



Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi

Journal of Social Sciences

ISSN 2564-6583 | e-ISSN 2602-229X |

ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ

RESEARCH ARTICLE

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS TAIWAN: OBAMA VS. TRUMP

Amerika'nın Tayvan'a Yönelik Dış Politikası: Obama ve Trump Karşılaştırması

Nur Seda TEMUR^{1*} 

¹ *Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences, Department of International Relations, Ankara, Turkey*

Geliş Tarihi/Received Date: 22.04.2020

Kabul Tarihi/Accepted Date: 07.07.2020

ABSTRACT

As Donald Trump won the vote in the U.S. presidential elections in 2016, many anticipated a number of changes in the U.S. foreign policy. In this sense, China and Taiwan were not exceptions. With respect to this outcome, this paper will address the following question: How did the U.S. Foreign Policy towards Taiwan change from the Obama administration to the Trump administration? Regarding this question, in this paper, I will try to defend the view that as long as U.S.- China economic rivalry and trade war persists, Taiwan will remain under U.S. protection, regardless of a change in administrations in the U.S. from Obama to Trump. This study will be a qualitative case study. In particular, in order to compare the U.S. foreign policy towards Taiwan under Obama and Trump administration, the data will be gathered from secondary resources through document analysis. These sources will be composed of relevant books, articles, academic journals, research papers, and newspapers gathered from libraries. These sources will be used in this article for elaborating on foreign policies of Obama and Trump administration on Taiwan.

Keywords: U.S.-Taiwan Relations, Obama Administration, Trump Administration, U.S. Foreign Policy.

ÖZ

Donald Trump, 2016 yılında ABD başkanlık seçimini kazandığında, çoğu kişi ABD dış politikasında birtakım değişiklikler öngördü. Bu anlamda Çin ve Tayvan istisna değildi. Bu sonuçla ilgili olarak, bu makale şu soruyu ele alacaktır: ABD'nin Tayvan'a yönelik dış politikası, Obama yönetiminden Trump yönetimine nasıl değişti? Bu soruyla ilgili olarak, bu yazıda, ABD-Çin ekonomik rekabeti ve ticaret savaşı devam ettiği sürece, ABD'deki yönetimlerdeki bir değişiklikten bağımsız olarak Tayvan'ın ABD koruması altında kalacağı görüşünü savunmaya çalışacağım. Bu araştırma bir nitel vaka çalışmasıdır. Özellikle ABD'nin Obama ve Trump yönetimi altındaki Tayvan'a karşı uygulamış oldukları dış politikaları karşılaştırmak için, veriler belge analizi yoluyla ikincil kaynaklardan toplanacaktır. Bu kaynaklar ilgili kitap, makale, akademik dergi, araştırma makalesi ve kütüphanelerden toplanan gazetelerden oluşacaktır. Bu kaynaklar Tayvan'daki Obama ve Trump yönetiminin dış politikalarını değerlendirmek için kullanılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ABD-Tayvan İlişkileri, Obama Yönetimi, Trump Yönetimi, ABD Dış Politikası.

Please cite this paper as follows/Atıf için:

Temur, N. S. (2020). U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Taiwan: Obama vs. Trump. *Alinteri Journal of Social Sciences*, 4 (1): 1-12.

* Sorumlu yazar/Corresponding author
E-mail: nursesdatemur@gmail.com (N. S. Temur)

INTRODUCTION

Although Taiwan conflict surfaced over 70 years ago, the U.S. Taiwan relations were placed on a legal basis with the Taiwan Relations Act only in 1979. With the acceptance of this act, the U.S. had the responsibility to assist Taiwan. Therefore, Taiwan Relations Act became the turning point for the relations between Taiwan and U.S. As Donald Trump won the vote in the U.S. presidential elections in 2016, many anticipated a number of changes in the U.S. foreign policy towards Taiwan.

In this sense, China and Taiwan were not exceptions. With respect to this outcome, this paper will address the following question: how did the U.S. Foreign Policy towards Taiwan change from the Obama administration to Trump administration? Regarding this question, this paper will try to defend the view that as long as U.S.- China economic rivalry and trade war persists, Taiwan will remain under the U.S. protection regardless of a change in administrations in the U.S. from Obama to Trump. With respect to this claim, this paper will first focus on the historical background of the conflict over Taiwan and the relationship between Taiwan and the U.S. Before the concluding remark, American foreign policy towards Taiwan will be examined under both Obama and Trump administration with a comparison. In the conclusion part, the overall issue will be evaluated, and both administrations will be compared.

METHOD

Before examining the historical background of the conflict over Taiwan, it will be necessary to focus on the studies done before on the American foreign policy towards Taiwan issue. When the literature is analyzed, it could be stated that studies are mostly on comparative bases and focused on various aspects. When the studies related to the foreign policy of the Obama administration are analyzed, it could be stated that the studies mostly focus on either the cases or the different aspects of foreign policies of Obama in general. For instance, one study by Wang focuses on three main hypotheses: pivot without Taiwan, Pivot then Taiwan, and third the pivot with Taiwan.

Therefore, Wang argued that pivot and Asia issues are at the center of U.S. foreign policy of the Obama administration (2015). Moreover, Friedman weights the statement for and against that strategy alteration with regards to China's improvement of the U.S. benefits in the Asian area (2013). Different from him, Zuo analyzes the Taiwan policy from the angle of world order. In other words, he argues that the world order has a huge role in the foreign policy of the U.S. (2018). Similarly, Rahawestri, in general, focuses on the analysis of the foreign policy of Obama on Asia. He argues that Obama's policies are the continuity of previous presidents (2010). Unlike other studies, Tucker and Glaser focus on the response of the abandonment of Taiwan policy (2011).

Regarding the studies on policies of Trump administration, they mostly highlight each policy in a separate way. For instance, Hu focuses on the relationship between the U.S. and China. Hu claimed that Trump's presidency leads to cold peace with its relation with China (2018). Moreover, Delisle focuses on Trump's policy toward Taiwan. It is claimed that different from other presidents, he follows uncertain strategies, and his decisions change in a sharper way (2018). When all these studies

were considered, it could be asserted that there are various studies on the U.S. policy towards Taiwan issue. The current work aims to extend this body of work by focusing on two U.S. administrations, which are Obama and Trump administrations, to contribute to the literature by focusing on economic rivalry and trade war between the U.S. and China and its impact on the U.S. foreign policy towards Taiwan.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONFLICT OVER TAIWAN & THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND TAIWAN

In order to compare the foreign policies of Obama and Trump administrations on the Taiwan issue, it is necessary to explain the Taiwan issue. Hence, this introductory section provides a brief overview of the conflict over Taiwan and the role of the U.S. on the conflict. It then goes on to the discussion of foreign policies of the U.S. administrations. The underlying foundations of the contemporary clash over Taiwan date back to 1683, “when the last truly Chinese dynasty” reached the end on the island and the Chinese settlers of the island lost their opposition against the rule of Manchu (Long, 1991, p.11). Indeed, there was a clash against the Manchus related to Taiwan, which was the struggle for the survival of Chinese society (Copper, 2013, p.34).

Besides, starting in 1683, the control of the island belonged to China. Due to the progress in both trade and agriculture, Taiwan took the attention of European states and empires (Goddard, 1966). The will of China to have control over Taiwan raised in the 19th century. After all, officially, Taiwan was recognized as a province in 1887 (Copper, 2007). The changes between 1894 and 1895 before the Sino-Japanese War became unsuccessful in keeping Japan from joining the island with respect to the Shimonoseki Treaty. The notable triumph of Japan in the war result in the control of Japan over Taiwan until 1945.

The Five-month Taiwanese Republic, which was of 1895, had a remarkable effect on the development of a Taiwan identity without considering that the Republic was not a settled one. It did not incorporate the entire region and society on the island (Manthorpe, 2005). Although there was a revolution by the society of the Republic against the impact of Japan on the island, the revolt was oppressed by Japanese forces. By suppressing the resistance, they could be able to put an end to the idea of unification with China. This could be achieved because since Taiwan’s economic growth was much more than China, the mainland, Taiwanese society perceives the unification as a danger to their well-being (Manthorpe, 2005, p.172). In short, the position of Taiwan has stayed a subject of warm discussion from that point forward. This complex history of Taiwan forms a base for the U.S. interest in the region.

Having seen Taiwan’s situation, it is now necessary to focus on the relation between the U.S. and Taiwan. The relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan took its legitimacy in line with the Taiwan Relations Act, which was accepted in 1979 by the U.S. Congress. The act was crucial because it ensures the U.S.’s help to Taiwan (U.S. Department of State, 2018). Besides, the U.S. became responsible for defending Taiwan against any possible Chinese attack, by supporting the island with arms and carrying the limits of the U.S. to oppose force or different types of oppression (American Institute in Taiwan, 1979). Although the U.S. agreed on limiting its arms sales to Taiwan in accordance with the Joint Communiqué with the People’s Republic of China (PRC),

after the Cold War, the U.S. authorities changed their minds. They sold aircraft to Taiwan (Klintworth, 2001). Hence, the U.S.'s main aim was to protect Taiwan for its survival (Ross, 2000).

The approach of the U.S. towards Taiwan did not change since Trump gained the presidency. Trump administration refrains from directly involving in the outland clashes, except if they openly intimidate the nation's national benefit (Ohara, 2018). In this sense, the U.S. is worried about the PRC with regard to economic competition instead of the military because the military strength of PRC and the U.S. cannot be compared.

Moreover, due to the One-China policy of the U.S., the U.S. government desired to intensify its relationship with Taiwan, with the will to restrain China. The One-China policy of the U.S. is the idea that the U.S. government perceives the PRC as the only legitimate government of China. In other words, it is declared that there is only one Chinese government which is PRC. Also, according to the policy, Taiwan is part of China. Furthermore, "America's One-China policy opposed the division of China by the imperialist nations and emphasized maintaining the country's sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and equal commercial opportunities with the U.S. and other foreign powers" (Chen, 2019, p.257).

Therefore, the U.S. government prefers Chinese communism to Russian communism. With the adoption of this policy the U.S. officials aimed to have strategic relations with the PRC (Bush, 2017, p.6). This goal and policy continued during the administration of Trump, similar to previous administrations. Considering all the above, Taiwan had great importance for the U.S. based on various factors. But most of all, Taiwan was a model for a modern democracy, which was constructed with the encouragement of the U.S. Thence, the U.S. wanted Taiwan to be an example to other states in the Asia-Pacific zone.

Moreover, Taiwan had a competing economy and had a leading position in terms of industry. Furthermore, considering the clashes over the Pacific region into consideration, the alliance of Taiwan was too crucial for the U.S. in order to have a privileged position in the region. Lastly, the rivalry between the U.S. and PRC in the financial and military spheres expresses the critical role of Taiwan for the U.S. Moreover, Taiwan was crucial for the U.S. government when the relationship between the U.S. and China is considered. For instance, "one of Washington's earlier objectives on China (especially in the immediate post-1945 years and the 1990s) was to remake China in America's liberal image, by transforming the mainland into a westernized democratic polity" (Chen, 2019, p.257). Thence, the American will was to westernize China according to its liberal goals. For this purpose, a solution to the Taiwan issue was needed. Ultimately, a solution to the conflict over Taiwan could not find out by the U.S. administration, and Taiwan has always been crucial for the U.S. government because of its advantages to the U.S. expressed above.

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

So far, this paper focused on the historical background of the conflict over Taiwan and the relationship between Taiwan and the U.S. The following part will focus on the

foreign policy of the Obama administration and the Trump administration. To start with the Obama administration period, the key plan of the U.S. government was to retreat step by step from the Middle East and return to the Asia-Pacific land because of its latent capacity dread that the U.S. would be underestimated in the area. Moreover, with the Obama administration, Taiwan's case became more stable than the previous presidencies. With the presidency of Obama, some changes occurred. For instance, the authorities or members of the government could have a chance to express their thoughts on the relations between the U.S. and Taiwan. Furthermore, the Obama administration highlighted the focal point of the U.S. readjustment. Additionally, the critical position of Southeast Asia states, overwhelming engagement to the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the South China Sea (Zuo, 2018, p.163).

Before going into the details of the newly developed policies of the Obama administration, it is necessary to focus on policies that were applied by the previous administration and continued during the Obama administration. In other words, at some issues, Obama continued some Bush administration strategies and just progressed them. The reason for this continuation was the little interest of Obama towards Taiwan. For him, the problems in the Middle East was much more crucial than Taiwan. Also, he focused mostly on Europe rather than Asia. Although the bilateral relations with China deteriorated, Obama followed the previous policies towards Taiwan.

Therefore, the American policy towards Taiwan stayed the same with the policies during the Bush administration. Indeed, "the Obama administration was not influenced by Taiwan's Republican friends or by public opinion about Taiwan, that were usually factors in making Chin/Taiwan policy. Also, Obama was liberal and Europe-centered" (Copper, 2013, p.203). Therefore, at the beginning of his presidency, his focus was on Europe and problems in the Middle East. Consequently, he continued to apply the Bush administration policies though both had different political backgrounds and perspectives. Furthermore, to start with the pro-Taiwan strategy, like the previous governments, the Obama administration followed a pro-Taiwan policy and supported the deals for the sake of Taiwan. In addition to these, Obama followed the policy of the previous president, Bush, about the one-China Policy. After he was elected as president, he declared that the previous administration promoted the one-China policy, and therefore, Obama did not want to shift this policy. (The Washington Times, 2019). Similar to the Bush administration, Obama also followed a foreign policy on the strength of the Three US-China communique and the Taiwan Relations Act (Obama & Biden, 2008).

In addition to these similar policies, another policy of the previous administration that was supported by the Obama administration was the arms deal. The administration continued the arms deal with Taiwan and supported its military, as was the case in the Bush administration period. During the election campaign process, he proclaimed that he would protect the democracy of Taiwan if he is elected (Rahawestri, 2010, p.111). Indeed, the military side of the Obama administration had an additional crucial role in the production of his arms trade strategy. The military side encouraged Obama to continue the policy of Bush. When he came on power, he kept the military trades, which were delayed by the Chinese government by virtue of a U.S. declaration of an enormous

sale of arms to the island in 2008. Consequently, when Obama came on power, in the early days of 2010, he signed the discussion in regard to another great arms deal.

According to this arms deal, the U.S. government agreed to sell \$6.4 billion military equipment, including military weapons, sophisticated communication systems, maritime ships, and helicopters to Taiwan. Indeed, he did not consider the warnings of Chinese authorities that they stated that if they did not end the arms sale, this would harm bilateral relations between the U.S. and China (Sutter, 2009, p.11). The military exchange did not help the increase in the defense industry gain of the U.S., and it supported the development of the defense ability of Taiwan (Tucker& Glacier, 2011, p.26). Therefore, the Obama administration followed a supportive policy toward Taiwan. During his administration period, the U.S. Congress, likewise, carried out the pattern of guaranteeing that Obama would stay supporter of Taiwan and their relations.

In addition to these policies, most important of all, during his administration period, Obama followed a balanced Asia policy. Therefore, Obama focused on the crucial role of Taiwan. By applying the strategy which was “pivot to Asia”, he tried to have close relations with Taiwan (Hu, 2018, p.81). This strategy on balancing Asia indicated a pan-Asia target in the U.S., in terms of security strategy. In this way, to some degree, this policy decreased the attention on the relation between the U.S. and Taiwan. This was rather favorable for the relationship between Taiwan and the U.S. in terms of security, because, if Taiwan had collapsed into a territorial security issue, this would diminish the striking nature of differentiation between the security treaty relation and inferior commitment with the U.S. (Wang, 2015, p.369). To put it in other words, by following a policy applied to the Asian region, not only to Taiwan, the Obama administration did not only protect Taiwan but also could balance the relations with China.

This point was crucial because the aim of the Obama administration was both to support Taiwan and strengthen the island, and at the same time, not to take the adverse attention of China. Another policy that was followed by the Obama administration was to reject Taiwan’s abandonment, which was proposed by U.S. policymakers. Indeed, the U.S. policy experts suggested that a new policy should be followed, which was abandoning Taiwan, to prevent any possibility of the initiation of the war between the U.S. and the People’s Republic of China. It was argued that for the sake of strengthening the cooperation in the Asian region, it is necessary to abandon Taiwan. However, although this was the only solution to protect the economy and security of the U.S. and the relations with China, Obama determinately refused the abandonment idea (Friedman, 2013, p.226). In a nutshell, the Obama administration followed the existing policies of the Bush administration and developed new policies towards Taiwan. The main aim of Obama was to strengthen Taiwan, especially in terms of military, and at the same time not to break the relationship between the U.S. and China.

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Having discussed the foreign policy of the Obama administration, this part of this paper addresses the foreign policy of Trump Administration. Starting from his campaign, Trump’s interest was focused not only on Taiwan but also on the Asia region. However, most of all, his focus was on the U.S. government’s values, and

therefore, he followed domestic-oriented policies with the idea of America first (Zhou, 2018, p.195). In other words, he developed policies towards the Asian region, specifically towards Taiwan, compatible with American interests. For instance, he suggested to Japan and South Korea to protect themselves.

This policy is also indicated in Taiwan. When Trump came on power, he followed two remarkable trends. The first one is that he adopted similar policies to the former U.S. administrators. He consoled the PRC in which One-China strategy continued, with the refusal of formal independence of Taiwan, notwithstanding his increasingly strong and radical explanations. The second trend is that the general political approach of Trump has left enormous ambiguity among the PRC and ROC strategy producers (Chen, 2019).

Arrangement instability is by all accounts, in any event, a significant mistake, and likely an element, of the Trump administration. However, the relations between the U.S. and Taiwan could not be able to resist this incident, because the foreign policy members of the U.S. government and Trump had little profoundness or evident enthusiasm towards the Taiwan case. The reason for the unstable and ambiguous Taiwan strategy of the Trump administration is the distant and opposing relations between the advisors of the U.S. government, who are experts on Taiwan case, and the political representatives of the U.S. The reason is the unsettled conflict among authorities under the Trump administration on policies for China (Delisle, 2018, p.30).

Thence, with Trump's election to the presidency, the significance of Taiwan's issue diminished, and its priority decreased. For instance, unlike Obama, he had no interest in containment policy for the Asian region, or he did not develop any strategy against China by having close relations with Taiwan. Instead, he mostly emphasized trade. Another policy that he followed after his presidency, he focused on having bilateral relationship with regional countries. Therefore, Trump aimed to deal with states bilaterally, not through regional institutions (Hu, 2018, p.81). Indeed, with this shift from regional institutionalization to the bilateral relationship, the view of Trump administration on the role of Taiwan on the relation between the U.S. and China changed. This regulation of the U.S. government leads to the development of close ties with the U.S. and Taiwan (Delisle, 2018, p.35).

Although Taiwan was not the primary issue for the Trump administration, the president continued the diplomatic relations. For instance, Congress accepted the Taiwan Travel Act, and Trump signed the law related to the act in 2018. This act led to an increase in mutual visits between the U.S. and Taiwan, and showed the reinforcement of diplomatic relations between both states against China. Therefore, another policy that is applied by the Trump administration towards Taiwan was the agreement between the Congress and the Congress on reciprocal visits (Chabot & Steve, 2018). After this, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State revealed that the relationship between both states is both stable and secure. One of the prominent foreign policy of the Trump administration was the arms sale to Taiwan.

After his election as president, he announced that it would sell arms to Taiwan, in line with the Taiwan Relations Act (Delisle, 2018, p.26). Subsequently, Defense Secretary Mattis made a declaration that, by referring to Taiwan, repeating the U.S.

responsibility to “working with Taiwan,” giving TRA-commanded protection articles, and “standing for the peaceful resolution of any issues in a manner acceptable to people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait” (U.S. Department of Defense Press Operations, 2017). Indeed, the Congress accepted the National Defense Authorization Act and Trump signed it. The act required Trump to take the complimentary ports of call by the U.S and Taiwan naval forces into account (Delisle, 2018, p.27).

In addition to other policies, one of the most effective Trump administration policies towards the Taiwan issue is the application of transactional policy. For instance, when the course of events is analyzed, it is argued that Trump followed a transactional policy in which Taiwan is used as a bargain between the U.S. and China. To put it differently, although Taiwan is not a priority for the administration of Trump, he used it for the transaction for bargaining. Hence, the Trump administration used Taiwan as a mean for negotiating with China. Also, in order to protect Taiwan from adverse actions of China, the U.S. administration under Trump may help Taiwan to strengthen its military against China and to have at least a military independence in the world. Hence, it is asserted that Trump may understand the strategic importance of Taiwan against China. Also, it is predicted that this realization may lead to taking Taiwan issue at the center of strategy for regional security. Consequently, this issue would re-expose the U.S. and China. (Hu, 2018, p.84).

Therefore, it is argued that the arms sales to Taiwan under the control of Trump administration may help the development of Taiwan’s military strength and American society because this will lead to the foundation of new job areas. In a nutshell, Trump and his administration members are both responsible for the unstable and ambiguous policy towards Taiwan and the relationship between the U.S. government and Taiwan. The duty of the Congress in proposing support for Taiwan was raised sharply under the administration of Trump in line with the legal decisions of the Taiwan Travel Act and the arrangements for the port call under the National Defense Authorization (Delisle, 2019, p.39).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the purpose of this paper was to compare the U.S. foreign policies of the Obama administration and Trump administration towards Taiwan. Concerning this aim, it was argued that as long as U.S.- China economic rivalry and trade war persists, Taiwan will remain under U.S. protection, regardless of a change in administrations in the U.S. from Obama to Trump. Due to the economic aspect of the Taiwan issue, the U.S. government in both of these administrations tried to develop their arms trade and financial support to Taiwan in order to show the economic strength and supremacy to China.

In line with this claim, this paper first focused on the brief historical background of the conflict over Taiwan and the relation between the U.S. and Taiwan. After this, under the American foreign policy towards Taiwan section, the foreign policy of the Obama administration and the foreign policy of the Trump administration were discussed. The research found that the base of the relations between the U.S. and Taiwan became legal with the Taiwan Relations Act that was signed in 1979. With this act, the U.S. took the responsibility to help Taiwan. The conflict over Taiwan had its

origins in 1963 when the Chinese dynasty reached the end of the island. Since that year, a settled solution could be achieved by neither China nor the U.S. Each U.S. administration tried to develop policies towards Taiwan.

To start with the Obama administration period, the main aim of the government was to develop policies to support Taiwan and not to breakdown the relationship between the U.S. and China. Also, they tried to turn back to developed their relations in the Asia-Pacific land. For the sake of this primary purpose, the Obama administration not only continued the policies of the previous governments but also developed new strategies. For instance, the Obama administration continued to follow the pro-Taiwan strategy. Therefore, the administration developed policies that would not harm Taiwan.

Another policy that was maintained was the one-China policy. After his election as president, Obama showed the positive impact of one-China policy, therefore continued for its relations. Furthermore, the Obama administration carried on the policy on the strengthening of the Three US-China communique and the Taiwan Relations Act. In addition to these, he continued to make an arms deal. Indeed, when Obama came on power, he signed a trade deal on selling military equipment to Taiwan. Apart from these continued policies, the Obama administration developed different policies, but most of all, he developed a policy that was the pivot to Asia policy. By applying this policy, the administration could have close relations with Taiwan and with the Asian region. Therefore, this policy leads to the balancing of relations with the region in general. In short, although Obama mostly followed the Bush administration policies, he tried to develop a regional strategy to strengthen its ties with Taiwan and China.

When the policies of Trump were considered, it could be stated that different from Obama, Trump favored the domestic-oriented policies in which the idea of America first was highlighted. Therefore, for Trump, the interest of the U.S. was crucial. Although Trump was determined on this issue, he had unstable and ambiguous Taiwan strategies because of his advisors (Delisle, 2018, p.30). Similar to the Obama administration, Trump maintained the one-China policy. However, different from Obama, his administration laid emphasis on bilateral relations with regional countries. For instance, in order to develop and strengthen Taiwan and the ties with the island, Trump focused on bilateral relations and dealt with states bilaterally, not through regional institutions.

Another policy of the Obama administration that he continued to apply was the arms sale. With his election to the presidency, he promised to sell arm equipment to Taiwan in order to develop the military power of Taiwan. Different from other administrations, Trump signed the related to Taiwan Travel Act. This act did not only lead to an increase in mutual visits between the U.S. and Taiwan, it showed the reinforcement of diplomatic relations between both states against China. Another policy developed by the Trump administration was the transactional policy. For instance, Trump used Taiwan as a bargain case for the relation between the U.S. and China. In short, similar to Obama, the Trump administration maintained some policies that developed before. However, he focused on American interests more than Obama and bilateral relations with Taiwan and China.

In a nutshell, having discussed how the Obama administration and Trump administration developed policies towards Taiwan, it could be stated that on the one hand, the Obama administration focused on building regional strategies in order to balance the Asia Pacific region, especially China. On the other hand, the Trump administration did not follow a regional strategy, instead, his administration focused on bilateral relations in the region. Considering these policies, it could be argued that the main worries of both administrations towards Taiwan was China. Both administrations focused on having supremacy over China and developed policies towards Taiwan.

Hence, Taiwan was the mediator issue between the relations of the U.S. and China. In other words, Taiwan issue was crucial because of the economic rivalry and trade war between the U.S. and China. The U.S. government, during both the Obama administration and Trump administration, preferred to continue the military trade and arms sale to Taiwan. The purpose of the U.S. government was to show its economic power and supremacy to China through its influence in Taiwan. Although China warned the U.S. administration to abandon Taiwan and to stop arm sales, the U.S. government did not agree to act according to the will of China.

Considering the economic aspect of Taiwan issue, the U.S. government acted to strengthen its economic relations in Taiwan. Indeed, the U.S. government, during both administrations, tried to show that they are powerful and have a control on the Asian region. In short, it could be asserted that as long as U.S.- China economic rivalry and trade war persists, Taiwan will remain under U.S. protection, regardless of a change in administrations in the U.S. from Obama to Trump.

REFERENCES

- American Institute in Taiwan. (1979, January 1). *Taiwan Relations Act*. Retrieved from American Institute in Taiwan: <https://www.ait.org.tw/our-relationship/policy-history/key-u-s-foreign-policy-documents-region/taiwan-relations-act/>
- Bush, R. C. (2017). U.S.-Taiwan Relations in the Trump Administration: No Big Fixes Needed. *Asia Policy*, 23(1), 29–35. doi: 10.1353/asp.2017.0004
- Bush, R.C. (2017). *A One-China Primer*. Washington, DC: Center for East Asia Policy Studies, Brookings Institution.
- Chabot, & Steve. (2018, March 16). H.R.535 - 115th Congress (2017-2018): Taiwan Travel Act. Retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/535>.
- Chen, D. P. (2019). The Trump administration's One-China policy: Tilting toward Taiwan in an era of U.S.-PRC rivalry? *Asian Politics & Policy*, 11(2), 250– 278. doi: doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12455
- Copper, J. (2017). Understanding President Trump's Taiwan Policy. *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, 24(2), V-Viii.
- Copper, J. F. (2007). *Historical dictionary of Taiwan (Republic of China)* (3rd ed.). Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

- Copper, J. F. (2013). *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?* (6th ed.). Boulder: Westview Press.
- Delisle, J. (2018). United States-Taiwan Relations: Tsai's Presidency and Washington's Policy. *China Review*, 18(3), 13-60.
- Friedman, E. (2013). China's Ambitions, America's Interests, Taiwan's Destiny, and Asia's Future. *Asian Survey*, 53(2), 225–244. doi: 10.1525/as.2013.53.2.225
- Goddard, W. G. (1966). *Formosa: A study in Chinese History*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hu, W. (2018). Trump's China Policy and Its Implications for the "Cold Peace" across the Taiwan Strait. *China Review*, 18(3), 61-88.
- Klintworth, G. (2001). China, Taiwan and the United States. *Pacifica Review: Peace, Security & Global Change*, 13:1, 41-59, 13(1), 41–59. doi:10.1080/13239100120036036
- Ladi, Z. (2016). *Limited Achievements: Obama's Foreign Policy*. France: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lee, M. (2017). Taiwan in Trump's Perspective: A Bargaining Chip? *Asia Policy*, 24(1), 26–32. doi: 10.1353/asp.2017.0040
- Lin, G., & Zhou, W. (2018). Does Taiwan Matter to the United States? Policy Debates on Taiwan Abandonment and Beyond. *China Review*, 18(3), 177-206.
- Long, S. (1991). *Taiwan: China's Last Frontier*. London: Macmillan Press LTD.
- Manthorpe, J. (2005). *Forbidden Nation: The History of Taiwan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Obama, B., & Biden, J. (2008). New Energy for America. *New Energy for America* (pp. 1–8). Obama for America.
- Ohara, B. (2018, September 2). *Where America and China Stand on the Taiwan Issue*. Retrieved from The Diplomat: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/09/where-america-and-china-stand-on-the-taiwan-issue/>
- Rahawestri, M. (2010). Obama's Foreign Policy in Asia: More Continuity than Change. *Security Challenges*, 6(1), 109-120.
- Ross, R. S. (2000). The 1995-96 Taiwan Strait confrontation: Coercion, Credibility, and the Use of Force. *International Security*, 25(2), 87–123.
- State.gov Website Modernization - United States Department of State. (2019, June 3). Retrieved from <https://www.state.gov/state-gov-website-modernization/>.
- Sutter, R. (2009). The Obama Administration and China: Positive but Fragile Equilibrium. *Asian Perspective*, 33(3), 81–106. doi: 10.1353/apr.2009.0011
- The Current State of U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations. (2009). *American Foreign Policy Interests*, 31(1), 59–62. doi: 10.1080/10803920802711538

- The Washington Times. (2009, November 17). Obama affirms 'one-China' policy. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/nov/17/obama-affirms-one-china-policy/>.
- Tucker, N. B., & Glaser, B. (2011). Should the United States Abandon Taiwan? *The Washington Quarterly*, 34(4), 23–37. doi: 10.1080/0163660x.2011.609128
- U.S. Department of Defense Press Operations. (2017, June 3). Remarks by Secretary Mattis at Shangri-La Dialogue. Retrieved from <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/1201780/>.
- U.S. Department of State. (2018, August 31). *U.S. Relations with Taiwan*. Retrieved from U.S. Department of State: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35855.htm>
- Wang, V. W. C. (2015). The U.S. Asia Rebalancing and the Taiwan Strait Rapprochement. *Orbis*, 59(3), 361–379. doi: 10.1016/j.orbis.2015.05.004
- Zuo, Y. (2018). The U.S. Global Strategy and Its Taiwan Policy. *China Review*, 18(3), 149-176.