

## UNDERSTANDING INDO-PACIFIC: A FOCUS ON THEORETICAL CONTEXT

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Received: 14 August 2024, Revised: 21 August 2024, Accepted: 25 August 2024

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine whether traders in Ujung Berung Market carry out buying and selling activities in accordance with the hadith of Islamic business ethics, which include honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, not selling prohibited goods, not swearing falsely, and not committing najasy (fraud) acts. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, collecting data through interviews, observations, and documentation involving 25 traders, 3 buyers, and 2 market administrators as samples from a total of 250 traders. The results of the study indicate that most traders in Ujung Berung Market understand the principles of Islamic business ethics, although some only know the basics. Although there are traders who have never violated, there are also traders who still carry out buying and selling practices that are contrary to the hadith of business ethics. In conclusion, traders in this market generally know the hadith of Islamic business ethics, although their understanding is often limited to the basics, and there are still buying and selling practices that are not in accordance with the hadith. Keywords: Business ethics, Hadith science, Buying and selling, Hadith business ethics, Living hadith

**Keywords:** Asia-Pacific, Indo-Pacific Region, TPP, Nation State, Theoretical Framework.

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji apakah pedagang di Pasar Ujung Berung melakukan kegiatan jual beli sesuai dengan hadis etika bisnis Islam, yang meliputi jujur, amanah, adil, tidak menjual barang haram, tidak bersumpah palsu, dan tidak melakukan perbuatan najasy (penipuan). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi dengan melibatkan 25 pedagang, 3 pembeli, dan 2 pengurus pasar sebagai sampel dari total 250 pedagang. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar pedagang di Pasar Ujung Berung memahami prinsip-prinsip etika bisnis Islam, meskipun ada juga yang hanya mengetahui dasar-dasarnya. Meskipun ada pedagang yang tidak pernah melanggar, namun ada juga pedagang yang masih melakukan praktik jual beli yang bertentangan dengan hadis etika bisnis. Simpulannya, pedagang di pasar ini secara umum mengetahui hadis etika bisnis Islam, meskipun pemahamannya sering kali hanya sebatas dasar-dasar saja, dan masih ada praktik jual beli yang tidak sesuai dengan hadis. Kata kunci: Etika bisnis, Ilmu hadis, Jual beli, Etika bisnis hadis, Hadis hidup

**Kata kunci:** Asia-Pasifik, Kawasan Indo-Pasifik, TPP, Negara Bangsa, Kerangka Teoritis

### INTRODUCTION

The 'Indo-Pacific' school of thought can research the notion in its scholarly and political contexts as well as the anti-colonial viewpoint in

popular culture. In his book 'The Discovery of India', former Indian Prime Minister and visionary Jawaharlal Nehru (1946) made predictions regarding the rise of the Indo-Pacific. He indicated that in the future, the Pacific might replace the Atlantic as the world's nerve center. Not directly through a Pacific state, India will inevitably exert an important influence there. India will also become a center of economic and political activity across the Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Indo-Pacific location gives it economic and strategic importance in a part of the world that is going to develop rapidly in the future (Muni & Mishra, 2019, p.27-28). During his maiden visit to Asia in November 2017, US President Donald Trump initiated the most recent revival of the Indo-Pacific concept, who repeatedly called for a 'free and open Indo-Pacific' (O'Brien, 2021, pp.1-2). This similar tone we received from Shinzo Abe, articulated in Kenya (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016). The same terminology echoed in Trump's first National Security Strategy, released in December 2017, in which the term 'Indo-Pacific' appeared eleven times while 'Asia-Pacific' was used only once (He & Feng, 2020, p.152). In addition, the United States released its Indo-Pacific strategy report on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019, and the ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) was published in late June 2019 (Ha, 2019, p.2). In recent time, which involves respecting the rule of four P: planning (politics), products, Price (values) and process (Meinam et.al., 2015, p. 9).

The current period is the century of the lobby and of seeking regional connection and groupings. It means the implication of political and strategic variables in the promotion of a regional destination, which is a vivid process. This political side of destination management becomes decisive, especially regarding regulation referring to the development of regional entities. The Indo-Pacific has become a key driver of world politics; which stretches from the west coast of the Indian subcontinent to the west coast of the Americas, the region spans two oceans the Pacific and the Indian which are increasingly linked by shipping and strategy. It remains nearly half of the

world's population. It includes many of the key engines in the global part of economic dynamics, as well as the largest emitters of future potentialities. Even, it's the home of several important emerging and new developing powers and also the geo-historical embarking region of colonial big powers. These rich factors grow the interest of the USA through a new vision in a free and open Indo-Pacific extends back.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This paper argues that the Indo-Pacific concept is theoretically and practically problematic or not. To draw the interference the study is based on historical perspectives, geographical context and analytical approach. Here are collected the information and adequate data, those are quantitative and qualitative also, from valuable journals, books, official lectures and speech, governmental reports, periodicals etc.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Theoretical Outline**

Given these above arguments, there emerges a pertinent question: Why is the Indo-Pacific concept a new foreign policy option for international context or regional perspective? To address the said question, this study admits on four cases or factors. Which are: i. Important Factors like geographical, historical, diplomatic and economic; ii. Influence Factors where the emphasis has been made to observe how major powers and regional powers shape their relations with the Indo-Pacific concept vis-a-vis TPP; iii. Dimensional Factors in terms of potential economic, political and strategic interests in the region, and iv. to evaluate the relevance of the Indo-Pacific in the international context. The following theoretical frameworks can be considered for these:

***Regional integration, regional co-operation and regionalism:  
Contemporary Philosophy of Foreign Policy***

In this study, regional integration, regional organization, and regionalism are the three strategies that are recommended. Regional integration is not a recent occurrence in the twenty-first century when international politics has entered a phase of hyper-globalization. The European Union is the most noteworthy illustration (EU). Comparatively speaking, regional integration used to be one of the most studied topics in integration studies. German scholars Arianne Kosler and Martin Zimmek (2009, pp. 925-928) explained a theoretical handbook in their edited work 'Element of Regional Integration: A Multi-Dimensional Approach' on comparative integration in many areas of the world. They examined it from a variety of perspectives, including politics, economics, law, and culture. In fact, in the new world order, former French foreign minister Jean Francois-Poncet sees the regional agreement as becoming 'centres for political and economic development'. This movement towards regionalism, with its geopolitical implications, is gaining traction (Gibb, 2009, p. 701). Regional integration encourages the development of a shared physical and institutional infrastructure. It necessitates cross-country collaboration in macroeconomic and financial policy, as well as common public boots on natural resources sharing, transportation and ICT infrastructure, security and education, commerce, investment and domestic regulation. In reality, regional cooperation in these sectors takes many forms, each with a different level of policy commitment. It has also prioritized different things in different parts of the world. As a result, regional integration allows countries to take some good initiatives to (i) improve market efficiency, (ii) build a block for global integration, (iii) share the cost of public goods, (iv) share large infrastructure projects, (v) collaborate on policy reform and (vi) enjoy other non-economic benefits such as peace and security. It is correct that it is necessary to identify and manage the dangers to regional integration. Geographical location, insufficient infrastructure and

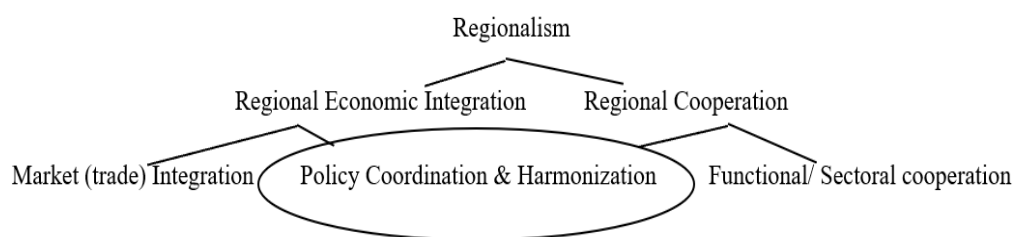
ineffective policies all contribute to nation-state divides. These are the fundamental impediments to economic growth in any international region. As a result, the World Bank assists its client countries in promoting regional integration by establishing common physical and institutional infrastructure (Regional Integration, n.d.). It should be emphasized, for example, that following the political changes in South Africa in the 1990s (Assessing Regional Integration in Africa (ARIA V: Towards an African Continental Free Trade Area, 2012, p. 11), the new administration set out to redefine regional based on integration and collaboration.

Regional organizations are continually trying to figure out how to best organize their institutional structures. It creates a positive feedback loop. The concept of this path focuses on geographical coherence in the international arena and helps to explain the relative's stability of institutional set-up. These have similar vested interests and a favourable power balance (Regional cooperation and integration in a changing world, 2013, pp. 1-3). As a result, each world region now has its own regional original organization. In fact, the EU has performed admirably in this process, while ASEAN has demonstrated its viability. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is still failing to gather traction. In reality, a regional organizational strategy is a dynamic process encompassing numerous country states, actors and a variety of interconnected issues ranging from politics to economics (Sudan, 2020). As a result, academics in International Relations pay attention to regional organization. Regional global cooperation options point out that regional hegemony participates in power politics inside regional organizations (Lim & Vreeland, 2013, p. 34).

Economic integration is pursued in a liner fashion by regionalism. Free trade zones are the first step, followed by custom union and a common market. There is a positive qualitative monitoring system in place. The use of a sector services model makes regulatory harmonization easier to achieve. It proposes a framework that stresses member 'Right to Regulate', with only

‘Cooperation’, when investment competition and intellectual property rights are required. In survival strategies in a single region, regionalism employs ad hoc internal solutions. Another idea that appears to emerge from this process is that (1) more is better and (2) economic integration is a shared good, investment, competition, intellectual property rights, standards, remedies, technical aid, and e-commerce are all covered (Erasmus, 2021). In fact, the end of the Cold War signalled the end of International system’s bipolar structure. This implies a clash between two political, economic and ideological rivalries (Hook, n.d.). Regionalism, on the other hand, is a crucial area of politics and International affairs. Its goal is to give a critical study of the past, as well as major themes and processes, of a region’s evolution in global politics. It played a crucial role in post World War II International Relations. Many regional groups arose in various parts of the world between 1950 and 1960, and since the late 1980s, we have seen a surge of ‘New Regionalism’. The study of regionalism has been seen in several parts of the world, including the Asia Pacific Region, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, the Far East, South East Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The European Economic Community (EEC), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and ASEAN are just few examples. Today, regionalism is inextricably linked to the changing nature of global politics, and most issue areas involve regional networks. The titles ‘League’, ‘Union’, ‘Pacts’ and ‘Confederation’ have all been used to describe the phenomenon of regionalism throughout history. (Singh, 2015, p.118) This method examines the intricate relationship between regional groupings growing relevance and present and future world order (Eckhardt, n.d.). In some circumstances of regionalism, a regional organization can act for regional identity based on economics, such as APEC and the rising identity of ‘Asia Pacific’, historical heritage creates ‘Southeast Asia’, cultural identity has seen ‘East Asia’, ‘Indian Ocean Rim’ for security reasons (Hook, n.d.). A historical comparison of decolonization and regionalization shows how actors or

members states link main and secondary institutional levels to create a more effective regional organization. Here's an example: in 1993, the European Economy Community (EEC, 1957) was absorbed into the European Union (EU) (Spandler, 2016). Even the EU has failed to gain acceptance as an international organization. In one word, the concept of regionalism denotes (figure 1).



**Figure 1. concept of regionalism denotes**

Resource: <https://www.fao.org/3/y4793e/y4793e07.htm>

It is right that, strong states will continue to play an important role in legitimizing regional institutions, while weak states will benefit from their welfare provisions and security cover. Contemporary regionalism is on a trajectory that is unlikely to change unless and until a new key turning point is reached (Fawcett, 2008). Regional cooperation and regional integration is not same thing, according to the institutional characteristics of regional integration. National governments can agree to collaborate on a wide variety of topics without having to tie them to trade preferences. (Institutional Aspects of Regional Integration, [n.d.](#)). The current international position is mostly focused on Indo-Pacific cooperation. However, from Indian Ocean to Pacific Ocean, requires a well-thought-out integration strategy. And the goal of this study would be to use this link to discover a theoretical framework for the Indo-Pacific concept.

### **A Study of Historiography on Indo-Pacific**

History is a continuous process of interaction to re-thinking historical practice (Munslow, 1997). According to 'Mandala Theory' of Koutilya, an ancient Indian politician, the Foreign Policy of inter-state

linkages environment of the external and internal realms of a state which extends the circle of state in the present time (application of Raja Mandala as a geo-political term). It insists the sovereign state for alliance making. (Kamal & Sahni, 2022; Bordachev et al., 2018, p. 32) As example, the Indo-Pacific concept is the preference of Koutilya's 'Mandala Theory' for rebalancing and strategic factors in regional pacts and partnerships (Kumar, 2020, p. 92-93; Dellios, 2003). In 1655 of the Indian medieval period the book 'Majma-Ul Bahrain' written by Mughal prince Dara Shikoh (son of Shahjahan) means the mingling of the two oceans (Haq, 1929) or "The Confluence of the Two Seas", Japanese former prime minister Shinzo Abe proposed this similar formation of Freedom and Prosperity in 'Greater Asia' including a vast network of the Indo-Pacific through Strategic Global Partnership (Berkofsky & Miracola, 2019, pp.19-20). The conventional view is that the process of 'Orientalisation' (from a Euro-centric perspective) symbolically began with the demise of Western colonial empires in the nineteen-fifties or perhaps with the economic rise of China from the eighties or later of the US-centric financial crisis of 2007/08. However, historians can look further back to the past, when some South Asian and later European states extended their reach to the 'Far East' through explorers, warriors and traders (Gourdon, 2021).

Dr. Gurpreet S. Khurana investigated that Asia is in the midst of a historic transformation; and the contemporary Indo-Pacific concept is a rebirth of an earlier spirit in a new form with new geopolitical realities (Khurana, 2019). It was started about 300 years ago, indeed before the Industrial Revolution (ADB Report, 2011, p. 3). According to this interpretation, ancient and historical big state of before colonial period recommends that it means one type of economic exploitation as a whole in post-colonial period. Prof. Patrick O'Brien, Hopkins and Cain import the thought, the availability of markets for the present industrial colonial world and the investment of capital in foreign markets may have actually renewed a 'new' equation in the global economy (Porter, 1990). James Mill, Vincent



Smith and other proponents followed the approach to focus on praising Western culture and values. In fact, this colonial perspective is influenced by the colonial ideology of hegemony. This school of thought did not believe in the fundamental contradiction between imperialism and nationalism (Ali, 2015). According to this school, it was motivated by the search for power and material benefits. It takes the ideals out of human behaviour and reduces nationalism.

Liberal and Neo-liberal Interpretations imply that the economic exploitation of the colonies was not beneficial to the capitalist states as it delayed the development of the 'new' industries in former imperialist countries (Rajaram, 2009, pp. 14-20). Neo-liberal Economic theory is an economic theory and an intellectual conviction that advocates for enhancing economic freedom for people while keeping government interference to a bare minimum. In this sense, it advocates the abolition of government-imposed barriers to cross-border movement of commodities, capital and people (Harmes, 2012, p. 59-68). Not only that, these elements are significant parts of globalisation, Economic neo-liberalism support FDI for the same reasons it supports international trade to protect individual freedom and to expand company choice and possibilities.

The primary goal of Economic Neo-liberalism is to maximise individual liberty and freedom of choice. This indicates that the state should adopt a highly minimum and solely regulatory role and refrain from most types of economic intervention, even when market processes result in lower economic efficiency (Thorsen, 2009, pp. 1-25). Along with liberal internationalism; it is concerned with establishing international peace through economic interdependence and the establishment of world regimes and institutions.

Beginning in the 1970s, the 'neoliberal' movement resulted in a wave of privatisation of State-Owned Enterprises (SOE). Because neoliberals are faithful to the integration of different governments in the international arena (Wikan, 2014), that a key component of the spread of neo-liberalism

is the behaviour of lobbyists. Countries have come closer to social Darwinism as a result of Neo-liberalism. Under neoliberal philosophy, economic Neo-liberalism support FDI for the same reasons it support international trade: to protect individual freedom and to expand company choice and possibilities such as the availability of health and educational services. It proposes 'laissez-faire' economics model, which prescribes the continuing economic growth that leads to technological innovation, exploration of the free market, and limited state intervention. That is the best practice of globalization in contemporary history (Baltzan, 2020, pp. 3-14; Zadra, 2016, pp.16, 38). Actually, historiography makes a comparison between reconstructionism and constructionism and constitutes the narrative of the dominant paradigm for reconstruction (Munslow, 1997). Thus all approaches want to ensure a broad regional ally. All these perspectives on the study of history promote new regime building through Indo-Pacific's collective action and collective interests. There may exist controversy but should remove misunderstandings.

### **Indo-Pacific: A Concept of Political Oceanography**

The study of Oceanography applies in many branches of science like biology, chemistry, meteorology, geography, geology etc. Today it is important for the study of climate change, marine life, pollution and other factors of human-use (Stanley, 2022). In Political Oceanography, 'Indo-Pacific' can be examined as geo-political character. The first step to recovering and rethinking karl Haushofers<sup>1</sup> (German Geographer, developed the thought of 'Geopolitik'<sup>2</sup>, influenced on Adolf Hitler) 'Indo-Pacific' is to examine the architecture of his political oceanography (Francesco, 2020, pp. 6-10). The neologism 'Indo-Pacific' is not the invention of colonial arbitrariness. Prof. Haushofer had given its proper clarification that the union of the Indian and Pacific Oceans is more natural than their separation and conflict. In fact, he insisted the European Atlantic and the 'Indo-Pacific' oceanic region as natural 'counter spaces.' To make

the explanation, he divided the global oceanic region and space. But what he meant by the term 'oceanic counter space' of a separated landmass is 'fauna geography' whereas exists one continuous 'life unit' which is based on the grounds of marine-biological and oceanographic evidence (Li, 2022, pp. 4-5). Developments in the Indo-Pacific region in 2021 are influenced by a combination of geostrategic and geo-economics interests.

The importance of the oceanic approach in the security, economic, development, environmental, resource resilience and ecological domains needs to be emphasized, with specific reference to the Indo-Pacific in various forums (Luthra, 2022). So there can not last long the American and European colonial powers forced upon the natural 'Indo-Pacific' space. In this way, Haushofer hoped to redeem and restore nature and tries to use the oneness of animal geography to legitimate the reintegration of historically dispersed human life. Geo-historical narratives also explore the perception of the Indo-Pacific as a new regional entity (Guha, 2021). Presenting a historico-anthropological argument and advocating Pan-ideas' geopolitics, he suggested that political society should learn more than international agreements. But all nation-states had been tried to legitimate the socio-political division of the sea area through customs. So, at first, every country was inclined to do specific their individual sea. He also suggested that, so reversely, the demarcation of the seas was distinctly modern project.

Maritime delimitation was also a distinctly modern project. So for it, is needful of modern oceanography. By it becomes possible to reconstruct the original maritime space and reconstruct the political life of earlier, even more, ancient times. Thus, Haushofer posits the continuity of the modern 'Indo-Pacific' and the contemporary priority and logical necessity of earliest (Li, 2022, pp. 6-15). In his innovative thought on geopolitics called the Rimland theory, Nicholas John Spykman (1944) emphasized that after World War II, the grand strategic conspiracy in world politics would exceed the rigidity of Continental-marine binarization and would lie along coastal sites or rims, whereas the interplay of sea power and land power media

presents a continuous umbilical connection for the deployment of naval power, particularly with the marginal seas surrounding the heartland of Eurasia (pp. 41-42), and it will necessarily find out geopolitical interactions. As example, Spykman argues that the Indo-Pacific connection in the future could assume greater importance over the Atlantic-Mediterranean-Indian Ocean Rimland, which will change the course of international politics (Guha, 2022).

### **Geo-Competitive Boom and Geo-Political Linchpin of Indo-Pacific**

A geopolitical contest between free and repressive views of the world order is underway in the Indo-Pacific region (Muni & Mishra, 2019, p. 21). In recent years classical geopolitics has been overlapping with critical geopolitics in political practice (Scott, 2012). Accordingly, the territory and maritime boundaries of the Indo-Pacific region are defined here, and some coastal states are taken an important place as strategic partners in the implementation of the geo-strategy (Muni & Mishra, 2019, p. 22). Even following this direction, Pacific Command of the United States is renamed as the Indo-Pacific Command in May 2018. The following features are typical to Indo-Pacific Asia (Nandy, 2019, pp. 277-282): a) The post-Colonial Nature of the region; b) Indo-centrism and its overstepping at the level of perceived imaging of India as a hegemonic power creates a fear mentality among smaller neighbours and catalyzes a strong anti-India sentiment from China-led lobby; c) It represents an ethnic mosaic where different ethnic groups compete to preserve their ethnic identity; d) Lack of common security perspectives and lack of potentially effective security communities; e) Prevalence in case of inter-state and intra-state disputes; f) Lack of a specific regional identity or failure to develop a regional identity; g) Failure to establish regional economic cooperation and economic interdependence. The supply chain of the globe is immensely depends up on Indo-Pacific region . During the COVID-19 has been badly disrupted (Naha

and Nandy,2022).

Actually the power of regionalism has been fallen here due to the dominance of politics. For example, SAARC has suffered from this harsh reality facing regionalism in South Asia (Kothari, 2019, pp. 164-165). Many parameters of Indo-Pacific policy are being reviewed in light of the rapidly changing geostrategic landscape. Because the mapping of the world has changed, suggesting the possibility of new understandings of foreign policy and national security strategy. At the starting of the new millennium, the Indo-Pacific region is belonging on the verge of attaining the status of a major global equation, emerging as an essential component (despite the reluctance of the global superpowers) of the new global order. In this way, material power and political influence are changing in the changing conditions of the world (Bhattacharya, 2014). According to policy makers in New Delhi, demonstrates a greater commitment to implementing India's Act East Policy, and even broadening the scope of Modi's approach to SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) in line with Act East (Kuo, 2018; Hall, 2019, p. 131). Indeed, the desire to achieve great power status is mainly for 'defensive' reasons. It is meant to protect against external domination or intimidation (Kothari, 2019, pp. 162-163). With this context, some broad goals for Indo-Pacific geostrategic competitive policy in the twenty-first century can be identified.

These are: (a) Discomfort with Power; (b) Marginalization of Military; (c) A deficit in the arena of strategic thinking and culture, means that third-world states' ability to think strategically on national security issues is most questionable. Lack of long-term planning and strategy is largely responsible for the historical and cultural development patterns of the Indo-Pacific region. Even, countries in the region have been on the strategic defensive throughout its history, reluctant to assert themselves except within their subcontinent; (d) lack of institutionalized thought, means a major consequence of the lack of strategic cultural integration of the Indo-Pacific countries, is the lacking of institutionalization of foreign

policy reflected from regional neighbours as well as neighbouring policies; (e) Strategic thinking on poly-alignment shows that every nation-state government in the region has succeeded in gradually deconstructing non-alignment, their pre-determined foreign policy legacy; (f) Geo-centric political linchpin thought explores that there has been much debated among several new foreign innovations in political as well as academic circles about 'Neighbourhood First' policy (Chatterjee, 2019). Going beyond their ideological rhetoric, now a lot of nation-states in the region confidently want to engage with all contemporary major global powers without any conflict.

### **Balance of Power and Approach of Middle and Small Power**

In international relations, the posture and policy of a nation or ethnic group defends itself against the power of the other party against another nation or ethnic group by matching its strength. States can pursue the principle of balance of power in two ways: by increasing their own power, such as in an arms race or in the competitive acquisition of territory; or by adding their own powers like other states while adopting the policy of alliance. There role plays a state or a regional organisation as 'Balance holder' ([Encyclopaedia Britannica](#), 2022). In the post-Cold War era, the Asia-Pacific emerged as a distinct arena of competition as well as cooperation among major world powers. Geographically speaking, the region includes all the coastal and island states of the South Pacific, Australia, New Zealand, Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia (Naidu, 2001). It includes two super powers, the United States and the former Soviet Union, two regional superpowers—China and several emerging economically powerful sub-continental powers such as Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and India—and other vibrant soft power economies and smaller countries in the region (Naidu, 2001; Kothari, 2019, pp. 206-207; MacDonald, 2019, pp. 16-36). Demographically, too, the region processes uniqueness.

In this way, the Indo-Pacific concept gained influence. This region

is the home to almost half of the world's demography (Bhaskar, 2021). China and India are clearly the two demographic giants with a population of 2.8 billion. The region also includes other countries with a large number of consumers and investors, such as Indonesia (with a population of over 200 million) or the Philippines and Vietnam, whose combined population is around 90 million. ASEAN countries collectively represent more than 500 million inhabitants. The world's largest cities are also found in the Indo-Pacific region (Ullah, 2021). Currently, nine of the twenty largest metropolitan areas are located in this region. And some of these cities have grown significantly in size in recent years as a result of deep economic transformation and mass migration from rural areas. Not unity of culture or common political ideology, but impressive and fast growing economic power gives the region a special identity and status.

The Pacific Islands<sup>3</sup>, a group of 14 island states in the South Pacific Ocean, with a total population of just over 8 million, cover a land area of just 553,959 square kilometres, but an ocean expanse of over 33 million square meters. These countries are Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Naturally, they represent a great resource in fisheries (Prasad, 2012). The largest country, Papua New Guinea, is here slightly larger than Japan. It is rich in minerals and liquefied natural gas. The smallest countries, such as Nauru, Tokelau and Tuvalu, have a land mass of less than 27 km, but a large ocean area. Traditionally, the Pacific Islands have had close economic and political ties with major powers such as the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, and to a lesser extent with Japan. However, in recent years, most Pacific Island Countries (PICs), led by Fiji along with China, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore, have been strengthening their ties with China and rapidly outpacing others. Increased trade and concessional infrastructure loans to smaller countries have defined the contours of China's deepening engagement with these countries (Kothari, 2019, p. 212).

### **Sub-groups' Diplomacy in global shift and size confusion in One Power thinking**

The concept of an Indo-Pacific security constructs a specific area of concern within the broader Asia Pacific construct promoted by Indian analysts. Even it received distinct recognition and impetus from Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in his 2007 address to the Indian Parliament, a 'Brotherhood from the Pacific and Indian Oceans' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2007; Heiduk and Wacker, 2020, p.17). It is right that India is keenly aware of the geo-strategic importance of the Asia-Pacific region. It is particularly interested in maintaining peace and strategic balance in the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. Being centrally located in the Indian Ocean, India's interest in securing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace free from superpower rivalry and enhancing cooperation among the littoral countries of the region has always been consistent with its foreign policy goals for its various policy initiatives (Kothari, 2019, pp. 207-211) such as India oriented Look East Policy (ASEAN-Centrality), 'ASEAN Plus Three' (APT), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM), Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORA-RC), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) and Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI, 2019) (Amin and Krishnan, 2021, pp. 15-23).

Other different sub-regional groups are amalgamated in one power thinking of Indo-Pacific. Those Indo-Pacific Division deals with matters relating to the ASEAN, East Asia Summit, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam (CLMV), The Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIMEC), Marine Eco-regions of the World (MEOW), Coral Triangle Initiative



(CTI), Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor (IPEC) etc. and tries to make a close coordination with APEC, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and other organizations (Indo-Pacific Strategy on the United States, 2022). It has a 'symbiotic link' with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or 'Quad'<sup>4</sup> and its Trans concept 'Quad Plus'. In 2013, US officials began using the term 'Indo-Asia Pacific', sometimes referred to as Indo-West Pacific or Indo-Pacific Asia. Even, USA President Joe Biden launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) on 23 May 2022 in Tokyo (Saha, 2022). The Indian Maritime Security Strategy in 2015 heralded a shift in global focus from the 'Euro-Atlantic' to the 'Indo-Pacific' and linked the latter concept to India's 'Act East' policy. (Indo Pacific Region: Detailed Overview, 2021; Heiduk & Wacker, 2020, p. 24). These sub-regional initiatives have envisaged themselves as the hotspot and try to make the 'Idea of Trans' in the vast region.

### **Old, Open and New Indo-Pacific: A Study of Realpolitik and Construing of world politics**

The Indo-Pacific was under European domination from about 1510 to 1900 and increasingly came under US control in the 20th century. Over the past twenty years, China has increased its strategic status at sea and is challenging the long-standing 'Euro-American' hegemony. At present time, the US-led 'Five Eyes' strategy<sup>5</sup> is mainly hoping to achieve the aim of maintaining dominance in the Pacific Ocean with Japan and Australia and in the Indian Ocean with India and Indonesia (Gourdon, 2021). In this perspective we need a study of 'Realpolitik.' The idea of 'realpolitik' is commonly used at present as a synonym for 'power politics' and unstated as the realist approach to foreign policy, an esteemed tradition had spread from Machiavelli and then Bismarck to George Kennan and Henry Kissinger. John Bew (2016) traces the term in the mid-nineteenth century from the writings of August Ludwig von Rochau (a little-known German Thinker). A few decades later, this concept spread to the Anglo-American

world, where it became knotted with ideas such as *'Machtpolitik'* means the politics of force and *'weltpolitik'* means global power politics. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the liberal internationalist movement was galvanized by U.S. former President Woodrow Wilson noticeably throws its specifics in evaluate to such concepts (Ikenberry, 2017). From Japanese perspective, Indo-Pacific a greater concept and it is both old and new (Nandy, 2024).

Old history says, Indo-Pacific was a 'Region' of European competition and hegemony. And present politics indicates a 'New' non-European regime in international scenario. Actually, 'Indo-Pacific' is a term that is used by more and more nations and regional organizations. It is gradually replacing the formerly popular term 'Asia-Pacific' ( Heiduk & Wacker, 2020, p.7). Only France has so far introduced its own 'Indo-Pacific' paradigm in Europe. The phrase 'Indo-Pacific' is used to describe a variety of ideas, some of which are contradictory. These, in turn, are founded on a variety of notions of regional order. What unites them all is the mention of the significance of an international system based on norms. Since 'Indo-Pacific' refers to politics, it is neither entirely descriptive nor neutral in terms of values. The 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' idea, in particular, is a manifestation of the intensifying geopolitical competition between Washington and Beijing and tries to restrain China. In Beijing, the term 'Indo-Pacific' is largely used to refer to a containment strategy led by the United States against China (Hemmings, 2019, pp. 20-24). In their conceptions of the Indo-Pacific, other actors, like ASEAN or India, emphasize elements like economic prosperity, connectivity, and multilateral collaboration. Washington is putting more and more pressure on the EU and its member states to align themselves directly or indirectly with the 'Indo-Pacific' and, consequently, for Washington and against Beijing.

The Europeans should not fall prey to this zero-sum thinking in their discussions. The argument is currently being dominated by zero-sum thinking. Ideally, there are three possible approaches (Heiduk & Wacker,

2020, p. 41): i) Keeping the word ‘Asia-Pacific’ while avoiding the ‘Indo-Pacific’ concept entirely is known as ‘equidistance’; ii) Alignment is the adoption and internalization of an existing ‘Indo-Pacific’ understanding. It would make sense from a German or European standpoint to accept the French idea; iii) Using European standards and principles as a foundation, the term ‘autonomy’ is used to describe a European view of the ‘Indo-Pacific’ and to make reference to concepts and methods already created at the European level. Further information is that, on May 2022, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) was launched by US President Joe Biden and there joined by 12 other countries, including India. Actually, it aims to answer of US to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TTP) and its successor CPTPP, and do establish as well as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) to make the new indo-pacific bloc (Subramanian, 2022). Some scholars argue that the new Indo-Pacific concept is led by a collective counter-thought. They explain, it needs direct presence and massive dominance to control the region. As the US focuses on countering China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), it has invited India into its club with Australia and Japan and coined a new term to define the region: the Indo-Pacific (Zafar, 2022).

### **Limitation of Indo-Pacific Context**

In the current years, Indo-Pacific is introduced as a popular political concept. Notable that, International actors and policymakers have just identified a gap in a common connection between Indo-Pacific Regions, which was aloof still now from the eyes of international politics but have some limitations in this process. In geopolitical terms, the two regions differ greatly in the geo-economy that much even in the security environment. As, the idea of the Indo-Pacific reflects the weak identity of regionalism, there has lack of collective bargaining and negotiation among nation-states for their diverse interests. Without good regional cooperation can't be achieved regionalism or successful regional functional institution. Indo-Pacific

promotes global awareness but the collective collaboration problem makes the prisoners dilemma/chicken game situation. Indo-Pacific Regionalism is not well acceptance still now as a geographic concept for states. Rather it extends the strategic competition between United State and China into the Indo-Pacific domain. Even Indo-Pacific Concept doesn't receive a clear geographic demarcation of a region. Most studies focus on open and economic integration but how will it be possible to conduct effective regional cooperation among the states for the institutionalization of the Indo-Pacific? There are so many challenging issues in the Indo-Pacific region, such as violation of human rights (Nandy, 2023). The non-traditional security issue is to be addressed by the nation states properly. Terrorism is another serious threat to the Indo-Pacific region which is to be addressed properly. Countries , like Pakistan , Afghanistan are responsible for international terrorism (Nandy, 2017).

## **CONCLUSION**

This theoretical examination highlights the extension of the Indo-Pacific region's political geography from the Asia-Pacific, emphasizing the distinction between the types of regionalism that begins typically with collaboration in less sensitive areas such as cultural and economic exchanges before advancing to more complex issues like security. The international system often imposes greater constraints on states wishing to collaborate in high politics areas, notably in security realms. Through various institutionalization models such as deep, thin, ad-hoc, and weak frameworks, and by employing concepts like sovereign networks and collective behavior, fundamental contrasts between the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific become apparent. While the Asia-Pacific region's scholarly community primarily focused on economic cooperation, driven by economists with a shared vision for trade and economic liberalization, the Indo-Pacific concept is broader and less defined, encompassing multiple facets of regionalism including economy, security, climate change, and

human trafficking. Strategies in the Asia-Pacific included quiet diplomacy aimed at persuading ASEAN member states to promote economic cooperation, alongside 'track II' diplomacy which played a significant role in popularizing trade liberalization concepts. In contrast, the Indo-Pacific strategy involves a discursive campaign to forge a distinct regional identity, potentially diminishing the role of ASEAN centrality seen in the Asia-Pacific. Meanwhile, examining India's foreign policy post-independence, initially shaped by non-alignment, reveals a shift towards a balanced participation in US-led groups like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and in organizations led by China or Russia such as the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, reflecting a strategic multi-alignment that could set a precedent for a new global paradigm.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose advocated this view during the Indian independence movement. He even met Karl Haushofer in Munich in 1934, forming a friendly bond with him later to have a meeting with Adolf Hitler.
- <sup>2</sup>Geopolitik means, not to be confused with 'Geopolitics'. It defined a branch of German statecraft, foreign policy and geo-strategy in 19th century.
- <sup>3</sup>Diplomacy towards the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) refers to the geopolitics and geo-economics' of East Asia, that developed after the establishment of the new strategic framework.
- <sup>4</sup>India, Japan, the United States, and Australia are now firmly committed to establishing a new strategic area for regional inter-state relations, to put China out of that group.
- <sup>5</sup>The intelligence alliance arrangement, called Five Eyes Intelligence Oversight and Review Council (FIORC) among USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

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