

Eurasian Geopolitics Versus Imperialism

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The geopolitical shift since the 1990s was initiated by the implosion of the Soviet Union. It manifests itself in the dismantling of its area of influence, as well as the advance of NATO to the Baltic and the Russian border. Productive internationalization intensified through global value chains.

Since unipolarity, the United States led invasions in the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia, in addition to increasing the siege towards China and Russia. From 2001 to the present, the 2008 crisis is the watershed. The second decade of the current century witnessed Russia's reincorporation into world decision-making power through its war machine and China's resurgence through the scope of its economic potential.

The new imperialism (2001) the interventions of 2001-2003, the geopolitical displacement from 2008, accentuated in 2013-2015, to reach the current moment. The rise of China and the recomposition lead to the US declaration of the "Asian pivot" towards China to encircle it. As a counterpart, it has promoted the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) since 2013. The United States in part, Russia and China (tripolar order?) impose their economic and diplomatic presence. There, sub-imperialist powers such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran (as opposed to Washington) plus co-imperial Israel influence other non-hegemonic actors.

The West Asia region is an interstitial knot of the Eurasian axis, as the recent three decades have shown. The area holds around 65% of the world's proven oil and gas reserves on the planet, and is essential due to its proximity to China and Russia. It nucleates central steps for international trade and its transport: the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, plus the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Straits. Likewise, its participation with one of the largest acquisitions of arms and military logistics stands out.

Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, strategic countries of Eurasia, went from being subscribed to Western politics to being designated as enemies of it, in three consecutive decades, the first since 1979 (immediately followed by the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran War), the second 1991 (then since 2003) and the third 2001, both through direct invasion, these two surround the first.

One of the greatest current struggles unfolds in this effective dispute scenario, since at least the second half of the 20th and 21st centuries, that is, the political independence of these “new countries”. At the same time we see the decline of Atlanticism and the Anglosphere after four centuries – or even less – of Western rule.

Classic imperialism and the new imperialism

Imperialism goes hand in hand with the changes in the accumulation processes, altering the geopolitical hierarchy and the forms of world domination. The classical stage is characterized by the colonization of spaces, in the period between 1880-1914. The second stage begins with direct inter-imperialist confrontations, it could be periodized until the 1970s and the oil crisis. The stage of new imperialism is envisioned in the 1980s, it would begin after the dismemberment of the USSR and the direct invasions of the expanded Middle East.

This new domination is based on updating the classical conception of Lenin, who debates with Kautsky, a vision of rivalry with another of inter-imperial association. In the last four decades, a brief unipolar period has been traversed by two phenomena. A geopolitical shift gravitates to the resurgence of Eurasia, with Asia Pacific as the economic locomotive. An economic Asianization challenges the Triad (USA, Europe and Japan), due to the US industrial decline and hegemonic competition. In the Middle East, the devastation leaves various countries in a critical state, and then Eurasian geopolitics against imperialism develops.

The United States stands as the protective superpower of global capitalism. It exploits the MICIMAT complex: Military-Industrial-Counter-Intelligence-Media-Academy-Think Tank and the ideology of the “clash of civilizations”. The imperial action is recreated through warmongering and therein lies a crucial difference with the form of Chinese expansion. It is not only about the struggles for power, of individuals or countries, but of the tendencies of capitalist accumulation on a global scale. A current form of domination is instituted through military bases in spaces that are allied or occupied by the powers.

Neoimperialism sums up five characteristics :

- one, the new monopoly of production and circulation;
- two, the new monopoly of financial capital, economic financialization;
- three, the monopoly of the US dollar and intellectual property, -which generates the unequal distribution of wealth-;
- four, the new monopoly of the international oligarchic alliance –monetary policy and war threats–,
- five, the economic essence and the general trend. In short, imperialism is a policy of domination carried out by the powerful of the planet through their states.

Recent geopolitical transitions

Since the 1980s and 1990s, capitalism has been restructured towards neoliberal policies and its neoimperialist phase. The recomposition of the new Russia and the exponential Chinese economic growth combined with the decline of the Franco-German European axis and Japan. The Sino-Russian alliance began in July 2001 with the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a comprehensive strategic partnership. The North Atlantic

Treaty Organization (NATO), four months later, occupied Afghanistan after September 11, 2001 with 300,000 soldiers.

The incursions sought to bring down countries not aligned with their policies, such as Iraq or Afghanistan. In addition to avoiding the strengthening of potential rivals such as China, a new center of capital accumulation and dependent on the supply of hydrocarbons, or Russia (Wolfowitz Doctrine, 1992). But the US got bogged down in Iraq, in a counterinsurgency war, declining its hegemony over the Middle East.

The roadmap indicated as targets the alleged “axes of evil” of “Western civilization.” They accused Syria, Iraq (two of the most consolidated secular nationalisms in the middle of the 20th century, with a Baathist ideology), Afghanistan, Libya and Iran, but also countries from other latitudes such as Venezuela, North Korea, the now ex-Yugoslavia and others. willing to develop some kind of autonomy.

The rebellions in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, in 2011, are marked by NATO invading Libya. In 2013/14, the Sino-Russian opposition prevented the impending US-NATO attack on Syria. This new world order maintained its confrontation scenario, due to its geostrategic and geoeconomic position, due to maritime and land routes, due to its proximity to Heartland , and due to its energy pre-eminence.

The US uses the dollar as a currency and reserve of value, and to consolidate it, it deploys its army. Since 2001, “War on Terror”, then 2011, “Asian Pivot”, it approaches the “rivalry between the great powers”, so far in intermediate spaces in Ukraine, Taiwan, the Sahel or Iran.

In the systemic crisis, the internal US fissure between the globalism of the coasts and the Americanism of the interior hinders its external projection. It maintains its financial and technological primacy, in the face of its internal crisis. It is not an inexorable decline of US imperialism, which, as a world structure of domination, is hierarchical with sub-empires and appendages, but it is not world governance.

The Asian giant consolidates itself as the largest engine of global economic growth. The Belt and Road, a hegemonic geoeconomic bet with contradictions, opposes the actions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to reconfigure the Greater Middle East since 1991. By consolidating Beijing, it poses a challenge and generates all kinds of tensions for the American hegemony.

The New Silk Road (BRI) or the Eurasian Land Bridge

The world power map outlines the alliance between Russia, China (US goal never to join) and Iran. In 2013, Putin warned against the US attempt to rebuild a unipolar world. Obama reaffirmed the “American exceptionalism” that would allow him to lead the world and thus defend world interests.

With ups and downs, the powers that remained with more regional or more global roles are Japan, Russia (and the USSR), the United States, France, Great Britain and Germany. In the last two centuries, China has been transformed from a semi-colonial, peripheral situation, through a constant improvement based on the 1949 Revolution, to rise to a central and hegemonic country, in an unprecedented case. The latest tectonic movements denote the importance of the Indian and the Pacific, compared to the previous preeminence of the

Atlantic; if we notice, in the busiest ports in the world.

The majority of the world population interacts in the Eurasian territory, a scenario of multipolarity, resources, cultural and linguistic variety. China represents the rise of Asia Pacific, Russia the political-military, territorial power and immense natural resources. Europe is represented by its triad: British and Franco-German axis. However, the unprecedented geoeconomic irruption is China, whose eradication of poverty for the benefit of four hundred million people in the last half century exemplifies that potential, together with the overturning of its overproduction and surpluses to the rest of the world.

The third power in contention is Moscow, a geopolitical and military challenger, not so much economically. The immediate priority is naval harassment in the China Sea, a vital area of world trade. The United States added the AUKUS to NATO, along with Australia, Great Britain and also reactivated the QUAD, a kind of “NATO of the Pacific” together with Japan, Australia and India. This would surround the “Necklace of Pearls” of the BRI maritime corridor on the outside. Meanwhile, China leads the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), among fifteen nations in the Asia-Pacific region – such as Japan, Australia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

The US strategy is counteracted by the Russian-Chinese alliance, which partly joins Central Asia (post-Soviet space), and joins Iran (25-year treaty). In intermediate situations, it leans towards Pakistan (a traditional nuclear ally of the US), and Turkey (a member of NATO) according to the planning of the BRI (Tehran-Istanbul) with its geostrategic position, one of the economic corridors to reach to Europe.

The “One China” doctrine exercises its sovereignty over colonial holdovers like Hong Kong and Taiwan. His military apparatus is preparing while he proclaims his peaceful action. The “century of humiliation”, from the Opium War in 1841 to 1949, when the People’s Republic of China was founded. Since 2015, a technological roadmap was designed, “Made in China 2025”, aimed at narrowing its gap; by 2035, strengthen its position, and by 2045, lead global innovation.

The economic integration of the BRI with Russia and Europe, together with the intention of developing the interior of the country (such as Xinjiang) and ensuring energy from the center of Eurasia. In addition to restricting the US presence and building routes that the US military could not interrupt in the event of a higher level of confrontation.

The railway line – built and projected – together with the sea and land lines connect Eurasia. The route has commercial, industrial, transport, science and technology guidelines. The strategy is summed up in peace for its economy and its global status, stabilizing the global economic and political situation. To the extension of its sphere of influence, its competitors respond with geopolitical rivalry in the Indo-Pacific region.

Two centuries of maritime predominance, the successive British and North American hegemonies, are interspersed with this terrestrial resolution (it reduces time by a third of what is necessary by sea) – the thalassocratic powers against the tellurocratic ones. It transforms the geography of central Eurasia, after the US invasions, a “reordering” but on uneven terms. Russia, in 2015, with the tacit support of China, intervenes with its army. Russia and the United States differ in the geographical proximity or remoteness where they intervene and the North American deployment around the world with its military bases.

Sino-Russian alliance plus Iran, geopolitical opposition to the Anglo-Saxon axis

The Sino-Russian alliance together with Iran outlines a strategic triangle. Russia regained prominence on the global geopolitical tableau. Another part of the hegemonic and resource struggle unfolds in the post-Soviet space, where NATO advanced eastward.

China, after being a world and Asian power, went through a period of invasions and colonization attempts, first by the British and then by the Japanese. And although it has nuclear weapons and is part of the UN Security Council, it has not followed the policy of aggression of the other four. According to Chinese academics, “the Beijing consensus” develops a circumspect behavior, a geopolitical logic of sharp power (sharp power), a different type of interference from that of purely diplomatic forces (soft power), or American hard war responses (hard power) and political interference.

The policy of the American Asian pivot – and of NATO – seeks to stop the deployment of the BRI. The United States is imperialist, its position is one of aggression, the places where it directs its fleets are thousands of kilometers from its territory. The North American country with its insular geography was involved in wars except for nineteen years of its history.

This repositioning of Eurasia is represented, in part, by this tripartite axis, although the disconnection with Germany is another central issue. China assumes a defensive reaction, its long-term planning and demographic weight stand out. Shade is another form of multipolar power sharing. Whether and to what extent this benefits the rest of the world remains to be seen.

Sub-imperialist powers

Transformations in a major region for hegemonic competition reflect or precede global systemic variations. Global tensions have repercussions there through indirect confrontations, popular rebellions, and fluctuations in alliances. The peripheral gendarmes do not contradict the independence of action of those countries, but they do confirm the level of interventionism in the region. It is enough to observe the successive maps of the Middle East, its independences and its warfare (1916, 1948, 1967, 1973, 2001, 2021) to verify the atmosphere of confrontation.

The role of this region goes through global energy (production, transit), refugees, the security of the Persian Gulf, nuclear non-proliferation, political Islam, non-state actors (such as Hezbollah and Hamas), the Israeli-Palestinian question , civil wars such as in Syria, regional tensions (such as the Saudi-Iranian rivalry), the Chinese BRI, plus the independence of sub-empires, popular revolts, democratic battles and anti-imperialist resistance.

After the implosion of the Soviet Union, a symbolic and material reconfiguration of the map is outlined, which had repercussions on regional bellicosity, when the US invaded the countries it had supported in the previous decade of the 80s, Iraq (against Iran) and Afghanistan (the “Vietnam” of the USSR). The purpose of world domination, in the 21st century, goes through energy, food, technology and security. This belligerence was covered by the characterization of the Muslim enemy as the adverse per se of the “West” instead of the “Red Bear”.

In the last two decades, 2001-2021, the United States begins its direct invasions of the area

in Iraq (1991, 2003-2021), Afghanistan (2001-2021), the watershed, the capitalist crisis of 2008, Libya (2011), interference in Syria (2012) and in Yemen (2015). In addition, the unconditional support for Israel against the Palestinians and Hezbollah, the alliance with Saudi Arabia and the appearance of ISIS (2014), plus the nuclear agreement with Iran (2015). Those raids have stalled to this day, with devastated countries, thousands of refugees, and critical social consequences.

The sub-powers located in the Middle East, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel, compete for different areas of influence. Two are perceived as heirs to the Ottoman and Persian Empires; the peninsular, with respect to the Arab-Muslim expansions to North Africa and Europe; in the colonial, the “Greater Israel” does not agree with any empire. At one point, this equates to Russian and Chinese perceptions of themselves, and differs from Americans in being a colony-turned-empire.

The sub-imperial character of Turkey, a member of NATO and linked to the Pentagon, is verified in its intervention in regional conflicts, its repression of the Kurds or the controversies with Iran. However, it oscillates between the association and certain dissidences with respect to the United States. As a place of transit and connection, the difference with its neighbors is that it is not supported by natural gas and oil reserves, but by trade and tourism.

Iran dominates the Persian Gulf with its territory, a bridge between Central Asia or China to the Mediterranean. An ally of Russia and China, of India (it built a port in Iran, to avoid Pakistan) which, along with Russia, are its main suppliers of oil and gas. For China, the Persian country is transcendental in the BRI. For Russia, it is essential to neutralize the US Fifth Fleet, based in Qatar. In turn, the Iran-Iraq-Syria-Lebanon (with Hezbollah) and Palestine (with Hamas) axis constitute an opposition to Israel and the Americans in the region. Iran possesses the world’s second largest gas reserves and the third largest oil, a vast territory in a key area, the opposite of the staunch ally of the “Empire of Chaos”.

The interests, alliances and roles of sub-imperialist countries such as Turkey and Iran -with ambivalence-, and historical allies of the hegemon such as Israel (co-imperial) and Saudi Arabia. In turn, these countries settle their differences in third countries, but they do not confront each other directly, nor do the superpowers. The rivalry is observed in their areas of influence, with the Gulf countries whose prominence is increasing. A new paradigm opens from the recent reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Israel is a co-empire with a “qualitative military advantage” sponsored by its ally. It approaches Arab countries, located in key maritime straits Bahrain, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sudan and Morocco in an open way, just as we could add Saudi Arabia in an underground way. In, the UAE approximates it to the opposite coast of Iran within the Persian Gulf. Israel suffocates and colonizes Palestine, bombards the Gaza Strip cyclically, blocks it by land, sea and air, an open-air prison.

Afghanistan, the “Vietnam of the USSR”, is a strategic country for NATO. It would provide a unique geopolitical advantage over China, Russia, India and Iran, being the platform to engage in Eurasia. NATO-induced wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria or Yemen have disrupted the existence of at least one hundred million people in this region in the last three decades.

The material reconfiguration transforms territorialities through direct or indirect

intervention. The concept of sub-empire hierarchizes the capitalist powers in the state of war, latent or permanent. Local actors whose interests and interactions are ambivalent to the superpowers. Turkey, the opposition to Iran and a rapprochement with the nuclear treaty, and the alliance with Saudi Arabia.

Hegemonic decline and Chinese rise

After the world crisis of 2008, in the region of the “Arab world” they revolted since 2011, thus deposing monarchies or long-standing rulers. However, the repressive counterrevolution dealt several blows to that movement. The transformations of the 2010s exposed how the United States veered in its policy to redirect it towards China and Russia.

The war against Iraq would isolate Iran as a step prior to its destruction, there were two opposition regimes like the Libyan and the Syrian. In Syria are the only military bases that allowed Moscow to project its naval and air power over the Mediterranean. The offensive of the so-called Islamic State against the Syrian regime – supported by the US, Israel, Turkey and Saudi Arabia – targeted Russia and Iran, which, from Syria, backed Hezbollah. Hence the Russian decision, backed by China, to get involved in September 2015.

In Syria the conflict devastated its population. While Libya was left in a situation of potential disintegration and state division into three regions. The land borders of Iran, which has suffered numerous economic sanctions, are fenced off by US military bases. It thus approaches the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, of Chinese interest.

The US in the Middle East is in a setback, due to its failure to comply with its plans, to convert five countries into fourteen or to balkanize several States. Although it destroyed several countries, the entry of China and Russia, as well as the influence of Iran, changed its roadmap. The attempt at imperial redesign is in tune with that applied by France and England at the beginning of the 20th century.

The destabilization of the region, misnamed the “Global War on Terror”, annihilated 900,000 people, caused 38 million refugees and internally displaced persons in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, the Philippines, Libya and Syria, plus the issue Palestine. It damaged at least a hundred million lives. The external change has become evident because Russia and China, two powers in recomposition, have intervened in different ways in the region, and have had an impact in addition to popular rebellions and sub-imperial powers.

The Middle East and Eurasia are constituted as decisive spaces of the world system. The United States is betting on preserving its world hegemony. It tries to maintain the arms supremacy deployed throughout the world, in addition to a series of partner or follower sub-powers at key moments, and due to their characteristics. In Our America we will see if the confrontation between the United States-Europe blocs with the Russia-China strategic alliance generates new realignments. It remains to be seen whether the Monroe doctrine prevails. The reaction should be to ally and not divide, as they conceive it.

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