INTRODUCTION

“We do have to get tough on China….This country manipulates its currency to our disadvantage, they engage in broad-based intellectual property theft, industrial espionage….What we do get in return from them? Well, we get tainted pet food, we get lead-laced toys, we get polluted pharmaceuticals."

--Hillary Rodham Clinton, May 4, 2008
(During Presidential Election Campaign)

When We were called Sick man of Asia,
   We were called The Peril.
When We are billed to be the next Superpower,
   We are called The threat.
   …

When We build our industries,
   You called us Polluters.
When we sell you goods,
   You blame us for global warming.
   …

When We buy oil,
   You called that exploitation and Genocide.
   When You fight for oil,
   You called that Liberation.
   …

Why do you hate us so much?
   …
   ---- A Chinese Poem
   By A Silent, Silent Chinese

The end of the Cold War in the 1990s had various impacts on international relations. The Soviet Union’s collapse in early 1990s transformed the global political system from bipolarity to unipolarity. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States remained the sole super power. This development started a debate over the possible shape of new world order after the end of the cold war and also about the possible international

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1 Quoted in John Pomfret, ‘Hillary’s China-Bashing’,
http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/postglobal/pomfretschina/2008/05/why_we_need_china.html
Accessed on August 25, 2011


3 The term ‘Cold War’ refers to the war like situation between the United States and the Soviet Union during the period of 1946-1991, in which there was no actual war between them but the world always remained in the condition of uncertainty, fear and apprehension of outbreak of war.

4 The term ‘New World Order’ refers to any period of history evidencing a dramatic change in world political thought and the balance of power. Since the beginning of the 20th Century, the world has experienced two world orders till the end of the cold war. The first world order was ‘Versailles System’ which was established after the First World War. The Second world order was established after the end of the second world war which was named as ‘Yalta System’. However, after the end of the cold war, although the United States claimed that the end of the cold war brought forth a new world order with the US primacy, the rest of the world is yet to settle on the shape and nature of the world order in the post cold war period.

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political scenarios in the 21st century. Some ambitious think tanks of the US foreign policy makers started projecting the new century as ‘American Century’.

On the other hand, People’s Republic of China’s emergence as a great power after the demolition of the Soviet Union was being regarded as a major and significant development in the post cold war period. China’s economic reforms have generated rapid and continuous economic growth and enhanced its military might as well, which resulted in Beijing’s ambitious plan to project itself as a great power at the global level. China’s remarkable economic recovery in the past three decades has gained considerable world attention. With record economic growth rates, China has become a major recipient of the world’s investment capital. Today China is more integrated with regional and global political and economic systems. This newly acquired wealth, including unprecedented foreign reserves, has provided Beijing the opportunity to embark on a military modernization and build-up program, to inject new life into its space program and to slowly rise to world leadership status.

China’s such increasing influence and strength compelled the scholars of international politics to rethink on their predictions about the possible world order in 21st century which might result in an ‘Asian Century.’

At the same time, with China’s development, there has been growing uneasiness in the United States about the implications of China's increasing economic and military power and its multilateral relations with nations across the world. The United States considers China as a peer competitor and a threat for its hegemonic influence all over the world. China claims to be a non-threatening power, seeking harmonious relations with the world. But the United States claims that China’s development is not peaceful. The United States argues that an authoritarian, economically successful China with a modernized military could be a source of instability and possible conflict. It perceives China as a major threat for the US, either as a civilization or as an economic and military power. These claims create the dilemma for the political analysts to reach on any consensus about the shape of world order.

The reason for the US concerns mainly arises from its hegemonic status in the world politics and the ideological incompatibility of China with the Western value system. China’s stunning economic growth has convinced the West that it is just a matter of time until China becomes a world superpower. But its ideological orientation makes China a revolutionary
power that is perceived to be threatening both to the United States’ status and global structure.

In this background, this work attempts to study harmonic and hegemonic nature of the bilateral relations between the United States and China and also seeks to understand the possible shape of the world order in coming decades because how China and the United States manage their relationship, will affect the fortunes of many states throughout the world.

This work is divided into six chapters. The first chapter initially discusses the nature of contemporary international politics and later it details the evolution of China-US relations during the cold war period. The section on contemporary international politics talks about the perception regarding the world order in the post cold war period and also about the possible shape and nature of China-US relations in this period. Later this chapter goes on to discuss the evolution of China-US relations during the cold war period. This section briefly discusses the Second World War and then the developments which took place after the end of the Second World War. This section explains the ups and downs of the relations among the United States, the Soviet Union and China during this phase.

The second chapter deals with the United States’ security strategy and its multilateral relations in the post cold war era. This chapter seeks to understand the policies and strategies of the United States to maintain its primacy and hegemony in this period. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section talks about the United States’ foreign policy, the second section is about the US defense policy, the third section is about US economic policy and the fourth section is about the US climate policy in this era. Apart from discussing the US policies in these fields, these sections also discuss US multilateral relations relating to these areas.

Likewise, the third chapter explains China’s security strategy and its multilateral relations in the post cold war era. This chapter seeks to understand the policies and strategies of China in order to emerge as a major power and pose a challenge for the US hegemony at global level. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section talks about China’s foreign policy, the second section is about China’s defense policy, the third section is about China’s economic policy and the fourth section is about China’s climate policy in this era. Apart from discussing China’s policies in these fields, these sections also discuss China’s multilateral relations also.
The fourth chapter discusses exclusively about the China-US relations in the post cold war era and the factors of confrontation and cooperation between them. This chapter deals with the relationship between both countries in the areas of foreign policy, defense field, economic policies and human rights.

The fifth chapter is about the presence of the United States and China in the Asia-Pacific region. This chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section is about the United States presence in Asia-Pacific region. The second section deals with China’s presence in Asia-Pacific region. The third section brings India also in both nations’ game plan in this region and is devoted to the presence of India, China and the USA in Asia-Pacific. The first major section which deals with the presence of United States in Asia-Pacific is divided into three sub-sections. These sub-sections explain the US presence in Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia. Likewise, the second major section on the presence of China in Asia-Pacific is also divided into three sub-sections which talk about China’s presence in Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia.

The sixth chapter is the last and concluding chapter that sums up the findings of the study and records the conclusions drawn on the basis of the facts and arguments as analyzed and revealed in the text.