

Power Transition and Global International Order

Abstract: Power is the main reason to rule over the world. The concept of power transition is started when a country has risen in economic growth and gained military power and reaches the level of its challenger, and also had its place at the top of the international order and the hunger for power led the country to reach the maximum extent. This is due to the fact when a country gets power and establishes a great economic system, it wants to get in the top position in the international order and also save its interest in the world. The global international order has seen several power transitions from empire to empire, region to region, and then country to country. The study is a qualitative analysis of past events of power transition in the global world. It also focused on the causes and prospects of power transition in the past and the future, respectively.

Key Words: Power Transition, Power Supremacy, Great Power Politics, Power Shift, Global Order

Introduction

An exchange between powerful states is called power transition ([Lai, 2011](#)). Kenneth Organski's landmark study related to power transition was first introduced in the year 1958. It is relevant to several important international issues. First, it concerns a significant increase in the size of the current regime of a big country due to rapid monetary expansion. Also, it is due to the growing strength of the worldwide demand, particularly in leading countries' sovereignty ([Kenneth, 1960](#)).

Discrepancies in the power stability and reservation efforts to change the international order have provoked battles among the world's superpowers in the past, resulting in great power wars. Shifts in the

global leadership and reform of international bodies are common outcomes of these confrontations. In a society where independent countries are self-governing, power is always distributed asymmetrically, and countries are more difficult. Great powers have strived to dominate the international system throughout history ([Levy, 2014](#)).

At every one moment, the world's most powerful nation leads a global system that includes several other big countries of secondary significance, as well as a few minor governments and dependencies ([Lai, 2011](#)). There is relative peace and stability in this arrangement if the dominating country and associates retain a tight switch over the universal command ([Zakaria, 2008](#)).

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Because of variations in a country's strength, international relations, like superpower status, are always in flux. If second huge countries, which are displeased with to present global system, see a significant increase in their national strength, a system trial will be produced. This occurred as a consequence of urbanization during the industrial revolution. Rising powers typically wish to change the international order to better serve their interests as a result of their growing influence (Stares, 2020).

Robert Gilpin explains in War and Change in World Politics by asserting that growing states must fight the dominant nation and its allies over the current international order's rules, the distribution of regions of influence, and even territorial boundaries. If both the dominant force and the challenger are unable to settle their differences via peaceful methods, war will erupt. Gilpin refers to this as "hegemonic war." (Gilpin, 1999).

It is the primary means through which large countries resolve their differences or create a global order. Ironically, the transnational organization is a product of geographical, financial, and consular shifts that have emerged from such wars of domination (Gilpin, 1999). The international system is free of great power conflict when the dominant nation has a large advantage in comparison to others, particularly the potential challenger.

The potential challenger cannot overthrow the international system or confront the dominant country. In these circumstances, the strong do not need to fight, and the weak do not dare to try. A rising challenger, on the other hand, will see an exponential increase in national strength, thanks to strong domestic economic growth. The dominant state is developing, but compared to the emerging power, it is losing territory (Chan, 2009).

The world's leading nations are on the edge of conflict as a result of the shift in power balance. According to Organski et al., changes in the distribution of power generate the conditions for power fight, with confrontation approaching when a national strength of a candidate closes the gap between itself and the leading country. The dominant nation may prevent the upstart from challenging the status quo before it has a chance to do so (Organski & Kugler, 1980).

Power Transitions in Four Modes

In the past, power transitions have transpired both peacefully and brutally. The four power shifts are discussed in detail below: discouragement (Spain towards the Netherlands), hostility (Netherlands towards the UK), collaboration (the Netherlands towards the United Kingdom), and the leader's perspective (from the UK to the US), (Feng, 2013).

The Transfer of Power from Portugal to Spain

One of the first transformations occurred in Portugal and Spain. After Alfonso III concluded the Portuguese Reconquista in 1249 and Joo overcame the Castilian prerogative to power, the country experienced a peak. Under Henry's leadership, Portugal became a strong nautical leader. Ships carrying the Portuguese flag sailed across the seas, stopping in India, sailing across Southern America, and passing through the Malacca before returning to the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The newly acquired overseas colonies considerably expanded Portugal's wealth and prominence (Pollack & Taylor, 1983).

The Transfer of Power from Spain to the Netherlands

Spain and Portugal's co-dominion found

their foreign domains increasingly threatened by England, the emerging supremacy, under the Treaty of Tordesillas. The independence war of the Dutch (1568–1648), sometimes called the Eighty Years' War, delivered the Spanish Empire its last blow. Spain pursued a campaign of denial and persecution against Holland, which progressively built its economic and naval might ([Israel, 1977](#)).

The Transfer of Power from the Netherlands to Britain

The worldwide Dutch organization came to an end when Great Britain became the world's hegemon in the 18th century ([Sluyterman & Wubs, 2010](#)). Following its Spain victory, the Netherlands exploited its monetary, scientific, and armed superiority to reinforce its external assets. Netherlands' international financial accomplishments exceeded the oceanic strength of Britain. Four combats happened between England and Netherlands. All of them were begun as challengers by England. The first war (1652–1654) resulted in a deadlock ([Brezis, 1995](#)).

The Transfer of Power from Britain to the US

In terms of economic productivity, the United States had caught up to Britain in the 19th-century era. Instead of following overall headship, the United States was gratified to emphasize its national aims of westward advancement and global influence ([Burk, 1979](#)). The United States decided to undertake a prominent position in international affairs soon after the Japanese, a Third Reich ally, devastated World War II in Hawaii. The US was not only the most powerful of the major victorious countries after the end of the war but also the most similar to the previous hegemon of philosophy, antiquity, and belief. Rather than opposing a new superpower, as the Netherlands did with the United Kingdom,

the UK simply gave up its hegemony ([Yongping, 2006](#)).

Power Transition from the Middle Ages till World War I

In 1815 Britain would develop itself to be a great global power after defeating Napoleon's French army. Britain would continue dominating the world as a power. Britain held a quarter of the world's area the development would continue and they reached their army peak in 1900. Britain had an amazing trade and market, too; overall, Britain was a successful power. Britain had a good position from 1815–1865 it has also been recorded that Britain increased at the speed of a hundred thousand square miles per year. At the end of the 1800s, Britain came into its decline era because its challengers were also great powers "Germany and the United States". In 1890 Germany was also very developed and had a lot of power, creating a newly aggressive foreign policy and the power shifted from Britain to Germany and America. ([Henripin, Olivier, 2007](#))

As the 19th century was near the end, America had developed too much, and it was becoming a great economic power; the United Kingdom was also a very strong power, but they were in the last stages of their dominant era. The United States seemed a threat of conflict for Britain, but nothing happened. The United States became the world's most outstanding economy passing Britain without a war or any offence because of realism, both countries did not go to war, and they made agreements and terms and did a power transition peacefully without a war. Instead of making enemies, both countries became a part of an alliance which later on also played a big role in the following world wars too. ([Yongping, 2006](#))

In the medieval era, the Seleucid Empire ruled and dominated most of the east after Alexander the Great passed. Many conflicts

and chaos started and the decline of the Seleucid Empire happened. Empire fell because of power transitioning conflict. The individuals of the Empire also demanded freedom. They fought several wars in the following years. Seleucid dynasties in the west and eastern satrap rebellions led the other armies to attack now what modern-day Iran is and take the power in the ancient East. ([Overtoom, 2016](#))

In the middle ages, ancient Romans had a very strong empire in Europe. The Roman Empire existed for 1000 years. However, from time to time, Romans got into a war with different tribes outside the empire. Civil wars were also starting in Rome. The government officials and the citizens were also becoming corrupt. The area of the Roman empire was also the cause of the power shift in the roman empire because the area was very large, and it was very difficult to rule the empire with this much area. The other empires tried to take over the power of the Romans from time to time. In the year 476 AD, the last Roman ruler of the west was dethroned by a Germanic tribe, and the power was shifted from the Romans to the conquerors. ([Gillett, 2017](#))

In history, there is also a very big example of power shifting in the Viking tribe who did a power transition for over three centuries. Vikings were a warrior tribe who came into power in 800 AD, The army was formed to conquer and rule the weak kingdoms and empires of Europe. From time to time Vikings invaded different kingdoms in Europe and gained power. They also developed a good trading system and economic power too. They used to attack an empire, and the whole power of that empire would be shifted to the Vikings, by this they made their kingdoms. The Vikings conquered most of Europe and got stronger and stronger from time to time they also reached parts of America too. The fall of Vikings happened in 1066 AD when Vikings made an unsuccessful attack in Ireland at

the Battle of Stamford Bridge and were defeated. ([Steinsland, 2011](#))

In the Middle Ages at the start of the 15th century Polish-Lithuanian empire was a big power in eastern Europe. The two empires were merged after some agreements and allied both ruled over Eastern Europe for some time. Another great power at the time in central Europe was Teutonic Order, they were a very powerful tribe that consisted of skilled German knights and religious warriors. The Teutonic Knights conquered many kingdoms over eastern and central Europe and were now focused on conquering Polish-Lithuanian Empire. On July 15, 1410, the Teutonic order attacked the Polish-Lithuanian Empire in northern Poland and was defeated by resistance. The whole power of eastern and central Europe was shifted to Polish-Lithuanian Empire. ([Osipian, 2011](#))

When the industrial revolution started in the 19th century Britain was a big power. In the coming times, Britain would face issues to be the biggest power in the world because Germany, Japan, and the United States were also becoming strong so the power of the world was transitioned between these 4 countries. ([Layne, C., 2012](#))

During the Same period of the middle ages, Jerusalem was being captive by the third Christian crusade. At that time Christians were very powerful and had a good military, they also were well settled in trade and market. In that period Christians were having great power in the Middle East. Fights and conflicts between Muslim residents and corrupted Christian knights were also common. The corruption in the empire was a big reason for the power transition of Jerusalem. The Muslims were also planning to regain the power of Jerusalem the leader of the Muslims was led by Salah Uddin Ayyoubi, who was also a great and very powerful leader of the Middle East at that time. In the late 12th century (1187) the conflicts in Jerusalem got

out of hand and the Muslim army led by Salah Uddin Ayyoubi attacked Jerusalem, after 12 days of siege and continuous attacks on October 2nd Jerusalem was surrendered by Balian of Ibelin to Muslims, the power of Jerusalem was shifted to the Muslim Empire who was now the most powerful in the Middle East. ([Edbury, P.W., 2017](#))

In the historical era, Greeks were thought to be the greatest power that ruled in that era, in the year 550 BCE the Greeks took the power from local Empires in that area the Greeks developed to their peak and created many policies also modern military equipment and new war strategies these things led to the success of the Greek Empire. ([Fleck, Robert K., 2013](#))

In the 11th century Granada was been captive by an Empire for 2 centuries, the Spanish armies attacked and conquered the city and took the power back. Later on, they would become very strong in trading marketing and educational systems and would develop a lot. ([O'Callaghan, 2010](#))

In history, there is one more very big power which was the Mongol empire led by Genghis Kahn, Mongol empire was founded by Genghis Kahn at the start of the 13th century and later on dominated the world for a long time. There is a big power transitioning history of the Mongol empire, they invaded many kingdoms and took their power in the prime of the Mongol era more than a quarter of the world's power was in the hand of Mongols. One of the remarkable power shifts to the Mongols was the invasion of China; the invasion of China started in 1211 and later would continue for many years the Mongols took full power of China which lasted until 1368. The Mongol empire became the biggest power in the world. ([Wright, D.C., 2022](#))

Another example of power transition in history is the Ottoman Empire which was created by the power shift from the Seljuk Turk Empire in the area of modern-day Turkey. At the end of the 13th (1299) century when the Seljuk Turk Empire was about to

fall by the damage done to the empire and the invasions of Mongols. Another power rise led by Osman 1 son of Ertugral Ghazi who later on took the power of Seljuk Turk Empire and formed the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire then continued to expand and gain power. In the future, they would become one of the greatest power in Europe and the whole world. The ottoman empire reached its peak in (1520) they were a great power and had an excellent market and trade system and had developed law by creating very effective law systems. ([Imber, C., 2019](#))

Mughal Empire gained too much domination and power in their ruling 200 years in the sub-continent. They become a great power with the help of their development in the business market and trade, education, law, and new military strategies. In their era, many developments were made in the sub-continent in the form of infrastructures and advancements in science and technology by the help of these things they became the biggest power in the sub-continent and a great power worldwide. In the 16th century (1526), Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, invaded the local powers of the sub-continent and transitioned their power to Mughal Empire which would continue expanding for the next 2 centuries. Mughal Empire was then finished in 1857 when the British attacked and took the power. ([Richards, 1993](#))

The British were already a great power in the mid-19th century and were at the peak of development. They came to the sub-continent in 1858 and took the power from the remaining sultans and the local powers and expanded their territory from Europe to East Asia and become a world power. A great advantage was given to Britain after the invasion of the sub-continent. Later on, when the two countries Pakistan and India formed the British power in the sub-continent was finished ([Darnton R. 2002](#)).

In the late 18th century (May 5, 1789) a great revolution took place in France known

as the French revolution. By the French revolution, France became a great power in Europe and worldwide. France becomes more powerful than the surrounding countries. During the revolution, France developed its military strategy a great contribution to the development of the military was by Napoleon Bonaparte. Development in technology and science, trading market, and education were also great factors in the power transition of France in Europe. [\(McPhee, 2001\)](#)

The Power Transition in the Twenty-First Century

In the 21st century era, worldwide headship transitions are underway. "No country, whether US, China, or others will be a world superpower by 2030," according to research ordered by National Intelligence Committee [\(Global trends, 2012\)](#). That appears to be an exaggeration of the US's impending, irreversible, and fatal decline as a global hegemon. Which nations will emerge as new candidates for global leadership in the twenty-first century if a transition occurs? There is no better way to begin an argument than by discussing the BRIC group of countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) [\(Anaman & Agyei-Sasu, 2014\)](#).

Energy resources abound in all 4 nations, which distinguishes them from previous global influential such as Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and the UK who were forced to expand their territories to accommodate for interior reserve limits. Water supplies in Brazil, oil and natural gas in Russia, and iron and coal ore in India are all highly relevant. China currently ranks most elementary in antimony, barite, vanadium, zinc, magnesite, plaster stone, pyrite, tungsten, titanium, fluorite, graphite resources, tin, coal, asbestos, and molybdenum deposits, and talcum [\(Mazarr et al., 2018\)](#).

China has a large and diverse mineral reserve base. The BRIC nations will have a

critical role in sustaining globalization as their global significance grows. Domestic resources, huge people, large territory, and strong collective outputs show their development has a huge amount of potential to be sustained domestically. Each is projected to develop progressively over time, given a steady internal atmosphere and good worldwide conditions [\(Feng, 2013\)](#).

According to a former World Bank Chief Economist, China's earning potential per individual will be split in half that of the US in 2030 if it grows at an annual rate of 8% over the following 20 years. China's populace will be 4.5 percent higher than that of the United States at that point. According to this projection, China's output will be double that of the United States by 2030. An erstwhile International Monetary Fund analyst says, China already exceeded the US in purchasing power parity in 2010, when China's GDP topped the US's \$14.6 trillion [\(The Guardian, 2010\)](#).

The four types of transition which have changed throughout the years are founder, collaboration, conflict, intimidation and power transition between the US and China will be determined by two different needs to set of different factors: supremacy equality, and value conjunction [\(Goh, 2005\)](#).

When the head of state and the competitor share a common interest is modest in the early phases of a challenger's rise, the hegemon might deploy conflict and deterrence to great success. US resisted and the depressed Soviet Union, while the challenger's national production may never be equivalent to the leaders'. The Soviet Union's inadequate political and economic systems were to blame for the challenger's deflation and collapse [\(Roland, 2021\)](#).

Power Transition in World War II, Cold War, and Future

After the cold war ended in 1991, the rivalry between world powers ceased, and

bipolarity weakened, steps were taken to eliminate nuclear weapons. According to analysts, the current state of international relations is favorable due to calm, while others argue that wars will become more frequent and severe. ([Lemke, 1997](#))

This regularity would still hold in the nuclear age: nuclear weapons, according to Organski, do not affect deterring war. Organski and Kugler's test procedure, on the other hand, may face considerable criticism. As a result, a different data set (acquired by Doran and Parsons) and a more appropriate test strategy to replicate Organski and Kugler's research. The findings demonstrate that the power transition theory cannot be ruled out. ([Houweling, 1988](#))

The tearing down of the Berlin Wall, and the subsequent embrace of the market economy and political pluralism by former communist republics in Eastern Europe, have been nearly two decades. The world witnessed the creation of a unipolar world, in which power would be concentrated in the hands of a single superpower, at least for the foreseeable future. However, as a result of economic globalization, regional power centers with credible military capabilities have emerged. ([Kumar, Atul, 2009](#))

The power transition theory conceives that the nation's ranking remains the same when a more powerful nation, gathers other nations to ally. In argument, purchasing power is the integrity for which nations fight for supremacy. China and India might also be in contention due to their huge population and a high potential for economic growth. When the economic performance of India and China reaches and extends the levels achieved by developed countries, power may change vastly in the world. ([Kugler, Jacek, et al, 2001](#))

Power transition is the biggest kind of politics, according to Kenneth Organski. It is about when a nation gets very powerful very fast due to the rapid growth in its economy. The United States was the

dominant nation because its military budget was at an all-time high. US president thought it was time for the world to follow the US. So he put a plan of 14 points to create a new coalition but was turned down by the EU. So these shifts in power struggle caused the outbreak of World War 2. ([Lai, David, 2011](#))

The US and China relations are the most nerve-racking ties in the 21st century. China's rapid population growth is directly proportional to economic growth and increase military capacity and capability. China could be compared to Germany before World War 1. China could become violent and a threat just like Germany and challenge the world. Realistically, the US will dominate in the first 2 decades of the 21st century. China will not be able to overcome the US in military, technology, or economy anytime soon. ([Zhu, Zhiquan, 2005](#))

In World War 1, Japan helped England, France, and the UK against Germany, that's why Japan wasn't considered a threat. Japan also didn't come head to head with any other major nation despite its industry. However, Japan was involved in terrorizing the less industrialized nations of Asia Pacific. By the 1930s, Japan had become a powerful nation and joined hands with Germany due to trade wars against the US. The US coalition is still in power and whether Russia wants to or not but will have to join it. Russia doesn't pose a threat as much as China even though it does unacceptable actions from time to time such as claiming Crimea. ([Sullivan, Conor, 2020](#))

In recent years, the US has become not just a powerful nation but the leader of a coalition of powerful nations. It is a world-order producer. Hegemonic patterns differ in the Atlantic and Pacific regions: American-European relations are based on connections and sporadic international collaboration. ([Ikenberry, 2005](#))

It contends that it is critical to remember that military resources provide hard coercive power, which is usually

accompanied by some degree of soft power. In a new geopolitical order controlled and developing countries, Europe is beginning to appear as a loser. China could pose a serious threat to American supremacy in Asia. However, India, the European Union, and Japan, all US allies, oppose China's ascent. As a result, China is unable to exert influence over the United States. According to balance-of-power theory, such a gain in power – or any major rise – could be dangerous because it disrupts the prevailing power balance. This theory may also argue that the ideal response to China's and India's emergence is to form. Perhaps emerging nations can be used balance. When configurations, is a long way top spot. ([Nye, 2011](#))

The EU faces challenges that hang not only internal cohesion but also its position in the global system. The UK was the dominant nation in the 1950s but was overhauled by Germany in the 1960s. Vaticinations suggest that the relative power of Germany also came as the dominant nation and remains so until now. Germany is declining and it'll come to a lower dominant nation in the future. Indeed, France may match the overall capabilities by 2030. The UK, which dominated in 1950 incontinently anticipated withdrawal from the EU. ([Yesilada, 2017](#))

Findings

The interchange of powers in the middle of the two countries is known as power transition. They also started to change the power in the international order by their appearance and affluence and also the other countries want to share power. So the war also started between them. The great powers want to be the controller of the world and they are trying to get their hands on all the countries of the world. There are four types of power transitions in history.

The first is the power of Portugal over Spain. After the Portuguese are gather there was a golden era many ships are sailing the

sea with the Portuguese flag on them and the wealth expanded to other people and among the Portuguese. There is also a power transfer from Spain to Netherland because they were threat by France and England. Then the transfer of the power from the Netherland to Great Britain it is when the global Dutch system and Britain were the hegemony and the Netherland utilize all of its strength in the war against England. The power was also shifted from Great Britain to the United States because of its global expansion and regional statistics and was of the strongest in the war.

The power transition and the changes in the global international order are the rear events that have slowly started when the time comes. The country that gains power shows its strength to the world and gets its recognition all over the world. The powerful country then tried to enter its name in the global order so that all the countries see and those who are their challengers also have to make great efforts to reach their level and compete with them in the international world.

The US and China's relationship was not very good in the past and when China increase its growth in economy and military capabilities and it will threat the US but the US was very far from China and it is behind it. But they can overcome any time. In a new situation of the power and global order developed countries are led by China and this will disappear the supremacy of the US in Asia. The US, EU, and Japan made alliances and opposes China, and the power has also balanced the theory that a strong counterbalance provides stability in the region, but China is not very close to the top position in the international global system.

Conclusion

After World War I, there was some peace among the world power because nuclear weapons are made and caused great damage, so all the world powers know the

consequence of war that how much destruction is made by the use of these weapons. The cold war began between the two powerful countries USSR and US and they both try to sabotage each other. As a result of the cold war, the USSR was divided into different other countries and the war was won by the US because of their alliances they also gave huge finance to win the cold war.

According to Kenneth organski, the power transition is a very high kind of politics that a nation wants the world to

follow it. The US was the dominant nation after World War 1 and wants all the nations to follow him, but the EU was not in favor, and this is the power shifter and caused WW2.

In the future, there are different balances and imbalances between the countries in terms of power and order. But war cannot take place because of the rules and regulations set by the big power and all the countries are also heavily dependent on each other economies, that in turn will lead to stable regional order.

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