South America under the auspices of the Monroe Doctrine, and the Open-Door policy was an extension of this with similar goals in China. On a different note, Frank Ninkovich has argued that it was ideology and not imperialism that motivated the United States in forming and adopting the Open-Door policy. Ideology is difficult to define, but Ninkovich stresses the importance of ideology in the formation of the Open-Door policy. While other factors could have played a role in its adoption, Ninkovich stresses that it was not materialism or commercialism that led to the policies formulation, but ideas and ideology.¹³

On the other end of the spectrum, Paul Alfred Varg, an American historian, argues that the importance of China was greatly overestimated and relatively economically insignificant. He argues that the “lack of a transport system restricted the influx of Western goods” limiting commercial activity.¹⁴ Furthermore, the goods that were being produced in the United States and sold in China were not traditionally consumed and far too expensive for the average Chinese subject. Also, most of the trade with the West was limited to the capital city of Peking (Beijing) and the port cities such as Shanghai.¹⁵ Therefore, the Open-Door policy was to some extent unsuccessful and unnecessary and reflected the optimism of the Chinese market. Finally, Walter LaFeber has claimed that the Open-Door policy was a way to protect Chinese territorial and administrative integrity. This was done to maintain the United States’ “most favoured nation” status which allowed it trade with China on the same terms as other major powers.¹⁶ This came as a response towards German expansion in Asia, as well as Russian and Japanese territorial encroachment. The United States tried everything to protect its status as a “most favoured nation” to allow its merchants to trade in the various treaty ports on equal terms as other merchants from Britain, Japan, Germany and Russia.

To conclude, the historiography of the Open-Door is both rich and divided. There is significant debate on the interpretations of the Open-Door policy, mostly focusing on the causes of the Open-Door and not the results of such a policy. However, the most likely reasons seem to be economic and preventionist in nature due to increasing encroachment of Western powers on Chinese territory. However, there was also an expansionist element to it due to the acquisition of strategically important territories such as the island of Guam and the Philippines in order to conduct this trade more successfully.

¹¹ William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, (W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1959), p. 157.

¹² Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, p. 66.

¹³ Frank Ninkovich, “Ideology, the Open Door, and Foreign Policy”, *Journal of The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations*, Volume 6, Issue 4, September 1982

¹⁴ Paul A. Varg, “The Myth of the China Market, 1890-1914”, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 73, No. 3 (Feb. 1968), p. 743.

¹⁵ Varg, “The Myth of the China Market, 1890-1914”, *The American Historical Review*, p. 744.

¹⁶ Walter LaFeber, *The American Age: U.S. Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad*, Vol. 1. (W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1994), p. 103

The historiography of United States foreign policy is equal if not richer. In terms of geopolitical interpretations of US foreign policy, there are four major interpretations, according to Geoffrey Sloan.¹⁷ The first interpretation is the “Isolationist Tradition” which is the “development and the assertion of an independent foreign policy, separate from that of Europe and based on the United States national interest.”¹⁸ This is based on policies such as the Monroe Doctrine (1823) and frequent political rhetoric about the dangers of Europe and their belligerent foreign policies. Not to mention, the United States did become independent from a European empire, adding to the distrust of Europe. Throughout the US's brief history there has been a long call for it to be isolationist and independent of all things European. The second interpretation of the same field is the Marxist interpretation that basically argues that since the inception of the United States of America, its main objectives have been to create and maintain a global empire. Marxist thought claims that “Americans considered themselves perpetually beleaguered, an attitude that led on to the conviction that military security was initially to be found in controlling the entire continent and ultimately prompted them to deny any distinction between domestic and foreign policy.”¹⁹ This is partly explained by the huge importance of security and the necessity to control the flow of capital and to find new potential markets to sustain the capitalist system and to exploit lesser developed states, while at the same time suppressing the working-class struggle. The third interpretation is the human rights school of thought. This interpretation essentially argues that the United States has long championed for human rights, making it unique in the world state system and forming the social and political fabric of its society. According to this school the “repeated proclamation of the dedication to the liberal breed, has always been a fundamental element in the cohesion of American society.”²⁰ The evidence for this school of thought cites the Bosnian War, the Peace Corps and several humanitarian missions in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. The spreading of democracy has also been an important part of this mission in order to facilitate the promotion of human rights. The final interpretation is from the conservative point of view which is essentially the Realist perspective. American foreign policy and geostrategy has been purely conducted to promote American state interests and to maintain the global balance-of-power. Especially in regard to Europe and the Western Hemisphere, this school of thought argues that the “national interest of the United States has from the beginning been obvious and clearly defined.”²¹ The fact that the world is in constant anarchy and each state must secure its own interests makes this school of thought heavily dependent on security interests and power politics.

While these schools of thought offer interesting perspectives, they also have certain flaws. The Marxist interpretation of American foreign policy concerns Empire, however there are significant issues with using this interpretation of American foreign policy. There is far too much emphasis placed on class struggle and economics and therefore significant neglect on security issues. The geopolitics of American Empire concerns both the economic and the military issues and therefore Marxism not well equipped to interpret the complex nature of the subject. The isolationist interpretation is rather a weak and naïve one, as the United States has always been reliant on Europe for trade and commerce, especially in the initial stages of its independence.²² There has never been a single moment in American history where the United States has been completely independent and isolated from Europe, commercially or politically. John Hay himself wrote to George Perkins in May 1898, stating “There is

¹⁷ Geoffrey R. Sloan, *Geopolitics in United States Strategic Policy 1890-1987* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), p. 80

¹⁸ A. A. Ekirch, *Ideals, Ideas and American Diplomacy*, (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p. 20.

¹⁹ William A. Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life*, (Ig Publishing, 2006) p. 53

²⁰ Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, (C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd., 2008) p. 116.

²¹ H. J. Morgenthau, 'The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy: The National Interest vs. Moral Abstraction', *American Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. XLIV, No. 4, 1950, p. 836.

²² George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower; US Foreign Relations since 1776*, 1st Ed., (Oxford University Press 2011), pp. 443-444

no such thing as isolation in the world today.”²³ The human rights school also comes with various problems as a foreign policy interpretation. Firstly, the Human Rights we know today were formally declared in 1946 as part of the United Nations Human Rights Charter. While there were ideas and charters in place for the rights of man, they were by no means universal. Also, American foreign policy has time and time again violated human rights in various conflicts and in covert projects. The Realist interpretation provides a more convincing argument than the previous interpretations. However, Realism fails to acknowledge the more cooperative elements in foreign policy and neglects the role of trade and commerce in which Asia is so important, and instead puts more emphasis on security. The ideal interpretation would be the Realist interpretation, as geopolitics concerns mainly security and power political issues, however it is by no means complete in explaining the complicated relationship of geopolitics, the Open-Door or American foreign policy.

To conclude, the historiography of US foreign policy demonstrates a plethora of debates and interpretations. These interpretations contribute very little to the geopolitics of American foreign policy, even less so when analysing China. The most fitting interpretation that is most relevant to geopolitics would be Realism, as the United States used geopolitics to act in its economic and political self-interest. This thesis will broaden and contribute to the various debates.

1.3 Questions and sub questions

This thesis will answer several questions pertaining to the Open-Door policy and geopolitics during 1890-1910. The region discussed will be of course be China and to some extent East Asia. The period is from roughly 1890-191. This periodization has been chosen because geopolitics was emerging as a discipline and two important works on geopolitics on Asia were published around this time (Mahan in 1890, Mackinder in 1904). Furthermore, this period was crucial in the establishment of the American Empire with great milestones such as the acquisition of Hawaii, the Spanish-American War and the adoption of the Open-Door policy. The answers to the questions will add to the field of American foreign policy in East Asia and provide new insights into this fascinating subject and period.

The main research question that will be answered is the following: Did geopolitical ideas shape America’s Open-Door policy of the 1890s? And if not, are there any areas where geopolitics did play a role in US foreign policy? It seems that from the outset, the Open-Door notes were mainly a commercial policy focusing on equal trade relations, however, it is possible that geopolitical considerations were taken into account. To complement this question, there are sub-questions that will contribute to the arguments and answer the main thesis question.

The first sub-question concerns the state of United States foreign policy in East Asia and more specifically in China from around the 1780’s to the 1890’s. What were America’s relations with East Asia during this period? What was new about the Open-Door policy of the 1890s? This question is important to get some sense of the longstanding relationship between the United States and China which is more important than ever today. Furthermore, it will highlight some of the geopolitical issues and strategies that were being used to cement this relationship.

The second question pertains to the geopolitical ideas that were most contemporary and relevant to United States foreign policy at the time. What were the most important geopolitical ideas in the 1890s? How did they view East Asia and the importance of this region for America? Were there other ideologies that may have influenced American foreign policy? It is important to get a grasp of the various ideas that statesmen, politicians and geopoliticians that were being published and discussed to

²³ Claude G. Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, (The Literary Guild, New York, 1932), pp. 68-70.

get an overview of potential ideas that may have led to the adoption of the Open-Door policy. Once these ideas are established, a possible connection can be inferred.

The third, final and most important sub-question concerns the relationship between geopolitics and the Open-Door policy. Was there a connection between the geopolitical thoughts and the adoption of the Open-Door policy? Is it possible to establish a connection between the geopolitical ideas and the American foreign policy in East Asia? In what areas can we see a connection between geopolitics and American foreign relations? With the guidance of the sources, both primary and secondary, an answer to these thesis questions will arise. These answers will plug gaps in the geopolitical historiography of US-Chinese relations, and perhaps even provide some understanding to their tense relationship today.

1.4 Methodology and sources

The methodology used throughout the thesis will be a qualitative content analysis of the sources. This approach involved the analysis of certain documents relevant to US foreign policy at the time using eclectic means to put forward an argument. The information relevant to the questions and the arguments put forward in the thesis will be used to construct answers and provide new insight into this subject and period. To establish a connection, an analysis will be made of the sources and particular attention will be made to any direct references to geopolitical theory, an individual or argument on geopolitics. This will demonstrate if there is a direct link between US foreign policy and geopolitical ideas at the time. While there are surely other sources that could have been used to answer the thesis questions, the selected sources provided the most comprehension and were easily accessible in regard to United States foreign policy during this period. Furthermore, they are official documents of the United States government, which adds to their veracity and importance as viable sources of historical study. An analysis will be made to investigate whether geopolitics featured in the sources and how. However, if no direct link can be established based on the primary sources, then an indirect link is perhaps possible in other areas of US foreign policy. The sources (both the FRUS and Presidential Papers) frequently mention various aspects of American foreign policy where geography and political considerations play a key role. These categories are in trade, railway concessions, naval power and missionaries.

The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) papers from 1890-1910 concerning the Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Korean and Samoan governments have been analysed. To provide further evidence and data to answer the main and sub-questions of the thesis, I have used Presidential Collections of the Presidents in office from 1890-1910. This selection was made in part due to the availability and the relevance towards the thesis questions. The FRUS is a collection of diplomatic correspondence between American diplomats and the Secretary of State. These are digitally available through the University of Wisconsin. They are organised chronologically and then further organised into the correspondence with each individual state. These documents have provided the bulk of the sources as they are both plentiful and relevant to the analysis. I have looked at diplomatic correspondence from 1890-1910 between the following states: China, Hawaii, Japan, Korea, Russia, Samoa and Spain to provide a coherent overview of the subject. To complement these sources, the papers of the various Secretaries of State have also been used, however, these have been proven to be not as useful.

The second collection are the Presidential Papers of Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft, ranging from 1889 to 1911. The Presidential Papers are collections of speeches, executive orders, bills and messages and contain both domestic and foreign sources that provide vital insight into American foreign policy in Asia and of foreign policy in general. The Presidential Papers also demonstrate how the upper echelons of government viewed trade, Asia and geopolitics. The other selection of primary sources consists of both Mahan's and Mackinder's

writings, lectures and analyses of their ideas, as well as other “geopoliticians” of the time such as Frederick Jackson Turner and Reverend Josiah Strong just to name a few. Biographies of the individual Presidents and Secretaries of State have also been used as secondary sources to further shed light on the question. Articles and books on geopolitics, empire and US foreign policy have provided the theoretical backdrop for this thesis. They have also significantly contributed to the historiographical debate in geopolitics and American foreign policy.

However, there were some difficulties working with the material. The Presidential Papers mostly relate to internal and domestic policies as well as domestic laws, and many of the speeches do not concern US foreign policy in East Asia or China. In the FRUS, most of the letters pertain to individuals and laws, and are much larger in volume. It is therefore possible that not all the information was properly analysed due to human error given the extensiveness of the collection.

1.5 Main theoretical concepts

The theoretical concepts that will mostly be referred to in this thesis are geopolitics and foreign policy, with particular attention to the Open-Door policy and general foreign policy in East Asia.

Geopolitics

Geopolitics as a field has always existed in some form, although it only became a scientific subject in the 1890's when the term was first coined by Rudolf Kjellén in 1899. He defined it as “the theory of the state as a geographical organism or phenomenon in space.”²⁴ The idea of a state as being organic and changing was novel at the time. The German geopolitician Friedrich Ratzel also pioneered the study of geopolitics, and his main arguments revolved around the idea of *Lebensraum*. He defined *Lebensraum* as “the geographical surface area required to support a living species at its current population size and mode of existence.”²⁵ This had a lasting impact on German mentality and was taken to another level by Karl Haushofer who influenced Nazi ideology on *Lebensraum* in Eastern Europe. His definition was that “Geopolitics is the new national science of the state, ... a doctrine on the spatial determinism of all political processes, based on the broad foundations of geography, especially of political geography”.²⁶ The simplest definition is given by Saul Bernard Cohen who defines it as the “analysis of the interaction between, on the one hand, geographical settings and perspectives and, on the other hand, political processes.”²⁷ Since geopolitics is an abstract term, it needs to be operationalized, and the way it is being operationalized in this thesis is through applying the definition of geopolitics by Cohen to the historical sources, thereby providing consensus on how geopolitics may be present in the documentation.

Foreign policy in the United States

Formulation of foreign policy in the United States government varies greatly depending on the presidential administration. Some presidents tend to focus on domestic policies, while others focus on foreign policy. Technically, the US Secretary of State deals with foreign policy and advises the President of the United States. Furthermore, the Secretary of State is the head of the Department of State, the body that handles the foreign affairs in the United States. Foreign policy is, however, formulated by the President, the executive branch, US Congress and to some extent the public, and it is

²⁴ Rudolf Kjellén, *Staten som Lifsform*, (Gebers, 1916), pp. 34–35.

²⁵ Friedrich Ratzel, *Die Erde und das Leben. Eine vergleichende Erdkunde*, (Vero Verlag, 2015), pp. 590-6.

²⁶ Hennig, *Geopolitik*, p. 9.

²⁷ Saul B. Cohen, *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations* 2nd Ed., (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008) p. 16.

the Department of State that carries the foreign policy out. However, formulation of foreign policy ranges from presidential administration to presidential administration. Essentially, “the process of formulation should begin with a clear definition of the national interests, followed by a delineation of the policies that would promote those interests and the course of action by the various departments and agencies that would further those policies.”²⁸ Furthermore, it is common for governments to consult with non-governmental agencies or individuals. Thinktanks and committees that specialise in governmental policy are at times consulted or asked to conduct research on public policy, as well as certain experts such as university professors.

The Constitution ensures checks and balances by extending formulation of foreign policy to the President, the Senate, the Department of State and to some extent the Department of Defence. There are four themes involving US foreign policy. The first is that it is outward looking. Secondly that it is about choice. Thirdly, foreign policy is heavily influenced by domestic policy. Fourth, it is influenced by the past.²⁹ Henry Kissinger argued that there was a “double standard” of American foreign policy, writing: “internally foreign policy is justified like all other policy in terms of an absolute standard; but abroad, what is defined as justice domestically becomes a program to be compromised by negotiation.”³⁰ It is difficult to know exactly how US foreign policy was formulated in the 1890’s, however it seems that there must have been a discourse between the Department of State, the President, the Secretary of State and the need to acknowledge and incorporate public opinion. Also, other intellectuals may have influenced foreign policy and decisions, as intellectuals like Mahan frequently exchanged letters to various statesmen in the US government. President Theodore Roosevelt knew Mahan very well and often corresponded with him. As certain scholars pointed out, the “emphasis given to presidential leadership in foreign policy is not to deny, or even to diminish, the significance of other actors, agencies, or influences upon the policy process.”³¹

1.6 Innovative aspects

The innovative aspects of this thesis come primarily from viewing the Open-Door policy and the United States foreign policy from a unique perspective, focusing on important geopolitical ideas that may have contributed to the formulation of US foreign policy in East Asia. The literature has time and time again shown that little to no mention of geopolitical ideas is made regarding the Open-Door policy, adding to the uniqueness of the study. It will therefore plug one of the many gaps in the current historiography and debate on the exact role of geopolitics and the Open-Door, and how these two concepts fit into American foreign policy. This thesis seeks to establish or disestablish a connection between geopolitical ideas at the time and the Open-Door policy in the documentation, and the sources will hopefully give some insight into the question at hand. There are no concrete explanations for this phenomenon despite there being plenty of literature on Mahan, Mackinder, geopolitics and American foreign policy. East Asia has been chosen as a case study because of the importance of the region in US foreign relations, even more so today. This relationship could shed light on current geopolitical issues between the United States and East Asia, as the relations between the two regions are becoming more and more strained. Kissinger once wrote that “if the United States were confined to the Western Hemisphere it could

²⁸ Foreign Policy Association “How US foreign policy is made”, http://fpa.org/features/index.cfm?act=feature&announcement_id=45&show_sidebar=0 31/05/17

²⁹ Glenn Hastedt, *Encyclopedia of American Foreign policy*, (Facts on File, 2004) p. vii.

³⁰ Henry A. Kissinger, “Reflections on American Diplomacy” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Oct. 1956), p. 38.

³¹ Michael Cox, Doug Stokes, *US Foreign Policy: Second edition*, (Oxford University Press, 2012) p. 119.

survive, if at all, only through an effort inconsistent with what is now considered an American way of life.”³²

This thesis will stimulate several debates and challenge current scholarship regarding US foreign policy in East Asia as well as geopolitics. Mahan is frequently mentioned as the mastermind behind US foreign policy in East Asia, however, this can be disputed in the sources. The methodological aspects will not be so innovative as they will rely on content analyses and use similar sources as other scholars have done. The innovative aspects therefore concern the major debates as to whether the Open-Door policy had anything in common with geopolitical ideas at the time, as this question has not been fully answered. There is no clear-cut answer and little has been done in contemporary scholarship to investigate this.

³² Kissinger, “Reflections on American Diplomacy” *Foreign Affairs*, p. 48.

2. American foreign policy in Asia

2.1 General introduction

Ever since the conception of the United States of America in 1776, foreign relations played a major part in shaping American identity and survival as a state. The American War of Independence could not have been won without the financial and military aid given by France, Spain and the Netherlands, ensuring success at the pivotal Battle of Yorktown.³³ Even after American independence, the United States relied on foreign policy and foreign trade for its survival. Trade agreements were essential for American economic stability and consolidation of sovereignty.³⁴ The United States wanted to expand its spheres of influence to Africa, Asia and Latin America, however, in many of these areas, American merchants faced European traders protected by privileges stemming from their colonial status. This was less so in East Asia: mainly China, Japan and Korea. But from the 1840s, European states attempted to increase their influence in this region as well, something the USA attempted to prevent by keeping these markets open for traders of all states on equal terms. Furthermore, the United States has had a long involvement in East Asia. There are generally speaking three major waves of US involvement in the region before 1900. These periods are roughly from 1776-1840's, from the 1840's to the 1860's and from the 1860's to the late 1890's. Each period revolves around different developments and geographic areas, usually due to commercial and trade reasons. These developments demonstrate the changing nature of US foreign policy in East Asia, as well as the developments leading up to the adoption of the Open-Door policy in 1899.

2.2 The first period: c. 1776-1840's

Arguably, the China trade had its roots already in the 1600's when tea was supplied to the British colonies in North America. However, the first period of an independent United States foreign policy in Asia began shortly after achieving independence. The first ship to trade with the Far East, aptly named the *Empress of China*, was previously used during the Revolutionary War against the British and renamed and refitted for commercial purposes.³⁵ It was converted into a merchant vessel bound for the Far East in 1783. This voyage marked the beginning of the United States' commercial relationship with China under the so called "Old China Trade." The *Empress of China* was captained by John Green and sailed with its supercargo Samuel Shaw, bound for the port of Canton (Guangzhou) for the profitable tea trade. It was carrying ginseng, cotton and lead just to name a few products; however, it was the root of the ginseng plant that was most valuable for the Chinese due to its perceived medicinal qualities. Upon arriving in Canton, the *Empress of China* was loaded with black and green tea, chinaware and silk bound for the US market. Samuel Shaw later appointed as the first unofficial American Consul in Canton stated that the "inhabitants of America must have tea, the consumption of which will necessarily increase with the increasing population of our country."³⁶ An article in the *Pennsylvania Packet* on the 16th of May 1785 commented on the full cargo that was being brought, "which heretofore we have

³³ Office of the Historian, "French Alliance, French Assistance, and European Diplomacy during the American Revolution, 1778-1782", <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1776-1783/french-alliance> 21/04/17.

³⁴ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, p. 57.

³⁵ John W. Swift, P. Hodgkinson and Samuel W. Woodhouse, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jan. 1939), p. 24.

³⁶ *The Journals of Major Samuel Shaw*, the First American Consul at Canton, with a life of the author by Josiah Quincy (Boston, Wm. Crosby and H.P. Nichols).

carried on with Europe to the great prejudice of our rising empire, and future happy prospects of solid greatness.”³⁷ The voyage truly marked the beginning of a new era for the United States. This new state in the Western Hemisphere began successful trade missions to the Far East, showing its ability for long distance travel, commerce and sovereign foreign policy and three years later, a similar journey was undertaken by the American trading vessel *Columbia*. During the early 1800’s, the nature of the merchandise changed when Britain began trading opium for tea. Opium was the perfect commodity to trade with China as it created its own demand due to its addictive properties. The first record of the American opium trade has its origins with the Baltimore brig *Entan* in 1805, that directly transported opium from the Ottoman port of Smyrna to Canton. Another brig, the *Sylph*, made a similar journey in 1811.³⁸

US trade with China was not entirely successful, as the supply of ginseng and furs would often exhaust the demand and saturate the market by the eager American merchants.³⁹ The opium cultivation at the time was dominated by the British East India Company who controlled opium production in India and could outcompete American suppliers to China. This opium was then sold to “country traders” who would then sell it to Chinese smugglers. However, American merchants began importing opium from Turkey, thereby circumventing the East India Company’s monopoly.⁴⁰ The War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain stifled this lucrative trade, but resumed shortly after its conclusion in 1814. It flourished due to an increased willingness to trade and consume opium and a reduction of Indian opium to about 1000 chests a year.⁴¹ While the product was illegal in China, many traders bribed the Chinese port officials to continue its sale in Chinese harbours.⁴² In 1821, the Chinese government cut off American trade due to a sailor throwing a jar at a woman on a peddler boat who fell into the Pearl River and drowned. The person who threw the jar refused to pay a bribe to the family, a mock trial was arranged and American trade suspended. The US government took a similar position to Britain and forced American opium traders to find innovative ways of trading opium and brought the two nations closer together.⁴³ The period after 1821, also known as the “Lintin Period”, was characterized by the use of the “Lintin system” which was a “model of efficiency, security, and profit, taking full advantage of superior Western technology, the flaws of Chinese governmental organization, and the avarice common to all mankind.”⁴⁴ American opium traders would smuggle opium to the island of Lintin (Nei Lingding) where the bribing and transportation of the product would be undertaken by Chinese dealers as opposed to American dealers. While US merchants did continue to trade other goods and wares, it was opium that consistently turned a profit. Major companies that took part in this trade were the Russell & Company and Perkins & Company, and were often competing against each other and competing against merchants from other European states.

The opium trade truly soared in the mid- to late 1830’s, where the annual average of the years 1835-1839 was almost double that of the previous seven years.⁴⁵ Several factors contributed to this

³⁷ Pennsylvania Packet, 16th of May 1785.

³⁸ Hunt Janin, *The India-China Opium Trade in the Nineteenth Century*, (McFarland, 2014), p. 84.

³⁹ Jacques M. Downs, “American Merchants and the China Opium Trade, 1800-1840”, *The Business History Review*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 1968, p. 422.

⁴⁰ See J. & T. H. Perkins to George Perkins, December 27, 1796, quoted in Thomas G. Cary, *A Memoir of Thomas Handasyd Perkins* (Boston, 1856), 282-283

⁴¹ The five-year annual average for the seasons 1809-1810 to 1813-1814 was 4,815 chests, while the average for the period from 1814-1815 to 1818-1819 was 3,873.

⁴² Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Opium Trade”, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/opium-trade> 09/05/2017

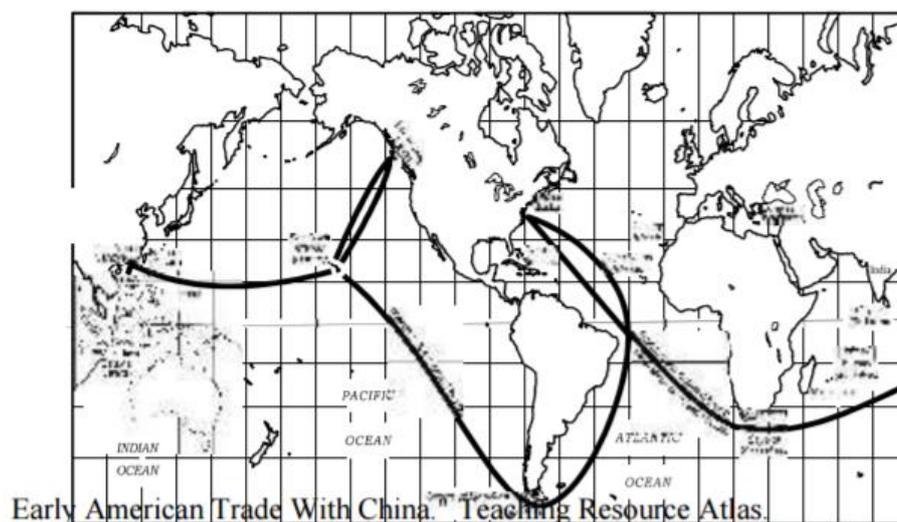
⁴³ Downs, “American Merchants and the China Opium Trade, 1800-1840”, *The Business History Review*, p. 427.

⁴⁴ Jacques M. Downs, Frederic D. Grant, Jr., *The Golden Ghetto: The American Commercial Community at Canton and the Shaping of American China Policy, 1784-1844*, (Hong Kong University Press, 2015), p. 122.

⁴⁵ The figure given by Morse is 35,445 chests for the years 1835-36 to 1838-39. *International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, I, 2

phenomenon, such as the opening of the port at Lintin, an increase in British power and presence in the region and the lack of an effective strategy to limit the consumption and trade in opium.⁴⁶ By the 1830's the United States had laid the foundations of various trades routes to China that were being frequently used. In 1834, tea accounted for around 80% of American trade with China.⁴⁷ Technology also played an important role in this relationship. New super-clippers were designed in the 1840's which could transport more goods at a faster rate than previously done. These new American clippers out sailed British ships, almost causing them to have monopoly over the Chinese trade. These new ships could sail from New York to Hong Kong in just over 100 days.⁴⁸ The Wanghsia Treaty between China and the United States (1844) was instrumental in the trade as it fixed tariffs, provided extraterritoriality and the right to buy land in the treaty ports. The Secretary of the Treasury Robert J. Walker stated in 1848 that "Asia has suddenly become our neighbour, with a placid intervening ocean inviting our steamships upon the trade of a commerce greater than all of Europe combined."⁴⁹ Figure 1 shows the traditional trade routes to China which would eventually become much shorter with the technological advancements in shipbuilding and the construction of the Panama Canal.

Figure 1: Map showing trade routes during the early America-Chinese trade, 1840's.



http://teachingresources.atlas.illinois.edu/chinatrade/resources/resource1_5.pdf

However, the US-China trade declined in the 1850's due to the rapid industrialisation of the North-eastern United States (New England), reducing the demand for Chinese worked cotton. Porcelain factories were able to replicate chinaware which further reduced the importance of the China trade. Most importantly, coffee from South American began overtaking tea as the drink of choice for the average American. European markets were becoming more profitable and accessible to goods produced by the United States. An important facet of this exchange of goods was the also the exchange of ideas. Missionaries began to enter China in the 1800's and attempted to convert Chinese subjects to the

⁴⁶ Downs, "American Merchants and the China Opium Trade, 1800-1840", *The Business History Review*, p. 441.

⁴⁷ Foster R. Dulles, *The Old China Trade* (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1930).

⁴⁸ R. A. Fletcher, *In the Days of The Tall Ships*, (Home Farm Books, 2006) p. 43.

⁴⁹ Walter LaFeber, *The Clash: U.S.-Japanese Relations Throughout History* (W. W. Norton & Company; New York, 1997), p. 11.

Protestant faith. Herring writes extensively on the role of American Christian missionaries and their importance in “opening up” China to American and Western trade which “reinforced commercial drives.”⁵⁰ The focus began shifting from China to Japan during the 1850’s.

2.3 The second period: 1850’s to the 1860’s

After the decline in trade with China, the United States looked towards secluded Japan. On the 8th of July 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry “opened up” Japan for trade with the United States using gunboat diplomacy, pioneered by the British during the Opium Wars. While often being credited as the first westerner to open Japan, Dutch and Russian traders had already begun commercial relations with the Land of the Rising Sun. The reason for this interest came with the establishment of regular trade channels with China and the annexation of California. The advent of steam ships required coaling stations from California to East Asia. Japan was well situated geographically for this purpose and rumours of its coal reserves caused further persuasion for increased relations.⁵¹ Another factor was the need for safe harbours for American whalers who had expanded into the North Pacific and where at risk for shipwrecks and violent storms. Both economic and ideological factors, such as new markets and Manifest Destiny, drove Perry’s expedition to Japan. Tied in with this was the American sense of mission and its moral duty to civilize and Christianize Asia. Already in the 1830’s missions were being sent to Japan from Canton to encourage relations, but were refused by the Japanese government due to the perceived lack of authority of the United States. One such mission was in 1846 led by James Biddle, Commodore of the American East Indian Fleet.

Commodore Matthew Perry believed that the only way to encourage Japan to trade with the United States would be with a display of military superiority. Perry made two voyages to Japan. In the first voyage, Perry carried gifts and a letter to the Emperor, as well as a squadron of US naval steamships and submitted the letter. The next year in February 1854 Perry returned with even more naval ships to receive an answer from Japan. The Japanese were well aware of the developments occurring in China such as the Opium War and the unequal treaties that were being signed due to superior Western technology and military strength.⁵² They subsequently agreed to American demands. The Treaty of Kanagawa (1854) was a milestone for both the United States and Japan. This marked an era known as *Bakumatsu* in Japan, where its isolationist policy began to end. The Kanagawa Treaty, or Japan-US Treaty of Peace and Amity, opened the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to US merchant vessels. The treaty also promised the protection of wrecked American sailors and appointment of US consul to Japan, however no clause on trade was included.⁵³ Nonetheless, it was a crucial step in US-Japanese relations.

Another milestone in US-Japanese relations occurred in 1858 with the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. The Harris Treaty, named after the first US consul in Japan, Townsend Harris, further cemented US-Japanese relations. Nagasaki, Niigata and Yokohama (replacing Shimoda) and later Edo and Kobe were opened to foreign trade. A clause on extraterritoriality for US citizens was added and the treaty allowed Japan to purchase US naval ships and armaments. Similar treaties were concluded in

⁵⁰ LaFeber, *The Clash*, p. 210.

⁵¹ George Feifer, *Breaking Open Japan: Commodore Perry, Lord Abe, and American Imperialism in 1853*, 1st Ed., (Smithsonian, 2006) quotation John C. Perry, p. 182.

⁵² Asia for Educators, “Japan and the West: The Meiji Restoration (1868-1912)” http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/main_pop/kpct/kp_meiji.htm 02/05/17.

⁵³ M. R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism. The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy*, (Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 42.

1858 by Russia, Britain, France and the Netherlands.⁵⁴ In 1860, the Tokugawa *Bakufu* sent an embassy to the United States to ratify the Harris Treaty and were consequently met by President James Buchanan. The party was accompanied by the *Kanrin Maru*, a Dutch built Japanese naval vessel to demonstrate the progress of the modernization of Japan.⁵⁵

This movement to westernize Japan did not occur smoothly as there was considerable anti-foreign sentiment and reluctance to political reform. The Japanese government sought French military expertise in 1865 as their army was considered the best in the world, especially after their victory at Solferino against Austria in 1859, and a military school was established in 1866 in Yokohama.⁵⁶ During the American Civil War (1861-1865), there was a general decline in trade from the USA to East Asia and Europe due to the draining of economic resources to fund the war, and therefore the United States did not manage to profit from the Japanese trade due to the conflict.⁵⁷ The Meiji Restoration marked a new era for Japan which officially took effect in 1868. In May of that year, Eugene van Reed, the consul general of the Kingdom of Hawaii in Japan (1866-1873) organized the transportation of Japanese labourers to Hawaii, causing a diplomatic crisis between Japan, the Kingdom of Hawaii and the United States, and in 1869 Japanese refugees arrive in Northern California.⁵⁸ Japanese exports to the United States were similar to that of China. Tea and silk were being regularly shipped to Philadelphia via the Suez Canal and later to California. However, the United States imported more goods from Japan than it sold to it.⁵⁹

During the 1870's foreign experts began arriving to help establish Western style institutions and to centralize the government. In 1880, the Japanese government distanced itself from the US, Great Britain and adopted a new form of government largely based on the Prussian constitutional system due its centralized system and close cooperation between a militaristic elite and political institutions.⁶⁰ Despite this, thousands of Japanese students were sent to the United States to learn from the Western education system attended the various military and naval schools to eventually modernize the Japanese military, naval and governmental system. The Japanese adopted a banking system similar to that of the United States in 1872, however it was "smaller, less highly leveraged, and did less financial intermediation than the U.S. system."⁶¹ There was significant immigration from Japan to the United States in the late 1880's and early 1900's, however this had its roots already in 1869 when a group of Japanese samurai established the Wakamatsu tea and silk farm. This diaspora was not only limited to the United States, but occurred in Brazil, Canada and Peru. Japanese-Americans would only really play a significant role during the Second World War.

⁵⁴ W. McOmie, *The Opening of Japan 1853–1855. A Comparative Study of the American, British, Dutch and Russian Naval Expeditions to Compel the Tokugawa Shogunate to Conclude Treaties and Open Ports to Their Ships* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2006), p. 85.

⁵⁵ Consulate General of Japan in New York, "The Kanrin Maru: the Japanese Ship that Crossed the Pacific" <http://www.ny.us.emb-japan.go.jp/150th/html/kanrinmaruE.htm> 04/05/17

⁵⁶ Hyman Kublin, "The "Modern" Army of Early Meiji Japan", *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Nov. 1949), p. 24.

⁵⁷ Ferry De Goey, "Western Merchants in the Foreign Settlements of Japan (c.1850–1890)" in *Commodities, Ports and Asian Maritime Trade since 1750*, edited by Ulbe Bosma and Anthony Webster, (Palgrave Macmillan; 1st ed. 2015), p. 121.

⁵⁸ Mauch Peter, Yoneyuki Sugita, John Van Sant, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Japan Relations (Historical Dictionaries of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations)*, (Scarecrow Press, 2007), p. xviii.

⁵⁹ David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Involvement: American Economic Expansion Across the Pacific, 1784-1900*, (University of Missouri, 2001), p. 168.

⁶⁰ Bernd Martin "The German Role in the Modernization of Japan", *Japan and Germany in the Modern World*, p. 77.

⁶¹ Shigeki Miyajima, Warren E. Weber, "A Comparison of National Banks in Japan and the United States between 1872 and 1885", *Monetary and Economic Studies*, (2001), p.31.

Again, missionaries played an important role in US-Asian relations, as “American missionaries and Christian *oyatoi* (foreigners employed by the Japanese government or Japanese organizations) were responsible for the introduction of a wide range of Western ideas into *Bakumatsu* and early Meiji Japan.”⁶² Naturally, most of the American missionaries were from a denomination of the Protestant faith and used the newly established trade routes to Japan to travel there. Hamish Ion argued that “America could and did lead in the spiritual arena with a missionary effort in Japan, its closest neighbour across the Pacific.”⁶³ Although the proselytization of Christianity was illegal, missionaries continued anyway with their work, and eventually in 1871, the practicing of Christianity became legal.

2.4 Third period: 1860’s to the late 1890’s

The period after the opening of Japan and the conclusion of the American Civil War saw renewed interest in trade with Asia, Europe and Latin America. The Secretary of the Treasury Robert J. Walker stated in 1848 that “Asia has suddenly become our neighbour, with a placid intervening ocean inviting our steamships upon the trade of a commerce greater than all of Europe combined.”⁶⁴ The third period saw the focus changing from long distance trade to Asia to the acquisition of territory and strategic islands en route to China due to the rise in steam ship traffic, its lack of range and the need for supplying stations. Hawaii, the Samoan Islands, the Danish West Indies and the Philippines became new objects of desire for American expansionists. A noteworthy mention in these developments was the invention and implementation of the telegraph which revolutionized diplomacy and trade. This, combined with the expansion of the railroad system and improvements in seagoing transportation technology greatly increased the capacity for real time trading. The telegraph brought with it “pervasive and often dramatic reductions in intermarket price differentials, information costs, and transactions costs” which greatly stimulated international trade.⁶⁵

The year of 1867 saw the advent of the “Alaska Purchase” which had been delayed by the Civil War. Russia had explored the region during Peter the Great’s rule and saw its potential due to its natural resources and sparse population. However, after the Crimean War, Russia wished to sell Alaska to the United States for fear of a Westward British invasion from Canada to Alaska. The “Alaska Purchase”, also known as “Seward’s Folly” by his critics, added just over 1.5 million square kilometres of territory to the United States for the relatively modest sum of 7.2 million dollars (112 million dollars adjusted for inflation in 2015), at a rate of 4.74 dollars per square kilometre. This acquisition guaranteed access to the Northern Pacific rim and ended Russian presence on the continent.⁶⁶ The so called “Seward Doctrine” laid the foundations for this commercial expansion through the Westward Expansion and the acquisition of Alaska.⁶⁷ This doctrine was an extension of the Monroe Doctrine involving the removal of foreign influence in the Western Hemisphere, the expansion towards the West and establishing trade agreements in the Far East through the acquisition of strategic islands in the Pacific Ocean. Although the Alaska in 1867 purchase provided a land corridor to Asia, because of the difficult terrain, climate, and lack of merchants, trade was limited. It was therefore more efficient to focus on maritime trade across the Pacific Ocean. Public reaction was mixed. Newspapers criticising the purchase cited lack of a return on the investment as well as governing problems. On the other end of the spectrum, supporters

⁶² Hamish Ion, *American Missionaries, Christian Oyatoi, and Japan, 1859-73*, (UBC Press 2010), p. ix.

⁶³ Ion, *American Missionaries, Christian Oyatoi, and Japan, 1859-73*, p. xvii.

⁶⁴ LaFeber, *The Clash*, p. 11.

⁶⁵ Richard B. DuBoff, "The Telegraph and the Structure of Markets in the United States, 1845-1890," *Research in Economic History*, Vol. 8 (Greenwich, CT.: JAI Press, 1983), pp. 253-77

⁶⁶ Office of the Historian, “Purchase of Alaska, 1867”, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/alaska-purchase> 02/05/17.

⁶⁷ LaFeber, *The Clash*, p. 8

of the purchase argued that it maintained favourable relations with the Russian government and it was seen as favourable to the new wave of expansionists after the conclusion of the US Civil War. However, most newspapers were either in favour of it or not opposed to it.⁶⁸ The purchase was only fully exonerated after the discovery of gold in the Yukon 1896, as Alaska became a gateway for the subsequent gold rush, absolving Seward from negative criticism on the Alaska Purchase. Westward expansion and the acquisition of California and Oregon in the Northern Pacific region also brought new possibilities for the expansion of the East Asian trade. While the westward expansion facilitated the Pacific trade, there was still a sizeable distance between Los Angeles and the Chinese and Japanese coasts. Naval steamship technology at the time did not provide the capacity for fast direct long-distance travel. It was therefore necessary to acquire resupply stations for fuel and food en route to Asia. The islands of Hawaii were extremely important for this reason. The islands were also known as the “Malta of the Pacific,” and it was an important stepping stone in the “great chain” that connected the US mainland with Asia.⁶⁹ Hawaii was still relatively far and the need for naval bases closer to Asia remained. The islands of Samoa also played a similar role. In U.S. eyes, as Samoan ports were a vital link in the system that connected the U.S. railroad network to Asia - especially if an isthmian canal was to be built.⁷⁰ However, the Imperial German government and Great Britain had also a vested interest in Samoa, causing a certain amount of conflict of interest between the two governments. It was only after a storm destroyed several American and German naval ships that the Samoan question subsided.

The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 raised hopes for vastly expanded commerce with Asia⁷¹. The Minister to Hawaii Edward M. McCook stated: “When the [U.S. transcontinental] Pacific Railroad is completed, and the commerce of Asia directed to our Pacific ports, then these islands will be needed as a rendezvous for our Pacific navy, and a resort for merchant ships, and this treaty will have prepared the way for this quiet absorption”.⁷² It was Seward’s plan originally to build a railroad or a highway from Alaska into Asia by acquiring naval bases and opening the isthmian canal in the Panama region.⁷³ Furthermore, the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was already negotiated in 1850 and provided a prospect of a Nicaraguan Canal for easier access to the Pacific Ocean and further commercial prospects for transpacific trade. The 1850’s also saw a rise of Chinese immigrants to the United States. Chinese labourers worked in various factories and took part in the California Gold Rush, various fisheries and in the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad.⁷⁴ These labourers were usually fleeing injustices at home and often sent a portion of their earnings back to their families in China. The Chinese immigrants usually worked under harsh conditions and for low wages under the “credit-ticket system” in which travel agents organized and forwarded the payment of the transportation of Chinese immigrants to the United States until the costs were repaid. This forced the Chinese to take any job they could, usually under unfavourable conditions. Racism and anti-Chinese sentiment began to rise due to economic and cultural tensions in California.⁷⁵ This culminated in the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to restrict Chinese immigration to the United States.

In 1878, Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt attempted to establish trade relations in Africa, the Middle East and Asia onboard the *USS Ticonderoga*. While the expedition was limited in its success, it

⁶⁸ Richard E. Welch, Jr. “American Public Opinion and the Purchase of Russian America”, *The American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Dec. 1958), pp. 492-493.

⁶⁹ Herring *from Colony to p.* 208

⁷⁰ Walter LaFeber, *The Clash*, p. 90

⁷¹ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower* p. 262

⁷² Walter LaFeber, *The Clash*, p. 17

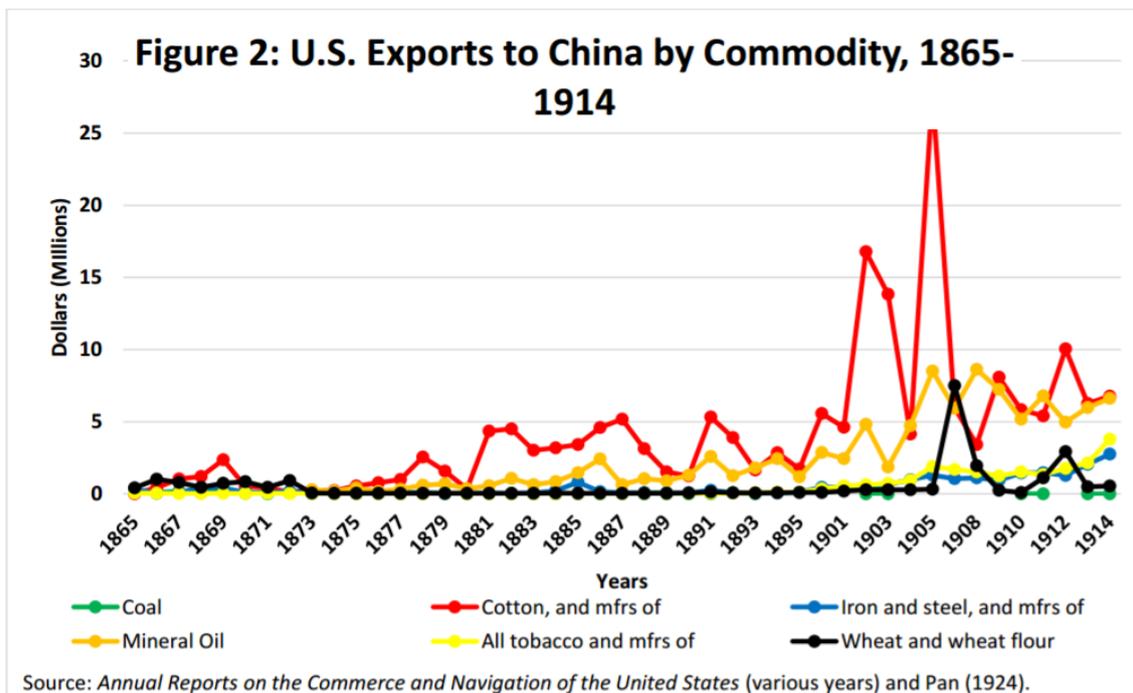
⁷³ Walter LaFeber, *The Clash*, p. 10.

⁷⁴ David M. Brownstone, *The Chinese-American Heritage*, p. 12; L. Eve Armentrout-Ma, “Chinese in California's Fishing Industry, 1850-1941”, *California History* Vol. 60, No. 2 (Summer, 1981), p. 142.

⁷⁵ Office of the Historian “Chinese Immigration and the Chinese Exclusion Acts”, , <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/chinese-immigration> 02/05/17.

was a show of American commercialism and prestige, and helped in negotiating a treaty with Korea in 1883.⁷⁶ Coincidentally, with the spread of electrification, machinery and automobiles to Asia, petroleum products became an important staple of US trade. Other major powers also tried to dominate the fabled East Asian trade, especially the United Kingdom, Japan and Russia, and to a lesser extent Portugal, the Netherlands and Italy. Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, stated “Our relations with China, which have for several years occupied so important a place in our diplomatic history, have called for careful consideration and have been the subject of much correspondence. (...) and at the same time this Government (...) has sought to arrange various matters and complaints touching the interests and protection of our citizens in China.”⁷⁷ The 1880’s saw a shift in perspective with the need to acquire coaling stations to supply the steamships on their way to trade with Asia. Again, missionaries were deployed extensively to various parts of Asia. Missions had been established in Burma, Siam (Thailand) and there were considerable numbers of American missionaries in China. Later, missionaries would attempt to evangelize the Filipinos in the Protestant faith. These missionaries disrupted local communities and distanced them from traditional faiths and ideologies, increasing American political influence wherever they proselytized.

Figure 2: Graph showing US exports to China by Commodity, 1864-1914.



Source: *A Lost Opportunity? Trade between the United States and China, 1865-1914*, Kathryn Gaydos College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

However, some historians argue that the Asian trade was and remained relatively unimportant for American economic power for most of the nineteenth century until the 1940’s. Paul Varg claims that only the ports of China were open to trade, the infrastructure was underdeveloped and the Chinese were

⁷⁶ Charles Oscar Paullin, “The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Sep. 1910), pp. 470.

⁷⁷ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 68.

not very interested in purchasing the many Western goods that arrived in China.⁷⁸ Also, it was Britain who controlled the majority of Chinese trade, about 80% of Chinese foreign trade in 1896, while the United States had a much smaller share of the trade volume.⁷⁹ In relative terms, the China trade never exceeded 3% of American foreign trade during this period.⁸⁰ As demonstrated in figure 2, exports to China were relatively small, except for a period from 1902 to 1906 where certain American goods saw a sharp increase in exports. What did propel the United States into increasing trade relations with Asia? It is true that the East Asian trade formed only a small portion of United States export, while imports of silk consistently grew, tea imports fluctuated from 1865 to 1914. It was the American expansionists who advocated Asian trade due to its vast population and potential to solve the various economic crises that were plaguing the United States. It is noteworthy to mention that during these years the United States created an “informal empire” in South America through “free trade imperialism”, and similar strategies were being used in Asia for American commercial expansion. There were fears of economic stagnation, especially after the Panics of 1873 and 1893. Many thought the answer to these economic depressions was the opening of new markets to American goods which would ensure continuing and growing levels of production. By 1898, American wheat production increased by 256%, corn by 222%, refined sugar by 460%, coal by 800%, steel rails by 523 percent, and miles of railroad track increased by 567%. Production of crude oil increased from 3,000,000 barrels in 1865 to 55,000,000 in 1898, and steel ingots from 20,000 long tons to 9,000,000 long tons in the same period. This level of economic development did not subside after the Spanish-American War, but continued in a similar astronomical fashion.⁸¹ Also, because of the Spanish-American War, “American power had spread overseas; and this process affected domestic politics-just as much as it was itself a function of domestic factors: economic, cultural, political, not to mention commercial and strategic considerations.”⁸²

⁷⁸ Paul Varg, "The Myth of the Chinese Market", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 73, No. 3, 1968, pp. 743-744.

⁷⁹ William Podmore, *British Foreign Policy since 1870*, (XLibris; 1st Ed., 2008), p. 18.

⁸⁰ Alexander DeConde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, (Scribner 2nd Ed., 1971), p. 360.

⁸¹ D. M. Pletcher, “1861-1898: Economic Growth and Diplomatic Adjustments” in W. H Becker and S. F. Wells (eds.) *Economics and World Power; An Assessment of American Diplomacy Since 1789*, New York, 1984, p. 120.

⁸² Michael Dunne, “US Foreign Relations in the Twentieth Century: From World Power to Global Hegemony”, *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 76, No. 1 (2000), p. 28.

3. Geopolitics

3.1 General introduction

Like many other social sciences, geopolitics has many different definitions. As aforementioned, geopolitics around 1900 can be loosely defined as “the new national science of the state, a doctrine on the spatial determinism of all political processes, based on the broad foundations of geography, especially of political geography.”⁸³ Geopolitics can be distinguished from political geography in the words of the French geopolitical scientist Jean Gottmann: “[Political geography] is a respectable discipline with a brilliant past’, whereas geopolitics is ‘a certain amount of scientific trappings in order to plead and facilitate certain national expansions.”⁸⁴ The idea of expansion, geography and politics is central to early geopolitical thought. Geography has always played an instrumental part in exploration, colonisation and empire. The Portuguese used geography to their advantage by establishing trading forts at strategic locations along the African coast, India and the Spice Islands. Rarely did an empire expand without taking geography into account. In regards to expansionism and imperialism at the time, Mackinder in 1904 argued that “every explosion of social forces, instead of being dissipated in a surrounding circuit of unknown space and barbaric chaos, will be sharply re-echoed from the far side of the globe”, hinting to the First World War.⁸⁵ Simply put, as there was no more land to discover or colonise, powers would need to take colonies and territories from each other that would lead to catastrophic events. He also believed that British geography had paved the way for the unique combination of democracy and imperialism, unlike other contemporary empires. Indeed, similar arguments were used to justify American territorial expansion, both westward and transoceanic, which was done in the name of democracy, republicanism and commerce. Undoubtedly, in the words of Gerry Kearns, “geography remains entwined with geopolitics and Empire, both in practice and in theory.”⁸⁶

However, while parallels can be drawn between geopolitics and empire, American imperialistic expansion was not territorial but commercial, according to Gilderhus.⁸⁷ Although there are differing views, Gilderhus makes a compelling case in the framework of trade and expansion. His arguments are similar to the ideas conveyed in Gallagher and Robinson’s *Imperialism of Free Trade* of the British Empire, where “the combination of commercial penetration and political influence allowed the United Kingdom to command those economies which could be made to fit best into her own.”⁸⁸ This was a form of neo-colonialism and informal empire, and was generally not territorial, very similar to the American case and its combination of merchants and missionaries to exert economic and political influence in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Was the Open-Door policy an attempt at further American geopolitical free trade expansion, or was it simply a strategy to increase trade relations with China while not jeopardizing other states possibility to do the same? And what were the principal geopolitical ideas at the time? There are two principal geopoliticians (Mackinder and Mahan) who wrote and lectured widely on the importance of Asia and trade, but with almost opposite viewpoints.

⁸³ Hennig, *Geopolitik*, p. 9.

⁸⁴ Gottmann, ‘Background of Geopolitics’, 206, 205.

⁸⁵ Halford J. Mackinder, “The Geographic Pivot of History”, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 170, No. 4, 2004, 1904, p. 422.

⁸⁶ Gerry Kearns, “Geography, geopolitics and Empire”, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 35, No. 2, 2010, p. 198.

⁸⁷ Mark T. Gilderhus, “Review: Forming an Informal Empire without Colonies: U.S.-Latin American Relations”, *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2005), pp. 312-313.

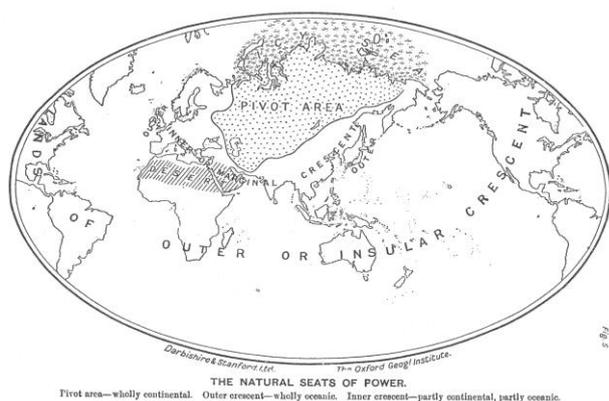
⁸⁸ John Gallagher, Ronald Robinson, “The Imperialism of Free Trade”, *The Economic History Review*, Second Series, Vol. VI, No. 1, p. 13

3.2 Sir Halford John Mackinder

Halford J. Mackinder (1861-1947) was a British geographer and one of the main founders of geopolitics and geostrategy (a branch of geopolitics that deals with strategy). Mackinder was born into a family of doctors. His father, Draper Mackinder, was a regular contributor to the *Journal of Public Health* and tried to establish a connection between “meteorological conditions and the outbreak of disease”, and may have inspired Mackinder into the study of geography.⁸⁹ While Mackinder was trained in the natural sciences, he was exposed to military and imperial history through his memberships at the Oxford Union and the Oxford University Rifle Volunteers. His world view was shaped by his mentor Professor Henry Moseley who had been on a round-the-world trip aboard the *Challenger*, however, Mackinder continued his studies in history, geology and palaeontology.⁹⁰ During his professional career, he helped to establish the Oxford School of Geography in 1899 and lectured at the London School of Economics (LSE) in economic geography in 1895. Alongside his education career, Mackinder published important books such as *Britain and the British Seas* (1902) and geographical textbooks for schools. He was also politically active from about 1900 as a “Liberal Imperialist”. His major work, *The Geographic Pivot of History* (1904), divided the world into three regions: “World Island (Europe, Asia, Africa), Offshore Islands (Britain and Japan), and Outlying Islands (North America, South America and Australia)”. He stressed the importance of Asia and technology which to some extent may have influenced American Open-Door policy.⁹¹ His main argument can be distilled into this small text:

*Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;
who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island;
who rules the World-Island commands the world.*⁹²

Figure 3: Mackinder’s Heartland Theory Map



Source: Halford J. Mackinder, “The Geographic Pivot of History”, *The Geographical Journal* Vol. 23, No. 4 (1904)

⁸⁹ Brain Blouet, *Global Geostrategy: Mackinder and the defence of the West*, (Routledge, 2005), p. 11.

⁹⁰ Blouet, *Global Geostrategy: Mackinder and the defence of the West*, p. 12.

⁹¹ Mackinder, “The Geographic Pivot of History”, *The Geographical Journal*,

⁹² Halford J. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, (Faber & Faber, 2014), p. 150.

As demonstrated in Figure 3, whoever controlled the Pivot Area in Asia would be in position to rule the World Island (Eurasia) and therefore the Outer Crescent. This would effectively lead to global domination by control of Asia. Mackinder changed his views and arguments later in his career with the publication of *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (1919), whereby he argued that the United States and Great Britain had a role in preserving global stability against powers wanting to take over the Heartland as well as stressing the dangers of a weakened Germany. Mackinder's ideas on Asia stemmed mostly from British perceptions and goals in regard to the continent. According to Kaplan, Mackinder's contribution to geography and geopolitics is monumental, stating that his Heartland theory "proved remarkably relevant to the dynamics of World War I, World War II, and the Cold War."⁹³ In all instances, Mackinder to some extent predicted the rise of Russia as a contender for world supremacy. While Russia was a major power during this period, the United States perceived Germany to be a greater threat to their ambitions. Mackinder's ideas only really became mainstream in American foreign policy during the Cold War, when Eastern Europe was dominated by the Soviet Union and Mackinder's arguments became increasingly used to "interpret the US-Soviet geopolitical contest."⁹⁴

The Geographic Pivot of History (1904)

Mackinder submitted this work to the Royal Geographical Society in 1904, helping him establish a department in geography at the University of Oxford. His influence would only become truly apparent and widely used during the Cold War; however, it is possible that he may have influenced certain aspects of early US foreign policy in Asia during the turn of the 20th century. One of Mackinder's main arguments was that "Central Asia, helping to form as it does the Eurasian Heartland, is the pivot on which the fate of great world empires rests."⁹⁵ Alexander the Great traversed Central Asia into India, thrusting the Macedonian empire into unforeseen heights. The Central Asian steppe was pivotal for the great Mongol empire, as it allowed for the rapid expansion of its empire, encompassing land from the East coast of China to the Ukraine in a period of less than one hundred years in the 13th century. The Mongols exploited the vastness and openness of the steppe through their proficiency in horsemanship which allowed for this rapid expansion. While Central Asia may have symbolised a period of imperial ascendance, it was also a pivot where empires declined. The French Napoleonic Empire succumbed in part due to the French invasion of Russia in 1812 which ended in disaster for Napoleon due to Russian scorched-earth policies and the harsh Central Asian winter. Similarly, Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 under Operation Barbarossa marked a turning point in Nazi German expansion, also due to the harrowing geographical conditions of the region. Eastern Europe would become a point of contention through much of the Cold War. Mackinder "though obsessed with land power, never actually denigrated the importance of sea power."⁹⁶

While Mackinder emphasised land over sea power, it was sea power that led the Americans to victory during the Spanish-American war and the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.⁹⁷ The early maritime empires of Portugal, Spain, England and the Netherlands were also proof of the importance of naval superiority in establishing and maintaining power. However, despite these historical lessons, one of the central themes throughout Mackinder's thesis was the declining

⁹³ Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle Against Fate*, (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2013), p. 19.

⁹⁴ Micheal J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, (Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1991), p. 189.

⁹⁵ Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 48.

⁹⁶ Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 59.

⁹⁷ Geoffrey R. Sloan, "Sir Halford J. Mackinder: The Heartland Theory Then and Now," in *Geopolitics, Geography and Strategy*, (Frank Cass, London, 1999), p. 19.

importance of sea power compared to the rising importance of land power. Mackinder witnessed the industrial progress made in Russia and more specifically in Southern Siberia where railways were being constructed to transport goods across the vast Eurasian landmass. Mackinder's article argued that the coming of steam power, electricity and the railways was finally permitting continental nations to overcome the physical obstacles that had hampered their development in the past.⁹⁸ In the "Geographical Pivot of History", Mackinder was aware of Mahan's ideas, writing that the "geographical condition of ultimate unity in the sea, and of the whole theory of modern naval strategy" was shaped by the writings of Mahan and Wilkinson.⁹⁹

In essence, "Mackinder's work suggests the struggle of Heartland-dominated land power versus sea power, with Heartland-based land power in the better position."¹⁰⁰ Mackinder was well aware of the qualities of naval supremacy, he was of course a subject of the British Empire. He experienced Great Britain's industrial and commercial hegemony during the mid-19th century to the early 20th century and even experienced the beginnings of the so-called "American Century". According to Gerry Kearns, "Mackinder was much less sanguine than contemporaries such as Alfred Mahan about the continuing pre-dominance of sea over land-power."¹⁰¹ Although published outside the periodization of this thesis, Mackinder's book *Democratic Ideals and Reality* deserves a noteworthy mention. Mackinder stressed the importance of international organizations in the preservation of peace, the need to create independent states in between Russia and Germany to create a buffer and even cautioned the problems with a severely weakened Germany.¹⁰² Mackinder was a liberal despite many scholars and critics calling him an imperialist. Mackinder also claimed that a democratic league of states was the most effective solution against imperialist expansion. He was also a believer in Wilsonian ideals and principles, as highlighted in his work.¹⁰³ Having said this, is it possible therefore that Mackinder ideas had some connection with American trade and foreign relations with China through his writings, especially involving the formation of the Open-Door policy and its attitude towards Asia?

5.5 General conclusion

American foreign policy is, according to one scholar, "the product of economic, racial, religious, political and geographical forces and role some individuals play really important role in its formation and people desire and expectation sometimes remain critical when economic decisions are involved."¹⁰⁴ From an American perspective in the 1890's, China, like other parts of East Asia, was at risk of becoming colonised, much akin to the Scramble for Africa in the 1880's. By 1914, 80% of the world was colonised by western powers.¹⁰⁵ This division put US commercial interests at risk due to preferential commercial treatment, such as the Imperial Preference of Great Britain. The United States, a relatively new power, needed to ensure its commercial and political participation in world politics. Like many other empires during the same period, the USA saw itself as a civilising force in the world. The Anglo-Saxon commercial spirit and the Protestant faith served as a bedrock for American ideology and patriotism. "America Exceptionalism" was beginning to take hold which further legitimized the

⁹⁸ Paul Kennedy, "The pivot of history", *The Guardian*, 19th of June 2004.

⁹⁹ Mackinder, "The Geographic Pivot of History", *The Geographical Journal*, pp. 432-433

¹⁰⁰ Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 67.

¹⁰¹ Gerry Kearns, "Geography, geopolitics and empire", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 35, No. 2, 2010, p. 190.

¹⁰² Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*,

¹⁰³ Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 55.

¹⁰⁴ Fawad Aslam, Yu Wenjie. "Quest of Early American Trade with China, Geopolitics and Open-Door Policy", *JPUHS*, Vol.29, No.2, July - December 2016, p. 57.

¹⁰⁵ Philip Hoffman, "Why Did Western Europe Dominate the Globe?", <http://www.caltech.edu/news/why-did-western-europe-dominate-globe-47696> 31/05/17

United States as a different and superior state. New Manifest Destiny was different and is credited to three things: its racism, claim to scientific ideas and popularity amongst the American people.¹⁰⁶ These three categories amalgamated into a geopolitical doctrine.

A direct link between the geopolitical ideas of Mahan, Mackinder and other geopolitical ideas at the time was, however, not found in the primary sources. Neither the FRUS papers nor the Presidential Papers demonstrated such a link. While this may be the case, it was clear that geopolitics did play a role in the formulation of the Open-Door, but not as a result of one specific geopolitical idea.¹⁰⁷ Similar conclusions can be drawn with the four categories most relevant to geopolitics in the sources. However, these links are not a product of one specific geopolitical idea of the late 19th century. Instead, it is relatively clear that these ideas existed before the emergence of geopolitics as a discipline. The geopolitical scholars merely popularized their ideas through structured and coherent arguments, using pre-existing notions already known by statesmen and politicians. Mahan's writings, especially in *The Problem of Asia* (1900), "undoubtedly reflected the thinking that led to Hay's promulgation of the Open-Door policy."¹⁰⁸ But again, his ideas merely reflected already existing ideas, and similar conclusions can be drawn from Mackinder's views. His contributions to the development of a new navy and the annexation of strategically important islands are also obvious, but in the documentation, no mention is specifically made to his works.

In terms of other geopolitical thinkers like Frederick J. Turner and Reverend Josiah Strong, expansion was already underway in the US and none of their arguments are actually seen in the documentation either. Missionaries had been in use to exert political influence since the Westward expansion. It is again more likely that their works used pre-existing ideas and formed them into influential texts that were read by the American public. Little suggests that these ideas were innovative or revolutionary, as many of the theoretical ideas had already existed and were being implemented by various statesmen.

The ideas that shaped US foreign policy came from pre-existing views from a range of different actors which had been tried and tested in the formation of the United States and the establishment of its commercial empire after 1776. According to Dunne, it was "expansion first on land and then overseas was the essential tradition; the central principles combined continentalism with unilateralism; and the dominant values of racial, political and social superiority were encapsulated in the belief in Manifest Destiny."¹⁰⁹ There are many possible explanations as to why these scholars or their ideas are not mentioned in the sources. Firstly, both Mahan and Mackinder's ideas existed before their publication, and therefore attributing arguments to their name would not seem correct. Secondly, the nature of the sources makes it difficult to mention them by name, but their ideas could have certainly been referred to. Lastly, there was perhaps no need to mention these individuals.

Similar geopolitical and geo-economic strategies are being implemented today. Geopolitics has become more important than ever in understanding today's globalized world. Transportation, trade and military strength are just some of the factors that still pervade in today's race for control of economic and capital flows. Just as the United States attempted to increase their geopolitical advantage through numerous strategies and interventions, similar events are occurring today from its great Eastern rival: China. As Kissinger stated, "American expansion both economic and geographical was not accomplished without a judicious application of power."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ DeConde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, p. 317.

¹⁰⁷ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 40

¹⁰⁸ Pringle, *op. cit.* p. 167

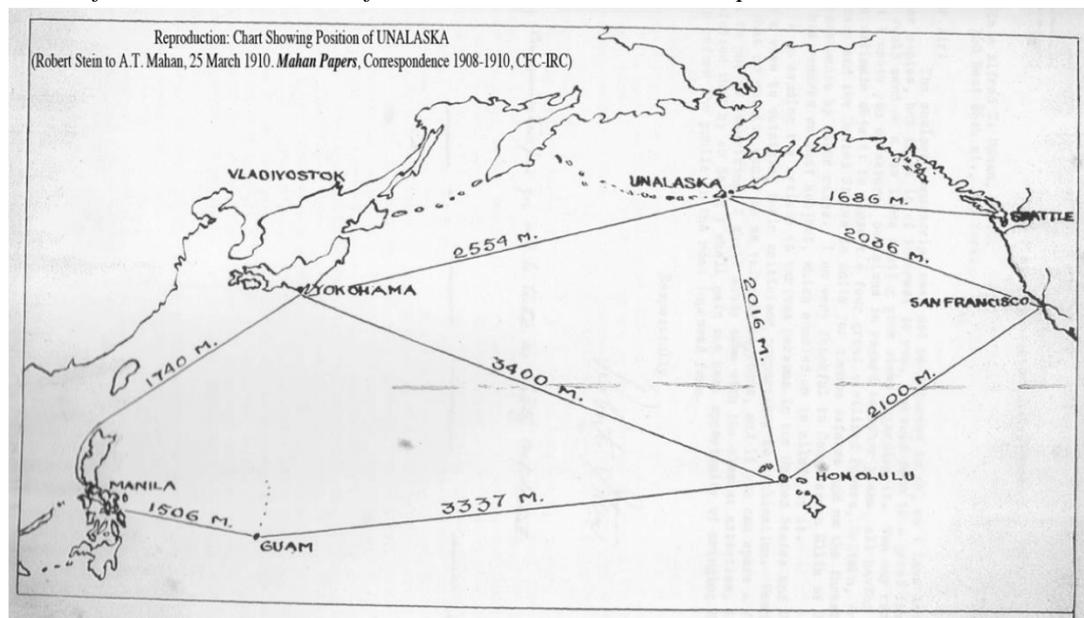
¹⁰⁹ Michael Dunne, "The History and Historiography of American Diplomacy: Principles, Traditions and Values", *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (Jan. 1998), p. 175.

¹¹⁰ Kissinger, "Reflections on American Diplomacy" *Foreign Affairs*, p. 41.

3.3 Alfred Thayer Mahan

Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914) was an American admiral, credited for his ideas on sea power which shaped the US Navy and launched the US into becoming a seaborne commercial empire. Ironically Mahan sought to turn the United States from a largely territorial empire into a more maritime empire, while Mackinder attempting to turn Great Britain from a maritime empire to a land empire. *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660–1783* (1890) was his seminal work, although he lectured extensively on the importance of naval supremacy. His arguments included the takeover of strategic islands in the Pacific and the creation of a modern navy. He is credited with the establishment America's naval power and the extension of its military capacity as well as the need for incorporating small islands into the US to serve as refuelling and coaling stations en route to Asian markets. While many scholars would agree with this statement, many of his central arguments already existed and were being implemented before his publications. The modernization of the American fleet had begun in 1883 with the construction of the steel ABCD ships, namely the USS *Atlanta*, USS *Boston*, USS *Chicago* and the USS *Dolphin*. In 1890, the United States had 42 active naval vessels, by 1910, it had 196.¹¹¹ He argued that sea power was not only more important than land power in the fight for dominance, but also less threatening to international stability. Mahan noted that it was “the limited capacity of navies to extend coercive force inland” that made them no menace to liberty.¹¹² He also claimed the it was “the Indian and Pacific oceans that constituted the hinges of geopolitical destiny”, not the Heartland as Mackinder claimed.¹¹³ The main logic behind this claim was that the Indian and Pacific Oceans “would allow for a maritime nation to project power around the Eurasian Rimland, affecting political developments inland—thanks to the same rail and road feeder networks—deep into Central Asia.”¹¹⁴ Figure 4 below demonstrates the importance of these strategically important islands in the Pacific Ocean in establishing communication lines, securing trade routes and expanding the American sphere of influence.

Figure 4: *The Pacific Theatre Sea Lines of Communication, North Hemisphere*



¹¹¹ Naval History and Heritage Command, “US Ship Force Levels 1886-present”, <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/us-ship-force-levels.html#1910> 16/05/17

¹¹² Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 72.

¹¹³ Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 72.

¹¹⁴ Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, p. 72.

Source: Letter from Robert Stein to Alfred Mahan, 25th of March 1910, Mahan Papers, 1908-1910.

Mahan's ideas were criticised as they gave Germany ideologies to create a total war in Europe. Also, Mahan underestimated the ability of a land power rapidly establishing control over a large area, countering his arguments.¹¹⁵ Mahan had also critics in the United States such as Senator Arthur P. Gorman, Representative William S. Holman and Carl Schurz who wondered "where exactly the danger to America came from", a danger frequently mentioned in his writing.¹¹⁶ Mahan's writings often discussed the possibility of foreign threats, however Mahan failed to explain exactly what these threats were or where they came from. He never actually thought that America's territorial integrity was at risk, writing "of invasion, in any real sense of the word, we run no risk."¹¹⁷ In terms of theories of international relations, Mahan can be considered a Realist because he analysed self-interest basis in national conduct.¹¹⁸ While initially popular, his ideas were not widely accepted by the American public, but the idea of nationalism and expansion did strike a chord with them.¹¹⁹ Most of Mahan's articles were published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *North American Review*, *Forum*, *McClure's* and *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Interestingly, these publications were mainly targeted at the general public not specifically at scholars.

The Importance of Sea Power on History 1660-1783

Mahan formulated his ideas in an English club called the "Phoenix Club" in Callao, Peru.¹²⁰ He was asked by Admiral Stephen B. Luce to lecture at the newly established Naval War College in Newport due to his knowledge in both history and naval gunnery. When reading a book on the Carthaginian land advance across the Alps and their subsequent defeat at the hands of the Romans in Theodore Mommsen's *History of Rome*, he wrote: "It suddenly struck me, whether by some chance phrase of the author I do not know, how different things might have been could Hannibal have invaded Italy by sea."¹²¹ In terms of international recognition, Mahan was read by Kaiser Wilhelm II and Alfred von Tirpitz. The navy became a point of great importance for the German Kaiser as it was part of his overarching policy of *Weltpolitik* (world policy). Von Tirpitz was the State Secretary of the Imperial Navy Office and therefore responsible for the transformation of the German fleet into an advanced modern navy. The "Tirpitz Plan" was designed to launch Germany into becoming a naval power. Kaiser Wilhelm II had reportedly issued 8000 copies of Mahan's work to his staff to persuade the Reichstag to pass the Naval Bill of 1898, of which a quarter was used.¹²² Kaiser Wilhelm II stated "I am just now not reading but devouring Captain Mahan's book and am trying to learn it by heart. It is on board all my ships and [is] constantly quoted by my captains and officers."¹²³ However his influence was probably contained in Europe to Germany. Britain's Admiral Sir John Fisher held opposing views to

¹¹⁵ Robert Strausz-Hupé, *Geopolitics: The Struggle for Space and Power*, (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1942), pp. 253-54.

¹¹⁶ Davis, op. cit. p.83.

¹¹⁷ Alfred T. Mahan, *The Interest of American in Sea Power, Present or Future*, (Boston, 1898), p. 243.

¹¹⁸ Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations; The Great Transformation of the Twentieth Century*, (Chicago University Press, Chicago 1964), p. 34.

¹¹⁹ Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations*, p. 39.

¹²⁰ Larrie D. Ferreiro, "Mahan and the "English Club" of Lima, Peru: The Genesis of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*", *The Journal of Military History*, Volume 72, Number 3, 2008, p. 901.

¹²¹ Alfred T. Mahan, *From Sail to Steam: Recollections of Naval Life*, New York: Da Capo Press, 1968, p. 277.

¹²² Theodore Ropp, 'Continental Doctrines of Sea Power', in *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, ed. E.M. Earle (Princeton, 1970, PP- 442-4; Volker R. Berghahn, *Der Tirpitz-Plan: Genesis und Verlauf einer innenpolitischen Krisenstrategie unter Wilhelm II* (Diisseldorf, 1971), pp. 179-81; Ivo N. Lambi, *The Navy and German Power Politics, 1862-1914* (Boston, 1984), pp. 65-7.

¹²³ Wilhelm II, in Robert K. Massie, *Dreadnought: Britain, Germany, and the Coming of the Great War* (New York: Random House, 1991), pp. xxiii-xxiv

Mahan's arguments. Fisher argued that submarine warfare and the concentration of naval power near the home country would provide the most comprehensive defence strategy.¹²⁴

The French naval doctrine was dominated by the *Jeune École* (Young School), pioneered by Henri-Joseph Paixhans.¹²⁵ The *Jeune École* advocated the use of small ships such as submarines to counter larger battleship fleets. This idea was formulated as a solution to British naval superiority. The French navy began investing heavily in submarines and "commerce raiders" to inflict damage on merchant vessels and to counter the superiority of large battleships. Admiral Fisher was reportedly impressed with the ideas of the French naval thought. Mahan's book was also translated into Japanese; however, Mahan's doctrine was not strictly followed due to internal tactical divisions among the Japanese navy. One reason that Mahan's naval doctrine was not followed was because the historical developments and geographic circumstances of Japan were different from the West as the Japanese Empire was confined to East Asia.¹²⁶ It can be successfully argued that the most influential naval tactician in the Imperial Japanese Navy was not Mackinder or Mahan, but Akiyama Saneyuki, the mastermind behind the battle of Tsushima.¹²⁷ He was sent to the United States as a naval attaché and attempted to contact Mahan and Roosevelt for admission to the US Naval College, however they were of little help. Japanese naval thought had differing goals from Western naval thought. The Japanese focused on regional naval theories and particular case studies as opposed to universal naval theories. The purpose of these were usually defensive in nature as Japan sought to defend itself against Western naval powers.¹²⁸

The Problem with Asia and its effect upon international policies (1900)

Mahan's work on Asia was similar to that of Mackinder's in the sense of a possible Russian threat, writing: "the vast, uninterrupted mass of the Russian Empire, stretching without a break in territorial consecutiveness from the meridian of western Asia Minor, until to the eastward it overpasses that of Japan."¹²⁹ Mahan wrote in a letter to the *New York Times* explaining the importance of Hawaii and stating that "it would be impossible to exaggerate the momentous issues dependent upon a firm hold of the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) by a great civilized maritime power."¹³⁰ He argued that China could become a geopolitical contender for power against the United States. Almost prophetically Mahan claimed that "it is difficult to contemplate with equanimity such a vast mass as the four hundred millions of China concentrated into one effective political organization, equipped with modern appliances, and cooped within a territory already narrow for it."¹³¹ He recognized a possible future struggle in the region and the importance that China would one day have. But was there really a connection between Mahan's views and arguments and the Open-Door policy, besides Mackinder and Mahan? Many historians have credited him for American naval supremacy and for the formation of American Empire, but to what extent is he responsible for the Open-Door?

¹²⁴ Jon T. Sumida, "Geography, Technology and British Naval Strategy in the Dreadnought Era", *Naval War College Review*, 2006 59 (3): p. 94

¹²⁵ Christopher Howe, *The Origins of Japanese Trade Supremacy: Development and Technology in Asia from 1540 to the Pacific War*, (University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 281.

¹²⁶ David C. Evans, Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy 1887-1941*, (Naval Institute Press, 2012), p. 135.

¹²⁷ Mark R. Peattie, *Akiyama Saneyuki and the Emergence of Modern Japanese Naval Doctrine*, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 1977.

¹²⁸ David C. Evans, Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy 1887-1941*, (Naval Institute Press, 2012), p. 139.

¹²⁹ Alfred T. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia: Its Effect Upon International Politics*, (Routledge, 2003), p. 68.

¹³⁰ Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, p. 10.

¹³¹ Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, p. 98.

3.4 Other Geopolitical thinkers and ideas

There were other “geopoliticians” that may have contributed to the Open-Door policy. William H. Seward, Secretary of State in the 1840s, was the architect of the early American commercial empire, his views and ideas predate the periodization involved, but certainly contributed to the formation of American commercial empire. There were other, possibly more influential geopolitical thinkers and scholars who may have contributed to the adoption of the Open-Door policy in 1900 and its continuation thereafter. Ideologically, it was “New Manifest Destiny” that provided expansion ideas after the completion of the Westward Expansion. New Manifest Destiny was the idea of the Anglo-Saxon superior race and the need to expand to demonstrate fitness and vigour.¹³² The main actors behind this idea of New Manifest Destiny were John Fiske, Josiah Strong, John W. Burgess and Frederick Jackson Turner.¹³³ Expansionism in 1899 was radically different from the Manifest Destiny of the 1840’s. Before, it meant continentalism and elevating people to statehood. In 1899 however, it was “insular and imperialistic.”¹³⁴

John Fiske (1842 – 1901) was an American historian and philosopher. He was inspired by the theories of evolution coined by Charles Darwin. He was further inspired by Herbert Spencer, an English biologist and famously claimed “I never in my life read so lucid an expositor (and therefore thinker) as you are.”¹³⁵ Fiske however focused on the political system of Federalism.¹³⁶ Fiske’s arguments were that the Anglo-Saxon race was superior to all races, due to among other things, the size of their brains.¹³⁷ This relates to the rising popularity of eugenics at the time, which had its origins in social Darwinism. His influence on public opinion can be disputed, as his target audience excluded Catholics and his chapter on the Anglo-Saxon race was “utterly ignored” as one magazine claimed.¹³⁸ However, his vehement racism may have ideologically led the United States into overseas expansion. Josiah Strong (1847 - 1916) was an American Protestant preacher. Similar to Fiske, was known for his theories on the Anglo-Saxon race and the need to civilize, evangelize and educate “lesser” races.¹³⁹ His most famous work, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*, lay the foundations of his racial and evangelical views. Strong to some extent influenced racial ideology among the American people, and felt the need for American territorial expansion that may have contributed to the formulation of the Open-Door policy. John W. Burgess (1844 – 1931) was an American political scientist. Although primarily known for his contributions to the field of political science in the United States, he has also been credited for the development of racism and the idea of American civilisational mission. This was then used to justify US expansion into the Philippines. He argued that “American Indians, Asiatics and Africans cannot properly form any active, directive part of the political population which shall be able to produce modern political institutions and ideals.”¹⁴⁰ The Philippines were a vital trading post for the United States, and also an important cog in the machinery of the Open-Door policy. It is therefore possible that his arguments resonate in the material. Frederick J. Turner (1861 – 1932) was an American historian and the creator of the “Frontier Thesis.” This scholarly work basically claimed that the American frontier was an essential part of the American character. Jackson’s “Frontier Thesis” was

¹³² DeConde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, p. 318.

¹³³ DeConde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, p. 319.

¹³⁴ Frederick Merck, *Manifest Destiny and Mission*, (Vintage Books, New York, 1963), p. 257.

¹³⁵ Charles D. Warner, *A Library of the World's Best Literature - Ancient and Modern - Vol. XIV*, (Cosimo, Inc., 2008), p. 5777.

¹³⁶ John Fiske, *American Political Ideas*, New York, 1885, pp. 101-52.

¹³⁷ John Fiske, *The Critical Period of American History* (1888, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1897), p. xi.

¹³⁸ *Nation*, New York, 30th of September 1886.

¹³⁹ Address of Rev. dr. Josiah Strong, p. 424.

¹⁴⁰ John W. Burgess, “The Ideal of American Commonwealth”, 10, *Political Science Quarterly* 404, 405 (1895).

reportedly still being taught and studied in sixty percent of American universities.¹⁴¹ The idea of evolution also played an important role in the formulation of the thesis. He claimed that European settlers to the United States evolved in order to adapt to the new environment, making a unique American character. His ideas were extremely influential. Theodore Roosevelt was in fact one of the first to endorse the Turner Thesis.¹⁴² Turner was rather critical of some of Roosevelt's use of methodology in his historical publications. They both had the "belief that the frontier had been the most significant force in shaping national institutions and that mystical entity they both called "national character." Not only did it build a distinct American national identity, it was believed that "it was necessary for Americans to appreciate the frontier past in order to meet the crisis of democracy in the 1890s."¹⁴³ Turner was also a supporter of Roosevelt's policies until Woodrow Wilson's formulation of the policy of "New Democracy."¹⁴⁴ Mahan and Turner's ideas to some extent complemented each other. It is possible that vestiges of his "Turner Thesis" are thus reflected in the formulation of the Open-Door. But what exactly was the Open-Door policy and how was it formulated?

¹⁴¹ Allan G. Bogue, "Frederick Jackson Turner Reconsidered", *The History Teacher*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1994, p. 195.

¹⁴² Richard Slotkin, "Nostalgia and Progress: Theodore Roosevelt's Myth of the Frontier", *American Quarterly* Vol. 33, No. 5, Special Issue: American Culture and the American Frontier, 1981, p. 608.

¹⁴³ Richard Slotkin, "Nostalgia and Progress: Theodore Roosevelt's Myth of the Frontier", *American Quarterly* Vol. 33, No. 5, Special Issue: American Culture and the American Frontier, 1981, p. 608

¹⁴⁴ Ray Allen Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*, (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973), 130; Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1979), 27, 410, 465-67.

4. The Open-Door policy and Geopolitics

4.1 General introduction

As shown in chapter 2, China had been historically a market for American trade. While trade never exceeded more than 3% of US foreign exports, American industrialists and politicians thought that China was extremely important due to its huge population and potential for consumption of goods produced in the United States.¹⁴⁵ As Senator Albert Beveridge said, “Our largest trade henceforth must be with Asia. The Pacific is our ocean (...) Where shall we turn for consumers of our surplus? Geography answers the question. China is our natural customer. (...) The Philippines give us a base at the door of all the East.”¹⁴⁶ More importantly, in the 1890’s China was becoming divided up by different powers, similar to the Scramble for Africa during the 1880’s. Manchuria was already under Russian control, and the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894 (and the subsequent Russo-Japanese War in 1904) divided China into separate territories, limiting American possibilities for commerce in the East. To keep China open for American goods and merchants, the Open-Door policy was devised.

The American Open-Door policy was an attempt by the United States to maintain free trade relations with China and other foreign powers while at the same time preserving Chinese territorial integrity to prevent one power from becoming too influential in the region. It was initiated by John Hay under various notes that outlined the aims of this foreign policy. Hay was Secretary of State from 1898 to 1905, had worked as a diplomat in London and was an avid Anglophile. He wrote an article titled *The Break Up of China* in 1899 which made the Open-Door policy relatively popular with Americans.¹⁴⁷ Hay was a proponent of the annexation of the Philippines and thereby instrumental in the development of the United States as an imperial power. However, Hay realised that China was far too large territorially and demographically to colonise and therefore concluded that it was best to keep China “open” for all. The Open-Door policy was not meant to provide the United States with a monopoly on the China trade, but to create equal opportunities for commerce between the powers involved. The fact that the United States did not use military means to enforce its demands suggests that it was in no position to do so considering the returns on such an invasive strategy. It was not uncommon for the US to use military interventions to achieve foreign policy goals, indeed, from 1801 to 1890, the US had over 65 instances of military use abroad.¹⁴⁸

The Open-Door policy not only benefited the US but also Britain, who did not want to see their merchants expelled from other areas and arguably profited more from the policy than the United States.¹⁴⁹ Also, Britain knew the costs of administrating such a large area compared to the profits that could be extracted from its control, adding to the various reasons for compliance.¹⁵⁰ However, things looked different from the Chinese point of view, as the Dowager Empress of China stated that the “various powers cast upon us looks of tiger-like voracity, hustling each other in their endeavours to be

¹⁴⁵ Warren I. Cohen, *Americas Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, (Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 40.

¹⁴⁶ U.S. Senator Albert J. Beveridge speaks on the Philippine Question, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 9th of January 1900.

¹⁴⁷ “The Break-Up of China, and Our Interest in It”, *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1899; Volume 84, No. 502; pages 276 - 280.

¹⁴⁸ Barbara Salazar Torreon, “Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798-2016”, *Congressional Research Service*, 2017.

¹⁴⁹ DeConde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, p. 361.

¹⁵⁰ Joseph R. Conlin, *The American Past: A Survey of American History, Volume II: Since 1865*, (Wadsworth Publishing, 2013), p. 585.

the first to seize upon our innermost territories.”¹⁵¹ While the Open-Door sought to protect China, it was adopted for American self-interests. China was divided into so-called “spheres of influence”, and there were fears that these spheres would become full-fledged colonies or territories.¹⁵² As a result, there were two Open-Door notes, one circulated in 1899 and one in 1900.

The first Open-Door note of 1899 had three major demands referring to the major powers involved in China. The first clause stated no major power in China “will in no way interfere with any treaty port or any vested interest within any so-called "sphere of interest" or leased territory it may have in China.”¹⁵³ This clause aimed to keep all the ports open to other powers, such as the United States, for trading, and to maintain the status quo of the spheres of interest. The second clause stated that the Chinese treaty tariff “shall apply to all merchandise landed or shipped to all such ports as are within said "sphere of interest" (unless they be “free ports”), no matter to what nationality it may belong, and that duties so leviabable shall be collected by the Chinese Government.”¹⁵⁴ This essentially claimed that solely the government of China should be allowed to collect taxes on trade and that the tariffs should be applicable to all merchandise, regardless of origin unless they are in free ports. The third and final clause stated that no major power “will levy no higher harbour dues on vessels of another nationality frequenting any port in such “sphere” than shall be levied on vessels of its own nationality” and that “no higher railroad charges over lines built, controlled, or operated within its “sphere” on merchandise belonging to citizens or subjects of other nationalities transported through such "sphere" than shall be levied on similar merchandise belonging to its own nationals transported over equal distances.”¹⁵⁵ This essentially tried to guarantee the equal treatment and taxation of goods being traded and transported by all major powers, to ensure the competitiveness of American merchants. The note was distributed to the six foreign ministers of the governments that significant interests in China (Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia). Figure 5 below demonstrates the various spheres of influence in China as well as the borders of China proper. It also shows the contested area of Manchuria which would later become problematic for the United States. The spheres of influence were closing fast, and the US needed a strategy to keep them from growing and to keep them open to American interests.

¹⁵¹ Edict by the Empress Dowager of China Cixi, 11th of December 1899.

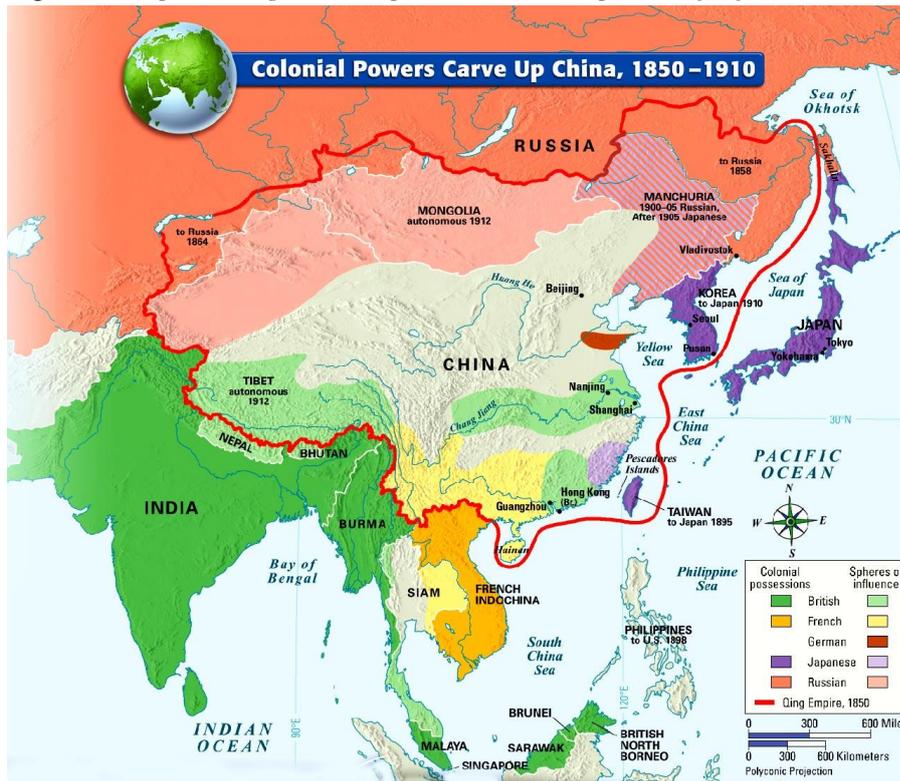
¹⁵² Joseph R. Conlin, *The American Past: A Survey of American History, Volume II: Since 1865*, (Wadsworth Publishing, 2013), p. 585.

¹⁵³ John Hay’s First Open-Door Note, 1899.

¹⁵⁴ John Hay’s First Open-Door Note, 1899.

¹⁵⁵ John Hay’s First Open-Door Note, 1899.

Figure 5: Map showing colonial possessions and spheres of influence in China, 1850-1910



Source: <http://delta.classwell.com/> Colonial Powers Carve up China.

The second Open-Door note came in 1900 as a result of the Boxer Rebellion and fears of further Chinese territorial encroachment. This note was an attempt to ensure Chinese sovereignty and to protect its territorial integrity amid increasing tensions in the region. The note expressed that the United States would “adhere to the policy initiated by us in 1857, of peace with the Chinese nation, of furtherance of lawful commerce, and of promotion of lives and property of our citizens by all means guaranteed under extraterritorial treaty rights and by the law of nations.”¹⁵⁶ Furthermore it reiterated the government’s guarantee of protection of American citizens and its interests, and the prosecution of individuals who would harm those interests. Arguably, the most important statement of the treaty stated that; “the policy of the Government of the United States is to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China, preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire.”¹⁵⁷

As mentioned, the Open-Door policy began as a strategy to “break into the European and Japanese spheres of influence” in China during the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁵⁸ Russia and Japan were becoming increasingly aggressive in Manchuria, both seeking to establish control over strategically important regions in Northern China, and Germany was following suit. Surprisingly, despite Japanese and Russian encroachment, it was Germany who was becoming the United States’ major rival. Their naval program caused disquiet among American politicians, and Kaiser Wilhelm’s *Weltpolitik* (World policy) also caused a certain amount of competition with the United States, especially in the Far East and Samoa. Hay, being an avid Anglophile, looked towards England as a potential ally to prevent and at least contain this encroachment. Other American politicians such as

¹⁵⁶ John Hay’s Second Open-Door note, 1900.

¹⁵⁷ John Hay’s Second Open-Door note, 1900

¹⁵⁸ Cohen, *Geopolitics*, p. 110.

Henry Cabot Lodge, Elihu Root and Henry White, also saw the benefits of having Great Britain as possible supporter of American policy in the region. Also, while there was an Anglo-German cooperative alliance, the British interests had become divergent from the German interests leading to Britain looking for other allies, such as the US.

All in all, the Open-Door policy was generally unsuccessful as it was largely “ignored by the major European powers” who “continued to divide China into their own zones of trade to the exclusion of American commercial activity.”¹⁵⁹ The Boxer Rebellion allowed for further European and Japanese encroachment into China and expanding and strengthening their spheres of influence, and China became further partitioned by Russia in 1900. The Russo-Japanese War of 1905 was a pivotal moment for the Open Door, and while the Russians lost, the US feared Japan’s increase in territory and power, and wanted Russia to remain in the region as a counterbalance.¹⁶⁰ In order to protect US interests in China, during the negotiations for the Treaty of Portsmouth Roosevelt heavily insisted that Japan sign a clause concerning the Open-Door. According to Dunne, the “most obvious public display of the inchoate American geopolitics was the US sponsorship of the Portsmouth Treaty in 1905 (...) Nothing showed more clearly the reach and potential of American diplomatic power and its material underpinnings.”¹⁶¹ Hay himself stated that there was “not a single power we can rely upon, for our policy of abstention from plunder and the Open Door.”¹⁶² England and Japan had also signed an alliance treaty in 1902, weakening America’s position in the region. Furthermore, an agreement was reached between Britain and Germany at this point, whereby it was agreed that the “ports on the rivers and littoral of China should remain free and open to trade and to every other legitimate form of economic activity for the nationals of all countries without distinction” circumventing the US attempts of similar agreements.¹⁶³ While the Open-Door was relatively unsuccessful, in some areas it was modestly successful. What made the Open-Door policy somewhat work was not the influence of the United States, but the increasing rivalry between the powers and a lack of consensus on how to deal with China. However, its success has been widely disputed and it finally ceased to exist in 1949 when China regained its independence after more than one hundred years of foreign encroachment into its territory and government. Having said this, is it possible that there is a possible connection between the Open-Door policy and geopolitics?

4.2 FRUS papers, the Presidential papers, Open-Door and Geopolitics

The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) papers showcase the diplomatic correspondence between diplomats and various officials included and not limited to the Secretary of State, foreign dignitaries and ministers and other persons of interest. There were four principle categories where geopolitics featured prominently in the documentation: trade, naval power, railroads and missionary presence. The Open-Door policy was only officially discussed in the FRUS papers after 1899. Despite this, geopolitical considerations did play an important role in the correspondence. During the early 1890’s, the letters from China related mostly to the treatment and protection of American missionaries, certain legal disputes between American merchants and the issuing of travel certificates. Also, extensively discussed were the treatment of Chinese nationals in the United States and the problems caused by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Needless to say, the Sino-Japanese War (1894), the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901) and the Russo-Japanese War (1905) were extensively discussed during these

¹⁵⁹ Cohen, *Geopolitics*, p. 110.

¹⁶⁰ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 60

¹⁶¹ Dunne, “US Foreign Relations in the Twentieth Century: From World Power to Global Hegemony”, *International Affairs*, p. 30.

¹⁶² Letter from John Hay to William McKinley, 14th of September 1900.

¹⁶³ Agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany relative to China, 16th of October 1900.

two decades. However, the bulk of the letters concerned mostly trading rights, interpretations of trade treaties, protection of American merchants, naval movements and missionary issues.

4.3 The Open-Door policy in the FRUS and Presidential papers

The first mention of the Open-Door policy in the China FRUS documents are of course in 1899 in a letter from the Secretary of State John Hay to Jean Henry Vignaud, Secretary of the American legation in Paris. In the letter, Hay states that enclosed in the letter was “confidential information” containing copies of the Open Door note to be sent to the United States ambassadors “at London, Berlin, and St. Petersburg in reference to the desire of this Government that the Governments of Great Britain, Germany, and Russia make formal declaration of an "open-door" policy in the territories held by them in China.”¹⁶⁴ All governments responded, albeit in similar ways.

The French response was rather positive. The French statesman Theodore Delcassé wrote to the American Minister to France, Horace Porter, stating that “[France] desires throughout the whole of China and, with the quite natural reservation that all the powers interested give an assurance of their willingness to act likewise, is ready to apply, in the territories which are leased to it, equal treatment to the citizens and subjects of all nations, especially in the matter of customs duties and navigation dues, as well as transportation tariffs on railways.”¹⁶⁵ In Germany, a similar response was given, where the German Secretary of Foreign Affairs Count von Bülow, who stated that the “politics of Germany in the extreme Orient are de facto the politics of the open door, and Germany proposes to maintain this principle in the future.” Similar replies were given by Great Britain, as seen in a letter from Lord Salisbury to the American ambassador to Great Britain, Joseph H. Choate. In his communication, Salisbury wrote that the British government “will be prepared to make a declaration in the sense desired by your Government in regard to the leased territory of Wei- hai Wei and all territory in China (...) provided that similar declaration is made by other powers concerned.”¹⁶⁶ In Italy, the circular was well received by its government. In Visconti-Venosta’s reply to William F. Draper, ambassador to Italy, Venosta wrote “the Government of the King adheres willingly to the proposals set forth in said note of December 9.”¹⁶⁷ In a similar fashion, the Japanese government replied positively to the circular message on the Open-Door. Viscount Aoki wrote to Alfred E. Buck, ambassador to Japan stating that the Japanese government “will have no hesitation to give their assent to so just and fair a proposal of the United States provided that all the other powers concerned shall accept the same.”¹⁶⁸ It seems that the powers involved in Asia were willing to accept the Open-Door policy as long as everyone else did. Despite these generally affirmative replies, the Russian reply was not as positively toned, but affirmative. Count Mouravieff, the Russian foreign Minister, wrote a letter to Charlemagne Tower Jr., the US Minister to Russia, writing that the Russian government had already “demonstrated its firm intention to follow the policy of "the open door" by creating Dalny (Ta-lien-wan) a free port.”¹⁶⁹ These replies show a generally clear positive intention by the various foreign governments to adhere to the policy, possibly to maintain the status-quo in China for geopolitical reasons. The intentions of the United States were clearly geopolitical, to maintain China open to US interests through the political

¹⁶⁴ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Vignaud, 6th of September 1899, p. 128.

¹⁶⁵ FRUS letter from Mr. Delcasse to Mr. Porter, 21st of November 1899.

¹⁶⁶ FRUS letter from Lord Salisbury to Mr. Choate, 30th November 1899, p. 136.

¹⁶⁷ FRUS letter from Visconti-Venosta to Mr. Draper, 7th of January 1899, p. 138.

¹⁶⁸ FRUS letter from Viscount Aoki to Mr. Buck, 26th December 1899, p. 139.

¹⁶⁹ FRUS letter from Count Mouravieff to Mr. Tower, 18-30th December 1899, p. 142.

policy of the Open-Door. However, at no point did the Open-Door aim to reduce the already existing spheres of influence or “demand equality of investment along with trading rights” in the spheres.¹⁷⁰

These replies were an unofficial acceptance of the United States’ policy, however, the Boxer Rebellion of 1899 would put pressure on the terms of the Open-Door. While the policy was aimed at restricting foreign influence and protecting the territorial integrity of China, the rebellion offered the other powers a legitimate reason to increase their involvement in the region.¹⁷¹ Foreign armies began arriving in China to protect their vested interests and to guarantee the safety of their citizens. Troops from the United Kingdom, France, Russia, Japan, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy began to arrive, jeopardizing the Open-Door policy. There were fears that the presence of foreign troops would lead to further encroachment on Chinese territorial integrity, leading to the formulation of the second Open-Door note in 1900. Guarantees were given by Russia that no further actions would be taken in China, as demonstrated in a memorandum distributed by Acting Secretary of State Adee. In the memorandum, Adee stated that the United States government “receives with much satisfaction the reiterated statement that Russia has no designs of territorial acquisition in China.”¹⁷² It was in the US’s interests “to reach an amicable settlement with China by which the treaty rights of all the powers will be secured for the future, the open door assured, the interests and property of foreign citizens conserved.”¹⁷³ By guaranteeing Chinese state sovereignty, US geopolitical ambitions in China would be preserved. These ambitions were clearly to ensure American commercial interests and to prevent further territorial acquisitions by the Western powers in China, and the Boxer Rebellion provided an excuse for them to increase their involvement beyond the protection of their citizens and interests. While the correspondence shows geopolitical aspects and ideas, they cannot be attributed directly to any geopolitical intellectual as none are mentioned in the sources.

The aims of the US government in China were hampered by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The Chinese imperial government attempted to change and repeal the anti-immigration laws in place for Chinese labourers through diplomatic means. These series of letters related to Chinese-US relations and the Chinese exclusion acts included a list of arguments against the Chinese Exclusion Act. In a letter from Wu Tingfang, Foreign Minister of China, he stated that since the annexation of the Philippine Islands, these “would constitute a convenient base of operations for the extension and maintenance of a large commerce between China and the United States”, demonstrating the US geopolitical advantage. The acquisition of the Philippines also provided an “additional reason why the friendly relations which had so long existed between the two nations should become more intimate and harmonious.” Wu was aware of the importance of the Open-Door to both China and the United States, stating that the Chinese government “welcomes your efforts with the other great powers to maintain an open door to the commerce of the Chinese Empire.” However, Wu complained that the United States was restricting access to Chinese merchants in the Philippines which in turn was “destroying the commerce of important cities.”¹⁷⁴ This argument was further amplified by the fact that other “races” such as the Filipinos were given free entry, but not the Chinese. Despite the Chinese complaints, Chinese Exclusion Act would remain into effect until its repeal in 1943 with the adoption of the Magnuson Act, ending racial discrimination of Chinese immigrants.

During a boycott in China of American cotton, Roosevelt stated that “At present our market for cotton is largely in China” and that the past years American cotton boycott “was especially injurious to

¹⁷⁰ Jerald A. Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy: Vol. 1: To 1920*, 4th Ed., (Routledge, 2012), p. 159.

¹⁷¹ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 52

¹⁷² Memorandum circular from Mr. Adee to Mr. Herdliska, 29th of August 1900, p. 304.

¹⁷³ Memorandum circular from Mr. Adee to Mr. Herdliska, 29th of August 1900, p. 304.

¹⁷⁴ FRUS letter from Mr. Wu to Mr. Hay, 10th of December 1901, p. 95.

the cotton manufacturers” in the United States.¹⁷⁵ The solution to the boycott in Roosevelt’s eyes was to “recognize our duties exactly as we insist upon our rights.”¹⁷⁶ He famously proclaimed that “we cannot go into the international court of equity unless we go in with clean hands”, and that the United States “cannot expect China to do us justice unless we do China justice.”¹⁷⁷ Roosevelt believed that the main reason for the cotton boycott “was undoubtedly our attitude toward the Chinese who come to this country.”¹⁷⁸ There were civil riots against the influx of Japanese and Chinese immigrants to Hawaii and California, which Roosevelt believed “jeopardized America’s amicable trade relations in the Orient, her strategic interest in Chinese territorial integrity, the security of the Philippines, and, in short, the whole *modus vivendi* in the Far East.”¹⁷⁹ Again, geopolitical considerations can be seen in the problems and responses with the correspondence and the public statements of Roosevelt. Geography was influencing political processes at home and in China. However, no direct link can be made to these geopolitical actions to Mahan and Mackinder’s ideas, the foremost intellectuals on China. It seems again that these actions involving the Open-Door were in the name of self-interest and Realist policy with heavy connotations of free trade imperialism.

Similarly, John Hay stated that the main goal of the Open-Door notes was to “favor Chinese financial stability and promote ability to buy in any market and to exchange native products, wherever produced, on equal terms with all nations.”¹⁸⁰ There were arguments for the removal of the *likin* (Chinese import duties) and further standardization of fixed rates especially interior of China, that “would equalize trade without partiality or burden, and, as trade penetrates interior, would yield steadily increasing revenue.”¹⁸¹ In order to accomplish this, Hay argued that “Application to the whole of China of the open door is required.”¹⁸² Another famous tenet that Hay expounded was that equal opportunity “should be had by all trading nations to sell throughout the Empire” and “lower duties should be attached to imports tending to develop Chinese productiveness.”¹⁸³ According to Hay, the goal was not to exploit the Chinese as other empires did in their colonies, but instead to allow the Chinese to “gain prosperity so as to buy what they do not produce only by developing native productions.”¹⁸⁴ Any unequal treaties or agreements “on the ground of reciprocity, territories, occupation or spheres of influence” should be prevented at all costs.¹⁸⁵ But the major argument remained, that it was necessary “to secure increased access to interior markets” in China.¹⁸⁶ Again, geopolitical and geo-economic aspects can be observed in the correspondence, and the need for trade became even more important with the annexation of the Philippines. While trade was usually cited as the main reason for issuing the Open-Door policy, it is also clear the United States aimed for political and economic goals through geographic considerations in China. The Open-Door sought to prevent further European influence in China to allow the US to trade and preach freely there through the preservation of Chinese geographic and territorial integrity.

1902 was an important year for the Open-Door where its influence and seriousness was severely tested. This can be seen in a letter from Secretary of State Hay to Edwin H. Conger, US Minister to

¹⁷⁵ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, pp. 498-499

¹⁷⁶ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, pp. 498-499

¹⁷⁷ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, pp. 498-499

¹⁷⁸ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, pp. 498-499.

¹⁷⁹ Roosevelt to Lodge, 3rd of June 1905, *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge*, p. 134-134.

¹⁸⁰ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368

¹⁸¹ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368

¹⁸² FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368

¹⁸³ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368

¹⁸⁴ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368

¹⁸⁵ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368

¹⁸⁶ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Rockhill, 11th of April 1901, p. 368.

China. Russia began making agreements with China in 1902 which allowed the Russians exclusive privileges to certain mines and railway concession. Hay wrote that the United States was concerned with Chinese treaties that “concedes to a corporation the exclusive right to open mines, construct railways, or other industrial privilege.”¹⁸⁷ These treaties would “contravene treaties of China with foreign powers, affect rights of citizens of the United States restricting rightful trade, and tend to impair sovereign rights of China.”¹⁸⁸ Furthermore Hay claimed that these agreements would allow other powers to pursue “similar exclusive advantages in other parts of the Chinese Empire” which in turn “would wreck the policy of absolutely equal treatment of all nations in regard to navigation and commerce in the Chinese Empire.”¹⁸⁹ Hay attacked the Russian government arguing that their intentions went against the “assurances repeatedly given to the Government of the United States by the Russian ministry for foreign affairs of firm intention to follow the policy of the open door in China.”¹⁹⁰ Russia was increasing its geopolitical and commercial advantage in Manchuria through the use of “free trade-and neo-imperialism” through bilateral economic concessions which would limit US access in the region, showing clear geopolitical considerations in the threat to the Open-Door policy. Chinese geography and the US foreign political process was having important repercussions for the defence of the Open-Door.

Tensions escalated in Manchuria due to these perceived threatening unequal geopolitical concessions, however nothing could realistically be done by the US government to increase their advantage in the region despite having a new modernized navy. This was probably due to the fact that in real terms, US economic and political interests in China were minimal and there was no certainty of victory over the other powers. Instead, diplomacy and negotiations were used to appease an idealistic public in order to reinforce moral drives. In a letter from John Hay to Conger, he urged Conger to observe cautiously “the arrangements that may be reached between China and Russia on this subject and should they in any way prove a menace to American interests and violate in any way the treaty provisions, you will take such action as the circumstances may require and your experience dictate.”¹⁹¹ The actions being discussed were not defined, but the enlargement of the Russian sphere of influence in Manchuria was perceived as a threat to American geopolitical interests in the region. The Russian government justified their actions in several ways. In a letter from Count Mouravieff to Charlemagne Tower, Mouravieff wrote that the Russian government “has already demonstrated its firm intention to follow the policy of “the open door” by creating Dalny (Talienwan) a free port.” Mouravieff also claimed that the tariff and custom duty negotiations “belongs to China herself, and the Imperial Government has no intention whatever of claiming any privileges for its own subjects to the exclusion of other foreigners.”¹⁹² However, to the relief of the United States, the Chinese government refused any agreement with the Russian government, as it wanted a similar agreement to the one made with Germany in Tsingtao, where the Chinese controlled the customs stations and exercised more control over customs. Despite these perceived threats, assurances were constantly given by the Russian government that they would comply with the Open Door and not hamper US commerce.¹⁹³

In 1906, after the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, Manchuria continued to be a point of contention for the Open-Door in the US-Chinese diplomatic papers. The Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time, Kato Takeeki called the Open-Door a “failure” and a “very grave matter.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁷ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger, 1st of February 1902, p. 247

¹⁸⁸ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger, 1st of February 1902, p. 247

¹⁸⁹ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger, 1st of February 1902, p. 247

¹⁹⁰ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger, 1st of February 1902, p. 247

¹⁹¹ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger, 3rd of January 1903, p. 47.

¹⁹² FRUS letter from Count Mouravieff to Mr. Tower, 18th -30th December 1899, p. 47.

¹⁹³ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger, 29th of April 1903, p.54

¹⁹⁴ FRUS letter from Mr. Takeeki to Mr. Conger, 29th of April 1903, p. 54.

The Japanese government was the only power in China to not accept the second Open-Door note. In a letter from John Hay to Assistant Secretary of State Huntington Wilson, the US government claimed that the Japanese were pursuing unfair trade practices in Japanese-occupied Manchuria stating that there was “alleged discrimination in favor of Japanese and against American commerce.”¹⁹⁵ After peace was concluded, American tobacco merchants were still not being granted access to Manchuria via Newchwang, and the Japanese justified this exclusion citing security reasons. Marquis of Saionji claimed that the government had been “compelled to impose certain restrictions upon the free entrance of foreigners and foreign vessels into the regions and seaports of Manchuria affected by their military occupation” in order “to safeguard military secrets and owing also to confusion due to the withdrawal of a large army from that territory.”¹⁹⁶ In the same letter, Marquis of Saionji assured the United States that it would even comply with the Open-Door. In keeping with their word, the Japanese government eventually allowed “citizens and vessels of foreign countries to enter An-tung-hsien and Tatatung-kou.”¹⁹⁷ These “discriminatory restrictions” during the temporary military occupation of the territory was “frustrating the “open-door”” and there was “serious concern” due to the “exclusiveness which the Japanese are effecting in Korea.”¹⁹⁸ It is clear from the diplomatic correspondence that the United States could not do much to enforce the Open-Door policy, let alone prevent other powers from pursuing their own interests. The geopolitical implications of the threats to the Open-Door were mainly economic, and not in line with Mackinder or Mahan’s arguments. No real connection can be established between their arguments and the correspondence in the FRUS papers or the Presidential papers, as no specific mention is made of their ideas or works.

Furthermore, there were complaints coming from the Anglo-American Tobacco Company in Mukden and Antung that they were being unfairly taxed, while the “shippers of Japanese cigarettes and tobacco do not pay.” Furthermore, foreign merchants were prohibited from entering the military occupation zones of Manchuria, while Japanese merchants were allowed to enter, causing more diplomatic uproar. US diplomats in China and Japan were instructed to inform the Japanese government if the “assurances of the open door and equal treatment in Manchuria are disregarded” as an attempt to¹⁹⁹ Eventually, these areas were opened up to free trade and it was suggested that the customs houses would be controlled by the Chinese government. Again, unfair Japanese trade practices limited American geopolitical and geo-economic interests and increased tensions which could have led to eventual trade wars, more restrictions of foreign merchants and the severe reduction of American geopolitical influence through trade and missionary work.

Manchuria persisted in being the most discussed region in China for the United States in 1907. In a letter from William Woodville Rockhill to the Secretary of State Elihu Root, he informed him of the unfair increasing import duties that were facing American merchants. He stated that the Russians “contend that goods subject to this reduced import duty can be transported to any point along the railway lines in Manchuria without being liable to further duty.”²⁰⁰ However, the Chinese claimed, “that the payment of two-thirds duty only entitles such goods to pass the Chinese frontier, and that they must pay transit dues (50 per cent additional) to clear them to points further in the country.”²⁰¹ The US government was also concerned with Chinese commercial practices, and claimed that all foreign goods imported into Manchurian ports “should pass free of duty to any inland opened market after having once paid full tariff import duties” and that the railway stations in Manchuria were “also open to

¹⁹⁵ FRUS letter from Mr. Hay to Mr. Wilson, 21st of February 1906, p. 170.

¹⁹⁶ FRUS letter from Marquis Saionji to Mr. Wilson, 11th of April 1906, pp. 178-179.

¹⁹⁷ FRUS memorandum from the Department of State, 13th of April 1906, p. 182.

¹⁹⁸ FRUS letter from Mr. Bacon to Mr. Wilson, 20th of April 1906, p. 186.

¹⁹⁹ FRUS letter from Mr. Bacon to Mr. Rockhill, 20th of April 1906, pp. 186-187.

²⁰⁰ FRUS letter from Mr. Rockhill to the Secretary of State, 17th of May 1907, pp. 130-131.

²⁰¹ FRUS letter from Mr. Rockhill to the Secretary of State, 17th of May 1907, pp. 130-131.

international residence and trade.”²⁰² The Chinese government was attempting to implement further duties on imported goods, which went against the Open-Door and US commercial interests. An agreement was finally reached in Manchuria by the establishment of a maritime customs house on the 30th of May 1907 in Dairen which would greatly facilitate trade. The Prince of Ching, Yikuang, was in favour of the Open-Door and this is reflected in the diplomatic correspondence whereby the Prince accepted the terms of the customs house treaty and wished to open more in Manchuria.²⁰³ In 1909, a letter was sent from the Secretary of State to the American ambassador Reid, whereby the present situation in China was discussed. The letter stated that there was a threat to foreign trade “likely to ensue from the lack of proper sympathy between the powers most vitally interested in the preservation of the principle of equality of commercial opportunity.”²⁰⁴ The only solution, according to Reid, was the “full and frank cooperation as best calculated to maintain the open door and the integrity of China, and to state that the formation of a powerful American, British, French, and German financial group would further that end.”²⁰⁵ Again, the Open-Door was used as a geopolitical strategy to keep China open and sovereign to limit foreign influence through economic, diplomatic and commercial means, and not military means as expounded by such geopoliticians as Mackinder and Mahan.

Guarantees were yet again given in 1909, but this time by Germany, as highlighted in a letter from Ambassador David J. Hill with an enclosed memorandum from the German foreign office to the Secretary of State Elihu Root. There were plans for the construction of railways in China by the major powers. The letter stated that the German “Imperial Government learns with satisfaction that American financiers intend to cooperate with those of Germany, England, and France in the construction of railways in China.”²⁰⁶ The German government added that this was “a fresh guarantee for the policy of the open door always pursued by the Imperial Government, and in the pursuance of which policy it has repeatedly concurred with the aims of American policy.”²⁰⁷

There was considerable diplomatic activity in the same year concerning loans and capital from the Russo-Chinese bank. Plans were made to construct an American controlled railroad between Hankow and Canton which required a large amount of capital. Banks like the British-owned Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) had a vested interest in the operation due to the importance of rail transport. There were plans to loan large sums of capital to the Chinese government to construct railways, which would effectively increase Russian economic influence. In a letter from Henry P. Fletcher to the Secretary of State Elihu Root, Fletcher wrote “With respect to the present loan, she felt that, by reason of her large commercial interests in the Yangtze, especially in the tea trade of Hankow; and on the principle of the open door, he was justified in notifying China of Russia's readiness and willingness to participate in this or any other foreign loans needed by China.”²⁰⁸ Furthermore, the Russian minister M. Korostovetz argued that the Russo-Chinese Bank “was practically a governmental concern,” and believed Russia “should have financial interest in China as well as the other powers.”²⁰⁹ In response, Fletcher replied that the American Government would allow Russian financial interests in China “on the principle, which we have always adhered to, of equality of commercial opportunity and the open door” showing the United States’ adherence to the policy.²¹⁰ Fletcher also stated in the correspondence that the “present concern was to secure American participation in the loan” and hoped

²⁰² FRUS letter from Mr. Rockhill to the Secretary of State, 17th of May 1907, pp. 130-131.

²⁰³ FRUS letter from Prince Ching to Minister Rockhill, 29th of June 1907.

²⁰⁴ FRUS letter from Secretary of State to Mr. Reid, 9th of June 1909, p. 152

²⁰⁵ FRUS letter from Secretary of State to Mr. Reid, 9th of June 1909, p. 152.

²⁰⁶ FRUS letter from Ambassador Hill to the Secretary of State, 16th of June 1909, p. 162.

²⁰⁷ FRUS letter from Ambassador Hill to the Secretary of State, 16th of June 1909, p. 162.

²⁰⁸ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Secretary of State, 23rd July 1909, p. 165

²⁰⁹ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Secretary of State, 23rd July 1909, p. 165

²¹⁰ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Secretary of State, 23rd July 1909, p. 165

that the Russian government “would not interfere with [US] efforts to reach a settlement.”²¹¹ Loans and capital were also used as a geopolitical tool to increase commercial control and influence in China, facilitated greatly by the annexation of the Philippines. In 1910, the Assistant Secretary of State Francis H. Wilson in a *note verbale*, wanted to maintain the “open door” in China as well as its territorial boundaries, and therefore “could have no objection to the participation in such future loans by the nationals of any interested Government which is committed to the support of this policy, as is true in the case of Russia.”²¹² Russia was important in the eyes of the US government in the maintenance and preservation of the Open-Door, and acted as a counterbalance to the Japanese. In the same note, the US recognized Russian efforts “to secure the several international agreements giving adherence to the policy of the open door in China” and commended the Russian government for its various reassurances of the policy.²¹³ The note also cited Article III of the Treaty of Portsmouth that stipulated that the “Imperial Government of Russia declare that they have not in Manchuria any territorial advantages or preferential exclusive concessions in impairment of Chinese sovereignty or inconsistent with the principle of equal opportunity.”²¹⁴

Despite Russian guarantees of the Open-Door, the United States government argued that the Russian government was doing the opposite of its stipulations. In a letter from the Acting Secretary of State Elihu Root to Ambassador W. W. Rockhill, they claimed that the city of Harbin in Manchuria would “still remain under the administrative control of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company” and that the proposed international settlement would place the business and customs houses at a “great disadvantage.”²¹⁵ Furthermore, they argued that the “exercise of municipal powers by the Railway Company is not in harmony with the convention of September 7th, 1806” and was in “violation of the extraterritorial rights of the powers and in violation also of the principle of the open door and equal trade opportunity” which the Russian government had guaranteed to follow.²¹⁶ Despite these problems, the US government identified the largest dangers to the Open-Door policy which stemmed from “disagreements among the great western nations.”²¹⁷ Furthermore, there was a need to show China that “Great Britain, Germany, France, and the United States are standing together for equality of commercial opportunity.”²¹⁸

Railroads and their financing continued to be a point of discussion for the United States in the diplomatic correspondence of 1910 pertaining to the Open-Door. The letters repeated that the “essential principles of the Hay policy of the open door are the preservation of the territorial and jurisdictional integrity of the Chinese Empire and equal commercial opportunity in China for all nations.” The way to achieve this in Manchuria and Eastern China, they argued, “would be to take the railroads of Manchuria out of eastern politics and place them under an economic and impartial administration by vesting in China the ownership of its railroads.” These would be financed by the major powers in the region who had agreed to follow the policy of the Open-Door.²¹⁹ Again, calls were made to establish “an international administration and control of the railroads in Manchuria and on the other hand to engage Russian capital in the enterprise of the Chin Chow-Tsitsihar-Aigun Railroad.” This strategy, according to the American government, was the best way of “maintaining in their entirety the political rights of China in Manchuria and of contributing to the development of this province by applying to it

²¹¹ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Secretary of State, 23rd July 1909, p. 165

²¹² FRUS *note verbale*, 6th of November 1909, p. 219.

²¹³ FRUS *note verbale*, 6th of November 1909, p. 219.

²¹⁴ FRUS *note verbale*, 6th of November 1909, p. 220; The Treaty of Portsmouth, September 5, 1905, Article III.

²¹⁵ FRUS letter from Acting Secretary of State to Mr. Rockhill, 3rd of January 1910, p. 226.

²¹⁶ FRUS letter from Acting Secretary of State to Mr. Rockhill, 3rd of January 1910, p. 226.

²¹⁷ FRUS statement to the press, Department of State, 6th of January 1910, p. 243.

²¹⁸ FRUS statement to the press, Department of State, 6th of January 1910, p. 243.

²¹⁹ FRUS statement to the press, Department of State, 6th of January 1910, p. 244.

the principle of the open door.”²²⁰ Again, no mention of using naval or land power in conjunction with the Open-Door in the sources can be seen. No real similarities between the new geopolitical ideas at the time can be inferred from the documents. The United States was clearly unwilling to confront a major power, although military intervention was a common tactic used. Instead, diplomatic strategies were used to achieve foreign policy aims. These were geopolitical; however, no direct links can be drawn from the sources to any specific geopolitical idea. The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs also defended their stance in regard to the Open-Door. In a letter from the Minister to the ambassador to Japan O’Brien, he argued that as “far as the question of the open doors concerned the principle of equal opportunity possesses in its application to Manchuria.”²²¹ O’Brien claimed that this was not the case and cited Article VII of the treaty of Portsmouth which stipulated that “the Japanese and Russian railways in those Provinces are dedicated exclusively to commercial and industrial uses.”²²² France also expressed its willingness to continue to adhere to the Open-Door policy in 1910. In the correspondence, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the French government “shares in the unanimous desire of the powers to maintain the “open door” and “the equality of commercial opportunities in Manchuria”, and reaffirmed “principle of the sovereignty of China.”²²³

While there are no direct references, an indirect connection can be made in the sources to existing geopolitical theories and China, whereby Chinese geography was shaping the American political considerations in the region. Furthermore, Chinese political geography was also influencing American foreign policy in the FRUS and Presidential Papers in four different categories: trade, naval power, railroads and missionaries.

4.4 Trade, railroads, naval power, missionaries and geopolitics

Trade occupied a substantial proportion in the documents outside of the Open-Door policy, mostly regarding equal trading terms of its merchants and the opening of ports and regions to trade in China. Again, geopolitical considerations were important in establishing trade routes and exerting commercial influence, and the annexation of the Philippines provided the United States a foothold into China. President Taft wrote: “our ownership of the Philippines, (...) and our assertion of a right to the “open door” in China have put us in a position forefront among the nations of the world.”²²⁴ After the conclusion of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the American Peace Commission claimed that Manila was a “natural centre of import and export trade” demonstrating clear geopolitical considerations²²⁵ This was one of the main arguments for the annexation of the entire Philippine archipelago, however, not the only one. Another similar argument claimed that the “magnitude and importance of the trade between Amoy (Xiamen) and Manila” was influencing the US government “of making Amoy the base of supplies for Manila in China.”²²⁶ This report echoed geopolitical considerations, as demonstrated by the emphasis on Philippine geography for political, in this case, politico-economic reasons.

The best well-known reason for the annexation of the Philippines was “divine”. McKinley famously acknowledged in an interview that he knelt and prayed to God, and came to the conclusion that “there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and

²²⁰ FRUS letter from Ambassador Rockhill to the Secretary of State, 22nd January 1910, p. 249.

²²¹ FRUS letter from the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs to Mr. O’Brien, 21st of January 1910, p. 251.

²²² The Treaty of Portsmouth, September 5, 1905, Article VII

²²³ FRUS letter from Mr. Bacon to the Secretary of State, 4th of February 1910, p. 256.

²²⁴ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of William Howard Taft, p. 564.

²²⁵ FRUS letter from Peace Commissioners to Mr. Hay, 25th of October 1898, p. 933.

²²⁶ FRUS letter from Mr. Conger to Mr. Hay, 20th January 1899, p. 150.

Christianize them.”²²⁷ However, there were more likely reasons for the annexation of the Philippines. Some arguments were based on the need to prevent other Western powers from taking advantage of the greatly weakened Spanish position in Asia. The US Minister to China William R. Day reasoned that “alienation of other islands by Spain should be prevented to keep out Germany, the great trade rival of Great Britain, today, and of United States in next generation.”²²⁸ This was the most likely reason, as it would prevent the Philippines from succumbing to other powers in Asia, such as Germany, Britain and Japan.²²⁹ There was also the issue whether to annex the archipelago or to allow the Filipinos self-determination. However, according to Day, the Filipino natives were “unfit for self-government” and that their ideas were “too undeveloped”, adding that the Filipinos would “submit to just civilized government.”²³⁰ The American Peace Commission also concluded that the Philippines were more “likely to prove a burden rather than a benefit to the United States” with one member stating that he would “minimize our holdings there to the lowest point consistent with our obligations (...) Our advantage is a naval and commercial base in the East. More than this we should not seek.”²³¹ This did not hamper the annexation of the islands.

The annexation of the Philippines was no small matter and there was little public support for it. The religious community saw the evangelical benefits of proselytizing and increasing the Christian community, however many Americans were sceptical of the benefits of the annexation. As Senator Vest argued, the notion of “conferring American citizenship upon the half civilized, piratical, muck-running inhabitants of two thousand islands, seven thousand miles distant, in another hemisphere” was outrageous.²³² Another factor that influenced the outcome of the Philippine question was the need for indemnity payments by Spain to the US. Hay argued that Spain “cannot expect us to turn the Philippines back and bear the cost of the property of Cuba without any indemnity but Porto Rico, which we have and is wholly inadequate.”²³³ Regardless of the reason, the Philippines became an important stepping stone on the way to China. President Taft wrote that the Philippine Islands “are about sixty-six hours from Hong Kong” and that “you come closer to China when you are in the Philippines than when you are [in America].”²³⁴ James J. Hill, an American railroad developer, added to the debate by stating in a letter that he believed that there would be a “commercial development on the Pacific Ocean in the next twenty years which will surpass any commercial growth the world has seen in the last thousand years.”²³⁵ He justified this statement by arguing that “China and Japan alone contain nearly one-third of the population of the globe; and the Chinaman, while his education and civilization is [sic] different from ours, is commercially speaking capable of the greatest development.”²³⁶ While Mahan’s ideas had already been published and were certainly well known, it is unlikely that they had any major impact on the already existing ideas on the advantages of commercial relations with Asia in relations to the Philippines. As mentioned previously, trade with China was and remained an extremely small percentage of US foreign exports at the turn of the century, and the US had a long history of trade with both Japan and China, rendering his arguments almost futile.

²²⁷ Charles Olcott, *Life of William McKinley*, (Boston, 1916, vol. 2) pp. 110-111.

²²⁸ FRUS letter from Mr. Day to Mr. Hay, 9th of October 1898, p. 927

²²⁹ Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America’s Foreign Relations*, p. 51.

²³⁰ FRUS letter from Mr. Day to Mr. Hay, 9th of October 1898, p. 926.

²³¹ FRUS letter from American Peace Commission to Mr. Hay, 11th of November 1898, p. 945.

²³² George G. Vest, “Objections to Annexing the Philippines” *The North American Review*, Vol. 168, No. 506 (Jan. 1899), pp. 112.

²³³ John Hay to William R. Day, 13th of November 1898, *Senate Docs.*, 56, Cong. 2 Sess., (Serial 4039), Doc. 148, pp. 48-49.

²³⁴ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of William Howard Taft, p. 436.

²³⁵ Letter from James J. Hill, 1898.

²³⁶ Letter from James J. Hill, 1898.

Again, although US commercial interests in Asia were small, President William McKinley Jr. (1843 – 1901) viewed with caution the territorial agreements between China and other states, whereby significant “portions of its maritime provinces are passing under the control of various European powers” and that American merchants and commerce should not be prejudiced by the “exclusive treatment by the new occupants has obviated the need of our country becoming an actor in the scene.”²³⁷ McKinley further argued that the position of the United States with its large Pacific coast and rising trade with Asia gave the United States “the equitable claim to consideration and friendly treatment in this regard” and it was McKinley’s aim to “sub serve our large interests in that quarter.”²³⁸ It was also his wish to see the ports and areas of Kiao-Chow, Wei-hai-wie, Port Arthur and Talienswan (Dalny), to “be open to international commerce” as well as no “discriminating treatment of American citizens.”²³⁹ Open ports and their geographical locations in China were extremely important in the diplomatic and political processes being pursued by the US government. However, Figure 6 below demonstrates that neither imports or exports exceeded more than 30 million USD by 1910 except for an anomalous spike in 1907. In comparison, US exports to Western Europe were in the value of over 800 million USD in 1913.²⁴⁰ While trade in itself was relatively unimportant, the need to have access in the region was important for geopolitical reasons.

Figure 6: Graph showing total US trade with China, 1865-1914



Source: *A Lost Opportunity? Trade between the United States and China, 1865-1914*, Kathryn Gaydos College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

²³⁷ The Public Papers of William McKinley, p.

²³⁸ The Public Papers of William McKinley, p.

²³⁹ The Public Papers of William McKinley,

²⁴⁰ United Nations Statistics Division, *International Trade Statistics, 1900 – 1960*, Table XXIV - 1 World Exports by Provenance and Destination: 1900, 1913, 1928, 1935, 1938, 1948, 1953 AND 1959 <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/Historical%20data%201900-1960.pdf> 21/06/17.

Eventually, Japan overtook the United States exports to China due to several reasons. Firstly, Japan is much closer to China than the United States is, meaning low transportation costs and more reliable trade connections. Also, the Japanese had militarily occupied Manchuria and brought in many Japanese immigrants to establish farms and trades while at the same time excluding foreigners on military grounds. Finally, Japan was in control of the railroads and the infrastructure, making their products more economically favourable for sale.²⁴¹ Manchuria was the most important region for American merchants. Although Chinese trade with American accounted for less than 1 percent of American exports in 1904, Manchuria was the outlet of 90% of American goods and “imported more goods from the United States than from any other foreign country.”²⁴² After the Russo-Japanese War, American flour, kerosene and cotton was being imported at higher levels than before the conflict. However, by 1909, the demands for American imports reduced and were dominated by other states.²⁴³ Despite this seemingly low figure and eventual decline of commercial importance, President Taft continued the rhetoric on the importance of the China trade. While not important economically, it was important geopolitically. He argued that China “is waking up. She is approaching a period of development that cannot but increase her trade and augment her importance as customer and as a trader with this country, while Japan and all the other Oriental countries are moving onward with giant steps in the commercial competition of the world.”²⁴⁴ Not only was China growing in importance, it became apparent that the United States needed to ensure its position in China, as Japan was making “giant strides to control the Oriental trade” and “trying to gain trade in China, just as we are.”²⁴⁵ Linked to the development of trade was the construction of railroads in China which had political as well as economic repercussions.

Railroads feature prominently in both the FRUS and Presidential Papers. Railroads were an important geopolitical feature in China because whichever state owned the railroad could control the flow of goods and people from the ports and potentially impose levies to transport these goods. The capacity to transport troops, military equipment and supplies was also greatly increased. President Harrison was very conscious of the dangers of rival railroad networks, not only in Asia but in the US too. One example of this was the Canadian Pacific Railway, where Harrison argued that its construction and the creation of “fast steamship service from Vancouver with Japan and China seriously threatens our shipping interests in the Pacific.”²⁴⁶ The United States was geopolitically threatened by other powers, and needed to increase commercial relations with China. In response, President Harrison recommended the establishment of a commission to study “the commercial and industrial conditions in the Chinese Empire and report as to the opportunities for and obstacles to the enlargement of markets in China for the raw products and manufactures of the United States.”²⁴⁷ This commission was created based on geographic considerations in China as well as for political goals.

President Roosevelt continued former President Harrison’s rhetoric in a similar fashion claiming that water transport “has wholly lost its old position of superiority over transport by land” except on inland seas and oceans. He stated; “we have new highways and railroads (...) which are practically of unlimited (...) usefulness.” Roosevelt continued his arguments claiming that the new highway, “the railway”, was of “infinitely greater importance” to US industry than the “old highway”

²⁴¹ Dana G. Munro, “American Commercial Interests in Manchuria” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 39, pp. 160-162.

²⁴² Munro, “American Commercial Interests in Manchuria” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, p. 157.

²⁴³ Munro, “American Commercial Interests in Manchuria” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, p. 159.

²⁴⁴ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of William Howard Taft, p. 434

²⁴⁵ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of William Howard Taft, p. 436.

²⁴⁶ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 146.

²⁴⁷ The Public Papers of William McKinley, p.

due to the fact that many of the railways were constructed by private enterprise and not by the intervention of the state.²⁴⁸ His statements echoed Mackinder's arguments on the geopolitical advantages of railroads and land routes due to their ability to transport large amounts of material and people quickly over a large area. Mahan was not a large proponent of railroads, as virtually no mention is made in his arguments, however Mackinder argued in favour of the importance of railroads and land power. However, in the sources, no mention is made of their ideas or publications, however it is clear that geography was influencing the American political process in financing and constructing railroads.

In China, there was a noticeable amount of investment in railroads by American companies. Several businessmen had travelled to China with the explicit aim of "constructing railroads, establishing banks, and developing mines". However, many of these businessmen left after a brief period, "except the American-China Development Company (ACDC)."²⁴⁹ The ACDC included many important financiers and industrialists from several American companies and banks such as J. P. Morgan, Carnegie Steel Company, National City Bank of New York and Chase National Bank.²⁵⁰ The main Chinese railway project was to construct the southern portion of the Canton-Hankou railroad (see fig. 7). The project was subject to a diplomatic incident whereby ownership of the company went to Belgian and French investors who bought majority stakes in the company. This was in violation of Article 17 of the 13th of July 1900 treaty stating that "the Americans cannot transfer the rights of these agreements to other nations or the people of other nationality."²⁵¹, as non-American investors suddenly had control of the company and violating the terms of the treaty.²⁵² Similar transportation investment projects were being undertaken in Korea by the American owned Seoul Electric Company. The owners of the company, Henry Collbran and Harry Bostwick, constructed lines for electric street cars and sought to build a railway line for the Russian government which potentially would have connected Port Arthur to Korea, again echoing geopolitical considerations.²⁵³

American railway concessions were fairly unsuccessful. The use of American capital was optional, and when the Chinese government refused to take loans and borrow capital from the US government to build railroads, they became furious. After the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, China needed foreign loans to repay the indemnity charges enforced by the Japanese government and these loans came with certain strings attached and concessions were given to several companies to build railroads. British, French, German and American companies began financing and developing railroads in Yunnan-fu, Kiachow, Kunming and the Trans-Siberian railway (see fig. 7). After the Boxer Rebellion, the Chinese government reacquired the concessions to the Canton-Hankow railway, and sought loans to continue the project. China was looking towards Britain, France and Germany for loans, and refused to accept any financial commitments from the United States. This frustration is evident in Fletcher's letter to Prince Ching. Fletcher argued that not accepting a loan from the United States "would be inconsistent not only with the dignity and moral right of the American Government, but also incompatible with a policy hitherto friendly on the part of China."²⁵⁴ He warned the Prince that "if the reasonable wishes of the American Government should now be thwarted, the whole responsibility would rest upon the Chinese Government."²⁵⁵ Fletcher found it difficult to grasp that China intended to "disregard her

²⁴⁸ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, p. 427.

²⁴⁹ FRUS letter from Mr. Denby to Mr. Olney, 15th of February 1897, p. 59.

²⁵⁰ William R. Braisted, "The United States and the American Development Company." *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, vol. 11, no 2 (1952): 147-165.

²⁵¹ Norman Miners, "Building the Kowloon-Canton-Hankow Railway", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch*, Vol. 46 (2006), p. 6.

²⁵² FRUS letter from the Chinese Minister to the Secretary of State, 22nd of December 1904.

²⁵³ Donald G. Southerton, *Colorado's Henry Collbran and the Roots of Early Korean Entrepreneurialism*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012, p.

²⁵⁴ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Prince of Ching, 16th of July 1909, p. 184.

²⁵⁵ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Prince of Ching, 16th of July 1909, p. 184.

obligations and true interests and act with such singular unfriendliness” towards the United States.²⁵⁶ He ended the accusations by stating that the US government “greatly deploras a situation in which it seems that individuals in China or elsewhere are able to defeat the practical operations of the policy of the open door and equal opportunity.”²⁵⁷

The Chinese Eastern Railway was a Russian line of railroads financed by the Russo-Asiatic Bank which caused further concern in the American government in relation to American geopolitical railroad concessions and believed they would go against the Open-Door policy.²⁵⁸ According to the Russian and Chinese ministers, the Chinese Eastern Railway was “not incompatible with the principle of the open door and of equal treatment”, and that “other powers shall enjoy the same rights and privileges as the other powers.”²⁵⁹ Railways were an important geopolitical feature to their ability to transport goods and people relatively quickly and over large distances. Politically, they were important as whoever controlled the railways controlled the flow of these things. The political and economic process of the construction and the financing of railroads had obvious geographic and geopolitical implications. However, these arguments were not a direct result of any contemporary geopolitical thought. Mackinder, the most vocal proponent of technology and railroad investments, is not mentioned specifically.

Surprisingly, France, Britain and especially Russia expressed concerns with Chinese actions towards the refusal of American capital in financing railroads. In an *aide memoir* from Mr. Kroupensky, the Russian *chargé d'affaires*, he wrote that the Russian government was “in entire sympathy with the position of the United States” and that it would not “insist upon spoiling the present negotiations by asking for participation in the Hupeh-Hunan loan.” Kroupensky aware of the tendency of the British, French and German governments to stick together on Chinese dealings and expressed Russian desires “to make known to the United States that it would wish to be a party thereto, believing that its attitude was in pursuance of the policy of the “open door” to which all nations were committed.”²⁶⁰ However, despite these words of sympathy, little was done to change the Chinese stance concerning the loans for the railway, limiting American geopolitical and geo-economic influence in the region. The United States was clearly in no position to force demands in China due to lack of power and will to do so. Figure 7 illustrates the various railway concessions owned by the various major powers in China. The United States owned the railway concession from Hankow to Canton, increasing its control over the flow of trade goods and troops for that particular route. Railroads were important in increasing and maintaining the various spheres of influence, as well as increasing economic influence in the respective regions.

²⁵⁶ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Prince of Ching, 16th of July 1909, p. 184.

²⁵⁷ FRUS letter from Mr. Fletcher to Prince of Ching, 16th of July 1909, p. 184.

²⁵⁸ Liang Chia-pin, “History of the Chinese Eastern Railway: A Chinese Version”, *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Feb. 1930), p. 190.

²⁵⁹ FRUS circular note, 4th of December 1909, p. 222.

²⁶⁰ FRUS letter from the Secretary of State to the British Ambassador, 4th of October 1909, p. 203.

Figure 7: Map showing foreign railway concessions in China ca. 1900



Source: <http://www.chinasage.info/railways.htm> Chinese Railways

An agreement was signed by the British, Chinese and American government on a joint venture for the development of the Chin Chou-Tsitsihar-Aigun railroad. However, the United States asked for certain considerations of the British government before the ratification of the agreement. In a memorandum from Ambassador Reid, it stated that the best way to ensure the political and economic rights in Manchuria for all states would be a “practical application of the policy of the open door and equal commercial opportunity” by bringing the Manchurian transportation system “under an economic and scientific and impartial administration by some plan vesting in China the ownership of the railroads through funds furnished for that purpose by the interested powers willing to participate.”²⁶¹ This plan entailed that the respective powers in China should “supervise the railroad system during the term of the loan” which led to a “period the usual preferences for their nationals and materials upon an equitable basis *inter se*.”²⁶² However, to ensure the success of this agreement, it was required the cooperation of Japan, China Russia, Great Britain and the United States, “whose special interests rest upon the existing contract relative to the Chin Chou Aigun Railroad.” The memorandum furthermore argued that the rewards to Japan and Russia on the agreement were “obvious” as they both wished “to protect the policy of the open door and equal opportunity in Manchuria”, as well as guaranteeing Chinese “unimpaired sovereignty.”²⁶³ It was also a strategy to “separate duties, responsibilities, and expenses” that both governments have undertaken “in the protection of their respective commercial and other interests.”²⁶⁴ These measures and considerations were devised to limit the negative impact of the

²⁶¹ FRUS letter from Ambassador Reid to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 9th of November 1909, p. 211.

²⁶² FRUS letter from Ambassador Reid to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 9th of November 1909, p. 211.

²⁶³ FRUS letter from Ambassador Reid to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 9th of November 1909, p. 211.

²⁶⁴ FRUS letter from Ambassador Reid to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 9th of November 1909, p. 211.

loan refusal of the United States by China while at the same time keeping American geopolitical goals afloat.

There was one area at least where the United States was successful in, and that was the construction of a modern American navy, another key geopolitical category that was evident in the sources. Naval strength was key to maintaining the US's new territories and to protect vital geopolitical interest in China. The need for a larger and more modern fleet had already been echoed by other Presidents preceding Roosevelt, such as President Harrison. Harrison wrote of the need in "completing a navy of the best modern type" that was "large enough to enable this country to display its flag in all seas for the protection of its citizens and of its extending commerce." This navy was not offensive in purpose, but was "essential to the dignity of this nation and to that peaceful influence which it should exercise on this hemisphere that its navy should be adequate, both upon the shores of the Atlantic and of the Pacific."²⁶⁵ Harrison was well aware of the importance of navy, stating; "No subject (...) more nearly touches the pride, the power, and the prosperity of our country than this of the development of our merchant marine upon the sea."²⁶⁶ He argued that there should be "appropriations be made for ocean-mail service, in American steamships, between our ports and those of Central and South America, China, Japan, and the important islands in both of the great oceans (...) and in some fair degree equalize the chances of American steamship lines in the competitions which they must meet."²⁶⁷ These arguments are similar to the ones found in Mahan's publications, however, no direct mention of him or his publications are made in the documentation, despite the similarity of arguments. President Grover Cleveland continued a similar rhetoric arguing: "All must admit the importance of an effective Navy to a nation like ours, having such an extended sea-coast to protect. And yet we have not a single vessel of war that could keep the seas against a first-class vessel of any important power."²⁶⁸ Cleveland furthermore argued that a "nation that cannot resist aggression is constantly exposed to it."²⁶⁹ The main line of argument revolved around having a weak foreign policy and entering negotiations at a disadvantage as it "is not in condition to enforce the terms dictated by its sense of right and justice." However, before modernizing the navy Cleveland argued that the US government needed "a thoroughly reorganized" Department of the Navy to fully carry out these reforms.²⁷⁰ Again, the geography of the United States was influencing the political processes of expanding the US navy to protect US interests both at home and abroad.

President Harrison took several steps in modernising the American navy, even before Roosevelt had. In 1899, \$35,000,000 had been invested for the "increase of the Navy." A further \$8,000,000 had been invested during the same time frame "for labour at navy-yards upon similar work." Harrison gave praise to the naval officers who had "responded magnificently to the confidence of Congress and have demonstrated to the world all unexcelled capacity in construction, in ordnance, and in everything involved in the building, equipping, and sailing of great war ships."²⁷¹ Again, no direct mention was made to the tenets professed by Mahan. However, expanding the navy would have given the United States a geopolitical edge both in the coasts of the United States and Asia

President Roosevelt also argued that a "first-class navy-first-class in point of size (...) is the surest and the cheapest guarantee of peace."²⁷² Hypocritically, the navy was used for offensive purposes

²⁶⁵ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 114.

²⁶⁶ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 146.

²⁶⁷ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 64.

²⁶⁸ The Public Papers of Grover Cleveland, p. 41.

²⁶⁹ The Public Papers of Grover Cleveland, p. 41.

²⁷⁰ The Public Papers of Grover Cleveland, p. 41.

²⁷¹ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 147.

²⁷² The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, pp. 383-384.

during the Spanish-American War, again most likely for geopolitical reasons. Harrison stated in an address that no state in the world would be “able to wage war, on our soil, with the United States” and that when the navy had been completed, “no nation in the world will be hasty to engage us upon the sea.”²⁷³ Roosevelt had plenty of first-hand experience in naval history and knew very well the uses of the navy in terms of geopolitical expansion. The Great White Fleet was dispatched in 1907 to demonstrate the superiority of the new American navy, beginning in Virginia, rounding Cape Horn in South America, calling at the US Pacific coast, then proceeding to Australia, Japan, China and then traversing the Suez Canal back to Virginia. The political process of the fleet’s construction was linked to geography, especially in its deployment around the globe. It is unlikely that Mahan spearheaded these developments, as the process already began in 1880’s, and the acquisition of islands in the Pacific went as far back as Seward with the takeover of the Midway Islands. Also, despite knowing Mahan personally, never did Roosevelt as president find any vital interests in China.²⁷⁴

Although the fleet was a major expansion of US military power, President Roosevelt continued to take an anti-expansionist tone, proclaiming that the United States government “has the friendliest feelings for China and desires China’s well-being” and that the US “cordially sympathized with the announced purpose of Japan to stand for the integrity of China. Such an attitude tends to the peace of the world.”²⁷⁵ Naval power *per se* was not explicitly mentioned in the FRUS documents, however strategic placement and an increased presence of naval ships was at times requested. In a letter addressed to James Blaine, Secretary of State, Charles Denby, the Minister to China, takes steps to increase Western naval presence in China to protect their interests.²⁷⁶ Claims were made that the American vessels “were sent to look after the interest of all the United States citizens in China.”²⁷⁷ Again, no explicit mention is made to any geopolitical idea at the time in the sources, however, geopolitics was playing an important role in using naval power to secure US interests. Naval projection was used in part to protect American missionaries, which also were used for geopolitical purposes.

Ideology and religion were fundamental in the extension of American geopolitical influence in China and Asia through the use of geopolitics. The idea of righteousness, morality, republicanism and democracy were used to justify occupation and influence in foreign territory. President McKinley stated in a speech that a “hundred years ago many of the fields were closed to missionary effort” and that currently, “almost everywhere is the open door, and only the map of the world marks the extent of their thought and action.” The idea of American exceptionalism also played a role in this promotion of evangelism and Western doctrine. President Taft wrote that missionaries formed a “nucleus about which gathers an influence far in excess of the numerical list of the converts. They have a political influence, an influence upon the Government of China itself, upon the Viceroy of China.”²⁷⁸ Interestingly, churches and evangelical congregations supported American imperialism as it would provide more areas in which the Protestant Christian faith could be preached.²⁷⁹ In another letter from the Chinese minister Tsui Kwo Yin in response to the Scott Act of 1888 and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, he openly stated that there were “two classes of interests in China” for the US government, the being the “missionaries and their propaganda, and, second, the merchants and their commerce”.²⁸⁰ These two geopolitical strategies would enable the US government to increase its foothold in China as long as

²⁷³ Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, p. 296.

²⁷⁴ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 61.

²⁷⁵ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, p. 632

²⁷⁶ FRUS letter from Mr. Denby to Mr. Blaine, 29th July 1891, p. 421.

²⁷⁷ FRUS letter from Mr. Denby to Mr. Blaine, 17th August 1891, p. 468.

²⁷⁸ The Presidential Addresses and State Papers of William Howard Taft, p. 436.

²⁷⁹ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 48.

²⁸⁰ FRUS, letter from Mr. Tsui to Mr. Blaine, 26th March 1890, p. 212.

5. Conclusion

This thesis had a four-pronged goal. The first task was to map out US foreign policy in Asia from c. 1776 to 1890, analysing the various features of each period and what they entailed for the United States. The second goal was to analyse the various geopolitical ideas on Asia that were well known during the turn of the twentieth century. These ideas would serve as the basis to the answer of the main thesis question. Thirdly, several US foreign political documents were analysed to establish or disestablish a connection between the Open-Door policy and the recent geopolitical ideas. Finally, this thesis sought to explore the possible links in four distinct categories (trade, naval power, railroads and missionaries) that featured regularly in the source material using again the various geopolitical ideas that emerged at the turn of the twentieth century.

5.1 American foreign policy in Asia (c. 1776 – 1890)

There were roughly three distinct periods that focused on various aspects and differed in geographic focus. The first period focused on China, the second period focused on Japan, and the third period focused on the construction of an American empire in Asia. The main themes that consistently dominate this relationship can be distilled into two strategies. Generally speaking, throughout these periods, American foreign policy in Asia was to trade extensively with other states and to propagate the Christian faith, with more importance with the former.²⁸⁷ In addition to this came the attempts to spread democracy, republicanism and liberty under American values. Geopolitical considerations were important, as seen with the “Seward Doctrine” and the rising importance of strategically important Pacific islands such as Samoa, Guam and Hawaii. Missionaries played an important role throughout the periods, as they “advocated American political control over distant lands”, increasing their influence in regions where American political influence had difficulty in reaching.²⁸⁸ It is important to remember that these tactics were not new and did not suddenly come into existence, as missionaries were used extensively to convert Native Americans before the Civil War, and trade with them provided economic incentives for expansion. Herring has argued that “some of the same forces that drove the United States across the continent in the 1840s propelled it into the Pacific and East Asia”²⁸⁹. These forces were also very evident in the source material as demonstrated in the conclusion for the fourth question.

5.2 Geopolitical ideas

There were several geopolitical ideas that could have contributed to the adoption of the Open-Door policy. The main geopolitical ideas popular and pertinent in the United States at the time were expansionary, imperialistic and usually racist in nature. Mackinder, while not as popular as Mahan in the USA due to his British nationality and focus on Central Asia, was still read by many people but mostly in Great Britain. Mahan’s contributions are obvious, as he distilled the ideas concerning Asia and Hawaii into clear and influential arguments, and was well read by politicians inside and outside the United States. Mackinder’s contributions to the field of geopolitics are also noteworthy, especially considering his ideas on the importance of railroads, trade and land power. There are some parallels

²⁸⁷ Walter LaFeber, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations Volume II: The American Search for Opportunity 1865-1913*, (Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. xiii.

²⁸⁸ Kenton J. Clymer, “Religion and American Imperialism: Methodist Missionaries in the Philippine Islands, 1899-1913”, *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Feb. 1980), p. 30.

²⁸⁹ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, p. 207

that can be drawn between the Open-Door policy and his arguments, for example the importance of Asia and technological developments in becoming a dominant power, as well as Mahan's arguments on naval power and the acquisition of Pacific islands. The main geopolitical ideas came also from the "new expansionists" under the auspices of the "New Manifest Destiny". Scholars like Fiske, Burgess and Turner provided ample arguments of the superiority of the United States and the need for further expansion through geopolitical means, and these were published in several public forums. While most of these ideas were relevant to internal American expansion, they soon evolved to include areas outside of North America (Hawaii and the Philippines). However, racism was not just a justification but also a prohibitor of widespread expansion. The United States refused to annex the whole of Mexico after the conclusion of the Mexican-American War in 1848, largely due to racist reservations of mass inclusion of an "inferior people."²⁹⁰ Geopolitics has always existed in one form or another and played an important role in American expansion and its need for a foothold in Asia.

5.3 The connection between Open-Door policy and Geopolitics

The Open-Door policy was clearly influenced by Chinese geographical factors and was directly influencing the American political process. Encroachment of Chinese territorial sovereignty, fear of monopolization of Chinese trade and lack of American hard power led to the adoption of the Open-Door policy. However, the Open-Door policy in the documentation was not the result of any specific theoretical geopolitical idea by such experts as Mahan and Mackinder, but it did have clear geopolitical intentions. The FRUS documents show that there is no direct mention of Mahan or Mackinder's ideas, but geopolitics did play a part in the adoption, implementation and maintenance of the policy. The Open-Door was specifically a result of Secretary of State John Hay. William Woodville Rockhill (1854-1914) and Alfred E. Hoppisley's (1848-1939) strategy to contain Western encroachment in China while simultaneously guaranteeing free trading rights for the United States, heavily contributed to the formulation of the Open-Door policy. Rockhill was an American diplomat who drafted the Open-Door notes and had spent copious amounts of time in Asia, being the first American to learn the Tibetan language. Hoppisley was a British diplomat who worked at various posts in Asia, beginning in the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs and rising to the post of Postal Secretary. He gained thorough experience from his duties in Chinese commerce. Rockhill arranged a meeting between Hoppisley and Hay in 1898, whereby different strategies were discussed concerning spheres of influence and preferential treatments.²⁹¹ These two diplomats had a decisive role in influencing Hay into implementing the Open-Door policy.²⁹² It was to Rockhill however "that Hay turned for advice on the Far Eastern policy."²⁹³ The reason for this policy was to promote geopolitical stability for the development of commercial interests and the "fulfilment of America's mission as an Asiatic power."²⁹⁴ The geographical setting, in this case China's ports and railroads, was having a severe impact on the American political process of diplomacy. Instead of being a geopolitical result of a specific geopolitical idea, it was a geopolitical Realist strategy to maintain a foothold in China which was at risk of being divided up by the Western powers. These geopolitical ideas were not the result of any newly formed argument, but the result of pre-existing ideas and self-interest strategies to secure US economic interests through Chinese territorial integrity. Michael Dunne has argued that the Open-Door policy was "further

²⁹⁰ Charles A. Gallagher, Cameron D. Lippard, *Race and Racism in the United States: An Encyclopaedia of the American Mosaic*, (Greenwood, 2014), p. 782.

²⁹¹ Ian Nish, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War*, (Routledge, 1985) p. 56.

²⁹² "Brooks Adams and American Expansion", *New England Quarterly*, XXV, June 1952,

²⁹³ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 43.

²⁹⁴ Cohen, *Americas Response to China*, p. 43.

evidence that the growth of American power and the expansion of the United States territorially into the Caribbean and the Pacific were the necessary condition for the American 'rise to world power'.²⁹⁵ Despite these results, there were four categories in the documentation where geopolitics featured prominently, these being trade, naval power, railroads and missionaries.

5.4 Trade, naval power, railroads and missionaries

Trade (and keeping trade open to American merchants), was undoubtedly one of the most important aspects of US foreign policy in China. Geopolitical considerations were important despite the decline in American trade. It was important for the United States to exert some influence in the region and to allow its merchants to trade freely. However, whether there was a connection between the geopolitical ideas that emerged in the 1890's and 1900's and trade in the sources can be severely contested. Similarly, the relationship between geography and politics is evident in the construction and implementation of the US navy. No direct links can be made between the arguments set forth in Mahan's publications, although some similarities do exist. The FRUS papers frequently mention railways, an aspect central to Mackinder's ideas. Is it therefore possible that a connection can be drawn between railroads and geopolitics in line with Mackinder? A positive answer is very unlikely. While Mackinder expressed the importance of railroads for the transport of men and material, it is unlikely that US foreign policy applied his ideas to their geopolitical considerations in Asia. Missionaries also played an important geopolitical role in US aspirations in China. Missionaries played an important role in the documentation as they both Christianized local populations in remote and densely populated areas, while at the same time exerted pressure on the local communities. Trade, naval power, missionary influence and railroad construction and their geopolitical benefits existed earlier than the emergence of geopolitics as a discipline and before the publications of Mahan and Mackinder's influential arguments. This is also reflected in the sources. Mackinder's links to the Open-Door can be heavily disputed. No similarities between his arguments and the arguments in the sources can be found. Mackinder's lack of influence is probably due to the fact that he was British and his ideas were focused on the idea of land power in Asia. His ideas are never mentioned in the FRUS correspondence or in the Presidential papers, nor is it known if he had any correspondence with American politicians or businessman. He did not see trade as solution to controlling China.

²⁹⁵ Michael Dunne, "US Foreign Relations in the Twentieth Century: From World Power to Global Hegemony", *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 76, No. 1 (Jan.2000), p. 30.

6. Sources

6.1 Primary sources

Presidential papers

Presidential papers of William Howard Taft, Twenty-Seventh President of the United States, March 4th 1909, to March 4th, 1913, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1913.

Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, Twenty-Third President of the United States, March 4th 1889, to March 4th, 1893, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1893.

Public Papers of Grover Cleveland, Twenty Fourth President of the United States, March 4th 1893, to March 4th, 1897, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1897.

William McKinley Messages, Proclamations, and Executive Orders Relating to the Spanish-American War, Published by Authority of Congress, 1902.

Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, P. F. Collier and Son Publishers, New York, 1930.

Messages and Papers of Theodore Roosevelt, New York The Unit of Publishing, 1909.

Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)

Affairs in China, (1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910), Government Printing Office, Washington.

Dennett, Tyler, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, (New York, 1925)

Fiske, John, *American Political Ideas*, New York, 1885

Fiske, John, *The Critical Period of American History* (1888, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1897)

Hennig, Richard *Geopolitik: Die Lehre vom Staat als Lebewesen*, (Teubner, 1928)

Kjellén, Rudolf, *Staten som Lifform*, (Gebers, 1916)

Mahan, Alfred T., *The Interest of American in Sea Power, Present or Future*, (Boston, 1898)

Olcott, Charles, *Life of William McKinley*, (Boston, 1916, vol. 2)

6.2 Secondary sources

Anonymous, "The Break-Up of China, and Our Interest in It", *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1899; Volume 84, No. 502; pages 276 - 280.

Aslam, Fawad, Wenjie, Yu, "Quest of Early American Trade with China, Geopolitics and Open-Door Policy", *JPUHS*, Vol.29, No.2, July - December 2016

Auslin, M. R., *Negotiating with Imperialism. The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy*, (Harvard University Press, 2006)

Billington, Ray A. *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian. Scholar, Teacher*, (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973)

Blouet, Brain *Global Geostrategy: Mackinder and the defence of the West*, (Routledge, 2005)

Bogue, Allan G., "Frederick Jackson Turner Reconsidered", *The History Teacher*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1994.

Bowers, Claude G., *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, (The Literary Guild, New York, 1932)

Braisted, William R., "The United States and the American Development Company." *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, vol. 11, no 2 (1952)

Brownstone, David M., *The Chinese-American Heritage*, p. 12; L. Eve Armentrout-Ma, "Chinese in California's Fishing Industry, 1850-1941", *California History* Vol. 60, No. 2 (Summer, 1981)

- Burgess, John W., "The Ideal of American Commonwealth", 10, *Political Science Quarterly* 404, 405 (1895)
- Chia-pin, Liang "History of the Chinese Eastern Railway: A Chinese Version", *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Feb. 1930)
- Clymer, Kenton J., "Religion and American Imperialism: Methodist Missionaries in the Philippine Islands, 1899-1913", *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Feb. 1980)
- Cohen, Saul B., *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations* 2nd Ed., (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008)
- Cohen, Saul B., *Geopolitics; The Geography of International Relations*, (Rowman & Littlefield, 3rd ed. 2014)
- Cohen, Warren I., *Americas Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, (Columbia University Press, 2010)
- de Goey, Ferry, *Commodities, Ports and Asian Maritime Trade since 1750*, edited by Ulbe Bosma and Anthony Webster, (Palgrave Macmillan; 1st ed. 2015)
- Conlin, Joseph R. *The American Past: A Survey of American History, Volume II: Since 1865*, (Wadsworth Publishing, 2013)
- Conlin, Joseph R., *The American Past: A Survey of American History, Volume II: Since 1865*, (Wadsworth Publishing, 2013)
- Cox, Michael, Stokes, Doug, *US Foreign Policy: Second edition*, (Oxford University Press, 2012)
- DeConde, Alexander, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, (Scribner 2nd Ed., 1971).
- Downs, Jacques M., "American Merchants and the China Opium Trade, 1800-1840", *The Business History Review*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 1968
- Downs, Jacques M., Grant, Frederic D. Jr., *The Golden Ghetto: The American Commercial Community at Canton and the Shaping of American China Policy, 1784-1844*, (Hong Kong University Press, 2015)
- Drucker, Alison R. "The Influence of Western Women on the Anti-Footbinding Movement 1840-1911", *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* Vol. 8, No. 3, *WOMEN IN CHINA: Current Directions in Historical Scholarship* (Fall 1981), pp. 179-199.
- DuBoff, Richard B., "The Telegraph and the Structure of Markets in the United States, 1845-1890," *Research in Economic History*, Vol. 8 (Greenwich, CT.: JAI Press, 1983)
- Dulles, Foster R., *The Old China Trade* (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1930)
- Dunne, Michael, "US Foreign Relations in the Twentieth Century: From World Power to Global Hegemony", *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 76, No. 1 (Jan.2000)
- Ekirch, *Ideals, Ideas and American Diplomacy*, (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966)
- Evans, David C., Peattie, Mark R., *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy 1887-1941*, (Naval Institute Press, 2012)
- Feifer, George, *Breaking Open Japan: Commodore Perry, Lord Abe, and American Imperialism in 1853*, 1st Ed., (Smithsonian, 2006)
- Ferreiro, Larrie D., "Mahan and the "English Club" of Lima, Peru: The Genesis of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*", *The Journal of Military History*, Volume 72, Number 3, 2008
- Fletcher, R. A., *In the Days of The Tall Ships*, (Home Farm Books, 2006)
- Gallagher, Charles A., Lippard, Cameron D., *Race and Racism in the United States: An Encyclopaedia of the American Mosaic*, (Greenwood, 2014)
- Gallagher, John, Robinson, Ronald, "The Imperialism of Free Trade", *The Economic History Review*, Second Series, Vol. VI, No. 1
- Gilderhus, Mark T., "Review: Forming an Informal Empire without Colonies: U.S.-Latin American Relations", *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2005)

Griswold, Alfred W., *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938)

Hastedt, Glenn, *Encyclopedia of American Foreign policy*, (Facts on File, 2004)

Herring, George C., *From Colony to Superpower; US Foreign Relations since 1776*, 1st Ed., (Oxford University Press 2011)

Hogan Micheal J., and Paterson Thomas G., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, (Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1991)

Howard, Michael *War and the Liberal Conscience*, (C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd., 2008)

Howe, Christopher, *The Origins of Japanese Trade Supremacy: Development and Technology in Asia from 1540 to the Pacific War*, (University of Chicago Press, 1999)

Ion, Hamish, *American Missionaries, Christian Oyatoi, and Japan, 1859-73*, (UBC Press 2010)

Janin, Hunt, *The India-China Opium Trade in the Nineteenth Century*, (McFarland, 2014)

Kane, Robert, "Who Influenced Whom? A New Perspective on the Relationship between Theodore Roosevelt and Alfred Thayer Mahan", *Saber and Scroll* Volume 3, Issue 4, 2014

Kaplan, Robert D., *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle Against Fate*, (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2013)

Kearns, Gerry, "Geography, geopolitics and empire", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 35, No. 2, 2010, p. 190

Kennan, George F., *American Diplomacy: Sixtieth-Anniversary Expanded Edition*, (University of Chicago Press, 2012)

Kennedy, Paul, "The pivot of history", *The Guardian*, 19th of June 2004

Kissinger, Henry A., "Reflections on American Diplomacy" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Oct. 1956)

Kublin, Hyman, "The "Modern" Army of Early Meiji Japan", *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Nov. 1949)

LaFeber, Walter, *The American Age: U.S. Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad*, Vol. 1. (W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1994)

LaFeber, Walter, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations Volume II: The American Search for Opportunity 1865-1913*, (Cambridge University Press, 1995)

LaFeber, Walter, *The Clash: U.S.-Japanese Relations Throughout History* (W. W. Norton & Company; New York, 1997)

Mackinder, Halford J., "The Geographic Pivot of History", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 170, No. 4, 2004, 1904.

Mackinder, Halford J., *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, (Faber & Faber, 2014)

Mahan, Alfred T., *From Sail to Steam: Recollections of Naval Life*, New York: Da Capo Press, 1968

McOmie, W., *The Opening of Japan 1853–1855. A Comparative Study of the American, British, Dutch and Russian Naval Expeditions to Compel the Tokugawa Shogunate to Conclude Treaties and Open Ports to Their Ships* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2006)

Merck, Frederick, *Manifest Destiny and Mission*, (Vintage Books, New York, 1963)

Miners, Norman, "Building the Kowloon-Canton-Hankow Railway", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch*, Vol. 46 (2006)

Miyajima, Shigeki, Weber, Warren E., "A Comparison of National Banks in Japan and the United States between 1872 and 1885", *Monetary and Economic Studies*, (2001)

Morgenthau, H. J., 'The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy: The National Interest vs. Moral Abstraction', *American Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. XLIV, No. 4, 1950

Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1979)

Ninkovich, Frank, "Ideology, the Open Door, and Foreign Policy", *Journal of The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations*, Volume 6, Issue 4, September 1982

Nish, Ian, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War*, (Routledge, 1985)

Osgood, Robert E., *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations; The Great Transformation of the Twentieth Century*, (Chicago University Press, Chicago 1964)

Paullin, Charles O., "The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Sep. 1910)

Peattie, Mark R., *Akiyama Saneyuki and the Emergence of Modern Japanese Naval Doctrine*, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 1977

Peter, Mauch, Sugita, Yoneyuki, Van Sant, John, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Japan Relations (Historical Dictionaries of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations)*, (Scarecrow Press, 2007)

Pletcher, David M., *The Diplomacy of Involvement: American Economic Expansion Across the Pacific, 1784-1900*, (University of Missouri, 2001)

Podmore, William, *British Foreign Policy since 1870*, (XLibris; 1st Ed., 2008)

Ratzel, Friedrich, *Die Erde und das Leben. Eine vergleichende Erdkunde*, (Vero Verlag, 2015)

Ropp, Theodore, 'Continental Doctrines of Sea Power', in *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, (Princeton University Press 1986)

Sloan, Geoffrey R., "Sir Halford J. Mackinder: The Heartland Theory Then and Now," in *Geopolitics, Geography and Strategy*, (Frank Cass, London, 1999)

Sloan, Geoffrey R., *Geopolitics in United States Strategic Policy 1890-1987* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988)

Slotkin, Richard, "Nostalgia and Progress: Theodore Roosevelt's Myth of the Frontier", *American Quarterly* Vol. 33, No. 5, Special Issue: American Culture and the American Frontier, 1981

Southerton, Donald G., *Colorado's Henry Collbran and the Roots of Early Korean Entrepreneurialism*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012

Sumida Jon T., "Geography, Technology and British Naval Strategy in the Dreadnought Era", *Naval War College Review*, 2006 59 (3)

Swift, John W., Hodgkinson, P., and Woodhouse Samuel W., *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jan. 1939)

Teng, Yuan C., "Reverend Issachar Jacox Roberts and the Taiping Rebellion", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Nov. 1963), p. 57.

Torreón, Barbara S., "Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798-2016", *Congressional Research Service*, 2017.

van Oss, Salomon F., *American Railroads and British Investors*, (Effingham and Wilson, London 1893)

Varg, Paul A., "The Myth of the China Market, 1890-1914", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 73, No. 3 (Feb. 1968)

Vest, George G., "Objections to Annexing the Philippines" *The North American Review*, Vol. 168, No. 506 (Jan. 1899)

Walton, Dale, *Geopolitics and the Great Powers in the 21st Century: Multipolarity and the Revolution in Strategic Perspective*, 1st ed., (Routledge, 2007)

Warner, Charles D., *A Library of the World's Best Literature - Ancient and Modern - Vol. XIV*, (Cosimo, Inc., 2008)

Welch, Jr. Richard E., "American Public Opinion and the Purchase of Russian America", *The American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Dec. 1958)

Williams, William A., *Empire as a Way of Life*, (Ig Publishing, 2006)

Williams, William A., *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, (W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1959)

6.3 Online sources

Asia for Educators, “Japan and the West: The Meiji Restoration (1868-1912)” http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/main_pop/kpct/kp_meiji.htm

Consulate General of Japan in New York, “The Kanrin Maru: the Japanese Ship that Crossed the Pacific” <http://www.ny.us.emb-japan.go.jp/150th/html/kanrinmaruE.htm>

Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Opium Trade”, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/opium-trade>

Foreign Policy Association “How US foreign policy is made”, http://fpa.org/features/index.cfm?act=feature&announcement_id=45&show_sidebar=0

Jack Farchy, James Kyngé, Chris Campbell and David Blood “One belt, one road A ribbon of road, rail and energy projects to help increase trade, Financial Times, 14th September 2016.” <https://ig.ft.com/sites/special-reports/one-belt-one-road/>

Naval History and Heritage Command, “US Ship Force Levels 1886-present”, <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/us-ship-force-levels.html#1910>

Office of the Historian “Chinese Immigration and the Chinese Exclusion Acts”, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/chinese-immigration>

Office of the Historian, “French Alliance, French Assistance, and European Diplomacy during the American Revolution, 1778–1782”, , <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1776-1783/french-alliance>

Office of the Historian, “Purchase of Alaska, 1867”, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/alaska-purchase>

Office of the United States Trade Representative, “The Peoples Republic of China”, <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/china-mongolia-taiwan/peoples-republic-china>

Philip Hoffman, “Why Did Western Europe Dominate the Globe?”, <http://www.caltech.edu/news/why-did-western-europe-dominate-globe-47696>

Press Trust of India, “China rebuilt itself with money drained out of US: Donald Trump”, New York March 27, 2016, http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/china-rebuilt-itself-with-money-drained-out-of-us-donald-trump-116032700385_1.html

Suzanne Daley, “Lost in Nicaragua, a Chinese Tycoon's Canal Project”, New York Times, 3rd April 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/04/world/americas/nicaragua-canal-chinese-tycoon.html>

United Nations Statistics Division, *International Trade Statistics, 1900 – 1960*, Table XXIV - 1 World Exports by Provenance and Destination: 1900, 1913, 1928, 1935, 1938, 1948, 1953 AND 1959 <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/Historical%20data%201900-1960.pdf>

US Department of the Treasury, “Major Foreign Holders of Treasury Securities (in billions of dollars)” <http://ticdata.treasury.gov/Publish/mfhhis01.txt>

Acknowledgements

I would like to firstly thank Ferry de Goey for guiding and correcting my thesis through these many months of work. Secondly, I would like to thank my colleagues Chris Jones and James Reidy for their academic support.