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**Phenomenon of «Strategic Asia»
in the World Politics**

Nowadays Asia undergoes a intensive geopolitical processes generating around China`s ascendancy. Its rise influences fundamental change of the geopolitical land shaft in Eurasia and development of new security patterns. There is need to form and understand new security and strategic realities in the contemporary global security issues. ``Strategic Asia`` is a new phenomenon explaining and making a political picture of the new international political process around China`s periphery. This process has a complex nature and includes many elements of diplomatic, military, economic and another transnational patters. «Strategic Asia» is a central element in the distribution of power within Asia in all geographical directions.

Key words: geopolitics, «Strategic Asia», security, China, rebalancing.

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**Әлемдік саясаттағы
«Стратегиялық Азия» феномені**

Қазір Азия Қытайдың өсу қарқынына байланысты геосаяси үдерістерінен өтіп жатыр. Қытайдың өсу қарқыны Еуразияның геосаяси көрінісін іргелі түрде өзгертіп және жаңа қауіпсіздік модельдерін дамыту үстінде. Қазіргі таңдағы қауіпсіздік болмысын және стратегиясын түсіну қажет. «Стратегиялық Азия» Қытайдың шеткі аймақтарындағы жаңа халықаралық үдерістерін және саяси көрінісін түсіндіретін жаңа құбылыс болып табылады. Бұл үдеріс күрделі сипатқа ие және көптеген дипломатиялық, әскери, экономикалық элементтерді, сондай-ақ трансұлттық модельдерді қамтиды. «Стратегиялық Азия» барлық географиялық аудандардағы Азиядағы билік бөлудің орталық элементі болып табылады. Геосаяси ландшафтың Қытай қауіпсіздік саясаты мен оның өсіп-өркендеуі «Стратегиялық Азия» аймақтық шеңберінде маңыздылығы анықталады.

Түйін сөздер: геосаясат, «Стратегиялық Азия», қауіпсіздік, Қытай, теңгеру.

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**Феномен «Стратегической
Азии» в мировой политике**

Сейчас Азия переживает интенсивные геополитические процессы, генерируемые вокруг роста Китая. Его подъем влияния фундаментально меняет геополитический ландшафт в Евразии и развитие новых моделей безопасности. Нужно понимать новые реалии безопасности и стратегии современных вопросов безопасности. «Стратегическая Азия» – новый феномен, объясняющий и реализующий политическую картину новых международных процессов вокруг периферии Китая. Этот процесс имеет сложную природу и включает много элементов дипломатических, военных, экономических и других транснациональных моделей. Данная статья посвящена рассмотрению феномена «Стратегическая Азия» как центрального элемента в распределении силы в Азии во всех географических направлениях. Важность «Стратегической Азии» определяется тем, что вопросы политики безопасности Китая и рост его влияния определяются именно в рамках региона «Стратегической Азии» и образуют геополитический ландшафт Азиатского континента.

Ключевые слова: геополитика, «Стратегическая Азия», безопасность, Китай, ребалансирование.

**PHENOMENON OF
«STRATEGIC ASIA» IN
THE WORLD POLITICS****Introduction**

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there are arising of new political, economic, social and another trends composing the nature of the international system and defining its features. China, as a geopolitical entity during Deng Xiaoping`s reforms had accepted by the midst of 90s new power projection capabilities based on its economic might. Another new geopolitical patterns which tape post cold war international order was a power shifting from Europe to Asian continent: the Middle East and Asia-Pacific. China affects both foreign policy dimensions: its periphery as a geopolitics and international affairs on various set of issues. Development of new geopolitical and security patterns triggered strategic thinkers to found and accept a new term which would be capable to explain occurring contemporary processes related to China`s rise and themes adjusting to it.

Term «Strategic Asia»` and its sense

Concept of «Strategic Asia» originates from the US NBR (National Bureau of Research). In general, this conceptual political term has two features describing its nature. First, academic and second is a common political. Inherently the term «Strategic Asia»` it is a mark of the program initiated by the National Bureau of Asian Research in the beginning of 2000s. As it mentioned by founder authors of this program – Ashley J. Tellis and Aaron L. Friedberg, the program of the ``Strategic Asia`` is dedicated to studies of the contemporary global power shift from West or Atlantic to Asia-Pacific in the post cold war system, with the strategic implications for further US policy [1]. Program itself is composed of three basic aims: first, provide sufficient knowledge on occurring trends within the region; second, forecasting of process and development of the events; third, recording of main events which shape contemporary picture of the region [2].

Giving a centrality to China`s rise and its strategic impact on Asian landmass (editor`s note – under Asia in terms of political geography is perceived area of Western Pacific, Asian Far East and South-East Asia littoral areas), NBR in the light of its research activ-

ity, publishes series of books dedicated to the study of vast spectrum tendencies related to the «Strategic Asia».

The first volume, Strategic Asia 2001-2002: Power and Purpose,

– second volume Strategic Asia 2002-2003: Asia Aftershocks,

– third volume Strategic Asia 2003-2004: Fragility and Crisis,

– fourth volume Strategic Asia 2004-2005: Confronting Terrorism in the Pursuit of Power,

– fifth volume Strategic Asia 2005-2006: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty,

– sixth volume Strategic Asia 2006-2007: Trade, Interdependence, and Security,

– seventh volume Strategic Asia 2007-2008: Domestic Political Change and Grand Strategy,

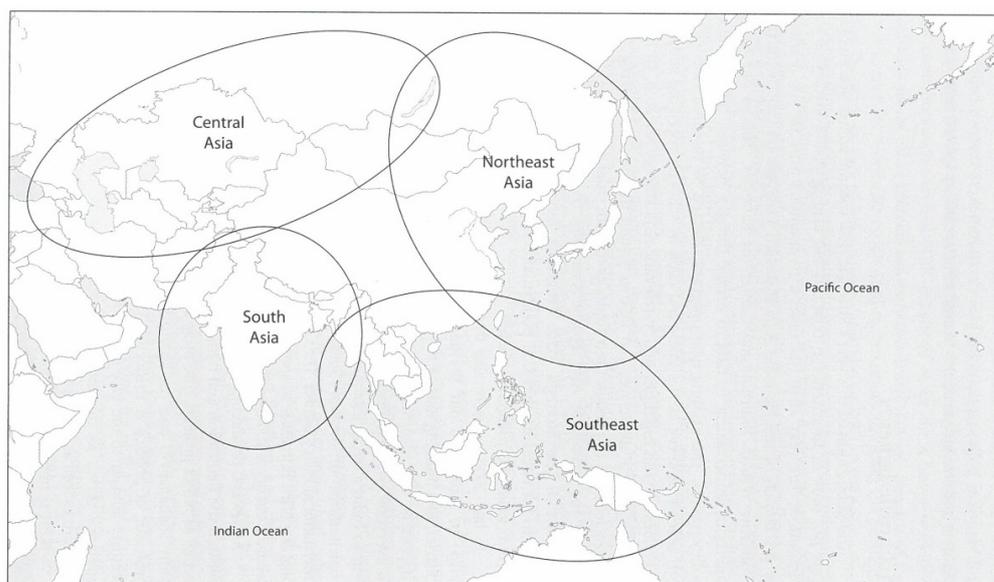
– eighth volume Strategic Asia 2008-2009: Challenges and Choices,

– ninth volume, Strategic Asia 2009-2010: Economic Meltdown and Geopolitical Stability,

– tens volume Strategic Asia 2010-2011: Asia's Rising Power and America's Continued Purpose

– and so on Strategic Asia 2012-2013 China's Military Challenge and so on.

The second major sense of the «Strategic Asia» concept is political. In some extent we can find out some similarities with William Churchill's famous quote on «iron curtain» and «cold war». Here, the basic similarities led not within the perception of war like a permanent situation and etc. William Churchill's quote on «cold war» is the most suitable general strategic explanation for that time geopolitical situation: both belligerent Superpowers did not attack each other, but were in high readiness to do it in any time, especially in crisis periods where nuclear missiles technologies were vast developed and deployed. In general political sense, the term of «Strategic Asia» describes a geographical dimension of the contemporary strategic situation around China's geographical periphery.



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Source: Strategic Asia 2010-11 Asia's Rising Power and America's Continued Purpose p.xiii

In academics terms, phenomenon of «Strategic Asia» could be explained through two IR theoretical concepts: constructivist concept of securitization and geopolitical «The Clash of Civilizations». These both political concepts have suitable approaches in discovering and explanation of the generation and development of «Strategic Asia».

Equally important sense in the formation of Asia- Pacific security architecture in theoretical

terms is belong to the concept of securitization. The concept of securitization belongs to Copenhagen School founder of which are Barry Buzan and Ole Waever. The sense of securitization within Asia-Pacific is based on constructivist perceptions of threats and challenges which make a vision and goal of foreign and security policy of the states. Another main component of the concept it is that major actors in the IR system are states. Foreign policy processes

occurring within the Asia-Pacific fully correspond to these standards.

China's rise generated by economic growth, unresolved regional issues on maritime disputes and accelerated military modernization, all of it drive shaping of security patterns within the Asia-Pacific. In terms of geopolitics, China's rise make it a major focus of its neighbors and other regional players. Perceptions of China's policy on maritime disputes and ongoing military modernization have taken a high attention of China's neighbors, from such countries like Japan and Taiwan which have direct relation to security issues in the region, as well as Russia and Kazakhstan which do not have such contested issues, but in attention on China's deep aspirations.

Another famous political concept was proposed by Samuel P. Huntington in his famous work «The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order». By the author was noted idea, that both geopolitical entities in the post cold war system would pose challenge to West – political Islam and China. In terms of geopolitics, it was a power shift from Europe to Asia, to say precisely, to the Middle East and Asia. Demography and economy, two generating factors within political processes, respectively. Here, the Asia-Pacific becomes one of the generators of global political processes and trends [3].

Term of the «Strategic Asia» in its explanation and reviling of occurring processes around China's ascendancy, has in general geographical dimension. Two factors which make this: China's central geographic position in Asian landmass [4] and China's accumulated power in its economic might which in turn enables Beijing's active foreign economic policy expansion around the world. In order to understand a full picture of Chinese strategic situation, it is need to differentiate between China's peripheral diplomacy which is foundation of the «Strategic Asia» and overall Chinese foreign policy. The basic distinction which led among them that China's peripheral diplomacy in general terms are defined by security patterns, meanwhile foreign policy in non-peripheral areas around the globe are based basically on economic cooperation.

«Strategic Asia» in geographical dimension is divided into two strategic areas: Eurasian littoral or Western Pacific, more broadly Indo-Pacific area, where main actors presented by China, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan, ASEAN, India and the USA. Security patterns are generated by two primary trends: first, territorial disputes over islands chain in the Japanese Sea and in the South China Sea,

calibration by parties Exclusive Economic Zones and Continental Shelves.

Second, by PLA military modernization and non-transparent spending according to China's ASEAN neighbors and the US. Another geographic dimension of «Strategic Asia» generated security patterns within Eurasian hinterland neighboring with China: Mongolia, Russian Far East, Eastern Siberia and Central Asian republics neighboring with China. In this geographic area, security patterns related with China are defined by the transnational trends and perceptions of China in some extent is obscure. Here, if China's policy in the Asia-Pacific sub regions is defined by confrontational actions such as introduction of aerial identification zones, maritime disputes and probable military confrontation spurred by the region disputed areas and security dilemma, in Central Asia and Russia it has a different manner.

Chinese policy is characterized by economic cooperation in terms of investments flow, search over energy supplies in order to secure volumes of energy supplies from unstable Persian Gulf. Main factor which makes these countries at first sight politically distant from China, but the part of the «Strategic Asia» it is a widespread suspicious expectations of the local populations on «Chinese expansion» or in other words «quiet expansion» which means that Chinese domination over the region will be achieved by non military means, but throughout low political patters: economic cooperation where China has disparate positions and migration of Chinese labor force. Some percentage of locals within Asian part of the post-Soviet space neighboring with China, are suspicious about true Chinese foreign policy aspirations toward the region.

It would be as well as important to note, in terms of global geopolitical rivalry, that copying of the previous US – Soviet contest would be wrong on the contemporary Sino – US interaction. In spite of the United States, China's security patterns are presented only in its periphery and not presented globally like the US. China's influence in Africa, Middle East and Latin America are restricted by economic-trade relations and energy cooperation. If Beijing has a real aspiration to become a global power, it should respectively correspond to all elements of the «structural power» [5]. China's power is spread disproportionately: China is the second world economy in the world, but it is component in security issues are restricted by adjusting geographical regions.

Nowadays, in the post cold war international system, «Strategic Asia» it is a place where are generated various regional security processes with

global impact. China's geopolitical ascendancy and its geopolitical spillover to Asian landmass in different directions, makes an Asia-Pacific an engine of contemporary security and geopolitical trends.

Asia-Pacific security patterns

Asia-Pacific security patterns in the context of "Strategic Asia" has a broad sense in the multidimensional complex of regional security issues. Security patterns are distinguished in the following patterns, which make up the regional security architecture:

- maritime-territorial disputes;
- military buildup;
- institutional building.

First major security pattern is the role of the maritime-territorial disputes within regional security parameters. Disputes over the western edge of PRC borders were settled peacefully and in normal dynamic of diplomatic relations with disputed contenders, meanwhile eastern edge, precisely within Eastern China and South China Sea in which much of issues are still not settled. There are two main points in Western Pacific: Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (China- Japan), Socotra rock (Japan-Korea) and issue Taiwan's independence. Another area of dispute: South- China Sea, where the main issue is the clarification of Exclusive Economic Zones and Continental Shelves.

In dispute over the South China Sea are involved major regional countries like: Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, PRC, Taiwan, Brunei. Maritime-territorial disputes, in its turn define what kind of the military balance or in other broader terms – security dilemma would be in the region. Second security pattern it is a military buildup. Many experts believe that regional military buildup is a proceeding from PLA military modernization that has taken incremental paces since the end of bipolar world. China's growing military budget for its army new capabilities modernization, has a strong political effect on its neighbors, from small in military capacity like the Philippines and Kazakhstan to states like Russia or Japan which military spending are significant in the global level.

Meanwhile Chinese high financial budget allocations trigger regional suspicions on Beijing's true aspirations. Another, significant geopolitical factor, it is a China's central geographic position which makes it an important player in the shaping of Asian security patterns [6].

Especially, military-strategic situation raised since the collapse of the Soviet Union regarding PRC

military strategy direction and potential, places PLA modernization of forces in general to the South East Asia particularly and Western Pacific as a whole [7]. In the contemporary period, within PLA modernization process major attention is paid for the development of Air Forces, Navy and Second Artillery and Missile Forces which must play a decisive role in the «local wars under condition of informationization» [8]. And the third main security pattern, it is the institutional building within Asia-Pacific.

In the region, in spite of China's high capabilities, however, primacy of the institutional building belongs to the United States. Announced by Obama administration in 2012, issued in DoD report: «Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense». «Rebalancing» strategy toward Asia-Pacific has a complex character. It is composed of three main branches: security-military, diplomatic which almost is identical or the part of the security-military and economic. Security-military sphere is composed of the network of US bases across Indo-Pacific region in accordance with newly announced US military forces dedicated to sustaining of the «rebalancing». Fact which confirms this position it's former US Defense Secretary alleged that 60% of US Navy stays in the Indo-Pacific region [9]. Another economic field, is presented within the region by Trans Pacific Partnership. Economic institutional building here, plays a geopolitical role and basically dedicated to the engagement strategy where Beijing would have to consider to join and accept offered rules with outgoing implications.

Conclusion

The major geopolitical processes nowadays occur in Asia Pacific with the concentration in China. Two Great power which shape regional and global construction is presented by the United States and China and other countries who are in ally relations with these great powers. Major geopolitical trends and security patterns developing within Asia Pacific region are generated by two Super powers in the shaping of this region's political, economic and military construction. China as an initiator of the securitization of regional issues and the United States as a main offer to build a set of regional links with China's engagement or containment. Security issue embodied in the face of geopolitical construction, would be look as a concentration of power center in China as an indigenous and leading Asian power or US Pacific power with the concentration in Pacific.

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