

Global Power Dynamics: Geopolitical Change in the 21st Century

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Abstract. This research aims to understand the dynamics of changes in global power in the geopolitical context of the 21st century. Through a qualitative approach, this research uses case study methodology and cross-country analysis to collect and analyze secondary data from related literature, policy analysis, as well as interviews with geopolitical experts and related stakeholders. The results of this research highlight the shift in political and economic dominance to Asia in the 21st century. The economic revival of countries such as China, South Korea, India and Indonesia confirms that Asia is increasingly becoming the center of attention in global dynamics. The confrontation between the United States and China reflects tensions in efforts to maintain and achieve supremacy at the international level. The formation of the Quad alliance, as a response to China's influence in the Indo-Pacific Region, shows the United States' strategy in managing regional dynamics. The transformation of the roles of the United States and Europe indicates that world power is increasingly dispersed.

1. INTRODUCTION

World politics or international politics has been the main stage for continuous dynamics since the time of ancient Egyptian civilization (6000 BC). As time goes by, fluctuations and changes in the geopolitical arena are not only influenced by changes in time, but also by the intervention of political actors who continue to change, bringing together new ideas and ideas (Djelantik, 2015). The 21st century is witnessing a significant evolution in global politics, where the paradigms of thinking, forms and exercise of power are undergoing profound transformations. This long history includes an important period in which great thinkers such as John Locke (1632-1704), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) made major contributions to political thought and the concept of power (Noperman, 2020).

These thoughts, born in the context of their respective times, provided the foundation for conceptual changes in international politics. Ideas about human rights, universal peace, and the social contract have formed a new basis for thinking that influences the policy direction of large and small countries on the international stage (Fathun, 2017). In the 21st century, the history of geopolitical changes continues. Globalization, the information technology revolution, and environmental issues are the main drivers of changes in the distribution of power and dynamics of international relations. Events such as global economic shifts, regional conflicts, and climate change have widespread and complex impacts on the global political order (Oley, 2020).

Thus, understanding the history of geopolitical changes in the 21st century does not only trace the passage of time, but also identifies how new thoughts and ideas continue to shape world politics today (Yani & Monratama, 2015). In this context, modern thinkers continue to emerge as architects of global political dynamics, making important contributions to the evolution of political concepts and the exercise of power in this era (Monratama, 2016).

The dynamics of world politics always blend with changing times, forming a geopolitical map that differs from one era to the next. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the face of world politics was very different from the geopolitical map that we know in the 20th and 21st centuries. However, the essence of politics remains focused on the struggle for power, a concept that is timeless (Indrawan, 2021). According to Morgenthau & Thompson (2010), leading political experts, international politics is actually part of politics in general and is a struggle for power. In his view, the ultimate goal of politics is to gain power and carry out desired goals. This concept can be illustrated through various historical episodes, from the struggle of the Crusades who aimed to liberate holy places from the infidels (Infidels), to the ambitions of President Woodrow Wilson who wanted to democratize the entire world, or even the Nazis' intention to conquer Europe and rule the world.

This exploration of political goals reflects the diversity of motives behind the struggle for power. In the context of the research "Global Power Dynamics: Geopolitical Change in the 21st Century," this paradigm involves understanding how political goals adapt and evolve with changing times. The 21st century brings unique geopolitical dynamics. It is not just a matter of geographical changes or distribution of power, but also involves the role of technology, global issues and increasingly complex societal demands. The history of power struggles involving agents such as states, international organizations and non-state actors forms a complex narrative and demands in-depth understanding.

It is in this context that this study details the evolution of political goals from the power struggles of the past to the unique and complex geopolitical dynamics of the 21st century. By tracing historical traces, this research explores changes in paradigms of political thinking and power, providing a deeper understanding of how global politics develops and challenging old views.

2. METHOD

The method applied in this research is a qualitative approach with an exploratory orientation. This research aims to reduce and analyze data obtained from various sources, especially textual or secondary data such as books, journals, newspapers and other media that are considered relevant to explain the problem formulation that has been described previously (Semiawan, 2010). The qualitative data analysis process is carried out carefully, considering the context and meaning behind the information contained in these sources. An explanatory approach is used to help understand and interpret the complexity of 21st century geopolitical dynamics. In this context, primary data is also integrated through interviews with related parties in this research.

Primary data sources were obtained through an interview process with geopolitical experts, foreign policy practitioners and other relevant stakeholders. This interview aims to gain a direct perspective and in-depth understanding of geopolitical changes, as well as to enrich and validate the findings found from secondary data analysis. This research method provides a holistic approach, combining secondary and primary data analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of global power dynamics in the 21st century. Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide a valuable contribution to our understanding of geopolitical change and its impact on international relations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

State entities are not only measured by their existence as legal entities or geographical areas, but also by the presence of political leaders who reflect authority and greatness. Historical leaders, such as Abraham Lincoln who assumed leadership in the United States during the Civil War, Benjamin Disraeli who led England into the era of imperialism, or Otto von Bismarck who played a key role in the unification of Germany, are living representations of the glory of their countries.

In this context, a leader figure is not only a policy maker, but also a symbol of a country's identity and strength. Political history records figures such as Vladimir Lenin who initiated the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, Franklin D. Roosevelt who brought the United States out of the Great Depression, and Winston Churchill who led England against totalitarian forces during World War II. They not only pursue power for the country, but also shape a narrative of national pride and greatness in the minds of their people.

1. 20th Century Geopolitics: Western Hegemony

Europe's political dominance on the global political stage in the past, which was manifested through the politics of imperialism, was not eternal. A very striking turning point for observing the evolution of world politics was the occurrence of World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945). World War I ended with the defeat of the central block led by Germany, and the victory of the Allied bloc or Entente. This momentum was officially marked by the 1919 Paris Peace Agreement which was held at the Palace of Versailles. The treaty was opened on January 12, 1919, attended by political leaders from 32 countries representing three-quarters of the world's population. War victors,

including President Woodrow Wilson from the United States, David Lloyd George from England, Georges Clemenceau from France, and Vittorio Orlando from Italy, were also present at this agreement (Mansbach et al, 2021).

The end of this great war marked a shift in world political hegemony, with Europe continuing to play an important role but also accompanied by the emergence of new powers, especially the United States. Thus, the global political structure not only reflects European dominance, but also reflects the dynamics of new powers that are starting to occupy the world stage. The Treaty of Versailles reflected the post-World War I political framework that formed the geopolitical foundations of the 20th century and introduced key elements that shaped a new and changing world order.

After World War I, the world's political map experienced significant changes with the emergence of historical events that formed a new foundation in global politics. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia became the main impetus for the emergence of communism ideology in international political discourse. Meanwhile, the establishment of the League of Nations (LBB) aimed to maintain world peace and prevent the recurrence of large-scale conflicts. In Germany, the German Revolution of 1918 paved the way for the founding of the Weimar Republic in August 1919.

One of the phenomenal events that created political turmoil was the March on Rome (Marcia su Roma) on October 22 1922 in Italy. This march involved masses of the National Fascist Party (PNF) under the leadership of Benito Mussolini, who wore black shirts, crossing the Rubicone river to seize power from the liberal Italian regime and form a fascist state. This event reflects the emergence of fascism which also penetrated several European countries, including Germany and Italy. This shift in ideology and form of government became an integral part of the dynamics of post-World War I world politics, creating a new and urgent political landscape (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2019). Top of Form

In Italy and Germany, post-World War I marked the emergence of a number of ultra-nationalist figures who were disappointed with the final results of the war and the detrimental provisions of their countries in the Treaty of Versailles. In Germany, one of the prominent figures was Adolf Hitler. Hitler protested firmly and loudly against the agreement which he considered to be significantly detrimental to Germany, as well as against the establishment of the Weimar Republic which he considered weakening the country. Hitler's views and aspirations detailing his dissatisfaction with post-World War I conditions and his vision of the restoration of Germany's glory are contained in his work entitled "Mein Kampf" (My Struggle), which he wrote during his imprisonment. In this book, Hitler presents his political vision and ultra-nationalist ideology, becoming a guide to the ideas and actions that later shaped the dark history of the 20th century.

After going through a series of political maneuvers, Adolf Hitler succeeded in achieving the position of German chancellor on January 30, 1933, appointed by President Paul von Hindenburg. However, the beginning of the leadership of Hitler and the Nazi Party marked the beginning of a nightmare for Europe and the entire world. Hitler's expansionist ambitions to expand Germany's territory brought the world into a historical phase full of terror, namely World War II. The conflict involved several dominant countries, including Germany, England, France, the United States, the Soviet Union, Italy, and Japan. The impact involved many countries around the world, marking one of the most devastating events of the 20th century. Although it does not detail the course of the war, in essence, the war ended with the victory of the allies, consisting of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union (Big Three), while the world fascists, such as Germany, Japan and Italy, experienced defeat which marked the end of the war. era of global fascism.

World War II, which ended in 1945, had a major impact on the world's political configuration. One significant outcome of the war was the founding of the United Nations (UN), an international institution aimed at maintaining international peace and cooperation. Meanwhile, the war also sparked a wave of independence in Asia and Africa, which resulted in the emergence of a number of new independent countries, ending the period of colonial rule. The war also created new dynamics in global power. The United States, after World War II, emerged as a global superpower that replaced the traditional role of Britain and France. With a strong economy and a dominant military presence, the

United States became the leader of the western bloc and played a key role in determining the direction of global politics.

However, one of the most prominent changes that emerged post-World War II was the start of the Cold War. Walter Lippman called it a historical phase in which the world was divided into two large blocs: the western bloc led by the United States and the eastern bloc led by the Soviet Union. The Cold War was characterized by intense tension and competition between two ideologies, capitalism and communism, and also competition for global political hegemony. Various conflicts and crises that occurred in various parts of the world became part of a culminating ideological and geopolitical war. In the end, the Cold War era ended in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which de facto placed the United States as the winner (Fukuyama, 2001). This event marked the end of a chapter in world political history and opened the door to new dynamics involving globalization, technological developments and political evolution in the 21st century.

2. 21st Century Geopolitics: Shifting Hegemony

At the end of the 20th century, the United States celebrated victory and dominated as a major global power after emerging as the winner of the Cold War and becoming the only world power after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This euphoria gives the impression that America will be the dominant power forever. However, entering the 21st century, world politics is still characterized by tension and confrontation, indicating that changes in global power dynamics may become an inevitable fact.

The 9/11 attacks on the United States were a significant turning point, inspiring President George W. Bush to formulate a policy against terrorism. This conflict opened a new chapter in the United States' relations with several countries in the Middle East, such as Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. However, the main focus is not only on regional conflicts, but also on changes in the global balance of power.

Even though the United States remains a very influential power, there are visible dynamics of change. The emergence of new powers, including increasingly economically powerful China, marks complexity and transformation in global politics. As time goes by, the question of whether America will remain dominant or whether new forces will emerge to reckon with the global political map in the 21st century becomes increasingly relevant and challenging. Thus, the dynamics of world politics in this era continue to develop, and new challenges emerge, giving rise to a new framework of understanding about the balance of power and the future direction of international relations.

Asia plays a crucial role in global dynamics in various aspects, including economics, politics and demographics. Japan, as a country in Asia, has long been a major power on the world economic and political stage since the 20th century. According to Noam Chomsky (2017), since the early 1970s, the world has experienced a shift towards a situation of trilateralism or tripolarism. This was marked by the formation of three main economic blocs in the world, where Japan became the leader of the main economic bloc in Asia. The second bloc is based in Europe, which is dominated by Germany, and the third bloc is the United States.

The important role of Japan in the trilateralism scenario highlights Asia's potential as a center of global economic influence. As a developed country with advanced technology and strong industry, Japan has become one of the key players in shaping the world economic order. Thus, the shift of economic and political power to the Asian region, as seen through Japan's dominant role, marked a dynamic change in the global political map, where Asia increasingly became the center of attention and influence in the 20th century.

But what is amazing and astonishing is the rise of the People's Republic of China. China, which in the 60-70s was a country full of poverty and political instability, has emerged in the 21st century to become one of the dominant powers in Asia. The beginning of China's revival actually began with Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the late 1970s. However, China's spectacular rise occurred in the 21st century and became a real threat to American hegemony in the world. Borrowing a term from Michael Wicaksono (2015), China is a long-sleeping dragon that is now awakening from its slumber. Even

though it is still in an extractive political economic system with the communist Party in power, this country has managed to grow into a great and dominant country, especially in the Asia Pacific. Top of Form

China's rise has indeed shaken international political and economic dynamics, causing tension and confrontation with the United States, especially in the context of international economics and trade. The United States' disapproval of China's dominance in international economics and politics is an understandable reaction, considering that the United States has an interest in maintaining its position as a dominant power in the global order (Al Syahrin, 2018).

The belief that China will become a world power that can surpass the United States in economic and political dominance has given rise to the view that the center of world political economic power in the 21st century will be in Asia, no longer in Europe or America. Although the United States and European countries continue to have a significant role, the main focus of economic and geopolitical interests is seen as shifting to the Asia Pacific.

The importance of this region is proven by the formation of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), an informal alliance between the United States, India, Japan, and Australia. This initiative reflects the United States' efforts to prioritize and secure its position in the Indo-Pacific Region, as well as to restrain China's dominance in the region. However, the consolidation of the largest political economic powers in Asia, such as China, Japan, India, South Korea and Indonesia, is difficult to materialize into a solid cooperative alliance considering the political differences and national interests of each country (Santoso, 2021).

A concrete example is the difference in views between Japan and South Korea, which remain countries that support United States policies and are skeptical of China. Nonetheless, political and economic dynamics in the region continue to evolve, and ongoing policy changes and alliances will be an important part of the Asia-Pacific political scene in the 21st century.

The statement that the 21st century belongs to Asia reflects the reality of the economic revival of several countries in the region, as expressed by political figures such as the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The strong economic presence of countries such as China, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Singapore and Japan further strengthens this argument. The role of the United States and Europe on the international stage is not expected to be as large as their role in the 19th or 20th centuries, and some economic projections even predict that Asian countries such as China, India and Indonesia will be among the top five world economies in the next few years. These changes created the foundation for a shift in the geopolitical map and world power to Asia in the 21st century. The growing economic strength in this region has not only created stability and growth at the regional level, but also positioned several Asian countries as major players in the international arena. In this way, the question of which country will emerge as the dominant power in Asia will be crucial, because whoever achieves it has the potential to become the new global superpower in this era. With this dynamic, it is believed that the 21st century will belong to Asia, marking an increasingly pronounced shift in the center of power in world geopolitics.

4. CONCLUSION

Comprehensively, the picture of global political and economic dynamics in the context of the 21st century shows that the center of world power has experienced a significant shift to Asia. The economic revival of countries such as China, South Korea, India and Indonesia confirms predictions that Asia will become the main focus in global dynamics. The competition between the United States and China, especially in the economic and geopolitical realms, reflects the struggle to maintain the dominance of the United States and China's ambitions as a major power in Asia. The formation of the Quad alliance (United States, India, Japan and Australia) is concrete evidence of the United States' efforts to confront China's influence in the Indo-Pacific Region. The role of the United States and Europe is undergoing a transformation, indicating that global power is increasingly spread throughout the world, while regional challenges and dynamics in Asia give rise to complexity in managing

international relations in this era. In conclusion, the 21st century is witnessing significant changes in the world's geopolitical and power map, with Asia as a major focus of interest posing new challenges and opportunities.

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