

# EMPIRE TENDENCIES OF USA WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ASIA-PACIFIC POLICY AND CHINA: AN ANALYSIS OF TRUMP DOCTRINE\*

ABD'nin İmparatorluk Yönelimi Bağlamında Asya-Pasifik Politikası ve Çin:  
Trump Doktrini Üzerinden Bir Okuma

**Kadir Ertaç ÇELİK\*\***  
**Doğacan BAŞARAN\*\*\***

## Abstract

*The end of the Cold War led to a unipolar New World Order under the American leadership. However, the USA military interventions attracted negative reactions from international society, prompting a search for the balance of power against USA. It has been observed that China's strategical coalitions it guides, has turned Beijing into a centre of attraction. Experts began to discuss China as a new hegemonic actor. In this regard, the National Security Strategy Document of the Trump Administration which is also referred to as the Trump Doctrine reflects the USA concerns. The article analyses the USA foreign policy towards Asia-Pacific and China based on this doctrine.*

**Keywords:** Empire, Trump Doctrine, Foreign Policy, Asia-Pacific, China.

## Öz

*Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesi, tek kutuplu Yeni Dünya Düzeni'nin ortaya çıkmasına yol açmış ve bu düzen, bir Amerikan Düzeni olarak şekillenmiştir. Ancak Soğuk Savaş sonrasında ABD'nin yaptığı operasyonlar, uluslararası toplumun tepkisini çekmiş ve güç dengesi arayışlarına sebep olmuştur. Bu bağlamda Çin'in öncülük ettiği stratejik ittifakların, Pekin'i bir çekim merkezine dönüştürdüğü görülmektedir. Bu durum, Çin'in yeni hegemon aktöre dönüşebileceğinin tartışılmasına yol açmıştır. Bu tartışmalar sebebiyle Washington, küresel liderliğinin sürdürülebilirliğine ilişkin endişe duymuştur. Söz konusu endişenin dış politikaya yansımaları anlamında, Trump Doktrini olarak da tanımlanan Trump döneminin ilk Ulusal Güvenlik Strateji Belgesi oldukça önemlidir. Bu makalede de Trump Doktrini üzerinden ABD'nin Asya-Pasifik ve Çin politikası ele alınmaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İmparatorluk, Trump Doktrini, Dış Politika, Asya-Pasifik, Çin.

---

\* Received on: 08.08.2019 – Accepted on: 05.09.2019

\*\* Research Assisant, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, International Relations Department, e-mail: kadir.celik@hbv.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0002-7856-9411.

\*\*\* PhD Candidate, Trakya University, Social Sciences Institute, International Relations Department, e-mail: basarandogacan@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-5055-5069.

## Introduction

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, The USA began to direct this ideological victory, in accordance with its geopolitical aims and in this context, the American hegemony, which began to prosper after the Second World War, reached its climax as the sole superior power in the global order by the end of the Cold War.<sup>1</sup> Being a superior power, served the global empire vision of the United States.

According to the USA geopolitics experts, the extinction of the Soviet Union- which was considered a serious menace and labelled as “other” after Cold War-brought the Eurasian geography to the forefront hence the USA foreign policy developed strategies on dominating this region as a prize for the formation of monopolar world order.

Even though the expulsion of the USA order to Central Asia and the Middle East, began with the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, *the Rising China* reality in Pacific geography became the important development that detracted the USA for global supremacy. As a result, the international system shifted from the monopolar structure formed after the Cold War, to a multipolar one.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1970s, China began to deter from Mao’s self-enclosed-revolutionist politics and embraced capitalism, prompting huge economic growth in a short span of time. The Beijing government won the price of being included in the global capitalist order and this growth provided China with a large economic power in the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> As a natural result, the economic rise of China and the improving situation actuated discussions regarding whether Beijing was an applicant to Washington in early 2000 or not. The Chinese foreign policy is structured based on the sensitivity that, an economic giant isn’t a political dwarf. Therefore, China lead’s as an architect of initiatives such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), BRICS and the New Silk Road which have been considered as the first steps to creating a global hegemony.

Thus, China's growth attracts the attention of Washington which perceives a global empire vision and assessments related to the future of China's expansions presented in the *USA National Security Strategy Documents*.

This study aims to focus on the United States Pacific tendencies and China's policy which were mentioned in the first National Security Strategy of the Trump administration published on 18th December 2017. The first section of the article, focuses on the *global empire tendencies of the US*, developing emphases on the rising importance of Pacific geography. The second section of the article deliberates on China's ascent, which is seen as a competitor to the United States global dominance. This growth began in the 1970s and took a different course after the 1990s due to desires of the SCO, BRICS and Belt and Road Initiatives which have been analysed as the possible/potential Chinese hegemony liaisons. The last section of the article focuses on Trump's Doctrine and the reflections of China's salient rise in the USA National Security Strategy Document.

## **The United States Pacific Policy as Part of USA Hegemony and Empire Tendency after the Cold War**

### *Imperial tendencies in American foreign policy*

The term imperial, which means '*imperium*' in Latin, has been used to illustrate an international structure created from different national colours by overstepping dynamic borders shaped like a rainbow.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, when the term imperial is used; a centre which dominates in a system, existence of units in the mean of hierarchical, is mentioned<sup>5</sup> and domination relations in system are described. Therefore, to handle Immanuel Wallerstein's concept which handles modern capitalist institutionalisation duration as

---

4 Hakan Tunç, *Wallerstein'e Göre Modern Dünya-Sistemi*, Beykent Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (Unpublished Master Thesis), İstanbul 2010, p. 12.

5 Stephen Howe, *İmparatorluk*, trans. Sinem Gül, Dost Yayınevi, Ankara 2012, p. 34-35.

a modern world- system and evaluates the history as a scene of empires, will be a consistent perspective.

As mentioned above, the imperial structure is based on the prolongation capacity of the international system accepted by the sovereign state's domination on the system on behalf of other actors. Consequently, the imperial structure on prolongation of power to other actors has a direct relation with armament and closely relates to preclusion capacity of alliances.<sup>6</sup> When foreign policy activities of the USA were analysed after the Cold War it is understood that it displayed an imperial reflex and wanted to set an imperial order by tyrannizing the system through forceful measures. The topic of this study is consent-domination dilemma occurring during turning the global hegemony into a global imperial tendency.

The implementation of the USA power in the Bosnian War with the intention of creating peace is evaluated as a response to continuing the system and is accepted as a legitimate cause by the international public opinion.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the USA hegemonial order's main feature is to prove its capacity in order to endure the system by organising rules and regulations within the international system. According to Stephen Howe, the perception portrayed the UAS as an informal empire.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, John Bellamy Foster explains the imperial structure of 21<sup>st</sup> century as a new speculative term, including political sciences, he furthers identifies imperialism as a hegemonial leadership which is used for system's continuation based on free market economy and armament.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the domination approach in imperialism causes discussions and consent which are evident. In the end, achievement of global superiority by the USA following the Cold War by dominating and tyrannising the system is a manifestation of becoming an empire

---

6 Kemal Çiftçi, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında ABD: Rızaya Dayalı Hegemonyadan İmparatorluk Düzenine" *ZKÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 5(10), 2009, p. 203-219.

7 Michael Hardt-Antonio Negri, *İmparatorluk*. trans. Abdullah Yılmaz, Ayrıntı Yayınları, İstanbul 2012, p. 91.

8 Howe, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

9 John Bellamy Foster, *Emperyalizmin Yeniden Keşfi*, trans. Çiğdem Çidemli, Divan Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2008, p. 27.

which leads to criticising the USA as a power abuser.

The abuse of power concerted in Afghanistan and Iraq has directed other actors in the system for a search to balance the USA power.<sup>10</sup> Historically looking at the USA power balance, it enhances the search for hegemony examples in history. After evaluating these examples, it is evident that a power balance springs to hinder demands of governments that generally tyrannises the system, efficient in its politics, economic and military turning them into a hegemon actor. During the Second World War, the USA hegemony institutionalised to prevent the global imperial tendency of the German Nazi leadership.

However, during the 21st century, as the USA aggression and imperial tendencies became prominent, the need for a new balance of power was evident. In this context, experts term China as the rival of the US, because of its role within the imperial orientation. In this context, the USA focuses on the Pacific and Chinese policies in order to maintain its global dominance and change its hegemonic system to an imperial institute.

### ***The rising importance of the Pacific region in Us imperial tendency***

In recent years, international relations literature has been dominated by debates in regards to global empire orientation by the USA. Nonetheless, the actors within the international system are in search of a new balance of power which will advocate the relation to the USA response to global policies of dominance. For that reason, China is considered a rival of the USA's position in terms of the balance of power, expected to be established against the American supremacy thence, China stands out as a strong actor with the ability to create hegemony. China's hegemonic potential necessitates the USA to succeed in its policies regarding Pacific geography. Focussing on the international ground, it is obvious that

---

10 Betül Karagöz Yerdelen, "Birleşmiş Milletler'in 70. Yılında Devletlerin İnsani Sorumluluğu ve İnsani Müdahale Sorunsalı", *Küresel Yönetişim, Güvenlik ve Aktörler: 70. Yılında BM*, Tasam Yayınları, İstanbul 2016, p. 51-52.

the playground of the struggle for global domination is shifting from the Middle East to the Pacific due to China's remarkable rise.<sup>11</sup> In this context, the United States needs to reduce China and Russia's effectiveness within the Pacific region in order to establish a global imperial strategy from its global hegemony.<sup>12</sup>

The Asia-Pacific region plays a major role within the geographical sphere consisting of the coastal and oceanic states.<sup>13</sup> From a wider perspective, it is evident that Southeast Asia's region is a community-based island. Today, the region yields great dynamism within the economy despite the serious political uncertainties related to the border issues arising from the states of the islands mentioned above. The political uncertainties experienced the region, results in the question on the effect of economic dynamism.<sup>14</sup>

The increase in wealth and prosperity of the states is due to economic status and fuel the national ambitions of these states. As a result, the rise of mass nationalisms attracts attention within the Pacific countries. The growing political uncertainties associated with the mass nationalisms mentioned in the Pacific region enhances the stability of the region.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the nuclear activities conducted by North Korea draws the world's attention to the region by often enchasing international society. The reasons mentioned above led Zbigniew Brzezinski to describe the region as a political volcano where large economic growth activities take place.

Although Brzezinski has defined the region as a political volcano by revealing its conflict potentials in the geography, China

---

11 Dođacan Bařaran, *Uluslararası Güç İliřkileri Bađlamında İkinci Dünya Savařı Sonrası Hegemonik Mücadelelerin İncelenmesi*, Giresun Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (Unpublished Master Thesis), Giresun 2017, p. 92.

12 Kaan Yiđenođlu, "İkinci Dünya Savařından Günümüze Deđişen Güç Dengeleri ve ABD'nin Pasifik Bölgesi Stratejisi: Trans-Pasifik Ortaklıđı Örneđi", *Akademik Bakıř Dergisi*, 58, 2016, p. 339.

13 Ömer Atageñç, "Çin ve Hindistan'ın Deniz Stratejisi ve Hint Okyanusu'nda Güç Mücadelesi", *Bilge Strateji*, 4(6), 2012, p. 139.

14 Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Büyük Satranç Tahtası*, trans. Yelda Türedi, İnkılap Yayınları, Ankara 2014, p. 215-216.

15 *Ibid.*

has made it clear that it may form the political side of hegemony in this region with political alliances which it pioneered. Beijing's growing regional role also increases the importance of the USA military presence in South Korea and Japan; because the USA has a global empire tendency in the Pacific. These are South Korea and Japan. hence, the USA willing to balance China's power within the region by keeping its alliance with these two countries limiting China's cooperation in a global sense.<sup>16</sup>

China's geopolitical convergence is one of the priority targets of the United States, though the Washington administration intends to limit China using peaceful means by including China into international cooperation. The United States believes that, the Malacca Strait should be controlled in terms of enclosing China, and this situation enchafes China.<sup>17</sup> The first foreign visit of the former USA President Barack Obama, who initiated the gradual withdrawal of the United States from the Middle East, carried out to the countries surrounding the Strait of Malacca can be seen as an example.<sup>18</sup> In terms of USA's operations in the Pacific, Beijing thinks that the USA is provocative. The Beijing administration is directly involved with the USA military presence in South Korea and Japan; and indirectly with Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia.<sup>19</sup> It is obvious that the USA attempted to construct a regional hegemony Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in this geographic region through the countries where it indirectly intervened its containment strategy.<sup>20</sup>

As a result, if the USA wants to succeed in its empire tendency in the direction of global domination, it will try to maintain its

---

16 Brzezinski, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

17 Kailash K. Prsaad, "The Limits of Hegemony: China's Troubled Assertiveness in the Asia Pacific", *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 4 November 2014, p. 63-78.

18 Engin Akçay-Özdemir Akbal, "ABD Güvenlik Politikasında Söylem ve Pratik", *Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 11(22), 2013, p. 9; Fuad Halilov, "Amerika Çin Etrafındaki Çemberi Daraltıyor", *TASAM*, [http://www.tasam.org/tr-TR/Icerik/4931/amerika\\_cin\\_etrfindaki\\_cemberi\\_daraltiyor](http://www.tasam.org/tr-TR/Icerik/4931/amerika_cin_etrfindaki_cemberi_daraltiyor), (Date of Accession: 26.01.2018).

19 Ersin Dedekoca, "Güçlenerek Artan Japonya-ABD İlişkileri", *Academia*, <https://bit.ly/2Hv5boi>, (Date of Accession: 26.01.2018).

20 Mark Beeson, "American Hegemony and Regionalism: The Rise of East Asia and the End of the Asia-Pacific", *Geopolitics*, 11(4), 2006, p. 541-560.

presence in Japan and South Korea and will face China due to Taiwan and North Korea. For these reasons, it will not be an exaggerated prediction in the coming period to expect the New Cold War as a hot-war zone to be Asia-Pacific.<sup>21</sup>

## **The Rise of China Against USA Imperial Tendency and the New Global Power Balance**

### ***Rising China case***

America's value around reshaping of the international system is essentially based on the idea of Pax-Americana, which takes on an absolute hegemonic mindset with the Bush administration.<sup>22</sup> The transformation of the USA hegemony into this kind of aggressive mentality has pushed other international actors to search for a balancing power against the US. There has been a debate about China being the only actor threatening the global leadership of the United States as a result of these searches. Thus, most the official statements have not been explicitly stated, the main challenge on the United States and its Pacific allies come from China, who are able to rival the United States with its economic rise and military potential.<sup>23</sup>

In China's policy activities, developed in parallel with the pushing of ideology, and China's foreign policy, in contrast to the imperialist character of American foreign policy, has been defined in the context of a status quo as "Peaceful Ascension" term (Çakmak, 2011: 123).

The concept of peaceful ascension was first used by Hu Jintao in 2003 and later developed by Zheng Bijian.<sup>24</sup> This discourse in relation to Bijian's perspective is based on the continuation of

---

21 Başaran, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

22 Abdullah Özkan, *21. Yüzyılda ABD'nin Küresel Stratejileri*, TASAM Yayınları, İstanbul 2006, p. 115.

23 Stephen W. Hook-John Spainer, *Amerikan Dış Politikası İkinci Dünya Savaşından Günümüze*, trans. Özge Zihnioglu, İnkılap Kitabevi Yayınları, İstanbul 2016, p. 363.

24 Rana Mitter, *Modern Çin*, trans. İnci Öztürk, Dost Yayınevi, Ankara 2012, p. 9.

political and economic reforms for the peaceful rise of China and the provision of cultural support. Nowadays, it is seen that China's Peaceful Ascension policy is based on 'harmony and development (Akgün, 2015). In this context, China, which rises on the basis of economic growth, increases its financial and economic success with the principles of business ethics, discipline, and social humanism and uses soft power elements within its political tendencies.<sup>25</sup>

Although the peaceful rise of China did not create a rich society from the poor country during the Mao period. In terms of per capita income, this process significantly increased China's GNP making it rich enough to fund other countries (Wasserstrom, 2011: 173). Therefore, by using peaceful diplomacy elements, it is clear that possible hegemony can provide consent. Hence, the Beijing government, being aware of its own potential, by trying to build the foundations of potential hegemony in terms taking steps to obtain the consent of other actors such as the SCO, BRICS and the Belt and Road Initiative.

### ***Shanghai cooperation organization***

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the transformation of the USA into this dominant sovereign actor in Asia has drawn the reaction of Asian states such as China and Russia and has directed these pairs to seek at least a regional balance of American power.<sup>26</sup> The main reason for the establishment of the SCO was the search for the balance against American power.

Beijing and Moscow have voiced the search for multi-polarity against the United States' unipolar world order,<sup>27</sup> this discourse was established with the participation of three Central Asian countries

---

25 Gosal Anthara Singh, "China's Soft Power Projection Across the Oceans", *Maritime Affairs: Journal of National Maritime Foundation of India*, 12(1), 2016, p. 26.

26 Göktürk Tüysüzöğlü, "Çok Kutupluluk Tartışmaları ve Karadeniz Havzası'nın Bölgesel Görünümü", *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi*, 8(3), 2013, p. 249.

27 Muharrem Ekşi, "The Bush Administration Fiasco from Hegemony to Empire and The Obama Restoration", *Bilge Strateji*, 2(2), Spring 2010, p. 129.

known as the Shanghai Five.<sup>28</sup> This creation under the leadership of Russia and China has a sensitivity to ensure that the security of the region and the organization have demonstrated a new global vision which includes the disarmament and cooperation related to security. The Shanghai Five was founded with the support of three Central Asian countries.

In 1996, the Shanghai Five founded in Shanghai,<sup>29</sup> between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, was later transformed into the SCO with an agreement signed with Uzbekistan in 2001.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to Uzbekistan's membership, India and Pakistan have become the next two members while Iran and Mongolia have joined the organization with the status of "observer member". Today this organization has an area of 37 million square kilometers while it constitutes 40% of the world's population. The organization also has two permanent members of the UN Security Council and half of the countries with nuclear power in the world.<sup>31</sup>

Despite SCO's characteristics, it safe to say that, it less successful in terms of institutionalization. this is quite important because the organization was transformed into a symbol that reflects the search for multi-polarity against the dictation of the American order, rather than the institutional depth. SCO's weakness has not surfaced due to the fact that it implied a message of "Don't Interfere with the Cases of our Continent" to the USA. This structure can be equally likened to "Monroe Doctrine" which prohibited the interference of the USA in other continents. Regardless of its demands.<sup>32</sup> China turns out to be irrelevant in this study by serving as the first example in terms of transforming into an actor capable of providing consent to the anti-USA alliances in the 21st century.

---

28 Selçuk Çolakoğlu, "Şangay İşbirliği Örgütü'nün Geleceği ve Çin", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 1(1), Spring 2004, p. 176; Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Orta Asya'da Güvenlik Sorunları", *Türkiyat Araştırmaları*, 1(1), 2004, p. 89.

29 *Ibid.*

30 "About", *Shangai Cooperation Organization*, [http://eng.sectSCO.org/about\\_sco/](http://eng.sectSCO.org/about_sco/), (Date of Accession: 23.03.2018).

31 Esm'e Özdaşlı, "Çin ve Rusya Federasyonu'nun Perspektifinden Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü", *Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 4(6), 2012, p. 120.

32 Başaran, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

## **BRICS**

BRICS structure is the only key project China ever established, within the global sphere. It's defined as the economic, social and political project with country members: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

Although the BRICS occupy 40% of the world's population, they are also well strategically positioned in terms of their geographical locations. In this context, the BRICS members appear to have a massive organizational impact capacity.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, it draws more attention as an example as a reference to the Chinese power over the global system compared to the SCO.<sup>34</sup>

The key example of China's vision of global leadership is that the cooperation of BRICS countries is not limited to the member countries. BRICS members carry out trade with developing countries, which have low-income levels and apply foreign direct investment and development finance. In particular, China has become the most important trading partner in these countries because it has become a factory for developing countries. This situation is similar to the Marshall Plan practice.

During the BRICS's sixth summit in Brazil, the organization announced a "New Development Bank" in Shanghai, though its headquarters is based in China so as the case relation with SCO, this showcase's the effectiveness of Beijing in institutionalization and reflects on China's leadership status.<sup>35</sup> In addition, the BRICS countries will stand against the USA hegemony and reduce their commitment to the dollar in the long run. With that said, China's BRICS structure reveals that it will challenge the American

---

33 Prsaad, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

34 Sibel Turan, "Değişen Dengeler Işığında Orta Asya'daki Küresel ve Bölgesel Güç Odakları Üzerine Bir İnceleme", *II. Sosyal Bilimciler Kongresi*, <http://www.bilgesam.org/Images/Dokumanlar/0-319-2014081424sosbilkongre71.pdf>, (Date of Accession: 29.07.2019), p. 864.

35 "Press Releases: Sixth BRICS Summit Fortaleza Declaration", *BRICS*, <http://BRICS6.itamaraty.gov.br/media2/press-releases/214-sixth-BRICS-summit-fortaleza-declaration>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2018).

supremacy and become the architect of the emerging multi-polar world.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Belt and Road Initiative***

In recent years, the rapprochement between Beijing and Moscow based on anti-USA is observed. SCO and BRICS projects were as a result of these rapprochements. On the other hand, they have proven not to be strong enough to provide a global alternative to the American hegemony. Thus, to establish a new world order for Beijing, it is of the great importance of expanding the alliance with the participation of many countries in the global sense by maintaining the alliance with Russia. In this sense, China with the effect of its own economic growth has made efforts by becoming the leader of the new multi-polar new world order and started the initiative of reviving the historic Silk Road, with the consideration to establish a global trade network.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, during his visit to Kazakhstan in 2013, laid out the pillars of the initiative, dubbed as the New Silk Road project.<sup>37</sup> The Silk Road, which traditionally begun from China to Europe and the Red Sea through Anatolia and the Mediterranean to Africa, is now being pushed forth by China as a hegemonic model. The modern Silk Road project is likened to the Marshall Plan, which was implemented by various circles in order to restore post-WWII Europe.<sup>38</sup> The Iron Silk Road project aims to create a global economic network through the interconnection of various countries by rail. For this reason, the strategies applied in the Chinese Foreign Policy recently are also defined by the term of railway diplomacy. The New Silk Road Strategy, with outstanding strategies implemented by China in line with its global leadership

---

36 Michael A. Glosny, "China and the BRICS: A Real (But Limited) Partnership in a Unipolar World", *Polity*, 42(1), January 2010, p. 129.

37 Tim Summers, "China's 'New Silk Roads': Sub-National Regions and Networks of Global Political Economy", *The World Quarterly*, 37(9), 2016, p. 3.

38 Özlem Zerrin Keyvan, "İpek Yolu Projesinde Türkiye'nin Yeri ve Önemi", *ANKASAM*, <https://ankasam.org/ipek-yolu-projesinde-turkiyenin-yeri-onemi/>, (Date of Accession: 02.09.2018); Nicolo Casarini, "When All Roads Lead to Beijing. Assessing China's New Silk Road and Its Implications for Europe", *The International Spectator*, 51(4), 2016, p. 95.

goal, aims for Chinese leadership in world trade with the creation of a global network. China's attempt to build its own hegemony in this way disturbs Washington and affects the USA's perception of security.

## **Incidences of Rising China Case to Trump's National Security Strategy Document**

Donald Trump's first National Security Strategy Document was published on the 17th of December 2017. The document implied that, the United States acknowledged the fall of the political hegemony, will be shaped by the use of soft power aspects. Furthermore, the USA will adopt a foreign policy strategy based on the use of hard power elements resulting in the new Cold War.

This document further emphasizes on the values by accentuating the liberal understanding of the American society. The USA foreign policy will be shaped with the sensitivity of protecting these values. An examination regarding the document in question reveals that the USA foreign policy will focus on four countries during Trump's term. The states include China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. The document emphasizes that China and Russia are challenging the USA power, while Iran and North Korea are also destabilizing it by putting the international peace environment at risk.<sup>39</sup> It is evident that two of the four countries mentioned in this document are of the Asia-Pacific states. Thence, this chapter examines the Asia-Pacific region and China in two separate sub-chapters.

## **Asia-Pacific Region in National Security Strategy Document Dated December 2017**

The American National Security Strategy Document refers to the values of Japan and South Korea as the main American allies in the context of Asia-Pacific policy. The document emphasizes on

---

<sup>39</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, December 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2018), p 2.

how both countries are economically developed and have political stability within the region.<sup>40</sup> Hence the USA forging an alliance with Japan and South Korea against North Korea and China, causing threats in the Asia-Pacific region. It is clear that the USA-Japan-South Korea tripartite alliance is based on liberal democracies alliances. Nonetheless, it is uncommon that the USA will strengthen its military presence in the region and will cooperate with Tokyo regarding missile defense systems.<sup>41</sup> This shows that the USA wants to preserve its status quo in the region and it also shows a stick against the revisionist tendencies to disrupt this status quo.

North Korea's nuclear activities are above the USA's revisionist tendencies in the Asia-Pacific region. The document states that North Korea's nuclear activities have been defined by Washington as a bandit state, which threatens the peace in the region. Additionally, the USA will force North Korea to give up its nuclear.<sup>42</sup>

The USA alliance with South Korea against North Korea demonstrates that the Asia-Pacific policy has a strategy that embraces the creation of power balance by co-operating with its allies and that power relations in the region are prominent.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, although the document states that the foreign policy orientations of the USA are based on defending liberal democratic values, it is quite hard to tell if the policy will be addressed within the framework of idealistic concept within international relations theories.

Washington's regional policy is considered within the framework of realist power relations, it is clear that other USA allies in the region other than Japan and South Korea come together in the ASEAN alliance to institutionalize this organizational structure. In this context, it is safe to say that the United States has developed a containment strategy against China through its allies in the region. Nonetheless, it is explicitly stated in the document that

---

40 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

41 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

42 *Ibid.*

43 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

the USA will try to ensure Taiwan's legitimacy on the reduction of China's prestige within regional politics.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the next chapter of this article aims to discuss how the United States perceives China in the National Security Strategy.

## **China in National Security Strategy Document Dated December 2017**

China's increasing impact in the international sphere has developed due to the failure of America within the global power, causing the USA to turn its focus in foreign policy activities towards the Asia-Pacific region. The document state that Obama's second term strategy and Washington supported China's free market economy in the 1970s through self-criticizing USA politics. However, it also emphasizes that China has sabotaged the situation with ambitious policies. Therefore, the document states that China wants to disrupt the status quo in its own favor by using the statist economic model in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>45</sup>

China, wants to turn the status quo in its own favor in the Asia-Pacific region and expand its influence by investing billions of dollars in USA countries to reduce the American effectiveness.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, Beijing has made efforts in terms of achieving its geopolitical goals with its infrastructure investments and trade strategies. In order to turn the status quo in its favor, China is weakening the stability of the region by carrying out activities aimed at its sovereignty in the South China Sea and establishing artificial islands in this sea.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the Beijing government's strategy to expand its sphere of influence is not limited to the Asia-Pacific region and challenges the US's global superiority.<sup>48</sup>

It is evident that China's activities undermine Washington's

---

44 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

45 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

46 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

47 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

48 Kadir Ertaç Çelik-Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Aralık 2017 Ulusal Güvenlik Strateji Belgesi Bağlamında ABD'nin Karadeniz Politikası ve Türkiye" *KARAM*, 15(60), Spring 2018, p. 114.

global supremacy in Europe, Latin American and African activities in the document. According to the document, China is trying to penetrate Europe by using the increasing trade volume strategy<sup>49</sup>. Beijing's administration is prepared to take the lead on the global capitalist system. It is doing so by being active in countries such as El Salvador, Cuba, and Venezuela by establishing an alliance relationship over the authoritarian leftist model based on the Chinese Communist Party tradition governing China.<sup>50</sup>

Consequently, the statements mentioned above, prove that China threatens American supremacy globally. The threat is perceived by the United States because it finds itself in the USA National Security Strategy Document. Nevertheless, the USA is once again reminded of its classic strategy of containment which will result in the Cold War in the long run. As described in the White House document. In addition, Japan and South Korea, have established strategies to improve relations with states e.g Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Australia.

## **Conclusion**

After the Cold War, the United States intervened with the Balkans by using the concepts of peace power and humanitarian intervention with the demands of the international community. Although the United States attitude reveals the situation described as Pax-Americana, the case of the Balkans. Concepts such as peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention became legitimate and were abused by Washington in the following years. By the 2000s, the USA moved away from Pax-Americana's hegemonic conception and established an empire orientation based on domination policies. In this context, the Iraq and Afghanistan interventions have been carried by undermining the international law, therefore, the need to balance USA power resulted. Only a quarter of a century has passed since the USA declared itself a single global superpower, thus those who declared the end of history after the Cold War were mistaken.

---

49 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

50 The White House, *op. cit.*, p. 51-52.

Recognizing the search for an international community seeking to establish a balance of power in the face of American aggression, the Beijing administration has demonstrated that it can lead this hegemonic leadership with strategies such as economic capacity as well as strategies developed by the SCO, BRICS and Belt and Road Initiative. China's leadership of the global system inflicted panic to the American foreign policymakers leading them to develop and implement new strategies.

The American strategy was to limit China in previous periods and attract it to broad cooperation within the liberal capitalist system; it was founded based on rasping its global leadership ambitions. However, according to the Americans, Washington was not able to co-operate to limit its ambitions for global leadership, on the contrary, it abused Chinese liberalism and prepared Beijing for the leadership role of the global system. For this reason, the policy of containment in the geopolitical sense has been adapted to limit China since the Obama period. This containment strategy has been detailed in the American National Security Strategy Document during Trump's term. The document predicts the existence of a new Cold War on the Asia-Pacific.

## References

“About”, *Shangai Cooperation Organization*, [http://eng.sectesco.org/about\\_sco/](http://eng.sectesco.org/about_sco/), (Date of Accession: 23.03.2018).

AKÇAY, Engin-Özdemir Akbal, “ABD Güvenlik Politikasında Söylem ve Pratik”, *Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 11(22), 2013, p. 7-29.

AKGÜN, Birol, “Çin İzlenimleri, Bir Ejderin Ayak Sesleri”, *Stratejik Düşünce Enstitüsü*, <http://www.sde.org.tr/tr/kose-yazilari/611/cin-izlenimleri-i-ejderin-ayak-sesleri.aspx>, (Date of Accession: 24.04.2018).

ATAGENÇ, Ömer, “Çin ve Hindistan’ın Deniz Stratejisi ve Hint Okyanusu’nda Güç Mücadelesi”, *Bilge Strateji*, 4(6), 2012, p. 135-167.

BAŞARAN, Doğan, *Uluslararası Güç İlişkileri Bağlamında İkinci Dünya Savaşı Sonrası Hegemonik Mücadelelerin İncelenmesi*, Giresun Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (Unpublished Master Thesis), Giresun 2017.

BEESON, Mark, “American Hegemony and Regionalism: The Rise of East Asia and the End of the Asia-Pacific”, *Geopolitics*, 11(4), 2006, p. 541-560.

*BRICS*, <http://BRICS6.itamaraty.gov.br/media2/press-releases/214-sixth-BRICS-summit-fortaleza-declaration>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2018).

BRZEZINSKI, Zbigniew, *Büyük Satranç Tahtası*, trans. Yelda Türedi, İnkılap Yayınları, Ankara 2014.

CASARINI, Nicolo, “When All Roads Lead to Beijing: Assessing China’s New Silk Road and Its implications for Europe” *The International Spectator*, 51(4), 2016, p. 95-108.

ÇELİK, Kadir Ertaç-Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Aralık 2017 Ulusal Güvenlik Strateji Belgesi Bağlamında ABD’nin Karadeniz Politikası ve Türkiye” *KARAM*, 15(60), Spring 2018, p. 100-124.

ÇİFTÇİ, Kemal, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında ABD: Rızaya Dayalı Hegemonyadan İmparatorluk Düzenine" *ZKÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 5(10), 2009, p. 203-219.

ÇOLAKOĞLU, Selçuk, "Şhangay İşbirliği Örgütü'nün Geleceği ve Çin", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 1(1), Spring 2004, p.173-197.

DEDEKOCA, Ersin, "Güçlenerek Artan Japonya-ABD İlişkileri", *Academia*, <https://bit.ly/2Hv5boi>, (Date of Accession: 26.01.2018).

EKŞİ, Muharrem, "The Bush Administration Fiasco from Hegemony to Empire and The Obama Restoration", *Bilge Strateji*, 2(2), Spring 2010, p. 115-136.

EROL, Mehmet Seyfettin, "Orta Asya'da Güvenlik Sorunları", *Türkiyat Araştırmaları*, 1(1), 2004, p. 85-112.

FOSTER, John Bellamy, *Emperyalizmin Yeniden Keşfi*, trans. Çiğdem Çidemli, Divan Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2008.

FUKUYAMA, Francis, "The End of History", *National Interest*, 16, 1998, p. 3-18.

GLOSNY, Michael A., China and the BRICS: A Real (But Limited) Partnership in a Unipolar World. *Polity*, 42(1), 2010, s. 100-129.

HALILOV, Fuad, "Amerika Çin Etrafındaki Çemberi Daraltıyor", *TASAM*, [http://www.tasam.org/tr-TR/Icerik/4931/amerika\\_cin\\_etrafindaki\\_cemberi\\_daraltiyor](http://www.tasam.org/tr-TR/Icerik/4931/amerika_cin_etrafindaki_cemberi_daraltiyor), (Date of Accession: 26.01.2018).

HARDT, Michael-Antonio Negri, İmparatorluk, trans. Abdullah Yılmaz, Ayrıntı Yayınları, İstanbul 2012.

HOOK, Stephen W.-John Speiner, *Amerikan Dış Politikası İkinci Dünya Savaşından Günümüze*, trans. Özge Zihnioğlu, İnkılap Kiyabevi Yayınları, İstanbul 2016.

HOWE, Stephen, İmparatorluk, trans. Sinem Gül, Dost Yayınevi, Ankara 2002.

IKKENBERRY, John Gilford, "The Illusion of Geopolitics: The Enduring Power of the Liberal Order" *Foreign Affairs*, 93, 2004, p. 80-90.

KARAGÖZ YERDELEN, Betül, “Birleşmiş Milletler’in 70. Yılında Devletlerin İnsani Sorumluluğu ve İnsani Müdahale Sorunsalı”, *Küresel Yönetişim, Güvenlik ve Aktörler: 70. Yılında BM*, TASAM Yayınları, İstanbul 2016, p. 51-63.

KAVUNCU, Sibel, “Nükleer Silahsızlanma Yolunda START Süreci”, *Bilge Strateji*, 5(8), Spring 2013, p. 119-148.

KEYVAN, Özlem Zerrin, “İpek Yolu Projesinde Türkiye’nin Yeri ve Önemi”, *ANKASAM*, <https://ankasam.org/ipek-yolu-projesinde-turkiyenin-yeri-onemi/>, (Date of Accession: 02.09.2018).

MITTER, Rana, *Modern Çin*, trans. İnci Öztürk, Dost Yayınevi, Ankara 2012.

MONGIA, Radhika, “The Global Political Economy and China”, *Defence and Diplomacy*, 3(2), 2004, p. 41-53.

ÖZDAŞLI, Esmе, “Çin ve Rusya Federasyonu’nun Perspektifinden Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü” *Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 4(6), 2012, p. 108-122.

ÖZKAN, Abdullah, *21. Yüzyılda ABD’nin Küresel Stratejileri*, Tasam Yayınları, İstanbul 2006.

PRASAD, Kailash K., “The Limits of Hegemony: China’s Troubled Assertiveness in the Asia Pacific”, *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 4 November 2014, p. 63-78.

SINGH, Gosal Anthara, China’s Soft Power Projection Across the Oceans, *Maritime Affairs: Journal of National Maritime Foundation of India*, 12(1), 2016, p. 25-37.

SUMMERS, Tim, “China’s ‘New Silk Roads’: Sub-National Regions and Networks of Global Political Economy”, *The World Quarterly*, 37(9), 2016, p. 1628-1643.

The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, December 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2018).

TUNÇ, Hakan, *Wallerstein'e Göre Modern Dünya-Sistemi*, Beykent Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (Unpublished Master Thesis), İstanbul 2010.

TURAN, Sibel, "Değişen Dengeler Işığında Orta Asya'daki Küresel ve Bölgesel Güç Odakları Üzerine Bir İnceleme", *II. Sosyal Bilimciler Kongresi*, <http://www.bilgesam.org/Images/Dokumanlar/0-319-2014081424sosbilkongre71.pdf>, (Date of Accession: 29.07.2019), p. 858-873.

TÜYSÜZOĞLU, Göktürk, "Çok Kutupluluk Tartışmaları ve Karadeniz Havzası'nın Bölgesel Görünümü", *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi*, 8(3), 2013, p. 241-273.

WALLERSTEIN, Immanuel, "The World-System after the Cold War", *Journal of Peace Research*, 30(1), 1993, p. 1-6.

WASSERSTROM, John N., *21. Yüzyılda Çin: Çin Hakkında Bilmek İsteddiğiniz Her Şey*, trans. Hür Güldü, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2011.

YİĞENOĞLU, Kaan, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan Günümüze Değişen Güç Dengeleri ve ABD'nin Pasifik Bölgesi Stratejisi: Trans-Pasifik Ortaklığı", *Akademik Bakış Dergisi*, 58, 2011, p. 327-341.