

## **U.S. Uni - Polarity and the International System**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article is exploring U.S. Uni polarity and the current main challenges it is facing. The rise of China and Russia and their increase influence in current international affairs considered by many specialists and U.S. policy makers as major challengers to the future of the U.S. This study is assessing such assumption and arguing for different reasons related to these challengers and to the U.S. and its major ally, Europe, that the U.S. remains the sole superpower. Meanwhile, such U.S. superiority and hegemony cannot be taken for granted forever; therefore, the article will explore and explain the strengths as well as the potential weaknesses of U.S. superiority in world politics.

**Keywords:** International System, Uni USA. Polarity.

### **Introduction**

The unprecedented power and influence of the U.S. as arguably the sole super power allowed the U.S. to determine world politics since WW2 and will remain so for the foreseeable future. This article is tackling the current position of the U.S. in the international system. Exploring this topic is of high importance for both academics and politicians alike; any changes in U.S. capabilities and its position in the international system will result in major consequences on different countries and regions regarding different domains. Such changes and their effect will also either support or challenge prevalent and well established academic assumptions.

The aim of this article is to address and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the U.S. and its position at the international system. To this end, the paper will shed light on the nature and dynamics of the international system itself and the advantages that the U.S. enjoys over its competitors such as Russia and China. For more understanding and deep analysis of the subject matter, the paper will delve into the relations and interactions between four major players in the current international system: Russia, China, EU and of course the U.S. These great four powers, in which global military and economic capabilities are accumulated, are the main components and shapers of the current international system. Any changes in the power, wealth, policies and alliances among these players will influence the structure of the international system and U.S. position in this system accordingly.

The main question this work is trying to answer is: to which extent is the U.S. capable of setting the agenda of the international system while other great powers, mainly Russia and China, are rising and their influence in world politics is increasing? Therefore, assessing the actual rise of these powers and its impact on the U.S. is the focal point and focus of this study. The main hypothesis this paper is evaluating is that: although the U.S. faces assertive growing global competitors such as Russia and China, the U.S. due to several reasons discussed in this paper continues to place itself at the most advanced position of the international system. However; such position and capability depend to a great extent on the behavior and policies of the current and coming U.S. administrations with its allies as well as with its competitors. The researcher is using a critical analysis approach by revising very recent publications of experts' and well known academics' in very reliable academic journals and think tanks whether in the U.S, Europe, or elsewhere.

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**U.S. Perceptions & the International System:**

Historically, the U.S. enjoyed the advantage of being geographically isolated which allowed it to disengage in international events leading to isolationism prior to WW1. It has also norms and historical experience of feeling very sensitive to national security and the need for being absolutely secured from external threats. This isolationism and national security sensitivity were not an option to other great powers (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, 52). As a result, U.S. strategists and academics initiated the fields of international system and security studies which influenced U.S. global perception and interaction mainly because of the vital importance of the dynamics and changes to the international system. Such tendency to hyper national security was reflected on the desire to achieve invulnerability to foreign sudden attacks by achieving deterrence. Projects such as Anti Ballistic Missile /Ballistic Missile Defense (ABM/BMD) were results of such U.S. strategies during the Cold War. Events such as Pearl Harbor 1941, Cuba Missile crisis 1962, and 9/11 were major events that shifted U.S. security strategies and agendas and consequently international security (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, 55). Technological development influenced greatly the issue of international security, nuclear weapon and its advanced delivery systems are good examples. It is worth mentioning that the U.S. Military Industry Complex (MIC) with its enormous investment and expenditure has had a major impact on U.S. security and defense intensification. In other words, domestic factors have a say in how the U.S. deals with security arrangement and expenditure (Buzan and Hansen, 2009: 76).

The U.S. considers key regions of crucial strategic importance as a result of the concentration of power and resources in them which are Europe, East Asia and the Middle East. Therefore, the U.S. grand strategy has been always denying its rivalries or their allies in these regions to control these regions given that U.S. global leadership relies heavily on these regions (Porter, 2019: 8). In more globalized world, regional politics and interregional interactions are becoming major components of international order. In addition, most regions that have dominant regional power are peaceful compared to regions that lack dominant regional power such as the Middle East, whereas when there is more than one regional great power, regional order and stability will depend on how cooperative these powers with each other are. Cooperation among such powers in Western Europe and the cooperation between Russia and China in central Asia are good examples. If regional states manage to take care of regional affairs in order to establish peace and cooperation, that would help the global dominant power to enhance international order and stability. In other words, great powers have major role and interests in achieving regional order which leads to international order (Tang, 2019: 126). Changes to the international system and the U.S. presence and influence over the system have been and will be influenced by the changes to these key regions and their relations to other great powers. This is why the U.S. is vigilant to key regions especially to those where Russia and China are increasing their presence in.

It has been argued that the political and military reach of the U.S. in particular and the west in general is restrained by other major powers. For example, Fareed Zakaria argued that uni-polarity is waning as a result of the diffusion of power more globally (Zakaria, 2008). Although the U.S. dominates world politics and is considered as the sole super power, it faces limitations of power through world politics due to the rise of major powers such as Russia and China (Walford, 2013). On the other hand, Richard Haass argued that the international system is in the age of Non – polarity claiming that even if the U.S. power is in decline, there is no chance for multi polarity or to fill the power vacuum that resulted from such decline (Haass, 2008). Such different visions of the international system will not accurately explain and predict the consequences of the current accelerated interactions and changes taking place at the international arena which might unquestionably challenge U.S. global leadership.

Although the U.S. used to be versed in long - term competitions as a result of a long Cold War, it seems it lost its competency in long term competition as a result of the luxury of the protection it experienced as a victorious of the Cold War and the absence of a real and clear competitor in the 1990s and early 2000s (Brands, 2019: 32). The patterns of amity and enmity, U.S. polarity and distribution of capabilities among other great powers in addition to the desire for intervention and involvement in international affairs are major driving forces for U.S. foreign policies and strategies which determine U.S. position and influence in world politics (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, 54).

U.S. grand strategy has become a main source of addressing the international security agenda, the National Security Strategy of the U.S. (NSS) for 2018 acknowledged bluntly that Russia and China are challenging American security and prosperity (NSS, 2107: 2). The NSS argues that although the U.S. obtains the strongest military capabilities in the world, the NSS admits that U.S. advantages are shrinking as its rivals and competitors are not only advancing their capabilities in different fields and regions, but are also getting closer to each other (NSS, 2017: 3). In addition, when threats increase, states perceive these threats not as discrete but as monolithic and worldwide; they also lose sight of geographical limitation (Porter, 2019: 11). Such views can be overwhelming and consequently stimulating for a superpower planning to remain in a leading position.

Meanwhile, it can be argued that the current U.S. administration still considers itself as the sole superpower and lives in a uni - polar system which it resides at the top of as a result of the recent top level recruitments of hawkish at the U.S. administration such as National Security Advisor John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (Walt, 2019). This is evident from the administration's decision to start trade wars and economic sanctions not only with U.S. competitors such as Russia and China but also with its economic partners who decided to maintain their oil purchases from Iran after the U.S. withdrew from Iran deal (Walt, 2019). These present U.S. policies are reflections to the seemingly irrevocable U.S. desire to regain its greatness again. Such policies are obviously designed to counter the rise of the mentioned above two powers and signal messages to other international and regional powers regarding U.S. sensitivity to its interests and centrality of world politics.

#### **U.S. – EU Strategic relations:**

Europe has been the most important region for the security and prosperity of the U.S. since WW2; this fact is the prime reason why the U.S. remained the leader of NATO since the founding of the organization in 1949. Nicolas Burns argues that the U.S. is safer with alliances with others especially with Europeans who share with the U.S. many vital interests and values (Burns, 2019: 2). The strategic relations between both sides at the Atlantic prevented Soviets and Communist expansion in Western Europe and resulted also in unprecedented economic growth for both sides. There is no doubt that such a strategic success resulted in the collapse of Communism in Eastern European countries ending the Cold War. Such an achievement was considered as one of U.S. greatest foreign policies and a demonstration of its ability to build and maintain democratic systems in these countries which contain over 900 million people living in peace and cooperation among each other in both Europe and North America (Burns, 2019: 3).

The importance of NATO is embodied in the deployments of NATO allies in many regions to fight different terrorist organizations such as ISIS in Syria and Iraq, in the Horn of Africa in West Africa not to mention also in Afghanistan in 2003. In addition to security affairs, Europe is also the largest and most reliable economic and political partner for the U.S. (Burns, 2019: 4). Although U.S. share of global GDP decreased from 40 percent in the 1960 to only 24 percent in 2017, the U.S. economy is still very strong; it maintains leadership in many key economic issues. This decrease in U.S. share in global GDP is due to the growth of the economies of U.S. allies mainly Europe, Japan and others worldwide including U.S. major competitor, China, which achieved this growth as a result of the liberal economic order initiated by the U.S. which built a world leading economy that is resilient to economic shocks and downturns (Kim. 2019: 156).

Despite of NATOS's major achievements since its commencement 70 years ago, some argue that NATO currently lacks a clear strategy to counter current challenges such as rising Russia and China. Needless to say that intelligence sharing between NATO members is currently not really efficient as it used to be mainly because they do not fully trust each other and there are limited efficient communications among them (Dempsey, 2019). More remarkably, although tensions took place during the long EU – U.S. relations, what is really strange recently is that the normative and institutional structure of the partnership is being challenged; more individualism in decision making, decrease in trust, divergence in perspectives regarding multilateral cooperation and less public support for this partnership at both sides. This is not to claim that the relations are deteriorating; there are challenges to these relations that need to be addressed

and the preservation of these relations depends on the behavior of both sides in the foreseeable future (Riddervold&Newsome, 2018: 518).

Trump's foreign policy is neglecting key principles that have maintained U.S. - EU relations since WW2. These key principles are security guarantees, open trade relations and multilateralism among both sides. Some may argue that the E.U is becoming more autonomous from the U.S. with increasing diverging tendency to build solid relations with both Russia and China (Riddervold& Newsome, 2018: 511). However, the EU still relies remarkably on the US protection and other security consideration although it succeeded in forming a regional block (Etzioni, 2013, 23). Because of the fact that the EU is unable to act militarily and politically alone and it relies on U.S. protection and leadership of world economy, what concerns the Europeans most is U.S. abandonments and unilateral approach. This pushed the Europeans to diversify their partnerships with other great powers in different realms.

China is becoming relevant to transatlantic politics for different reasons; it is stepping up its economic activities in Europe in strategic and sensitive issues such as European advanced technology. In addition, China is increasing its ownership of different vital infrastructural projects across Europe; at present it owns 10% of Europe's ports and waterways. Adding to that, most European countries, regardless of their wealth, crave foreign investments especially those targeting the infrastructure sector such as the China's Belt and Road Initiative (Brattberg, 2019). Europe is a prime destination for Chinese foreign direct investment; it has risen from only €1 billion in 2008 to more than €35 billion in 2016. Such huge investment allowed China to influence the political behavior of some EU members such as Greece and Hungary in 2017 to block EU statement regarding China's human right record. Generally, the EU is more flexible and pragmatic in its relations with China compared with the U.S. (Brattberg&Soula, 2018). As a result, the U.S. administration perceives China's global rise and its different grand strategies and aspirations whether in economic or security affairs as major challenges to U.S. interests considering China as a "strategic competitor" which aims at challenging both the U.S. in many respects and vital regions such as Europe (NSS, 2017: 46). It could be argued here that since Europe was a major indispensable ally for the U.S. in achieving and maintaining its global leadership, China is planning to neutralize and penetrate such a major ally by these projects and investments in order to lessen U.S. global power and influence.

#### **U.S. – Chinese relations:**

Many scholars argue that China has limited ambitions to become a global military and political power claiming that China is only perceived as a threat because of its sizable economy making China of no threat to U.S. political and military power. China's military power and presence is concentrated only in South East Asia with limited reach in other regions. On the other hand, the U.S. has military presence in almost 150 countries in almost all regions of the world; as a result, China cannot be considered as eminent threat to the U.S. in the foreseeable future (Etzioni, 2013, 19). In addition, China is seeking dominance in Asia – Pacific only whereas Russia shows readiness sometimes to accept security competition with the U.S. in many regions. Russia also has a reputation of having the tendency to resort to nuclear usage against military threats as well as the use of ruthless intelligence activities and networks and information warfare (Porter, 2019: 10). Needless to say that Russia is motivated to enhance its position in world politics as it feels embarrassed of the retreat it experienced recently as a historical empire and superpower. For China, it is the other way around; China's current position and role in world politics and economy are considered as great achievements and enhancement compared to its modest role in recent history. Therefore, China is very careful to maintain international stability to preserve its achievements and not jeopardize them, whereas for Russia international chaos and instability may result in changes in its favor.

While China is not a democratic country and since the international order is liberal mostly regarding open – trade, China then could easily integrate in such international order mainly because it adheres to free and open trade with almost all major actors in the international order. However, the current international order remains a Western one mainly because Western countries are the main source of power that underpinned the order. In addition, most of the ideas that are shaping the order are western ideas which had a major influence over the institutions that make the structure of the order (Tang, 2019: 5). For China, the liberty and western characters of the order are source of anxiety

not only because of U.S. dominance of the order, but also because such characters might lead to intervention in China's internal affairs and contradict with its preferences.

A major negative trend of U.S. – Sino relations which developed over the 2000s is the rise of U.S. nationalism as a result of globalization and its negative impact on U.S. domestic settings. Such hyper – nationalism is clear in President Trump's critical views regarding the ways by which the U.S. economy was handled. Trump perceives the multilateral trade agreements as being unfair to the U.S. and serving only the interests of other countries such as China. In addition to China's ambition to interlink itself with Europe and Africa by the Belt and Road Initiative, China is confidently equal to U.S. military presence in Western Pacific which used to be a U.S. dominance region for 70 years (Swaine, 2019). More importantly, since it became a nuclear power in 1964, China was always aiming at keeping its nuclear arsenal small, defensive, and compatible with its economic capabilities and resources, mainly to achieve strategic deterrence; however, some nationalists Chinese policy makers assert that China should modernize and develop its nuclear capabilities to achieve better deterrence and international recognition among great powers (Zhao, 2019). Therefore, China's economic growth, increase in nationalism, expansive role and cross interests worldwide and U.S. suspicion of China's future might push China to be serious in developing its military capabilities including nuclear ones.

The asymmetric trilateral relations between the U.S., Russia and China are embodied in the fact that Russia and China have not built a strategic alignment with each other despite the fact that they share a common interest against the U.S. (Zhao, 2019). It is worth to remember that the disengagement between China and the USSR in 1960s and U.S. containment of China accordingly in the late 1970s were at the best interests of the U.S. This is how the U.S. managed to penetrate the alignment between the two great powers. Sustain such penetration during the current era requires careful calculations; at least one of the two countries, possibly China, needs to feel comfortable with U.S. different policies. As Stephen Walt argues, although Russia and China are not natural allies, U.S. unilateral behaviors are pushing them to get closer to each other (Walt, 2019).

#### **U.S. – Russians relations:**

Great power politics has major influence on international security and stability. The rivalry between the U.S. and the Soviet Union dominated international security during the Cold War. Russia, unlike China and the EU, has strong tendency to expand its presence in different regions. Nevertheless, some may argue that despite of its global presence, Russia is toothless and has limited capacity to act as a decisive international power, let alone its economic difficulties and other internal challenges (Etzioni, 2013, 26, 27). There are many commonalities between the U.S. and Europe and vital shared economic interests between the U.S. and China; in contrast, there are few shared interests that can bring Russia and the U.S. closer to each other; what divides them is by far more significant than what might bring them together. According to Daniel Coast, the director of the National Intelligence in his testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in January 2019, China's long term policies aim to match or overtake U.S. global capability; whereas for Russia, it tries to misdirect and obfuscate the whole international system to destabilize and diminish U.S. position in the world (Dobbins, Shatz, &Wyne, 2019).

The U.S. government believes that China and Russia are planning to shape a world that is antithetical to U.S. interests and values. China managed to advance its different military capabilities as a result of its access to U.S. technology and innovation economy. Therefore, the U.S. is disappointed by the fact that its previous support to China which led to China's rise and economic growth is turned to be a challenge to the U.S. It hoped that this support will end up in liberalizing China and integrating it in world order in a compatible manner with U.S. preferences. Not less importantly, Russia also aims to weaken NATO and the EU who are considered as the most prominent allies and pillars to the U.S. and its global leadership while modernizing its nuclear systems to be the most significant existential threat to the U.S. (NSS, 2017: 25).

Meanwhile, Russia and China are becoming closer allies to each other more than any time in the past. They

cooperate with each other to consolidate their role in the UN to reflect their interests at the organization's structure and behavior (Coast, 2019: 24). The two countries increased their military cooperation in the last few years remarkably. They conducted a joint naval exercise in July 2017. In Sep 2018, China participated in Russia's annual Vostok military exercise and bought from Russia advanced military equipment such as the S – 400 air defense systems and 24 SU – 35 fighter aircrafts. Bilateral trade between the two countries surpassed \$100 billion in 2018 for the first time ever, needless to say that Russia became China's largest supplier of oil and gas in 2016 (Dobbins, Shatz, &Wyne, 2019).

Although Russian and Chinese relations are growing remarkably, their ties are more anchored in shared grievances than in common visions. Their common perception of the centrality and superiority of the U.S. in world politics is what brings them closer to each other. In reality, there are many differences between them; China's economy is a way beyond Russia's. China's GDP in 1992 was a bit less than Russia's (\$427 billion versus \$460 billion); interestingly, in 2017 China's GDP became almost eight times of Russia's (\$12.2 trillion versus 1.6 trillion). Not to mention that China's growth remains over four times of Russia's, thanks to the international order and free trade system embraced by the U.S. This is why China is not willing to challenge the current order; all what it tries to do is to enhance its position within the current order by modifying it in its favor, contrary to Russia which is more willing to challenge and destabilize the whole system (Dobbins, Shatz, &Wyne, 2019).

#### **Challenges and Opportunities for U.S. Leadership:**

The current major challenge for the U.S. is that it might be locked into facing five adversaries simultaneously in different vital regions; two of which are great powers, namely revisionist Russia and expansionist China. Moreover, there are other three regional rogue powers which are challenging U.S. interests: Iran, North Korea and possibly Venezuela (Porter, 2019: 9). What makes facing these adversaries a real challenge to the U.S. is its unilateral approach in dealing with them, such an approach is making the U.S. facing these challenges alone without the support of its strategic allies, needless to say that these countries can be contained in peaceful manners, if not all of them at least some.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, the prominent U.S. strategist and political scientist, argued that the U.S. has strategic role and interests in maintaining international order. In addition, he stressed that the decline of U.S. power will not necessarily result in the emerging of another constructive one which is interested in maintaining international order and security. The decline of U.S. power and its role in international security, according to Brzezinski, will result in negative consequences such as regional instability and arms race including nuclear proliferations worldwide (Brzezinski, 2012).

Since the current international order was formed by the victors of the two Great Wars and the Cold War, and since similar wars are unlikely to take place in the foreseeable future, and even if they take place there will not be clear winners, as a result, there will not be a clear enforcement of rules of one side over the rest. The present diffusion of power that is taking place is from the West to the rest, contrary to previous orders when concentration of power mainly was in the West (Tang, 2019: 127). Furthermore, while the end of the Cold War resulted in less possibility for wars among great powers, then the whole fields of international relations and international security are changing, the context in which the U.S. used to operate within is different and the influence it can make in transforming these fields requires different tools (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, 169). During President Trump administration the U.S. and NATO troops deployment in joint missions have risen; however, U.S. policies lack partnership and strategic thinking. Not to mention that some U.S. allies jeopardize both the U.S. and international security by supporting terrorist organizations in the Middle East for their own narrow national interests without considering U.S. preferences (Porter, 2019: 16).

There is a consensus that the U.S. is struggling in responding effectively to the challenges posed by both Russia and China. One of the reasons for such struggle is that President Trump is not interested in facing and competing with Russia; on the contrary, he seemed seeking appeasement with Russia (Brands, 2019: 31). Another reason is that Russia and China are increasing their influence regionally and globally to prevent the U.S. from operating freely in critical commercial zones (NSS, 2017: 27). Although the U.S. successfully used its asymmetric strategy and advantage during

the Cold War mainly with technological advancement and dominance, Russia and China nowadays are using their own asymmetric strategies such as the advantages of authoritarianism, secrecy, deception, and illegal and immoral political war fares which exploit the openness of democratic systems and societies such as those in the western countries including the U.S. Same token, the U.S. can launch more effective political war fares on its rivalries who suffer from domestic challenges in order to increase cost on them; issues of human rights and democracy are of vital impact on both Russia and China. Aaron Friedberg argues that a major driving force and reason for U.S. victory in previous wars was its desire to defend its values against hostile ideologies (Brands, 2019: 37). Moreover, since the U.S. has the biggest market, financial resources and technological leadership, it can exercise influence over other states' behaviors and the preferences of their economical and commercial interests groups (Kim, 2019: 154). Therefore, the NSS for 2018 argued that the U.S. should seek cooperation with its competitors from a position of strength (NSS, 2017: 26). Such cooperation from a position of strength while considering and addressing the interests of both allies and competitors, if possible, will bind and keep U.S. allies closer to the U.S. and decrease its competitor's desire and ability to challenge and penetrate these alignments.

The rise of China and terrorism shaped U.S. security perspective and strategy. The Global War on Terror by the U.S. after 9/11 had a global reach. For the U.S., deterrence today is by far difficult and more complex than during the Cold War mainly because rivals' capabilities have developed and diversified in different sectors that might cause a serious challenge for the U.S. (NSS, 2017: 27). Therefore; Zakaria claimed that the international system is somehow uni - multi polarity or as many Chinese geo-politicians term it "many powers and one super power" (Etzioni, 2013, 16). This is why the current era is not the right time for the U.S. to practice harsh unilateralism; FedrigaBindi rightly argues that Trump's foreign policy might lead to isolate and mitigate U.S. presence in international affairs, stating that "*America First is America Alone*" (Bindi, 2019: 270). In addition, U.S. retreat from its role at the center of the international order will be at the best interest of its rivalries such as Russia, foreign policy is just like physics: Vacuum quickly filled (Bindi, 2019).

### **Conclusion:**

This article tried to explore the current position of the U.S. in the international system. The purpose was to assess the challenges to U.S. leadership of the international system. Doing that was possible by analyzing the interactions between major powers such as Russia, China and Europe and the extent to which such interactions are influencing U.S. position and ability to lead. It is evident that the U.S. is still relatively the determinate power in world politics. However, the current dynamics of the international system can be a serious challenge to the U.S. The rise of China and Russia as real competitors to the U.S. needs to be considered and addressed wisely and strategically. It is clear that the closeness between Russia and China will result in increasing their ability in influencing international affairs, such closeness and cooperation between these two powers will create extra pressure on the U.S. to maintain its efficiency and free hand in influencing international events. On the other hand, as mentioned in details previously in this paper, Russia and China have major differences and priorities, needless to say that they might have risky disagreements and frictions among each other in bordering regions especially if the U.S. decided or pushed to lessen its presence and influence. For China, the U.S. is more useful, considerate, flexible and more importantly geographically far away compared to Russia, China is not only far away from the U.S., but also faraway from Europe, the U.S. major historical ally who has been always threatens by Russia.

Because of its wealth, location and power, Europe also has a major role in the structure and dynamics of the international system. It has been the indispensable ally ever to the U.S. The multilateral institutional approach that ruled the relation between both sides was the guarantor to the sustainability of the strategic relations among them. However, these relations are not fully taken for granted due to the increase in: U.S. occasional unilateral approach, EU tendency toward independency from the U.S. and China's increasing economic ties with Europe. These challenges in U.S. – EU relations do not mean that the relations at both sides of the Atlantic lost their strategic significance; still what bind the

U.S. and Europe together politically and economically are by far more influential than those challenges. The reciprocal interlocking between the two allies is very deep and profound, both sides share many values, economic ties and interests among them are strategic and enmity and hostility among them is very low if any. Not less importantly, challenging and threatening foes and ideologies such as Nazism, Communism, Soviet Union and Terrorism perceive both sides of the Atlantic as being united; this has always made the U.S. and Europe close and interdependent and will remain so regardless of marginal differences and disagreements which can be resolved.

The future of U.S. superiority depends, to a considerable extent, on its position in the international system and its ability to utilize from such position to achieve its crucial interests and goals. Therefore, a major challenge for such superiority would be an ambitious great expansive power that can either deprive the U.S. of utilizing the system or restructuring it in its favor. This could happen if the U.S. allows these ambitious powers build strong alignments with each other. The U.S. cannot lead the world alone without considering the interests with key allies; mainly the Europeans, secondly the Chinese and finally the Russians or at least either to appease them or to isolate them essentially from both China and Europe.

The impact of Trumpism might harm U.S. power and ability to lead. His ventures to achieve U.S. *Greatness* and prioritizing *America First* and usage of unilateral approach are making U.S. allies fear its abandonment. Such fears might push U.S. allies away including vital ones like the Europeans. As a result, the real challenge is when these allies become closer to other great powers such as Russia and China or reluctant to help or neutral when the U.S. wants to face these great powers. The U.S. has to be aware of the fact that the current diffusion of power is leaving the U.S. with good but few options; it is still the sole superpower operating at the top of a robust international economic and political system in which most if not all players are adhered to and linked with, any changes to such system will be costly and risky for everyone; meanwhile, the U.S. cannot act alone and it has to be careful with what it wishes for.

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## الأحادية القطبية الأمريكية والنظام الدولي

محمد جمال الخريشه\*

### ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث لدراسة الأحادية القطبية الأمريكية في النظام الدولي الحالي و التحديات الرئيسية التي تواجهها مثل الصعود الصيني و الروسي التي ربما يعتبرها البعض تحدي رئيسي لمستقبل الولايات المتحدة و مكانتها الدولية، وهذه الدراسة تقوم على تقييم فرضية رئيسية مفادها أن الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية تستطيع المحافظة على موقعها المتقدم على جميع منافسيها في النظام الدولي، وفي ذات السياق، للمحافظة على هذا الموقع المتقدم على الولايات المتحدة الأخذ بعين الاعتبار الفرص والتحديات التي تواجهها في علاقاتها مع حلفائه مثل الأتحاد الأوروبي ومنافسيها مثل روسيا و الصين

الكلمات الدالة:النظام الدولي، الأحادية القطبية، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية.

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