HEGEMONY AND ENERGY RESOURCES: 
EXAMPLE OF CENTRAL ASIA

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Abstract

Hegemony has been the key concept of political literature after Antonio Gramsci, who was an Italian philosopher, used it. “Hegemony,” which was first mentioned by Gramsci in the context of the practice of hegemony construction by a dominating class on social areas. Basic definition, is the concept of “governing with assent.” International perspective says that the hegemony, which is built by the dominating class by universalizing its own benefits as common benefits, thus establishing an intellectual/moral/ideological leadership and organizing the public assent, is the realization of a historical project based on the consensus among the dominating classes of predominant countries. In this project, the consensus between the financial powers-ideologies-organizations was achieved.

Energy, especially after oil started to be used in mid 1800s and it has become the most important production and transportation matter after 1900s, brought about its prevailing importance for world politics and world economics. In the 21st century, the energy is the most important factor for public welfare and sustainable development for the countries. Countries are in the race for this important position of energy that have energy resources might provide wealth and welfare. Energy might provide for those countries which possess the resources. On the other hand, energy might cause political and economic instability due to being an area of contest among global powers. Moreover, it is not sufficient to possess energy resources for those countries. These countries need economic and political strength of global powers for supply of energy resources that brings global power contest. As a result of contest, countries control energy supply can increase so those countries strength in global

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scale. It is possible to that one dimension of energy resources problem can be explained with the concept of “threat” and as for the other dimension, with the concept “interest”. Energy is accepted as indispensable element for continuation of current civilization. In that reason, energy geopolitics and energy security concepts are very important for all world nations.

The example of this work will be the Central Asian States because of that reason has rich energy resources. This paper will define what the hegemonic power is first and than hegemonic powers of the region that Russian Federation (RF), United States (US) and China will be examined on the energy policies.

Key words: Hegemony, Energy Resources, Central Asia

1. Theoretical Framework: Hegemony and Energy

The concept of hegemony, it is possible to drive up to the ancient Greeks. Hegemony derives from the word "hegemon" which means "leader" in Greek (Gills, 2003: 237). Concept of hegemony refers to the dominant and oppressive state of acompetence on the system over others (Yılmaz, 2010: 194). More clearly, it is taken to means: "...one of the states within the community, is to lead a government to others." or “…a city government, the superiority over other city-states.” (Şener, 2014:407).
Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci, used the notion of hegemony for first time in modern sense. Notion is often used in Marxist theory (Beyer, 2014: 33). Gramsci's definition of hegemony: have used similar political tastes, to characterize relations that characterize national issues and in particular social class struggles. According to Hülagü, Gramsci's understanding of hegemony is different from the concept of ideology. Hegemony is a form of special rule established by the totality of meanings and values. This can be used not only in ideological means, but also in other methods. Examples of such situations; the reorganization of the tax system in order to create followers and aristocrats such as the creation of the working poor.” (Hülagü, 2014: 197).

Gramsci describes "hegemony" as a special power relation ". In other words, it is a situation where the sovereign social groups have secured their privileged status with mutual compromise. Such social forces develop an ideology that provides for the domination of the ruling sovereign groups. (Ari, 2013: 464). The author takes hegemony in a historical process. Someone else is taking the place of a hegemonic class.

It would be correct to include briefly the definition of Cox that is also benefited from the concept of Gramsci hegemony international discipline gave a new sense of perspective discipline. According to Cox; "Hegemony refers to the established world order, in other words the internationalization of the capitalist mode of production, which is an extension of state-civil society mutual relations. Thus, hegemony is defined as a 'point of attachment' between the world order, social forces and states. "(Çiftçi, 2009: 205)

Hegemon state has some characteristics. Currency must be valid internationally. It should have bases and allies everywhere in the world. It demonstrates its leadership by intervening in the regional crisis and conflict. But it is not enough power to drive this position. Most importantly, it needs to take advantage of a significant portion of other countries and convince them of their own leadership (Uzgel, 2012: 31). Hegemonic power must also legitimize this position by spreading and accepting its own way of life, culture and values throughout the world.
Energy supply security is provided by the state in the international system according to the realization. On the other hand, the impact of energy security and foreign policy on an international system, where hegemon is the state, may be different from the effect of world trade. According to the theory of hegemonic stability, rules set by other platforms such as trade, finance, air transport, telecommunication and energy lead to the birth of international regimes (Ipek, 2012: 229). The continuation of these regimes despite the weakening of the hegemon power determines the structure of the international system. This situation is explained by an asymmetric dependency that depends on the distribution of the qualifications of the states.

The realist approach is questioning the relationship between the power of the states and the free or protected world trade structure. According to which the distribution of economic power in an international system in which hegemonic power exists enables the liberation of world trade. In other words; Political power and economic development are questioned (Ipek, 2012: 229). It is argued that the political position of the state in the international system has weakened as the relative cost of not being free to trade is increased for a state, considering the relative costs of the protectionist or closed structure to the trading parties. The only exception to this generalization is the oil exporting countries.

It is an undeniable fact that the presence of energy resources in the region has brought violence to the region, not peace, petroleum income has not changed the situation of the countries of the region positively, has led to efforts to share resources through threats, and has become the address of terrorism with constant war and destruction. In this case, it would not be wrong to say that the Middle East and Central Asia geography has returned to the battlefield of energy resources between the hegemonic powers. Even today, the Baltic Sea and the Caspian Sea, etc., It is emphasized that a 'petroleum diplomacy' has emerged in the fields, and that despite all the changes in the world, the traditional geostrategy is being staged again (Yılmaz, 2013: 321). While energy dependency of the states becomes critical, competition in this area is accelerating, it is worthwhile to emphasize that energy companies stand out as important as an international tension field even if they are global rather than national and appear as block power.
The military, political, economic, commercial, environmental developments and natural disasters that took place in the 1990s brought energy security again with a different and more comprehensive content since the second half of the 1990s. It is not wrong to say that in the new era, such as diversification, competition and security of supply, the content and the framework have largely changed over the last decade, while still maintaining their position as key elements of energy security. In this context, Central Asian States, especially rich in hydrocarbon deposits, are in the field of hegemonic attraction. Hegemon states aimed to direct the region in the direction of its own interests.

2. Hegemony, Energy and Central Asia

The Central Asian States have become the playground for the struggle that they have entered in order to manage the energy resources that exist in Central Asia because of the energy resources they have, Russia and China in the region, and the USA beyond the ocean. In this part of the work, the politics of the energy resources in the region will be examined because of the proximity to the region, first of all Russia, then of the USA, and finally of the rising power of the region that is Chine.

2.1. Russia

One of the basic elements of Russia's strengthening relations with the states in Central Asia was the economy. The most important economic reason why Russia played a role in the indifference of developments in the Central Asian States is the division of labor between the Soviet Republics, including the Republics of Russia and Central Asia, during the period of the USSR. For this reason, a strong interdependence has occurred. The fact that the post-USSR republics fail to imagine different approaches to economic problems has led to the failure of economic reforms to be addressed in a coordinated manner.

Russia expects the Central Asian States to act in accordance with its own approach in the field of energy politics. Russia is a very rich geographical region in terms of hydrocarbon energy resources. The fact that Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan's energy resources can not reach international markets through a route outside of Russia has become a means to consolidate their hegemony in Russia
These countries are able to export oil and natural gas through pipelines passing over Russia. Russia is making a huge profit by taking the energy resources of these states at a very low price and re-exporting them at a very high price.

Russia's internal and external political parameters, Vladimir Putin's 2000 election as president has become a turning point. With President Putin's presidency, great reforms began to take place in Russia (Kısıçık, 2014). With the help of the centralist politics Putin began to implement, he began to regain control within the Federation (Oran, 2013: 532). In Russia after 2000, the "Near Neighborhood" and other neighboring countries were shaped by the following basic elements: prioritizing energy sources, prioritizing trade associations, trying to identify regional balances using ethnic conflicts and conflicts, and combating terrorism.

In the world, privatization and corporate unification, rising at the same level as globalization, have begun to become a form of the liberal system. Contrary to this situation, Putin, in such a period Lukoil and Gazprom etc. has made energy companies an important actor in Russian foreign policy. This gave Russia the advantage over the hegemonic forces in the other energy field. According to Putin, "global energy; Is the most important actor in socio-economic development and the global energy problem is directly affecting the prosperity of millions of people "(Akgül, 2007: 132).

In general, Putin's foreign policy conception is evaluated by İşyar in the following way: "Russia's re-emergence as a world power in a multi-polar world system where there is cooperative and civilized competition based on outreach is based on the alleged use of the Asian card pragmatically while cooperating with the West." Enabling the control of energy has become the most important element of Russian foreign policy. Russia opposes that argument (İşyar, 2004: 51.)

Russia wants to protect its advantageous position in energy markets and is developing strategies for this. It is at the top of these strategies; "To protect the monopoly position on the energy supply in Central Asia and to prevent the energy resources there from opening up to the world markets with alternative pipelines not under their control ..." (Hasanoğlu, 2014).
Russia has become the main target of energy policies in the control and transmission of energy reserves, a dominant role in its policies, and in particular of natural gas in the Central Asian region to the European market (Çınar, 2008: 28). According to Çınar, Russia has become the main target of energy policies in the control and transmission of energy reserves, a dominant role in its policies, and in particular of natural gas in the Central Asian region to the European market (NTVCNBC, 2013). NABUCCO project, which is based on the transfer of Turkmen natural gas, which Turkey hopes for economic development, to Europe via Turkey, seems to have decreased with this agreement.

It is useful to evaluate why Russia wants to be a hegemonic power in the Central Asian States in terms of the size of energy transmission lines. The most important of these is the Central Asia-Central Natural Gas Pipeline, which was built in 1967. It was developed until 1985 (Kısaçık, 2014). When the first section (3,000 km) of the line with an annual capacity of 10.5 billion m³ was completed, it received the world's longest energy transmission pipeline title for that period (Zaman Gazetesi, 2014). This capacity has reached 80 billion m³ from 44 billion m³. During the construction of this transport line connecting have been exceeded Astana, Ashgabat and Tashkent to Moscow, over 300 natural and artificial obstacles, including Amu-Derya, Ural, Volga and Oka rivers. The construction of the main gas pipeline system, which contains a large number of fine lines with an annual capacity of 80 billion m³ (Kısaçık, 2014).

Today, this natural gas pipeline, eco-political and geopolitical importance, continues for Russia (Sabah Gazetesi, 2014). Because of this transfer line, Central Asian natural gas is delivering to Moscow and Kiev. An agreement was signed between Moscow and Ashgabat in 2003. This agreement is a 25-year agreement on the gas sector. According to this agreement, Moscow will import the Turkmen gas and offer transit guarantee to Ashgabat. In this context, 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas will be purchased and sold every year until 2028 by changing the price and quantity (Kısaçık, 2014).

Another important project is the Caspian Coast (Prikaspiskiy) Pipeline Project for Russia. In May 2007, Turkmenistan President Berdimuhamedov, Russian President
Putin and President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev joined the triple summit of the Turkmenbashi city (Kimyamühendisli.com, 2014). Later, on 20 December 2007, the parties signed a final agreement on the construction of the project in Moscow. Through this pipeline, 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas will be transported annually from Turkmenistan and 10 billion cubic meters from Kazakhstan. The 1,700 km of the line will pass through 1200 kilometers of Kazakhstan and 500 kilometers of Turkmenistan (Kısıncık, 2014a).

The other important project is the Atýrau-Samara (UAS) Pipeline Project, which is 1232 km long, extending from the city of Atýrau in Kazakhstan to the city of Samara in Russia. The daily capacity is 300,000 barrel. But Moscow intends to increase this capacity by 500,000 barrel (Kısıncık, 2014a).

2.2. US

The US's first interest in Central Asia began after the Second World War and at the beginning of the Cold War. The work revealed by Mackinder, the founder of geopolitics, as the key region for Central Asia to control the central region, led to American policies. (Ögün, 2014).

Concentrating on the energy resources of the Caspian in the 1990s and trying to reduce its dependence on the Basra Gulf, the United States has taken some initiatives in this context to reduce Russia's influence on the safe transport of energy resources to international markets (Pirinççii, 2008: 212). The "Near Neighborhood" doctrine declared after the disintegration of the USSR, China's efforts to influence the region, and the interests of US oil companies have gradually increased the US interest in Central Asia (Erhan, 2003a: 6). The involvement of the regional states in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program and the opening of permanent representatives in the capitals of the states of the region after 1992 are clear proof of the efforts to settle the region (Erhan, 2003a:6). The "Silk Road Law" passed through the US congress in 1999 directed to the region has an axis that will facilitate the commercial interests of American investors in the region. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline agreement signed in Istanbul in 1999 was also supported by the United States because it would be an alternative to Russia's power transmission lines (Yılmaz, 2014).
It is possible to analyze the US Central Asian geographical objectives through two basic strategies. The first relates to the role of the United States in the global power equation. The US wants to reduce and control the two major regional powers over Central Asia, Russia and China, both real and possible in this region. The second important objective is to provide access to the rich hydrocarbon resources of the Central Asian geography. All other US policies towards Central Asia can be interpreted as derivatives of these two main objectives. (Kireşçi, 2011: 34).

The US is aiming to transfer its energy reserves in Central Asia to world markets through Western companies and to benefit from the geo-economic and geopolitical potential of Central Asia. The United States does not want its hegemony to control hydrocarbon reserves in this geographical region from Russia and Iran. The US supports transit to international markets from the routes outside these two countries. In this context, the US supported the BTC oil pipeline Project. According to Budak; "Encouraging Kazakhstan to supply oil to this line, thus ensuring the end of Russian monopoly in transporting oil to international markets (Budak, 2014). The US is promoting the Caspian pipeline project that will bring Central Asian energy sources through Turkey to Europe and world markets and the natural gas pipeline project that will transport the Turkmenistan gas to Pakistan and India.

It has been observed that the US is seeking to develop strong relations with Kazakhstan in the region in the direction of geo-economic and geopolitical interests. US energy giants Chevron and Exxon Mobil, which have formed a joint consortium with Kazakhstan to extract oil from the Tengiz area, realize about a quarter of the oil production in Kazakhstan (Yeniçağ Gazetesi, 2014). Other US energy companies also operate in the Caspian region. According to Yılmaz, "When considering the US's energy dependency and the current uncertainties in the rock gas field, Central Asian energy sources are important for the US in terms of energy supply diversity. The United States has focused more on this global hegemony target, which is surrounded by Russia, China and Iran in the period after September 11, 2001 " (Yılmaz, 2014). Budak says: "He has developed cooperation with the Central Asian States in the context of logistical needs in Afghanistan. It seems that the search for a strategic partnership with the Central Asian
States in the post-9/11 period is relatively weak in the period of Obama's power because of the financial crisis "(Budak, 2014).

"Central Asian States, with the exception of the United States and Russia, are inclined to link their energy sources to the surrounding countries with the key equations in China. For example, the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation Organization has projected six major regional energy pipelines to be animated under the coordination of the Asian Development Bank. It concerns the United States that countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and Azerbaijan also take part in project routes. Undoubtedly, US and US companies will want to take part in these projects. The main goal for the United States is to naturally connect some of the Central Asian energy resources with alternative channels to Europe; Some of them to the South Asian region and have a say in terms of economic and security in these projects (Kireçı, 2011: 41).

2.3. China

In recent years, it is observed that China, which is constantly developing, is trying to get more active in the "Great New Game", that is, Central Asia, which is rich with energy resources, especially the Caspian region's oil and gas reserves. The driving force of the Chinese strategy is the demand for energy resources in the process of extremely high economic growth. China has set as its main objective to observe its far-reaching geopolitical objectives in the direction of "Central Asia" with the disintegration of the USSR. China has moved to increase both political and economic relations with five of the countries of Central Asian States, particularly Kazakhstan (Hüseyin, 2014).

China entered the central region with an agreement covering the rights to export and transport oil successfully in an important oil region of Kazakhstan in 1997. The intervention of China was perceived as the hegemony of China in the region. (Uğrasız, 2002: 231) Central Asian energy sources are viewed as a geographical region that meets China's increasing consumption of oil. In the eyes of Chinese experts, Central Asia is the center of the geopolitical map of oil and natural gas. According to this view, if an actor can control the resources of Central Asian energy, it will be active in the global strategic conjuncture (Ekrem, 2011: 29).
It will be useful for the essence of China's Central Asian energy pipeline investments to briefly address them. These investments

“I. The 3666 km Central Asia-China Pipe Natural Gas Pipeline was built in 2009.

II. Kazakhstan-China (Atasu-Sincan) Oil Pipeline was built by Sino-Kazakh Oil Pipeline Co.Ltd. With CNPC and Kaz Munai Gas at a cost of USD 700 million 3000 km in 2006.

III. In 2009, the Chinese Investment Company in Kazakhstan received 14.5% of Kaz Munai Gas and 49% of CNPC Mangistaumunaigaz.

IV. China National Petroleum Company has signed an oil and gas discovery agreement in Turkmenistan. "(Azer, 2014: 238-239)

The fact that Central Asia is adjacent to East Turkestan and that it is a transit route is extremely important for China. (Çakıroğlu, 2014). "In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping made a visit to the Central Asian States and the agreements made as a result of these visits show the value given to the region in terms of the" New Silk Road "trade that China wants to revive. Jinping's Central Asia tour includes energy and energy security issues." Jinping's visit to Turkmenistan that is about "A" and "B" natural gas transmission lines continue to be safe and transfer, the "C" natural gas pipeline should be completed soon, "D" line will start the transfer of natural gas as of 2016. " (Çakıroğlu, 2014). A natural gas contract between China and Turkmenistan, which will reach 65 billion m3 by 2020, has been signed at this visiting. According to this agreement, "Turkmenistan is China's largest natural gas supplier, while China is also Turkmenistan's largest natural gas buyer. The Turkmenistan-China natural gas pipeline is closely related to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, which will pass through the territory of Uzbekistan and especially 225 km, which will pass through its territory except these two states. Kyrgyzstan, which is economically weaker than the other Turkic republics, is claimed to be worth $2 billion in transit fees. China is among the expectations to invest $3 billion in Kyrgyzstan " (Çakıroğlu, 2014).

The security of Central Asian hydrocarbon reserves and transport lines is also one of China's major interests in this geography. China's energy consumption, such as
oil and natural gas, is increasing along with the pace of economic growth. Outward
dependence has exceeded 50%. According to the report of the International Energy
Agency, China has become the largest country consuming world energy since 2009,
leaving behind the United States. According to the report, China's energy consumption
will increase further in the coming years and will rise from 17% in 2010 to 22% in 2035.
In this respect, China sees Central Asia as a means to reduce energy dependency
(Uğrasız, 2002: 67).

3. Result

It limited to the energy resources of Central Asia so Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan
have not been addressed. Tajikistan has rich uranium and silver mines and it has rich
water resources. These water resources should play a more active role in energy
production. Although Kyrgyzstan is called "the island of democracy", there have been
many color revolutions and political stability has not been fully achieved. Behind the
scenes of these color revolutions lies the struggle of the hegemon forces to possess the
rich underground resources of Kyrgyzstan.

Due to the "geopolitical gap" that emerged with the disintegration of the USSR,
the countries of the region became a playground for hegemonic powers due to
heterogeneous structures in terms of ethnicity and religion (Bozkurt, 2006: 121). 
Especially Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and
Afghanistan, which are called "Eurasia Balkans", have recently been on the way to
being pawns that the US used to dominate the region.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Turkic Republics of Western Turkistan,
which gained their independence, could not attain their identity because of constantly
colored revolutions or external interventions. They have left the monopoly of
geopolitical and energy resources they possess as the region to the hegemon forces. The
Turkish Republics will remain in monopoly of the hegemon powers unless they unite
under one roof in line with the same purpose.
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