TERRITORIALIZATION OF THE INDO-PACIFIC: A CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS
PERSPECTIVE

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

TOBB UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND TECHNOLOGY

TAHA ACAR

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

MASTER OF ARTS

JULY 2022

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

_____

Prof. Dr. Serdar SAYAN

Director of the Graduate
School of Social Sciences

This is to certify that I have read this thesis and that it in my opinion is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the Degree of Master of Arts in the field of International Relations at the Graduate School of Social Sciences.

Thesis Advisor

Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Serdar PALABIYIK   _____

(TOBB ETÜ, Political Science and International Relations)

Thesis Committee Members

Asst. Prof. Bahadır PEHLİVANTÜRK   _____

(TOBB ETÜ, Political Science and International Relations)

Asst. Prof. Kadri Kaan RENDA   _____

(Hacettepe University, International Relations)

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic traditions and the rules of ethical conduct. I also declare that I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work, as required by these traditions and the rules of ethical conduct.

_____

Taha ACAR

ABSTRACT

TERRITORIALIZATION OF THE INDO-PACIFIC: A CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS
PERSPECTIVE

ACAR, Taha

Master of Arts, International Relations

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Serdar PALABIYIK

This thesis is an inquiry into the notion of the Indo-Pacific to explain how it was territorialized and why it has taken the place of Asia-Pacific by using the theoretical perspective of critical geopolitics. Using the discourse analysis as its method, the thesis analyzes the discourses of four states – the US, Australia, Japan, and India – on the Indo-Pacific with the premise that geopolitical knowledge is not a natural fact but a discursive knowledge. The thesis has three arguments. First, the Indo-Pacific is an old but forgotten discursive construct that has been re-employed in the mid-2000s to denote a specific geographical space, not a natural region. Secondly, the geopolitical identity of the Indo-Pacific differs both temporally and spatially, meaning it has changed over time because of different reterritorializations and deterritorializations of the discursive space. At the same time, which is the key argument of this thesis, the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific by different actors resulted in two different Indo-Pacific geopolitical constructs. The first one is named "maritime Indo-Pacific", which signifies the geopolitical imagination of the US and Australia, and the second one is named "wider Indo-Pacific" which signifies the geopolitical imagination of Japan and India. Thirdly, to answer the question of why this territorialization has taken place, the thesis will argue that both geopolitical imaginations represent inside/outside distinction on regional security issues, the most notable of which has been the issue of the "rise of China". As a result, geopolitical imaginations are being used as justifications for foreign policy choices of four discourse-producing states.

Keywords: Indo-Pacific, Territorialization, Critical Geopolitics, Practical Geopolitics

ÖZ

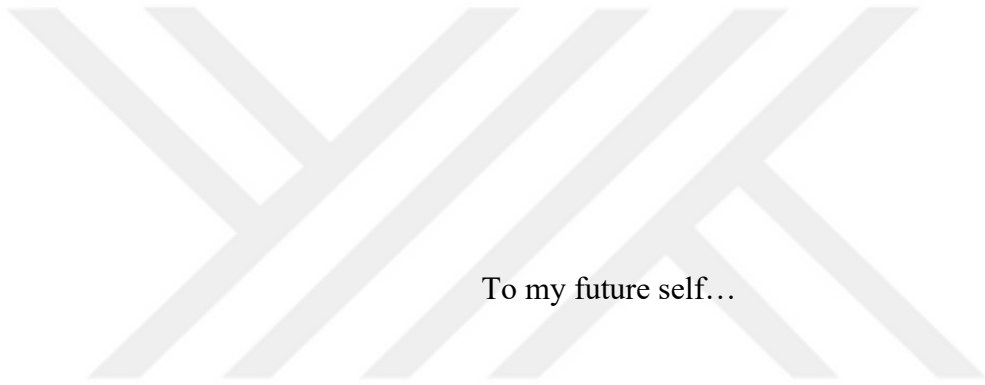İNDO-PASİFİK BÖLGESİNİN ALANSALLAŞTIRILMASI: ELEŞTİREL JEOPOLİTİK BİR BAKIŞ

ACAR, Taha

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler

Tez Danışmanı: Doç. Dr. Mustafa Serdar PALABIYIK

Bu tez, eleştirel jeopolitiğin teorik perspektifini kullanarak İndo-Pasifik kavramının nasıl alansallaştırıldığını ve neden Asya-Pasifik'in yerini aldığını açıklamaya çalışan bir araştırmadır. Yöntem olarak söylem analizini kullanan tez, jeopolitik bilginin doğal bir gerçek değil, söylemsel bir bilgi olduğu öncülüyle, dört devletin -ABD, Avustralya, Japonya ve Hindistan- İndo-Pasifik üzerine söylemlerini analiz etmektedir. Tezin üç argümanı vardır. Birincisi, İndo-Pasifik doğal bir coğrafi bölge değil, bunun yerine 2000'lerin ortalarında belirli bir coğrafi alanı belirtmek için yeniden kullanılan eski ama unutulmuş bir söylemsel yapıdır. İkinci olarak, İndo-Pasifik'in jeopolitik kimliği hem zamansal hem de mekânsal olarak farklılık gösterir, yani söylemsel alanın farklı yeniden-alansallaştırılması ve alan-bozumu nedeniyle zaman içinde değişmiştir. Aynı zamanda bu tezin en önemli argümanı olan İndo-Pasifik'in farklı aktörler tarafından alansallaştırılması, iki farklı İndo-Pasifik jeopolitik kurgusu ile sonuçlanmıştır. Birincisi, ABD ve Avustralya'nın jeopolitik tahayyülünü ifade eden "deniz İndo-Pasifik", ikincisi ise Japonya ve Hindistan'ın jeopolitik tahayyülünü ifade eden "daha geniş İndo-Pasifik" olarak adlandırılmıştır. Üçüncü olarak, bu alansallaştırmanın neden gerçekleştiği sorusunu yanıtlamak için, tez, her iki jeopolitik tahayyülün de bölgesel güvenlik konularında iç/dış ayrımını temsil ettiğini ve bunlardan en dikkat çekeninin "Çin'in yükselişi" olduğunu savunacaktır. Sonuç olarak, jeopolitik tasavvurlar, söylem üreten dört devletin dış politika tercihlerinin gerekçesi olarak kullanılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İndo-Pasifik, Alansallaştırma, Eleştirel Jeopolitik, Pratik Jeopolitik

To my future self…

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AoFP: Arc of Freedom and Prosperity

Confluence of Two Seas: CTS

FOIP: Free and Open Indo-Pacific

MEA: Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MOFA: Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs

RoK: Republic of Korea

The US: The United States of America

TPP: Trans-Pacific Partnership

LIST OF MAPS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, the use of the Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical concept built for a specific region has progressively increased. Asian states such as Japan and India as well as extra-regional actors, such as the US and Australia[1], and even international organizations like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the European Union adopted the notion of Indo-Pacific in their official documents and discourses. Both states and organizations from different regions are actively taking part in the use of this notion, which caught the interest of academia, think tanks, and news agencies.

The question is, how do we make sense of this concept, considering its extensive use in political as well as popular discourses? The Indo-Pacific notion can be seen as broadening the Asia-Pacific region by including the Indian Ocean on the one hand and restricting it by excluding inner continental sections of the vast Asian continent on the other. Hence the Asia-Pacific has been shifted southeastward in a way to bring the coastal regions stretching from the Persian Gulf until the Sea of Japan to the center while defining the Russian, Chinese, and Tibetan landmass as peripheral regions. The importance of the region comes from what it currently possesses. More than half of the world's population,

---

[1] Australia has generally been classified not as an Asian but as an Oceanian state, since, geologically speaking, the continents of Asia and Oceania do not share the same continental tectonic plates.

nearly two-thirds of the world economy, the largest Muslim-majority state, seven of the largest standing armies, and most importantly, six nuclear-armed states, reside in the region if it is extended from the Indian Ocean to the US Pacific coasts. Furthermore, the region experiences a variety of critical political events. The first one is the *rise of China,* which reshaped the global economy, world politics, and regional Asian affairs. The second one is the US's concerns about the rise of China and its response formulated in the discourse of *rebalancing to or pivoting to Asia,* which places a greater emphasis on the US's role as a balancer and India as an essential security actor in this rebalancing. And the third one is *Act East*, which was known as the *Look East* policy during the Singh government, which signals a change in the diplomacy of a rising India in international affairs. These three events, taken together, gave rise to the Indo-Pacific and highlighted the importance of the Indo-Pacific construct.

However, the importance of the region does not end here. The Indo-Pacific is not merely a geographical name, free from the political context. First, the Indo-Pacific is now consciously used by most countries and even international organizations as a geopolitical concept instead of the Asia-Pacific. It was chosen at the expense of Asia-Pacific. This usage can be traced back to the documents released by the countries, discourses of government officials, seminars organized by various think tanks in India, Australia, the US, and other places, and the institutions focusing on the Indo-Pacific region. It has entered the political language of most countries and institutions. And in years to come, it might make its way into everyday language.

Secondly, while the Indo-Pacific indicates a regional name with geopolitical implications, it is also a concept of foreign policy strategies of different countries. *The Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy* used by the USA and Japan, the *Stable and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Strategy* used by Australia and India's *Act East* policy focusing on a free and open Indo-Pacific Countries' exploitation of the word Indo-Pacific, formulates and engages in policies that can shape the region. They also make the necessary efforts to increase connectivity, ensure rule-based norms, combat perceived threats, and most importantly, provide security and increase the volume of trade in the region. When all these points were combined, the Indo-Pacific was the favored place of the Asia-Pacific.

The limitations of the Asia-Pacific were many. First, for most of the Cold War, the US, Japan, and Australia advocated for it to connect East Asia to the Pacific Ocean. Using only East Asia excluded the US from the region but connecting it to the Pacific legitimized the participation of the US in East Asian affairs (McDougall 2016, 6) but it did not account for the rise of two powers. The Indo-Pacific, on the other hand, reflects the growing importance of India and its policy regarding East Asia. Additionally, it illustrates the significance of the Indian Ocean in terms of its volume of trade and connection to the South China Sea via the Malacca Straits. Second, the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, which likewise targets Asia and the Indian Ocean with its connectivity projects, competes with the Indo-Pacific as a foreign policy tool that emphasizes connectivity in Asia and the Indian Ocean. While China goes west for its diplomatic mission, the Asia-Pacific could not provide the necessary geopolitical rationale for

expanding to the Indian Ocean with its limitations between East Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

Nevertheless, the Indo-Pacific should not be seen as a new term that came to existence in the twenty-first century. The term was first used by the German geopolitician Karl Haushofer. Karl Haushofer used the term in his works, *Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean* published in 1924, and *Building Blocks of Geopolitics* published in 1928*, Geopolitics of Pan-Ideas* published in 1931*,* and lastly, *German Cultural Politics in the Indo-Pacific Space* published in 1939 (Li 2021, 3). Scott shows that Haushofer uses the Indo-Pacific concerning India and China, Nicholas Spykman referred to these same maritime waters as maritime highways linking the whole area together in 1944 (2012, 88). The influence of Haushofer does not stop here regarding the Indo-Pacific. Takeuchi shows how the geopolitical was established in Japan. After Kjellen's works were reviewed in Japanese journals, geopolitical thinking made its way to the Japanese intellectual sphere. During the 1930s-1940s, works of Haushofer, such as of *Geopolitik des pazifischen Ozeans, Bausteine zur Geopolitik* and *Weltmeer und Weltmacht* (Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean, Building Blocks for a Geopolitics, and World Oceans and World Power) were translated to Japanese, and his ideas spread throughout Japan (2000, 75). Later, the Germans achieved their aim of *Kampf gegen Versailles* (breaking down the terms of the Versailles Treaty and started using "New European Order" as their new slogan. The usage of this slogan inspired Japanese leaders to adopt their slogan called "New Order in Asia", which evolved into the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (Towa Shin Chitsu-jo)" (Takeuchi 2000, 77-78). At the time, countries in Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

were limited to East and Southeast Asia, plus Oceania. Apart from its profound influence on Japan, geopolitical thinking influenced India as well. Indian historian and diplomat, Kavalam Panikkar, wrote a book in 1945 titled *India and the Indian Ocean* with the subtitle "An Essay on the Influence of Sea Power on Indian History," which was named after Alfred Thayer Mahan's masterpiece entitled *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, emphasizing the importance of the Indian Ocean.

These considerations and the usage of the Indo-Pacific were well known and discussed until the end of the Second World War. However, with the promotion of the Asia-Pacific by the actors mentioned above, the Indo-Pacific was forgotten for much of the Cold War as a geopolitical term. For much of the Cold War, the Indo-Pacific was a term for marine biology. It is possible to find articles focusing on sea urchin reproduction in the Indo-Pacific (JS Pearse and BF Philips 1968), red tides of the Indo-Pacific (Maclean 1989), or the historical biogeography of the Indo-Pacific (Schuh and Stonedahl 1986).

The end of the Cold War brought a change in international relations, and countries responded to these changes by re-politicizing the term and old terms. As mentioned, with the ending of the Cold War, India and China started to rise in Asian political affairs. This, combined with the volume of trade, population density, nuclear power, and foreign policy choices of countries located in the Asia-Pacific (now including India), gave rise to the Indo-Pacific. The considerations (importance of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean) of Haushofer, Spykman, Mahan, and Panikkar entered the foreign policy lexicon of the Indo-Pacific powers in this century. One could argue that the Indo-Pacific is a revived

version of an old idea rather than a new regional framework. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assume that these events created a geopolitical region that is shaping the foreign policy choices of states and is essential and unchanging in its nature.

The Indo-Pacific is both a geopolitical region and a geopolitical discourse. From the perspective of classical geopolitics, geographic facts highlight environmental determinism, rivalries, and great power projection. The Indo-Pacific is one such environmental determinism. The Indo-Pacific is a clearly defined region that has real constraints on the foreign policymaking of the countries in the region. In their documents and discourses, the Indo-Pacific defines the current borders of international relations from India to the Pacific Ocean and wherever the region reaches. It has real effects on the international relations between countries, the outcomes, and the future of international relations with its geographical features such as maritime straits, oceans, and land. The countries understand the Indo-Pacific as their current position, and *the free and open Indo-Pacific* foreign policy that they employ is their strategy for the region to deal with the threats, insecurities, and unknowns. To sum up, the Indo-Pacific defines the current policies for the whole region.

On the other hand, from the perspective of critical geopolitics, the Indo-Pacific is a geopolitical construct. From a theoretical perspective, critical geopolitics is envisaged as a critique of the assumptions of classical geopolitics. Assumptions such as natural relationships between space and power and natural constraints of geopolitical features on foreign policymaking were criticized, meaning the critical geopolitics do not accept the

geographical features as natural and given. Instead, these features are constructed by different people in different historical and geographical circumstances. This construction provides the basis for geopolitical rationales for political purposes that cannot be the reflection of a natural geopolitical order (Agnew 2013, 20). For example, if a particular space is territorialized as vulnerable, under threat, or posing a security threat, it becomes easier for those who define it to intervene, deterritorialize, and reterritorialize the region, free from the previously understood threats and vulnerabilities. To put it differently, critical geopolitics approaches *geopolitics* not as a neutral understanding of pre-given 'geographical' facts but as a profoundly ideological and politicized form of study of geography, regions, and maps (Tuathail and Agnew 1992, 192). Because geopolitical claims inscribe places as particular types of places to be dealt with in a particular manner, they are inevitably geopolitical.

Within this framework, this thesis will employ the theoretical foundations of critical geopolitics. It will consider the Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical discourse, built on assumptions and schemes to justify the foreign policy choices of the countries, which try to define, shape, and form the identity of the region to set their political agenda. The thesis will employ critical geopolitics to trace the genealogy of the region to uncover its historical construction and its geographical construction to show its plural and fragmented identity.

To trace historical-geographical construction, the thesis will employ the two theoretical notions of the critical perspective: territorialization and practical geopolitics.

Territorialization refers to the discursive construction of certain spaces through attaching norms, values, and meanings to these territorial entities. The result of territorialization is a politicized territory. Deterritorialization refers to the loosening of this spatial order (territorialization), and reterritorialization is the discursive construction of renewed territorial meanings (Agnew 2009, 725). The territory with defined borders and power relations creates a binary distinction between who is inside and outside, who is accepted within the boundaries, and who is not.

Practical geopolitics, one of the three geopolitical discourse categories defined by Tuathail and Dalby alongside formal and popular geopolitics, on the other hand, enables us to answer the question of "who does the territorialization?" (1998, 4). While focusing on who is doing the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific and how it was made into a geopolitical construct, practical geopolitics as a theoretical tool will focus on how the governing political elite and the bureaucracy do the territorialization, thus providing the international political scene with geopolitical representation and assumptions.

The thesis will use these concepts from the toolbox of critical geopolitics and offer two hypotheses. First, the Indo-Pacific is purely a discursive geopolitical construct, represented and imagined by certain geopolitical discourses. This discoursive construct provided and showed the geopolitical rationale of the countries examined in this thesis. Secondly, there is no single geopolitical discourse concerning the Indo-Pacific. Its identity is plural and has changed over time and space. From a temporal dimension, the connotation of the concept has been transformed over time; its meaning has changed from

its inception in the mid-2000s until the early 2020s. From a spatial dimension, the construction of the Indo-Pacific marked two distinct forms of identity because of the way it was territorialized. The Indo-Pacific geopolitical construct of the US and Australia, which is named "the maritime Indo-Pacific," mainly excludes China while focusing on the union of two oceans—the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. The other geopolitical construction by Japan and Australia, named "the wider Indo-Pacific", does not exclude China, keeps its inclusive identity, and focuses not only on two oceans but also on two continents – Africa and Asia. At the same time, two Indo-Pacific constructs share common adjectives: open and free. Thirdly, following these two arguments, the analysis will try to locate who is outside or inside of the Indo-Pacific and why such a practice is taking place within each country. It will be seen that the Indo-Pacific, even though it is framed against China's rise in Asian politics, is not always exclusive to China. While the first group, the US and Australia, openly frames China as a hostile power in the region, the second group, India and Japan, could not produce such an exclusionist discourse considering their neighborhood with this particular country. Moreover, it will be argued that not only the identity but also the borders of the Indo-Pacific are inconsistent between groups, which is why the stance against China is not surprising.

The method to trace the genealogy and identity of the Indo-Pacific geopolitical construct is discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method aimed at studying the written and spoken language concerning the political context. Discourse analysis is generally applied by examining how language functions to create meaning in distinct social contexts, whether political or sociological. It focuses on the contextual

9

meaning of the language to uncover the meaning behind it by focusing on the whole text. This thesis will also apply discourse analysis to discourses of political actors to understand the contextual meaning and the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific. It will focus on different texts at different times to locate the change in its identity temporally and spatially. Moreover, the thesis will locate the regularities, patterns, and pattern-breaking discourses in the Indo-Pacific and analyze how they change. Since this thesis employs practical geopolitics in its discoursive analysis, it will focus on the discourses of the political elite, bureaucracy, and official documents of the countries, but it is not going to stop here. Focusing on the language of the political elite misses the material changes happening in social life. To address this gap and improve the framework of discourse analysis, the thesis will embrace the discourse analysis framework by Müller (2010). Based on this framework, the discourse analysis of the thesis does not solely focus on the texts and discourses but also on the social practices. Social practices of the political elite in the form of institution building will be understood as signifying discourses and will be treated as such. Secondly, the discourse will not only analyze how the geopolitical discourse frames a geopolitical product by summing up all its contents but also ask why such framing takes place, what are the irregularities and what are the patterns.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 first summarizes the theoretical background of classical and critical geopolitics. After that, the chapter provides a summary of how the Indo-Pacific is framed by scholars who use geopolitical lenses to understand the region. Then the last part of this chapter summarizes the main theoretical arguments of the thesis in detail and introduces the toolbox of critical geopolitics. Chapter

2 investigates the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific by Japan and India, by pointing out its similarities, differences, and regularities, and arguing that the territorialization of Japan and India is more synergetic. Chapter 3 investigates the territorialization of the US and Australia by contrasting the similarities and differences between the two countries. While the differences in understanding the Indo-Pacific between the US and Australia are many, their territorialization shares points that are not shared by India and Japan. Chapter 4 summarizes the institutionalization attempts of the Indo-Pacific by four countries in the past two decades, including Malabar naval exercises, QUAD, and AUKUS. It shows that institutionalization attempts are weak due to different geopolitical imaginations of different actors regarding the region. Lastly, the conclusion reframes the discourses of these four actors about the Indo-Pacific and how the temporal evolution and spatial differentiation of the discursive construction of the Indo-Pacific resulted in different policy outcomes.

There are certain limitations of this thesis. This thesis did not use the local languages – Hindu and Japanese – to find missing discourses on the Indo-Pacific. The discourse analysis is limited to the sources translated into the English language. A more nuanced thesis would use the local languages, not only relying on translated English documents and speeches. Secondly, as with any other post-positivist approach, there is a debate about whether discourse matters in the making of foreign policy. Discourse analysis might not always show a clear causality between the explainer and the explained. It mostly deals with how, instead of why. Still, this thesis tries to explain the "why" behind the Indo-Pacific as a foreign policy concept and as a geopolitical discourse.

The strengths of the theory choice for this thesis are that it enables us to see the evolving patterns, pattern-breaking events, and geopolitical rationales of the geopolitical representations of the regions. The geopolitical representations of the Indo-Pacific are many and fragmented but show some similar patterns as well. These patterns can be grouped into two distinct Indo-Pacific representations together with minor within-group variations; such a categorization is a novelty in the literature. Secondly, analyzing the contemporary usage of the word and how it evolved from Indo-Pacific to Asia-Pacific, using critical geopolitics enables us to understand why such construction is taking place now, when it was started to be constructed, and how the constructed space evolved temporally and differentiate spatially.

CHAPTER II

CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS: SPACE AS A DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCT

The term geopolitics has been utterly described by Osterud by dividing it into two parts: in concrete terms, geopolitics is a body of knowledge that includes formulas for strategic planning based on the relative positions of land power and sea power throughout world history and in abstract terms, geopolitics has suggested that there are causal links between political power and geographic location (1988, 192). Academicians, policy analysts, and journalists in various media use the term to comprehend and vaguely describe a specific political event that occurred in many areas of the world such as Asia-Pacific, Central Asia, Europe, Africa, etc. At times, they use the term without defining it or explaining it. Kelly notes that the term has been employed inconsistently in the media and academia; this is not due to a lack of a unified approach, but rather because those who use it do not comprehend its original meaning (explained above), and hence fail to utilize it rigorously (2006, 43). However, aside from common usage in media and popular culture, it is possible to trace a unified geopolitical approach – which Kelly mentioned - that began in the nineteenth century. Originally a term invented by Swedish political scientist Rudolph Kjellen, 'geopolitics' was used to elaborate on the ideas of Friedrich Ratzel who had argued that the state was an organism, thus geopolitics was understood as the effect of natural geographical factors on the 'living' state (Dahlman 2009, 87).

Following Kjellen, scholars of geopolitics consistently tried to demonstrate that foreign policy choices of states were already determined by their location, place, and geopolitical considerations, by linking politics to geography. But with the acknowledgment of the diversity of geopolitical discourses by critical geopolitics, which contested the definition of geopolitics and questioned the history of geopolitical thinking, geopolitical tradition and the definition of geopolitics have changed. There are four stages to the geopolitical tradition's development. Firstly, the preparation of essential geopolitical ideas in the nineteenth century. Secondly, the usage of geopolitical ideas in political discourse between the end of World War I and World War II. Thirdly, the rebirth of the term "geopolitics" amongst policymakers during the Cold War, and lastly, the birth of Critical Geopolitics in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Exploring the similarities and variations between different periods of geopolitical history is critical to understanding how discourses regarding the use of geography have evolved. Furthermore, the majority of the literature concentrating on the subject analyzes the Indo-Pacific utilizing traditional geopolitics. As Bayram notes that Indo-Pacific as a narrative has increasingly been visible in the vocabulary of geoeconomics and geopolitics. While geoeconomics is associated with the volume of international trade, energy, and navigation through the Indian Ocean; the emergence of China and India in the region's politics and the military is correlated with geopolitics (2021, 25).

2.1. Classical Geopolitics

According to Herb the backdrop for the foundation of classical geopolitics was tied to rising competition among European states, concerns about the finite resources of the world, as well as the uncertainty in international affairs generated by the advent of Germany as a unified nation-state, challenging the established imperialist, which led to the development of new notions aiming to guide the political activity of imperial governments (2008, 23). This guidance was provided by "geopolitics". The central importance of classical geopolitics was to show how environmental and topographic features have an effect on the control of territories. Thus, geopolitics is connected to the establishment of nation-states as the dominant political institutions in the international system. Specifically, geopolitics emerged around the end of the nineteenth century, during a period of increased competition among the world's most powerful states, and it is the theories developed during this period that are referred to as "classic geopolitics." (Flint 2006, 17). The idea of a "geopolitical tradition," according to Tuathail, should always be addressed carefully; this tradition was set by a group of white male intellectuals from diverse national backgrounds and cultures to create a specific mode of thinking on international relations and they all share three common points in their approach to global space and international relations (1996, 16).

First, intellectuals of classic geopolitics were either promoting an imperialist agenda or were imperialists themselves. They all shared the belief that their civilization was superior to others and the development of a powerful, unified capitalist state was

necessary to survive in the international system (Tuathail 1996, 17). For example, Mahan developed his theory of 'sea power' in detail because, according to him, for a state to become an efficient global power, it must have a capable naval power. He developed this theoretical approach to guide the policymakers of the USA since he intended his country to become a world power and attain world dominance with minimal casualties and maximum profit (Gülmez 2009, 23). In his famous work "The Geographical Pivot of History", Mackinder divides the world into three parts: Outer/Insular Crescent; Inner/Marginal Crescent, and Pivot Area and informs the policymakers of the British Empire with a few issues (1904, 435). First, from a geographical point of view, the balance of power is in favor of and rotates around the Russia that controls the Pivot Area, which is always great in size but has limited mobility (Mackinder 1904, 437). Second, If Russia, which controls the Pivot Area, is allied with Germany, it can break the balance of power in the current setting, and lead to the creation of the empire of the world (Mackinder 1904, 436). Third, and most importantly, he argues that the balance of power at any moment is partly geographical and partly material. However, geographical conditions are more measurable than others, hence it should apply to history and current politics (Mackinder 1904, 437).

Second, classical geopolitical scholars shared the idea that neo-Lamarckian social evolutionism was also applicable to state behavior under certain environmental features. Unlike Darwinism, which maintains that evolutionary processes are impacted by random variation in species, Neo-Lamarckian social evolutionism believes that organisms are directly transformed by their environment (Tuathail 1996, 17). The first component of

this viewpoint was that a state is an organism with aspirations, needs, and demands in the environment in which it lives, and that, like all other organisms, it must fight or collaborate with other states to live and expand. Secondly, the acquisition of resources, people, and land was merely seen as a contribution to the growth of states and fulfillment of their needs. For this reason, Agnew and Corbridge have noted that policymakers justified expansion by referring to the realm of nature, rather than the realm of politics (1996, 57). Finally, from the social evolutionist perspective, states are organic entities with "natural limits," which suggests that they may not only be defined by historical boundaries but also by other natural elements of the environment such as mountains, rivers, deserts, and finally, all members of a recognized nation or ethnic group had an innate right to live within the state's boundaries.

Third, Cartesian Perspectivism, which evolved alongside Positivism, formed the foundation of classical geopolitics. According to Cartesian Perspectivism, reality exists outside of the intellectual's consciousness. As a result, the relationship between the intellect and the universe is framed as one between a perceiving subject and a perceived object. Based on Cartesian perspectivism, the subject is neutral, as is one's view on world events. The subject looks down from space at the two-dimensional world, watching and recording what is happening on the earth's surface but not interpreting it. The subject's primary goal is to investigate and report the world in an essentialist manner. This indicated that in the explanation of the geopolitical forms of knowledge, the gaze of the subject favored the contemporary and synchronic approaches over the historical and diachronic approaches. It aided in the subordination of history to space and encouraged

the spatialization of observable phenomena rather than their historicization. This spatialization of the world's objects and events reduced history to a collection of timeless essences, conflicts, and geopolitical rules (Tuathail 1996, 17-18). These rules, then, guided foreign policy making from a positivist and objective point of view. This is essentially what Mackinder has done above. In this way, the universe is trapped and shown as repetitive, and history is merely an affair on the surface of nature (Tuathail 1996, 18-19). To sum up, when these three points are combined, it became possible to trace a geopolitical tradition going back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The concepts developed by these scholars of classical geopolitics in the nineteenth century were employed by a generation of German geopoliticians in the interwar period and World War II. Among them, one prominent example was Karl Haushofer who coined the later infamous concept, namely the *Lebensraum* (the living space). The use of the word '*geopolitik*' by Nazi Germany had severe consequences because, after World War II, the word itself was banished from academia as geographers, particularly of Anglo-American tradition, tried to evade the stigma coupled with the word *geopolitik* and Nazi Germany. Therefore, they started to use the word 'political geography' which was exclusively reserved for scientific studies and academic work in political geography (Herb 2008, 24) However, the classical geopolitical tradition did not disappear entirely. In the 1980s, the tradition of classical geopolitics once again entered the vocabulary of Anglo-American tradition because of two nuclear powers, Reagan's policies throughout the 1980s, the placement of medium-range missiles in Europe, and increased regional conflicts. Many works that reemphasized spatial elements as determining variables for

political power because of this phenomenon have been produced (Herb 2008, 24). The geopolitical tradition that had occurred during the Cold War was primarily ideological, in the sense that it contained the myths, experiences, and values of two major superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union after World War II. Therefore, John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge refer to this tradition as 'ideological geopolitics' (1996, 65). Instead of arguing for an 'organic state theory' or political power derived from civilizational superiority, ideological geopolitics had different and distinct characteristics such as:

- dividing the global space into friendly and hostile blocs where capitalist-liberal democracies and communist regimes reigned

- a continuous struggle over the political-economic organization of the world

- representing an international system composed of 'three worlds' where there was a persistent rivalry between the USA and the Soviet Union to enlarge their spheres of influence to former colonies and non-aligned states

- using phrases (hegemonic stability, containment, etc) to naturalize ideological conflict (Agnew and Corbridge 1996, 65).

Indeed, civilizational (Anglo Saxon tradition) or naturalized geopolitical (German tradition) discourses did not wither away but they were embedded into the new discursive space. When the Soviet Union collapsed, ideological geopolitics that was extensively employed by the statesmen came to an end. Simultaneously, in academia, the emergence of the 'critical turn' and the post-positivist approaches in social science gave inspiration to critical geopolitics.

2.2. Critical Geopolitics

According to John Agnew, critical geopolitics could be defined as a critical stance that global politics is supported by both representations and assumptions about how geographical partitioning of the world, international images, the locations of the continents and oceans, and strategic plans enter the construction of foreign policy and legitimization of those policies. In this respect, rather than being recognized as natural realities, geographical assumptions and schemes are produced by individuals under various historical conditions and geographic locations (2013, 19). Thus, the geopolitical justification for social and political goals became based on socially constructed assumptions and schemes, not on geography (Agnew 2013, 19-20).

The first critical geopolitical works emerged in the late 1980s with the studies of scholars such Simon Dalby, John Agnew, and Gearoid Ó'Tuathail as the pioneers of this approach to geopolitics (Painter 2008, 65). They were inspired by various critical theorists of the Frankfurt School and Michel Foucault. They criticized the positivist assumptions of objective knowledge embedded in classical geopolitics and problematized the components of 'geo-politics'. For them, geopolitics is not an objective practice of global space by which the foreign policy choices of states were determined. Instead, it is attached to the constant social reproduction of power and political economy because it is a form of geography and politics that incorporates a con-textuality (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 2). Thus, critical geopolitics begins from the Foucauldian premise that geopolitics is a form of power/knowledge discourse by which intellectuals of statecraft spatialize and

represent 'the world' characterized by types of places and peoples (Tauthail 1996, 46). It seeks to show how geographical discourses, practices, and perspectives calculate, define, and evaluate the world (Dodds 2005, 28). Its main theoretical framework rests on five assumptions.

First, from a critical geopolitical stance, geographical politics have an impact on all aspects of foreign policy, hence geopolitics is material and representational spatial practices of the statecraft itself, not merely a particular school of statecraft. Because of this, geopolitics is better understood as a large cultural phenomenon rather than a geopolitical tradition of wise men of statecraft. Thus, critical geopolitics analyses the geopolitical imagination of the state and its cultural mythologies (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 2-3).

Secondly, critical geopolitics argues that space is plural and there are myriad ways of constructing a political space. This construction happens with the creation of borders. At a glimpse, borders seem concrete and materialized. However, in the abstract sense, they can be a line on a map separating countries, regions, cities, and towns. In practice, they can be fences, hedgerows, signs, and military checkpoints on the ground. They indicate division and separation of political entities and people, and most importantly classify separate territories. As simple as they seem, they are also contradictory, and the debates about them are no less confusing. Joseph Nevins differentiates between 'boundary' and 'border'. He suggests that the boundary is a strict line of separation between two (at least in theory) distinct territories, while a border is an area of interaction and gradual division

between two separate political entities (2002, 7). The border is a line that outlines 'here' and 'there', it distinguishes 'us' from 'them' and one territory from another territory. It is both tangible and material (Mountz 2009, 199). Simultaneously, it is mental and ideational.

At this point, it is also necessary to define what territory is. Territories are part of the space claimed by a particular group or political actors such as states, terrorist groups, intergovernmental organizations, and supranational organizations (Dahlman 2009, 77). They are created with the establishment of borders and boundaries; hence territories are where distinct groups live. Parts of space that geographers refer to as a locality, region, or pace are sometimes described using the term in a more ambiguous manner to explain various geographical scales (Paasi 2003, 109).

To understand how territories are created and why they are essential, it is also important to understand the related terms, i.e., territoriality, territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization. Territorialization is a process by which a specific part of space is made into a territory that denotes a politicized place. As a dynamic process, many political players have used it to territorially fix people and their affairs in space (Agnew 2009, 745). When a 'space' is made into a territory, power relations within that particular territory necessarily emerge. The term that we use to define it is territoriality. In the case of human territoriality, most of the earth's surface is inhabited by individuals, social groups, institutions, and states that, by using abstract and culturally loaded symbolism, transform space into territories (Paasi 2003, 111). In all social

circumstances, when territoriality arises, it results in power dynamics within a territory. It is a strategy by which humans exert control over people and things by controlling an area and it is a primary way of expressing social power in a geographical context. Sack argues that the definition of territoriality does not only convey its meaning but also indicates what it can do based on three interrelated relationships which are included in the description (1986, as cited in Paasi 2003, 112). First, territoriality consists of a form of classification by area, the clustering of people and things by location in space. Secondly, territoriality is based on the interaction of boundaries. Thirdly, to manage access to the territory and things inside it or outside of it, territoriality includes enforcing control. Territoriality, in addition to building and maintaining social order, also helps people make sense of their surroundings and experience the world (1986, as cited in Paasi 2003, 112).

Once a territory is formed and the social relations (territoriality) within the territory are established, it is ready for deterritorialization. Deterritorialization refers, not to the creation of the borderless world but the loosening of the spatial order (Tuathail 1996, 180). It represents a tendency for states to come across and engage in the uprooting of objects and people, which has social, psychological, and political repercussions, in the context of global capitalism. Thus, when a particular way of imagining and organizing the territory weakens, territoriality loses both its identity and its components which maintain the centralized power. Reterritorialization is the exact opposite of this process (Agnew 2009, 745). An example given by Tuathail and Luke (1994, 383) shows the deterritorialization at end of the Cold War. They first argued that for nearly four decades,

capital accumulation and state power were confined in a Cold War territoriality defined by two ideologically defined blocks, the U.S./NATO/Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) bloc versus the U.S.S.R./Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO)/Council on Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) bloc. These two different blocs shaped much of the imagination of territories, space, and human territoriality in the twentieth century. Cold War territoriality ended (deterritorialized) with the collapse of the other bloc in 1989. Recognizing this problem, various re-territorialization discourses were created in the USA such as 'The West Versus the Rest' and 'The Best In the West' (Tuathail and Luke 1994, 386-392). The deterritorialization of the 'Old World Order' happened with the re-territorialization of the same space altogether; producing new ways of new maps of meaning, imagined territories, and territorialities.

Critical geopolitics does not deny the existence of boundaries but gives particular attention to the boundary-drawing methods and practices that characterize the daily lives of states (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 3). It is concerned with the inside-outside distinction of states; it pays attention to the construction of the dyadic accounts of outside vs. inside, here vs. there. In maps of meaning, it investigates how certain conceptual spatializations of identity, nationhood, and threat manifest across states' landscapes and in turn how specific political, social, and physical geographies frame and influence certain conceptual, moral, and aesthetic perceptions of oneself and others, safety and threat, closeness and distance, and apathy and responsibility (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 3-4). This argument is fundamental in this thesis because the borders of the Indo-Pacific are

disorganized, plural, and contradictory since countries that have adopted the Indo-Pacific, define where the region starts and where the region ends quite differently from each other, even though they accept a region that is same in the name. It is possible to see patterns of divergence and convergence in the territorialization of borders of Indo-Pacific in the discourses of countries, more importantly, which countries are inside and outside of it. Thus, border drawing practices in the Indo-Pacific are a significant part of this thesis. The Cold War term Asia-Pacific had been deterritorialized and reterritorialized as 'Indo-Pacific' in the twentieth century and 'Indo-Pacific' itself is continuously deterritorialized and reterritorialized over the years. Its borders changed, its identity changed, and countries adopted different versions of the region to represent themselves and others in the region.
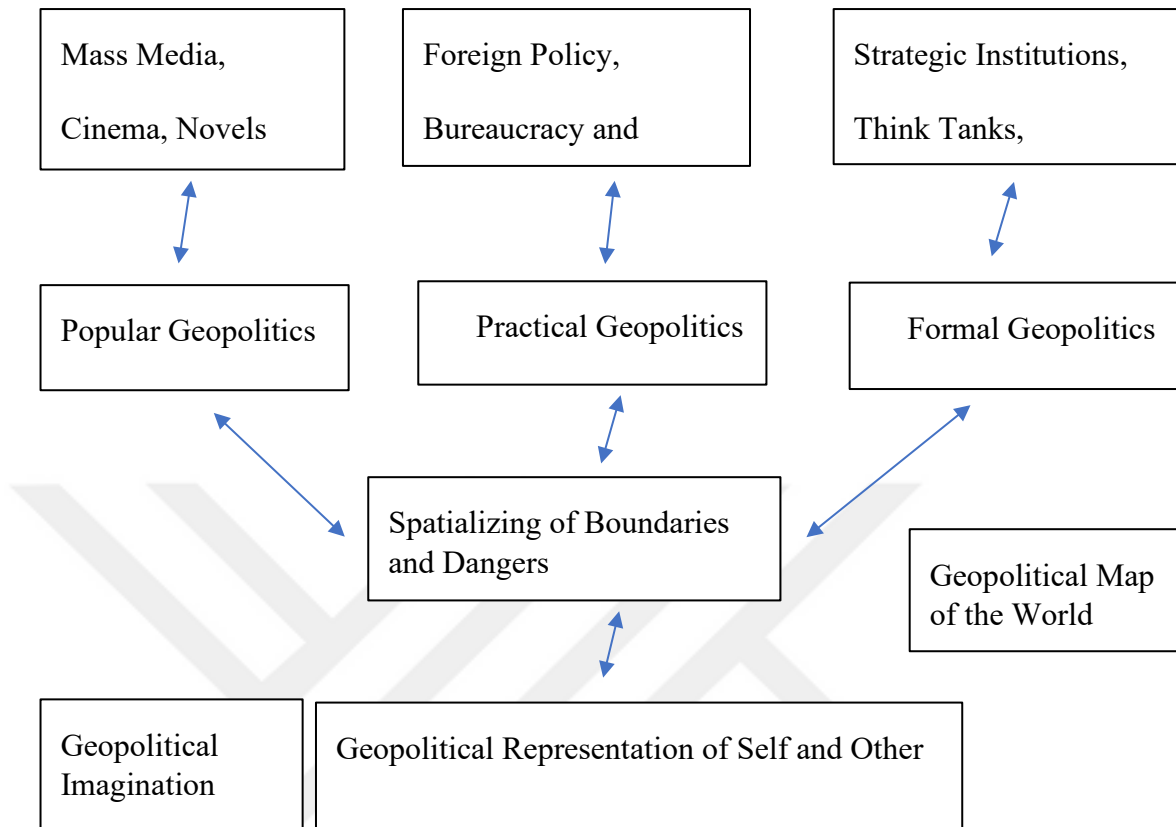
Table 2.1. Plural Assemble of Representational Geopolitical Practices (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 3)

Third, Critical geopolitics does not reject the traditional understanding that geopolitics is a practice of statecraft by leaders; instead, by considering geopolitics as a vast social and cultural reality, it complements it. Thus, geopolitical reasoning is not centered on one form of reasoning, rather it is a set of decentralized practices. Tuathail and Dalby argue for three distinct geopolitical reasoning as the table above demonstrates. The first is popular geopolitics, which is represented in popular culture through films, literature, cartoons, and other forms of popular media. The second one is called formal geopolitics which is a form of reasoning centered around a strategic community such as think tanks,

academia, and strategic institutions. The third one is called practical geopolitical reasoning – which is central to this thesis – and denotes the reasoning of state leaders, foreign policy, and political institutions (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 4).

Fourth, critical geopolitics denies the objectivist perspectivism on the study of geopolitics. It tries to disturb the classical geopolitical approach which represents the conflict and cooperation in international politics as an easily comprehensible scene without any interpretation (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 6).

Fifth, by denying the objectivity of geopolitical knowledge, critical geopolitics conceptualizes geopolitics as 'situated reasoning', seeking to theorize its broader social, spatial, and techno-territorial conditions of development and usage. Because in classical geopolitical tradition, the questions about geopolitics have always been about states, their relation to territoriality, their society, and borders (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 6). Classical geopolitics attempted to answer the questions produced by Foucault's term 'governmentalization of the state', such as "What is the path to national greatness for the state?", "What is the best relationship of a state to its territory and how can the state grow?" and "How can the state be reformed so that its political effectiveness can be strengthened?". Geopolitics tried to produce objective knowledge of the effective organization of things inside governments and societies, and this objective knowledge depended on the visualization of space (cartography), the development of techno-territorial networks (railways, national media), and the implementation of governmental reforms. Thus, the context of historical expansion, governmentality, technological

history, and territoriality is where critical geopolitics places its engagement with geopolitics (Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 7).

In sum, these five arguments provide the foundation for a different conception of power and power's relationship to space from the one that dominated traditional studies of geopolitics. Three differences stand out from classical geopolitics. First, power is also exercised culturally, and through practices of representation, and does not exist only in material form. For critical geopolitics, the power of discourse affects the understanding of political events and the perceptions of relations among places. Second, critical geopolitics adopts a more scattered and plural view of power than traditional geopolitics. Power is not located exclusively in the state but is spread across society. Third, critical geopolitics seeks to disrupt the spatial ordering of classical geopolitics. Classical geopolitics took the state's territorial sovereignty for granted and accepted that it was feasible in practice and in theory to distinguish domestic and foreign policy (Painter 2008, 65-66).

2.3. Critical Literature Survey on Indo-Pacific as a Regional Construct:

Having reviewed the classical and critical versions of geopolitical reasoning, this section of this theoretical chapter would deal with the literature that has somehow questioned the territoriality of the Indo-Pacific. To do so, I tried to find every piece of research on the Indo-Pacific that used 'geopolitics' in its title. My research regarding the use of geopolitics to understand the Indo-Pacific has resulted in finding two main arguments. To start with, some authors see the Indo-Pacific construct as a natural outcome

of international politics in the twenty-first century. The rise of India, along with China, problems in the South China Sea, the growing importance of the Indian Ocean and the Strait of Malacca, and the rivalry between the USA and China play an essential role in this narrative. In this sense, geography is shaping how countries are reacting to it. The Indo-Pacific is a geopolitical and geoeconomics 'reality' for countries in and out of the region (for instance see Mohan 2012; Medcalf 2013; Pardesi 2019). Others understand the Indo-Pacific as a discursive construct, a 'new' region to be more precise (Pan 2014; Scott 2012; see Prasad 2019 for the myth of Indo-Pacific). As a result, the constructivist approach and the concept of regionalism play a major role in their analysis of the Indo-Pacific. For example, in their book titled *The Rise and Return of the Indo-Pacific*, which is one of the most comprehensive research projects on the Indo-Pacific, Timothy Doyle and Dennis Rumley discuss the construction of the region (2019). In the introductory chapter of their book, they argue that in the study of geopolitics and international relations, there is an enduring debate among essentialists, namely positivist tradition, and constructivist and relativists. On the one hand, essentialists support the 'realist' perspective on international relations, focusing on state-centric histories, relations, and regimes. On the other hand, constructivists from several critical sub-disciplines argue that realist scholars are only telling 'statecraft stories' themselves, meaning they are simply articulating the dominant world views of powerful elites within states and transnational organizations and corporations. Acknowledging this, they conclude their geopolitical stance on Indo-Pacific contains both essentialist and constructivist arguments because such an eclectic approach is useful both empirically and discursively (Doyle and Rumley

2019, 8-11). But still, they engage with the Indo-Pacific from a perspective that combines both positivist and constructivist, not from the perspective of critical geopolitics. However, what is interesting in their book is that in Chapter 3, they argue for a return of classical geopolitical thought with the ascent of the Indo-Pacific and trace the diffusion of this classical tradition in the Indo-Pacific states, by referring to Haushofer and Ratzel. Later, in Chapter 4, they argue that even today the attitudes, perceptions, and misunderstandings of the Cold War remain a fundamental part of the decision-making process undertaken by senior Indo-Pacific policymakers. A question appears when they trace the history of the Indo-Pacific to classical geopolitics and argue that perceptions of the Cold War remain: To which geopolitical discourse does Indo-Pacific belong? An ideological or naturalized geopolitical discourse? The answer from critical geopolitics would identify such discourses and focus on how words such as 'containment, spheres of influence, expansionism' are used in the speeches of decision-making elites and foreign policy documents.

Edited by Ash Rossiter and Brendon J. Cannon, *Conflict and Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific New Geopolitical Realities* (2020) focuses on the construction of the region by the main actors in the region: Japan, the USA, Australia, India, and China. They emphasize that, on the one hand, some academics reject the Indo-Pacific as a natural product of the shift in global wealth and argue that it should be understood merely as a discursive construction, with origins in the discourses of states troubled about China's expanding influence and power (Rossiter and Cannon 2020, 1). On the other hand, some academics and politicians think that the Indo-Pacific region, a maritime region spanning

the Indian and Pacific Oceans, will be the center of a period of intense major power competition. For those who use the phrase "Indo-Pacific" in foreign policy circles, the union of these oceans signifies a new coherent region (Rossiter and Cannon 2020, 1). From this view, considering these two oceans and the islands they contain as a whole is the best way to conceptualize the political certainties of this century, particularly the growth of China and India (Rossiter and Cannon 2020, 1). They conclude that disagreements over the ontological foundation of the Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical notion will continue for some time and the policy choices of the main actors in the region are going to shape what the Indo-Pacific is going to mean (Rossiter and Cannon 2020, 2). What can be seen here is that the argument once again comes down to the debates between essentialists and constructivists. Is the Indo-Pacific a new natural reality, a pure byproduct of current geoeconomics and geostrategic concerns in the region? Or is it a discursive construction? Which comes first? The geographical realities affecting the foreign policy choices of states or decision-making elites of states constructing the very geographical reality which represents the global space in a particular way to justify their policies? This thesis is going to side with the debates arguing that the Indo-Pacific is a discursive construction. However, the main aim is not to use a constructivist framework and describe how a region has been constructed. Instead, it is going to adapt the theoretical critical geopolitics and use its toolbox. To do so, an introduction to the toolbox of critical geopolitics is needed.

2.4. The Toolbox of Critical Geopolitics to Understand Indo-Pacific as A Geopolitical Discourse

Now that the debates around the Indo-Pacific have been examined, the question remains how is this thesis going to utilize the toolbox of critical geopolitics; practical geopolitics in particular to demonstrate the construction of Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical discourse? The first concept that should be dealt with is, therefore, 'geopolitical discourse'. As discussed above, geopolitics argues that there is a one-way causal relationship going from the geographical factors to the foreign policy choices of states. Critical geopolitics deconstruct this relationship by analyzing how this causal relationship is both written and read. This means that the term 'geopolitical discourse' refers to how geographical factors of global politics have been represented and conveyed. This thesis argues that the Indo-Pacific is a geopolitical discourse that has been illustrated and shared in a particular way by different actors. Thus Indo-Pacific construct is not understood as an objective geopolitical knowledge but as situated reasoning and discourse.

To engage in discourse analysis, the thesis will adopt the framework offered by Müller (2010). Müller takes the discourse analysis of Laclau and Mouffe and applies it to geopolitics. This type of discourse contains two features, and it is through these features this thesis will approach a geopolitical identity. The first feature is that this discourse analysis takes social practices as a part of a discourse, hence allowing for the conceptualization of identity as being both discursively engraved, expressed, and legislated. By doing so, it recognizes that identities are not limited to the linguistic realm

but also appear across different systems of signifying practices including social practices. Thus, it would be possible to argue that geopolitical identities do not emerge devoid of context but are always situated products (Müller 2010, 15). The second feature is that this type of discourse analysis pays greater attention to the structural characteristics and does not stop at interpreting discourses by summing up their contents, but instead attempts to find patterns and regularities that construct and alter discourses. By doing so this type of discourse analysis moves from a traditional critical interpretation of texts to a theory-based identification of future-structuring identities (Müller 2010, 15).

Secondly, this thesis will argue that the Indo-Pacific cannot be understood as one region but has plural definitions with different adjectives that construct its identity. Its borders have been drawn differently by other geopolitical imaginations and its territoriality has been established differently by the various actors. To find an answer to how it is constructed by different actors, the thesis will employ practical geopolitical reasoning which involves the examination of discourses of state leaders, foreign policy, and political institutions. In the current literature, some researchers have used practical geopolitical reasoning to analyze the foreign policy justification of states. For example, Gearoid O Tuathail utilizes practical geopolitics to understand the response of the USA regarding the Bosnian civil war (2002). He formulates a framework grammar of geopolitics and asks five questions: *where* (for specifying the involved location); *what* (for describing the situation); *why* (for explaining the creation of causality); *who* (for including protagonist/actor typification); and *so what* (to understand strategic calculation). By analyzing the discourses of leaders, he answers these questions to

understand the imagination of the USA and what kind of foreign policy it has developed to answer the issue (Tuathail, 2002). Following Tauthail, Tanvi Pate's article examines India's foreign policy towards Israel by using practical geopolitical reasoning (2020). He takes the framework of Tauthail mentioned above and asks the question: where Israel is in India's geopolitical representation under the Modi administration? He argues that Modi was able to play the geopolitics of "India" as the "global actor" and "Israel" in "West Asia" by emphasizing the democratic foundation of India and Israel's historical, defense, and economic ties.' 'Israel was considered to be a country in "West Asia" separate from the politics of "The Middle East," whereas India was claimed to have ambitions outside "South Asia." (Pate 2020, 23). Ouelette and Weiss's work focuses on the conceptualizations and geopolitical depictions associated with the Czech Republic by different American presidential administrations by using critical geopolitics to analyze the impact of identity construction on policymaking processes (2015, 267). These works mainly focus on the state's imagination of other states or events but not on a region; however, this thesis primarily aims to analyze the construction of the region itself using critical geopolitics, not just how states use the geopolitical discourse and perform the geopolitical imagination to legitimize and justify their foreign policy behavior.

Thirdly, by focusing on the border-drawing practice of the Indo-Pacific, this thesis will try to locate who is inside/outside of the region in concern, describe the discursive construction of borders of the region, and understand why such construction is taking place. In doing so, the spatial terminology of critical geopolitics, including territorialization, reterritorialization, and deterritorialization will also be employed to

show the continuities and changes in the meaning of the Indo-Pacific over time. As this thesis's concern is not only to explain the foreign policies of countries but to understand the discursive construction of the region, it is crucial to employ the terms mentioned. In short, in this thesis, critical geopolitics will be used to understand the political identity and rhetorical meaning of the Indo-Pacific beyond its classical geographical purpose.

CHAPTER III

INDO-PACIFIC'S TERRITORIALIZATION: CONVERGENCES AND DIVERGENCES IN THE TERRITORIALIZATION OF INDIA AND JAPAN

In this chapter, I will discuss the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific region by Japan and India. First, I will start with the Indo-Pacific conceptualization of India and then move on to Japan. The reason for this, as mentioned in the Introduction chapter, is that the Cold War term *Asia-Pacific* has been deterritorialized and reterritorialized with the combination of the Indian Ocean and Pacific, i.e., *the Indo-Pacific*. Bayram gives two reasons for its replacement: (1) the relative decline of the USA and (2) the rise of both India and China in the twenty-first century (2020, 7). Much of the discussion in the literature revolves around these two reasons, as they both seem to have a 'real' influence on the prominent actors in the Indo-Pacific. However, I will claim that even though the argument which maintains the Indo-Pacific was a response to these significant changes in international politics is sound, the region was constructed to justify the policy changes by the countries in the region and this construction was a demonstration of the changing regional dynamics as well. The causal relationship is constructed not one way but mutual; in other words, it is not only the transformation of the politics based on geography that resulted in discursive transformations, but also discourses continuously deterritorialize and reterritorialize geographies. The Indo-Pacific is not only a result of changing politics

but it was a transforming construct of the political landscape. Its meaning and representation changed over the years. Second, I will argue that it is possible to claim that the geopolitical imaginations of India and Japan can be taken together as one geopolitical discourse despite several differences in their outlooks and the geopolitical imaginations of the USA and Australia can be grouped as another – more or less similar – geopolitical discourse. The challenge for this grouping is that even though countries in a group have adopted the Indo-Pacific geopolitical discourse in their formal usage, they have divergent territorializations of the Indo-Pacific. Japan and India have different discourses about who is outside or inside of the region; nevertheless, the boundary drawing practices they have employed to define the Indo-Pacific are almost the same. This chapter concentrates on the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific by India and Japan and then shows how these two states' production of the Indo-Pacific has significant similarities in treating them as a discursive bloc.

3.1. India: Geopolitical Imagination of the Indo-Pacific

India's transformation of Indo-Pacific's geopolitical representation could be examined by understanding two distinct foreign policy doctrines and two succeeding governments: the policies of the Look East (1991) and Act East (2014), as well as the policies of the Singh government and Modi government.

When India gained its independence in 1947, it joined the international system as a sovereign actor and championed what is known as the Non-Aligned Movement. The concept of non-alignment reflected a refusal to participate in either American or Soviet

politico-military blocks and an emphasis on the maintenance of the autonomy of the newly independent country. And for much of the Cold War period, the doctrine of non-alignment was the guiding principle of India's approach to international relations. However, the developments during the Cold War affected India's foreign policy. India's ties to the Soviet Union temporarily got closer, which harmed its ties to Southeast Asian nations that were closer to the USA. Additionally, at that point in time, India neglected its relations with the Southeast Asian region while it was focusing on managing relations with countries in the South Asian region[2] and trying to deal with its problematic relations with China (Mazumdar 2021, 357). Until the conclusion of the Cold War, the Asia-Pacific geopolitical discourse dominated national imaginations. For India, the concept was highly problematic because the term was used to connect East Asia to the Pacific region by the USA, Australia, and Japan and it legitimized the involvement of the USA in Asian politics (McDougall 2016, 6). Simultaneously, it excluded the Indian Ocean and trapped India in its region until the end of the Cold War. This imagination changed with the downfall of the Soviet Union in 1991, which deterritorialized the geopolitical imaginations of states in Asia and it greatly affected India by creating new challenges and opportunities for India to engage with the states in the Southeast Asian states and Asia in the post-Cold War era. First, India's doctrine of non-alignment became obsolete when the Soviet Union collapsed. Second, with globalization, the global economy started to become more

---

[2] South Asian Region includes: Pakistan, Nepal Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan; Southeast Asian region includes: Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

integrated. Third, India was experiencing a currency crisis in 1991, mainly due to increasing oil prices because of the Gulf Crisis deteriorating the trading account, and partial loss of export markets (Sweta and Saxena 2002, 403). Haokip argues that India was compelled to reevaluate the core tenets of its foreign policy because of five reasons: currency crisis, integrative forces globalization, fear of being marginalized, rising China's impact on India's foreign policy and Asia-Pacific region, and frustration with the South Asian integration process (2011, 248). As a result of these anxieties in 1991, then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao initiated the policy of 'Look East' to get India out of its geopolitical limitations and boost its relations with the countries in the Southeast Asian region and with ASEAN countries in particular (Haokip 2011, 248). In other words, the 'Look East' can be described as the geopolitical gaze of India toward Southeast Asia. This gaze, a new form of reterritorialization when Cold War geopolitics came to an end, is formulated to justify Indian involvement in Asia.

3.1.a. Birth of the Indo-Pacific in India: Naval Circles

While India's geopolitical imagination has been changing, the Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical discourse did not start in government circles but naval circles. In 2006, with the funding of a Japanese non-profit organization, Nippon Foundation, the Ocean Policy Research Foundation (now, known as the Ocean Policy Research Institute), which is a Japanese think-tank specializing in ocean policy research and policy recommendations, published a book entitled *The Indo-Japan Dialogue on Ocean Security* (2006). In this book, Premvir S. Das, the former Commander-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command of India, has written the section titled "Maritime Violence in the Indian Ocean – Challenges

and Responses". In this section, he emphasizes the security problems in the Indian Ocean and uses the word 'Indo-Pacific' (2006, 111-115) two times; however, he continues to employ 'the Asia-Pacific' in general to assess the dangers and refer to the region he is talking about. There is, however, no conceptual definition of the term, where it refers to or what it includes, or whether it includes anything at all. It is just used without referencing any country, borders, or space. This first rather vague usage was later repeated by a commander in the Indian Navy, Captain Gurpreet Khurana, in detail in an article entitled "Security of Sea Lines: Prospects for India–Japan Cooperation" published in *Strategic Analysis* in 2007. Accordingly, Khurana defined the Indo-Pacific at the first endnote of his article as follows "The term 'Indo-Pacific' refers to the maritime space comprising the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific. Littoral to it are the states of Asia (including West Asia/Middle East) and eastern Africa" (2007, 150). In the Indo-Pacific, the security of sea lanes of communication extends through the Indian Ocean, from Arabian Peninsula to Northeast Asia, and there are four hotspots where insecurity persists: Gulf of Aden/off Somalia, Persian Gulf, off Sri Lanka, Southeast Asian Straits and Western Pacific (Khurana, 2007, 141-144). The emphasis on eastern Africa (off Somalia) and the Middle East (Persian Gulf) is crucial because, in the article, the author takes the significant challenge for sea lanes as the widespread maritime terrorism. In the end, Japan and India need peace in the Indian Ocean, Southeast Asian straits, and the Western Pacific for their energy demands and security (Khurana 2007, 144). This is one of the first references to the Indo-Pacific as a discursive construct in the post-2000 period, in which the borders and importance of the region, as well as certain dangers associated with it,

have been defined and shaped from the view of an Indian naval officer. Thus, it would be appropriate to argue that this text is quite significant in understanding the discursive construction of the Indo-Pacific in India.

Another Indian naval officer, Arun Prakash, the Chief of Naval Staff between 2004 and 2006, also recognized the necessity for the creation of a new word, which will include nations that are located on both the Indian and Pacific oceans' peripheries, namely the Indo-Pacific (2011, 6). The Indian Ocean (Indo), which meets the Pacific Ocean (Pacific) at this point, is referred to as the "center of the world" in his words. Additionally, he argues the phrase "Indo-Pacific" would be much more accurate and inclusive than any other term (Asia-Pacific), especially when referring to zones on either side of the Malacca Straits (2011, 6). In addition to these earlier references to the concept, the Indian think tanks began to popularize the Indo-Pacific concept in their seminars and conferences, which grew in numbers almost annually. According to Scott, these Indian think tanks have formed a semi-official bridge between non-government institutions and the government; as a result, the Indo-Pacific conferences that they organized between 2011-2018 included ministers, officials, and diplomats from both the Singh government and Modi government, and the rationale behind organizing these conferences was simple, the 'Indo-Pacific is the new geopolitical reality' (2018, 199).

Year	Institution	Title of the Conference/Seminar
2011	United Service Institute	Japan-India-US Trilateral Strategic Dialogue on Security Issues in the Indo-Pacific Region
2013	National Maritime Foundation	Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region
2013	United Service Institute	Perspectives of the Indo-Pacific Region
2013	Indian Council of World Affairs	Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region
2014	Observer Research Foundation	Sea Change: Evolving Maritime Geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific Region
2014	Observer Research Foundation	Regional integration in the Indo-Pacific
2014	Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies	India, Australia, and Indo-Pacific: Regional Interpretations
2014	Observer Research Foundation	Evolving Security Architecture in the Indo-Pacific
2015	National Maritime Foundation	Maritime Dynamics in the Eastern Indian Ocean Region and the Western Pacific Ocean Region
2015	National Maritime Foundation	India and China: Constructing Peaceful and Stable Maritime Order in the Indo-Pacific
2015	Observer Research Foundation	Towards an Indo-Pacific Partnership: Reconnecting India and New Zealand
2015	United Service Institution	The Indo-Pacific Region: Security Dynamics and Challenges
2016	United Service Institution	Strategic Balance in the Indo-Pacific Region

2017	Observer Research Foundation	Indo-Pacific Region: Converging India-Japan interests
2017	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations	Changing Security Dynamic in the Indo-Pacific
2017	Vivekananda International Foundation	Trilateral India-Japan-USA Dialogue – The Indo-Pacific
2018	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses	Strategic Stability in the Indo-Pacific

Table 3.1. Indo-Pacific Seminars and Conferences of Indian Think Tanks (Scott 2019, 199-200)

3.1.b. The Singh Government's Reterritorialization of the Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific concept was formulated in Indian naval circles in the mid-2000s, but it was not until 2011 that the officials in the government started to use the term and incorporated it into their discourse. At the governmental level, one of the earliest references to the Indo-Pacific as a region was mentioned by Shyam Saran (2011), the Chairman of the National Security Advisory Board under the National Security Council, when he spoke:

> Over the past year, the term 'Indo-Pacific' has gained currency in strategic discourse in India. From a geopolitical perspective, it represents the inclusion of the Western Pacific within the range of India's security interests, thus stretching beyond the traditional focus on the Indian Ocean theatre. It is a logical corollary to India's Look East policy (2011)

Following Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Ranjan Mathai delivered a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington D.C. In his remarks, he recognized the shift in the concept by saying that "as some here have begun to call it, the Indo-Pacific region"; and in that region, he argued that "while our Look East Policy began with a strong economic emphasis and content, we now have growing strategic and security engagement in the region" (2012). In December 2012, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh used the phrase "Indo-Pacific" when he was talking at India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit: "Our (India and ASEAN) future is inter-linked, and a stable, secure, prosperous Indo-Pacific region is crucial for our progress and prosperity" (2012). The following year, the Indo-Pacific has become more visible among policymakers. In March 2013, the (East) Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs Sanjay Singh noted that for the last few years, policymakers and strategic thinkers have been using the term 'Indo-Pacific,' and the region is seen from India's perspective in much more than just an economic and security context; rather, it is seen in the context of the region's aspirations along a common path (2013, 291-293). In the same year, Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs, delivered two important speeches. The first one was at Rikkyo University in Tokyo in March 2013; the second one was at the launch of the ASEAN-India Centre in New Delhi in June 2013. He noted that Shinzo Abe's 2007 visit to India and speech titled The Confluence of the Two Seas gave rise to the term 'Indo-Pacific,' which is currently utilized by strategic thinkers in India and as both nations import significant amounts of oil and gas, India and Japan must work together to maintain the security of the world's commons and the principle of freedom of

navigation on the seas (2013, 1176). In the second speech, he argued that the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership, from the shores of the Pacific to the western borders of the Indian Ocean, from the Straits of Malacca to the Straits of Hormuz, is an anchor of stability (2013b, 296).

Lastly, in the book called *Indo Pacific Region: Political and Strategic Prospects*, published by New Delhi-based Indian think-tank Indian Council of World Affairs, Salman Khurshid repeated what Shyam Saran said in 2011 by arguing that from India's perspective, the natural corollary of the country's Look East Policy, which contributed to deepening and expanding India's relations with Southeast and East Asia and beyond, is the concept of 'Indo-Pacific' (2014, xi). He adds that although the phrase "Indo-Pacific" has been used for some time in scientific and marine circles, it has only recently developed a strong reputation in geopolitical circles (2014, x).

During the Singh government, the government officials recognized that the Indo-Pacific construct has become more apparent over the years. Although the term was born among Indian Naval officers as early as 2005, for Indian policymakers, it entered their vocabulary after Shinzo Abe gave his speech. As a result, a strong link in the common geopolitical imagination of the Indo-Pacific between Japan and India could be traced back here. Moreover, government officials during the time recognized that the Indo-Pacific region denotes the security and economic interests of India, making India a central actor in the region. What they understand from the term, such as its geographical scope, what

it means for India, and how it is being imagined, is similar to Indian naval circles and Shinzo Abe's formulation of the term during his speech at the Indian Parliament.

3.1.c. Modi Government's Territorialization of the Indo-Pacific (2014-2020)

Between 7 April and 12 May 2014, nine phases of elections were held in India to choose members of the Indian Parliament, the Lok Sabha. Led by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party, the National Democratic Alliance won the elections, with Narendra Damodardas Modi as its prime minister candidate. The election of the BJP-led government had two crucial implications for the Indo-Pacific. First, the 'Look East' policy, which was a major contributor to the rise of the Indo-Pacific, was transformed into the 'Act East' policy, which meant that India would actively and purposefully engage with countries in the wider Asia-Pacific, including Australia, Japan, and South Korea and will limit itself to the member countries of ASEAN (Mazumdar 2021, 363). However, the two policies should not be understood as two different, divergent policies; instead, their names and evolution only signal an evolution in India's foreign policy in the changing international system. When the Cold War ended, 'Look East' was launched, signaling a shift in India's foreign policy toward Southeast Asian countries. However, as India became an important country in the context of the rise of China, looking East was not sufficient to adjust to the changes in international relations of Asian countries. Lynch III and Przystup note that the Act East policy sought to foster increased collaboration and initiatives in response to China's assertive posture in the Indo-Pacific.; however, Indian leaders do not engage with China publicly instead, they employed the Act East policy in a way to build partnerships with countries that share Indian concerns on China (2017, 10).

Second, the new administration fully revealed the territorial imagination of India on the Indo-Pacific in the International Institute for Strategic Studies Asia Security Summit: The Shangri-La Dialogue, which takes place every year but only two of these summits are important to the territorializing discourse. The first one in 2016 and the second one in 2018. The territoriality of the Indo-Pacific has been thoroughly established in these security conferences by drawing the region's borders and designating its characteristics and aims. Although the boundaries of the Indo-Pacific had previously been discussed in Indian naval circles, it was only at these summits that a head of state first articulated the region's purposes, adjectives, and goals. And it was during these summits that India's Act East policy was not in line with its Indo-Pacific discourse.

On 4 June 2016, Defence Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar gave a speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue, where he talked about the Indo-Pacific. First, he said that he is going to confine his talk to what the strategic community now more frequently refers to as the Indo-Pacific (2016). He argued that for the Indo-Pacific, there are three security concerns. (1) the threat of territorial disputes that escalate into military conflicts, (2) terrorism, and (3) the maritime domain being susceptible to terrorism coming from the West (piracy originating from the Eastern shores of Africa), and in the East, concerns about the situation in the South China Sea (Parrikar, 2016). With this speech, the dangers in the region were highlighted.

Two years later, on June 1, 2018, at Shangri La Dialogue. Prime Minister Modi gave his most important speech, which centralized the discourse on the Indo-Pacific and

articulated India's vision. This text should be analyzed in detail because of its dense content. First, Modi formulates India's vision as an open, stable, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region. Then Modi expands on his eight-point vision of the region:

- The Indo-Pacific is a natural region, At its core, the Indo-Pacific is inclusive, open, and accepting of ASEAN centrality and unity. It advocates for a region that is free, open, and welcoming of all nations and unites them in a shared goal.

- The center of the Indo-Pacific is Southeast Asia and ASEAN has been and will be central to its future.

- A rule-based order in the region containing sovereignty and territorial integrity, equality of all nations, and dialogue to solve the problems.

- Equal access to the use of open places on the sea and in the air is a right under international law and it would require peaceful settlement of disputes.

- In the Indo-Pacific region, India promotes an environment in which notions such as rule-based order, and open, balanced, and stable trade prevail.

- Connectivity, which promotes trade and prosperity, is vital in the Indo-Pacific.

- All of this is possible if Asian countries do not return to the age of great power rivalries because the rivalry of Asian countries will hold every nation back. Cooperation in Asia is going to shape this century (2018)

In conclusion, Modi (2018) says that India's participation in the Indo-Pacific Region, from the coasts of Africa to the Americas, is going to be based on inclusiveness. A year after this speech, India redrew the borders of the Indo-Pacific. During the 11th Delhi

Dialogue on December 14, 2019, Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar noted that there is an opportunity for a western Indian Ocean version of this concept as well, even as the nations of the eastern Indian Ocean and the States on the seas connecting it to the Pacific are developing their visions of the Indo-Pacific (2019). For India, the Indo-Pacific contains the island nations of the Arabian Sea, the countries in the Gulf, and partners of India in Africa (2019). With these statements, India's geopolitical discourse on the Indo-Pacific was finalized.

First, the geopolitical discourse of India seems coherent from the mid-2000s onwards. Gurpreet Khurana (2007, 150) mentioned that the Indo-Pacific compromises the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific, including states in Asia/West Asia/Middle East and eastern Africa. This vision is in line with Modi's (2018) 'from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas' vision and for the Indo-Pacific and Subrahmanyam Jaishankar's inclusion of India's neighbors in the Gulf. And Salman Khurshid's (2013, 296) speech that recognized the ASEAN-India partnership as an anchor from the Strait of Hormuz to the Pacific seems in line with Modi's ASEAN centrality and Subrahmanyam Jaishankar's inclusion of Gulf States. Secondly, the inclusion of the shores of Africa, the Persian Gulf States, and the Indian Ocean into the Indo-Pacific construct represents the dangers that India perceives and the centrality of India. As Shyam Saran (2011) wrote that Indo-Pacific represents the inclusion of the Western Pacific within the range of India's security interests. The role, which India would play in the region, was based on its security interests and its utmost importance in the region. About the dangers that India perceives, Defence Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar (2016) mentioned the piracy which is present on

the Eastern shores of Africa; while Gurpreet Khurana (2007, 144) underlined maritime terrorism and piracy in the Indian Ocean as early as the 2000s. Furthermore, the Indian elite represented the geopolitical importance of the region by connecting the future and prosperity of India to the Indo-Pacific region. As a result, just like Japan, India emphasized a rule-based, prosperous, free, and open Indo-Pacific region. This region has been territorialized to cover the threats perceived by India. Not necessarily about China or what happens solely in the Indian Ocean. Third, as early as 2011, India saw the Indo-Pacific construct as a natural corollary of its Look East policy. From this point, the Indo-Pacific construct is, in the eyes of the Indian political elite, not a natural byproduct of contemporary global politics in Asia but a product of India's foreign policy that India initiated with the deterritorialization of the Cold War geopolitical order. They claim that the Indo-Pacific area was founded through their foreign policy.

3.2. Japan: Geopolitical Imagination of the Indo-Pacific

Yuichi Hosoya divides Japan's strategy of the Indo-Pacific, namely the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific', into two parts. He argues that even though the term the 'Free and Open Indo- Pacific' had never been used before it was launched in August 2016; when the Shinzo Abe government came to power in 2006, his administration suggested that the Indo-Pacific's regional order should be centered on collaboration amongst democracies (2019, 19). This is referred to as FOIP 1.0. As Hosoya argues, the original initiative faced a dilemma because it seemed confrontational and would create division between Asian countries; thus, many Asian countries did not want to participate in the initiative; however, FOIP 2.0, learning from the previous mistakes, was not confrontational in its nature and

51

more inclusive (2019, 25). Satake and Sahashi make a similar argument by saying that contrary to the commonly held belief that the FOIP signifies Japan's containment of China, the FOIP wants to sustain an open and inclusive regional order that aims to bring all regional nations into a shared framework (2020, 34-35). It aspires to increase the region's resilience and interconnection rather than single out or exclude any particular nation to prepare it for China's future rise (Satake and Sahashi 2020, 35). The questions are: Is this argument true? Is it possible, after following the geopolitical discourse on the Indo-Pacific, to argue that the region is inclusive? What are the adjectives, objectives, and borders of this region? Tracing Japan's geopolitical will focus on two periods: the first Abe government between 2006-2009 and the successive Abe governments between 2012-2020; however, I will not split the discourse on the Indo-Pacific into two like Hosoya (2019) did. While talking about the successive governments, it is important to talk about two policies: Arc of Freedom and Prosperity (AoFP) which was mentioned once in 2007 in the first Abe government, and "The Free and Open Indo Pacific Strategy", which was established as the core strategy of Japanese foreign policy during the third Abe government. Thus, tracing the geopolitical discourse of the Indo-Pacific by Japan should start with the AoFP discourse.

3.2.a. First Shinzo Abe Government: Roots of the Indo-Pacific in the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity

In the 2005 Japanese general elections, the Liberal Democratic Party led by Koizumi won the elections by winning 237 seats in the Parliament. A year later, Koizumi left office in September 2006 and was succeeded by Abe Shinzo. During his short office between

September 2006 and September 2007, two important geopolitical discourses were promulgated. The first one was the idea of the 'AoFP' by Taro Aso, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.[3]

Aso delivered an opening speech on the 20th Anniversary of the Founding of the Japan Forum on International Relations, where he spoke of a new pillar in Japanese foreign policy (2007). The new pillar places a strong emphasis on ideals that are shared by all people, including freedom, democracy, basic human rights, the rule of law, the market economy, and building an "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" (MOFA, 2007). Aso drew the line of the AoFP, starting from the Baltic States, going through Central and Eastern Europe, leading to Turkey and Middle East countries, then heading through India and South Asian countries, and finally to the Korean Peninsula, and ends up in Mongolia (Aso, 2007). The Arc means that Japan will engage with countries along the Arc to promote both freedom (to enable democracy to take root) and prosperity (MOFA, 2007). The Arc, Aso talks about, seems to cross the Indo-Pacific region, which was later mentioned by Abe in the Indian Parliament and at the launch of the FOIP in 2016. However, the territorial imagination of Arc (see map 1.0. below) is wider than that of the Indo-Pacific. And later, this territorial imagination was forgotten and never mentioned by Japan. This ambiguous and wide space was territorialized by a new pillar of Japanese foreign policy

---

[3] From here, the word 'MOFA' will express Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

but quickly deterritorialized by actors who never mentioned it again and moved onto the Indo-Pacific region; thus, forgotten by even Japan.

Map 3.1. "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" (MOFA 2007)

Five months after Taro Aso's speech about the Arc, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered a speech at the Indian Parliament entitled 'Confluence of the Two Seas'. His speech was just one month after Gurpreet Khurana's article that first cited the Indo-Pacific (2007). In his speech, Abe asked a question: where do India and Japan stand historically and geographically? (2007). The answer is found in the book by Mughal Prince Shikoh, *Confluence of the Two Seas (CTS)*. The symbolic importance of this is that the name of the book and Abe's speech share the same title. For Abe:

The Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now forming a dynamic couple as seas of freedom and prosperity. A 'broader Asia' that broke away from geographical boundaries is taking on a distinct form. For this reason, both India and Japan have the ability and the responsibility to ensure that it broadens yet further and to nurture and enrich these seas to become seas of clearest transparence (2007).

He continued by saying that the concept of "broader Asia" will grow into a vast network that encompasses the entire Pacific Ocean, bringing together Japan and India with the USA and Australia (2007). In the same speech, he mentioned that this network, while open and transparent, will allow people, goods, capital, and knowledge to freely flow and mentioned the previous Arc conceptualization by underlining that India and Japan's strategic alliance is essential for the realization of Japan's current aspirations, which include the establishment of a new region known as AoFP at the borders of the Eurasian continent (Abe, 2007).

What is important about Abe's speech is that it seems completely in line with the anxieties and risks perceived by the Indian naval circles when they talked about the Indian Ocean and the timing is close to that of Indian naval circles as well. The security of sea lanes carrying oil, gas, and other strategic commodities passing from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean through the Malacca Strait is portrayed as the binding glue of the two seas. The convergence of the Indian and Pacific Oceans is taking shape as a result of shared fears of India and Japan. However, in this territorialization, Abe refers to the

confluence as 'broader Asia,' not as the Indo-Pacific. And unlike Gurpreet Khurana's formulation, it does not refer to Africa, just as the AoFP does not. It is, however, possible to see this 'broader Asia' as a prequel to the Indo-Pacific in Abe's geopolitical imagination because he will, later, refer to this exact speech. It is about forming a new regional order, based on shared anxieties (flow of commodities through the safe and transparent region) and values (freedom and prosperity).

Was this formulation against China's rising influence on Asian international affairs? It is hard to tell. If the CTS and the AoFP can be read as a single conceptualization of Japanese foreign policy, it is possible to doubt their intentions. For example, in a 2013 interview done with web-based newspapers on Japanese news agency *Nippon*, Cabinet Advisor Yachi Shotaro said that people mistakenly interpreted the AoFP as an encirclement strategy. Even assuming that it was in Japan's power to encircle China was not the intent of Prime Minister Abe (Shotaro 2013). However, there is a problem: Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD). The first QUAD meeting took place in Manila, on May 7, 2007, as a multilateral dialogue between the USA, Australia, Japan, and India. China responded to this meeting and subsequent cooperation among QUAD members quite harshly in the same year. A few months after the QUAD meeting, Shinzo Abe delivered his famous speech at the Indian Parliament. Additionally, the Malabar consisting of the US, Japan, Australia, India, and Singapore took place in September 2007. Due to their concern over a security alliance that would target China, Chinese authorities sent formal diplomatic protests to the US, Australia, Japan, and India (Nicholson 2007).

Therefore, even if Abe's intentions were not about encircling China, the Chinese officials thought it was the case because of what happened in only one year.

In the same year, on September 26, 2007, the Japanese government changed and Yasuo Fukuda took office as Prime Minister. Thus, Abe's diplomatic arc promotion withered away. Between Abe's second time in office in 2007 and his return as Prime Minister in 2013, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs lists no statements and publications on the Indo-Pacific. In the same year, Australian Defence Minister Brendan Nelson visited China and assured Chinese authorities that Australia is not pursuing a quadrilateral dialogue with India, and in India, he said that "Australia does not want to do anything unnecessarily that upsets any other country" (McDonell 2007). Moreover, maintaining a cordial relationship with their Chinese counterparts was a priority for both Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda (Hosoya 2019, 21). Thus, both QUAD and the concept of FOIP 1.0 were dropped from the agenda in the same year. AoFP and the CTS promoted freedom of people, goods, capital, and knowledge to flow and prosperity in the region by focusing on trade and investments. The territorial borders of the Arc and the Confluence of Two Seas overlapped in the sense that the borders of the 'two seas' were inside the Arc. Both geopolitical discourses were later combined to reterritorialize the region as Indo-Pacific, but their imagination was quickly deterritorialized and lost its meaning up until 2012.

<u>3.2.b. Second, Third and Fourth Abe Governments: Return of the Confluence of Two</u>

<u>Seas and Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy</u>

When the LDP won the 2012 elections against the Democratic Party of Japan, Shinzo Abe returned as Prime Minister and revisited his old ideas in an article for *Project Syndicate*, entitled "Asia's Democratic Security Diamond." In the text, Abe argued that what he said in the Indian Parliament about the "Confluence of the Two Seas" was correct since the concepts of peace, stability, and freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean are linked to the same principles in the Indian Ocean, and as one of Asia's oldest sea-faring nations, Japan, together with Australia, India, and the United States, should play a larger role in protecting the common goods in both regions (2012). While Abe was not using the word 'the Indo-Pacific', he connected the two seas. Also, he noted that the South China Sea is becoming a 'Lake Beijing'; consequently, he envisions a strategy, with four states participating, to build a diamond to protect the maritime commons running from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific (Abe 2012). His return to office was immediately followed by a reterritorialization of a region, which he used to promote his ideas. However, even though 'the CTS' returned, AoFP has never been mentioned again, though its components of freedom and prosperity remained in Abe's formulation of the Indo-Pacific.

After this frustrating statement about China's build-up in the South China Sea, Abe was supposed to deliver a speech entitled "The Bounty of the Open Seas: Five New Principles for Japanese Diplomacy" during his stay in Jakarta; however, he could not deliver the speech due to changes in his itinerary. In that, Abe focused on the Confluence

of Two Seas and outlined five principles of Japan's foreign policy to build a future: (1) Ensuring freedom of speech, thought, and expression in the region where two oceans (Indian and Pacific) meet, (2) guaranteeing the seas are governed not by might but by laws and rules, (3) as part of Japan's diplomacy, promoting free, open, interconnected economies, (4) pursuing intercultural ties among the peoples of Japan and this region, and (5) exchange among the youth who will carry our nations into the future (2013) The same year, Abe delivered a speech entitled "Japan Is Back" at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a nonprofit policy research organization based in Washington DC. Abe used the word the Indo-Pacific, for the first time, by saying when the Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific region grows in prosperity, Japan must continue to be a major promoter of norms (2013a). After this speech, Japan's political elite and its diplomatic papers preferred not to use the word Asia-Pacific. During Japan-India Summit on November 14, 2014, and Japan and India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership on December 12, 2015, both India and Japan reaffirmed that they shared a policy to increase stability and development of 'Indo-Pacific', and in the latter, they supported a version of the Indo-Pacific based on an open, equitable, stable, and rule-based regional order (MOFA 2014, MOFA 2015).

The turning point in Japan's political discourse and geopolitical imagination on the Indo-Pacific was when Shinzo Abe defined the region and subsequently, the Japanese foreign policy regarding the Indo-Pacific on August 27, 2016, during the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). Abe reterritorialized the Indo-Pacific by emphasized not only the union of two seas (Pacific and Indian Oceans)

but also two continents – Asia and Africa (2016). Moreover, he argued that Japan would work towards transforming the confluence of two seas and two continents into a free and prosperous region that valued freedom, the rule of law, and the market economy (Abe 2016). Although he never mentioned the word the 'Indo-Pacific', it was clear that he was referring to the Indo-Pacific itself. No longer after this speech, the concept of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy was articulated on November 11, 2016, in a statement entitled "India-Japan Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister to Japan" (Thankachan 2018, 85). In that statement, both India and Japan emphasized that for the entire region to develop, it is crucial to increase the connection between Asia and Africa by creating a free and open Indo-Pacific region (MEA of India 2016). The idea of ASEAN Centrality entered FOIP late. The ASEAN Policy Speech by Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu on January 10, 2020, emphasized that the "ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific", namely the AOIP, has much in common with the future image of the Indo-Pacific that Japan envisions. Moreover, Japan sees ASEAN Centrality as an essential source of power for the development of the entire Indo-Pacific (Toshimitsu 2020).

In conclusion, much of the Indo-Pacific discourse in Japan was dominated by Shinzo Abe during his second, third, and fourth governments; while the government led by the Democratic Party of Japan between 2010-2013 did not engage with the Indo-Pacific. His "CTS" speech affected both the government officials of India and his own government's view of the region. And during this time, the Indo-Pacific construct moved away from being a predominantly maritime region to a region that connects two continents and two oceans. However, unlike India, Japan did not develop a policy to realize the region until

2016. The importance of the FOIP from the geopolitical perspective is that Abe's territorialization of the Indo-Pacific and all statements by the LDP government to represent and realize the Indo-Pacific region was finally put into a strategy and institutionalized as distinct foreign policy.

3.2.c. Japanese Diplomatic Bluebooks Between 2017 and 2021

So far, Japan has released three bluebooks with special features regarding the Indo-Pacific construct. They are Diplomatic Bluebook 2017, Diplomatic Bluebook 2018, and Diplomatic Bluebook 2019, respectively. These Blue Books are important to understand the geopolitical imagination of Japan regarding the Indo-Pacific, as Japan has not released up-to-date special Blue Books with special issues on the Indo-Pacific.[4] But, they have released two more bluebooks that mention the Indo-Pacific but are not included in the Indo-Pacific page of MOFA as a special issue.

In Chapter 1 of the 2017 Diplomatic Bluebook, it is established that during TICAD VI, Shinzo Abe announced the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' (MOFA 2017, 026). What is more, the paper emphasizes that by strengthening the synergy between their foreign policies, Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, and India's Act East respectively, Japan and India will contribute to the stability and development of the Indo-Pacific region (MOFA 2017, 027).

---

[4] Also, look: https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page25e_000278.html accessed, 9/11/2022, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

The 2018 Diplomatic Bluebook provides an important map of the Indo-Pacific and its important corridors. And in line with that map (Map 3.2.), which covers the Middle Eastern countries bordering the Arabian Sea, the Bluebook reterritorializes the borders of the Indo-Pacific as a region stretching from the Asia-Pacific, through the Indian Ocean, to the Middle East and Africa (MOFA 2018, 020). The 2019 Diplomatic Bluebook repeats the newly defined borders of the Indo-Pacific and emphasizes that Japan promotes the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' to develop the Indo-Pacific region (MOFA 2019, 028). The risks in the region are defined as piracy, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal fishing, and natural disasters. To combat these problems, Japan emphasizes that countries should cooperate toward a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' and Japan's effort toward realizing the Indo-Pacific rests on three pillars: (1) rule of law, freedom of navigation, free trade, (2) enhancing connectivity and infrastructure development to achieve economic prosperity, (3) pledge to support maritime law enforcement, anti-piracy measures, working together to reduce risk, and non-proliferation. The 2020 Diplomatic Bluebook uses the maps of previous papers and again repeats the boundaries of the Indo-Pacific, which connects the Middle East and Africa to the Asia-Pacific (MOFA 2020, 008). The following pages emphasize the inclusiveness, economic dimension, freedom of navigation, connectivity, and governance of the region (MOFA 2020, 008-009). The 2021 Diplomatic Bluebook reiterates the previous borders extending from Asia-Pacific across the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa (MOFA 2021, 030) In the region, Japan promotes maritime order and fair economic area, enhancing connectivity, governance building, and maritime security (MOFA 2021, 031-032).

Map 3.2. Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, 2018 Diplomatic Bluebook, Chapter 1, Page 021.
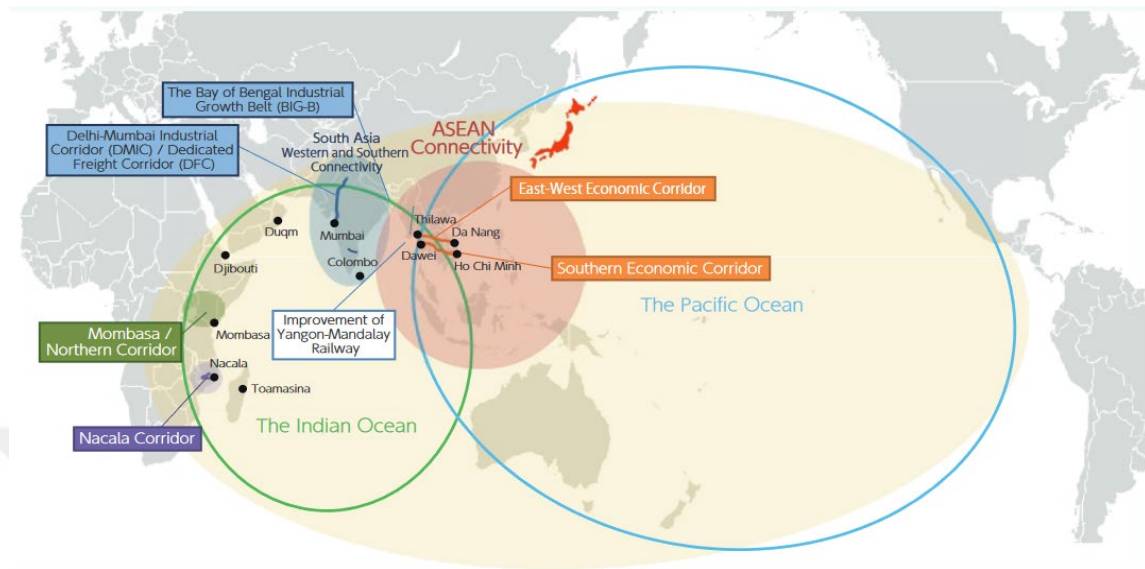
First, the importance of Japanese Bluebooks is that the 2018 Diplomatic Bluebook re-draws the borders of the Indo-Pacific in a such way that the expanded borders become close to the borders defined by India. The figure in the Blue Book also shows the Indo-Pacific, which includes many corridors. The parts of the region are connected through corridors. As argued above by the formulators of the Indo-Pacific, it is in Japan and India's mutual interest to defend common goods moving through the Indian Ocean to the Indo-Pacific, notably energy items. This territorialization shows the importance of economic activity and energy products passing through the corridors in the Indo-Pacific and pays greater attention to the corridors of Africa. Thus, the anxieties of freedom of navigation, piracy, and rule-based order have become not limited to the activities of China in the South China Sea but also the threats to economic activities in the Indian Ocean. Secondly, the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific by the Bluebooks reflects much of the statements of government elites, reaffirming the dangers (dangers to rule-based order, freedom of

navigation, and trade by piracy) and adjectives of the Indo-Pacific region (free and open, rule-based, prosperous) They repeat each other without changing the borders and issues, making Japan's discourse highly concentrated and unchanging throughout the years. Third, the Indo-Pacific web page, which is a core part of the Japanese discourse on the Indo-Pacific provided by the Foreign Ministry of Japan, still uses the maps provided by the 2018 Bluebook, the web page is the core part of the FOIP. Fourth, they summarize the initiatives of Japan to realize the Indo-Pacific region and how they are affecting the region overall.

3.3. Divergences & Convergences in the Geopolitical Imagination of Japan and India

The convergences and divergences in the geopolitical imagination and geopolitical representation of self and others in the region can be discussed from two points: 1) conceptualization and geographical scope, 2) the question of China's inclusion in or exclusion (against or indifferent towards China) from the region.

On the first question, both India and Japan diverge on the territorialized geographical scope, although borders drawn by the two countries for the Indo-Pacific region are close but not alike. The Indo-Pacific region's boundaries, which include the states in the Persian Gulf and extend from the Pacific to the coastlines of Africa, were established by both nations. But Japan, taking one more step, used the word 'Middle East'; although maps of the Indo-Pacific region that Japan includes the states bordering the Arabian Sea, not the whole Middle East (Figure 2.0). And for India, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar's last

conceptualization of the borders included the Gulf States as well but does not include the Middle East (2019). The inclusion of Gulf States is to secure the importance of energy-importing states of the region. However, different from the geographical scope of the USA and Australia which will be addressed later, Japan and India are the only countries, in this case, to have Africa included in their geographical scope and expand the borders of the Indo-Pacific to the Gulf States.

	Japan	India
Position regarding China	Inclusive	Inclusive
Adjectives	- Rule-based order - Free from coercion and force - Open, Stable, prosperous - Freedom of Navigation -ASEAN Centrality	- Rule-based order - Free from coercion, respecting the sovereignty of states - Open, Stable, prosperous - Freedom of Navigation - ASEAN Centrality
Borders of the Indo-Pacific	Connecting the Pacific to Shores of Africa via the Indian Ocean, connecting Asia and Africa; including the Middle East	Connects Pacific to Shores of Africa, via the Indian Ocean to realize the Indo-Pacific connects Asia and Africa, including the Gulf States.

Table 3.2. The Conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific Region by Japan and India

Secondly, the adjectives that are attributed to the Indo-Pacific regional order by Japan and India are mostly similar, excluding one aspect. For India, the Indo-Pacific should be

built around inclusiveness, openness, prosperity, and ASEAN centrality, including being ruled by consensus, having freedom of navigation, being free from great power rivalries, and most importantly respecting the territorial integrity of nations. In their geopolitical imagination, the Indian Ocean and the Indian subcontinent are at the center of this region, as the importance of the security sea lanes, and India's security interests have grown since the end of the Cold War. Every nation-state should abide by the rules of international law and prosper together by not returning to great power rivalries. For Japan, the Indo-Pacific region carries the remnants of the AoFP. The FOIP Strategy, which territorialized the Indo-Pacific region, includes adjectives such as "free and open", freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and the market economy, free from force or coercion, and prosperity but it does not refer to sovereignty of states. Choong (2019, 420) notes that there is a clear harmony between Act East and Japan's FOIP. This can be seen from previous discourses where Salman Khurshid mentioned that it was Shinzo Abe's talk at the Indian Parliament that gave rise to the Indo-Pacific in Indian policy circles (2013, 291-293), and Japan's 2017 Diplomatic Bluebook, in which both India and Japan see their strategies as complementary. Moreover, the FOIP of Japan was declared during TICAD VI which was held in Nairobi, the Republic of Kenya. Japan's FOIP, whose scope and adjectives closely resemble the Indo-Pacific formulation of India, is more than about China and the Indian Ocean. It is about reaching and including Africa as a region in the Indo-Pacific. China is no longer the only concern in the region. The region is about passing the western part of the Indian Ocean. The second question is "Is China excluded from the Indo-Pacific region, or is the Indo-Pacific region besieging China?". Shah argues that the Indo-Pacific is not

besieging China, mainly because of China's convergence of strategic interests with Japan and India (2020, 134). For Japan, maps provided by Japan include China when drawing the Indo-Pacific region, and for India, the Indo-Pacific does not exclude any nation and is not directed at any specific country so that every nation can join.

To sum up, having examined the statements and writings of policymakers, foreign policy, and political institutions through the framework of practical geopolitics, it can be argued that the geopolitical imaginations of Japan and India regarding the Indo-Pacific construct and how these countries represent themselves seem identical to one another. Furthermore, the Indo-Pacific is not a neutral and natural construct of these countries; instead, both India and Japan are trying to territorialize the region by adopting certain foreign policies in their discourses, statements, and foreign policy papers. The territorialization of the Indo-Pacific was affected by policies of the (Look East) Act East and FOIP policies, perspective, and geopolitical imaginations of these countries, in addition to the current state of global politics, or the "realities" of the international/regional order.

CHAPTER IV

GEOPOLITICAL DISCOURSES OF AUSTRALIA AND THE USA ON THE TERRITORIALIZATION OF THE INDO-PACIFIC

In the previous chapter, it is argued that the geopolitical imaginations of Japan and India were similar to one another. In this chapter, the argument will center around, like in the previous chapter, convergences, and divergences of the geopolitical imaginations of the USA and Australia. However, it is possible to argue that convergences overtake divergences. Hence, the geopolitical imaginations of these states will be grouped into one. There are two main reasons to make this argument. First, neither the US nor Australia stretches the borders of the Indo-Pacific to the Middle East, let alone to Africa. Discourses of these states do not recognize what is beyond the Indian Ocean as part of the Indo-Pacific. Both Australia and the USA are not concerned with the piracy happening on the eastern shores of Africa and their engagement with the Gulf States is not tied to the existence of the Indo-Pacific construct. Secondly, while the discourses of India and Japan heavily focus on what is happening on the western side of the Indian Ocean and do not implicitly target China, the USA discourses exclude and stigmatize China. Japan and India, for their part, seek engagement with the Belt and Road Initiative, but the USA does not. Moreover, they do not negatively paint China. In the case of Australia, its emphasis on the USA for the regional balance as well as the latest AUKUS deal that is completely separate from the QUAD places its geopolitical imagination and representation close to

that of the USA. The shortcoming of this chapter is that the materials of Australian discourse are limited in quantity compared to numerous speeches by American policymakers.

4.1. The Free and Open Indo-Pacific of the USA: Beginnings of the Rebalance Policy of Obama Administration (2008-2012)

The term "Indo-Pacific" first appeared in the American policy lexicon during the first Obama administration. Although the administration did not use the terms "Indo-Pacific Strategy" or "Indo-Pacific region" explicitly early on, there was a marked shift in their attention to Asian politics. In time, usage of the Indo-Pacific grew in political discourse and the US official documents, reflecting the increasing significance of the Indian Ocean in the US policies on Asia. Hence Asia-Pacific was deterritorialized and then reterritorialized as the Indo-Pacific. In the case of the US, during the Obama administration, the US' focus on the region was referred to as the 'pivot to Asia' or the 'rebalance to Asia'. Starting in 2011, a series of official announcements, underlining the US interest and its engagement in the region, has been made (Hang 2016, 292). The geopolitical discourse of the Indo-Pacific started to be manifested during the Obama administration. During his visit to the Australian Parliament in 2011, Obama declared, "as the last American troops are leaving Iraq, the USA is now turning its attention to the potential of the Asia-Pacific region and that the US is a Pacific nation" (Obama, 2011). He stressed the idea that the US will build a cooperative relationship with China because the peaceful and prosperous rise of China is in the interest of both Australia and the US (Obama, 2011). In the same year, a month before Obama's speech in the Australian

parliament, Hillary Clinton delivered a speech titled "US Involvement in Asia-Pacific" in Hawaii. In her speech, she used the term 'Indo-Pacific basin' to reflect closer naval cooperation with India; saying that due to the significance of the "Indo-Pacific basin" for international trade and commerce, the USA is boosting its cooperation with the Indian navy in the Pacific (Clinton 2010). A year later, Clinton wrote an article entitled "America's Pacific Century" for *Foreign Policy,* an American journal focusing on global affairs. In the article, Clinton argued that the future of global politics will be decided in Asia, and the US will be right at the center of it. As the US begins to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan and the war in Iraq cools down, she stands at a pivotal point. She should choose where to focus her energy. For the American statecraft, it should be the Asia-Pacific region. To accomplish this, the US will collaborate closely with India and Indonesia (2011). Using the term 'Asia-Pacific,' Clinton defined the borders of the region stretching from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas to the Indian subcontinent, spanning two oceans -the Pacific and the Indian- that are more and more linked by shipping and strategy (2011). By mentioning sea lanes, freedom of passage, and a perception that acknowledges the increasing significance of the Indian Ocean, the term she adopted matches the concerns of Japan and India. Moreover, the borders she defined by referring to two oceans remind the concept of the 'confluence of two seas' used by Shinzo Abe four years prior. And for much of the US discourse on the Indo-Pacific, the borders defined by Clinton persisted. With Clinton's article, the geopolitical discourse of the first Obama administration has been established. The administration used both "Asia-Pacific" and "Indo-Pacific basin" to refer to the 'CTS'

and highlight a path for the US future foreign policy to express the US power in a region recognized as the most important in the twenty-first century.

4.1.a. Second Obama Administration - From Rebalance to the Indo-Pacific (2012-2016)

The Obama administration previously considered the rising significance of the Indian Ocean in the US's future foreign policy. From this perspective, the new administration began using the concept of Indo-Pacific and abandoned the discursive territoriality of Asia-Pacific. The Asia-Pacific was being deterritorialized in the imagination of the US elite and reterritorialized as the "Indo-Pacific". And from 2014 to 2016, the administration used only the 'Indo-Pacific' wording.

The Department of Defense was the first institution that adopted the Indo-Pacific concept. The Defense Secretary, Chuck Hagel, similar to Clinton's accounts concerning India, invoked Indo-Pacific frameworks (Scott 2018, 26). In his remarks to the independent global think tank, Observer Research Foundation, based in Delhi, India, he noted that today the interests of these nations across the Indo-Pacific are more closely aligned than ever, and as a result, India "looks east" while the United States "rebalances." And as is well known, that was not always the case for many years (Hagel, 2014). In the same year, during his visit to Australia for the Australia-United States Ministerial Consultation, he delivered a speech saying that the US will collaborate with others to establish a security system throughout the Indo-Pacific region after consulting with Japan, Korea, and ASEAN. This will be done while recognizing and respecting each country's sovereignty and countries' interests in a stable, peaceful, and safe world (Hegel, 2014b).

In the second administration, Hilary Clinton was succeeded by John Kerry in 2013. He followed the common discourse on the Indo-Pacific. During Kerry's visit to Colombo, Sri Lanka, he emphasized the role of Sri Lanka in the Indo-Pacific region (2015); and during his meeting with the foreign ministers of India and Japan in New York, he claimed that the US has a huge opportunity to emphasize its interest in the Indo-Pacific as part of India's East Asia policy and Prime Minister Abe's strong engagement with South and Southeast Asia (Kerry, 2015b). In the same year, the US Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, and the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, published an article in *Foreign Policy* entitled "How India and the United States Are Building a 21st-Century Partnership" (2015). In the article, they emphasized the fact that the Indo-Pacific was centered on India. Additionally, both nations acknowledged that freedom of navigation and overflight, integrated economies, and a rule-based architecture in which disputes have been resolved amicably may generate stability, prosperity, and peace in the region. (Kerry and Pritzker 2015). The first Obama administration had deterritorialized the Asia-Pacific and reterritorialized the Indo-Pacific by referring to certain adjectives such as sea lanes, freedom of navigation, and borders stretching from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean. The second Obama administration added rule-based architecture, stability, peace, and sovereignty for all nations. However, the question of China in the region was only mentioned in *The Factsheet: Advancing the Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific* (2015), one year before the 2016 presidential elections. The document, published by the Office of the Press Secretary in 2015, summarizes the strategy. Accordingly, the U.S. vision for Asia and the Pacific:

- strengthened U.S treaty alliances with Japan, the RoK, the Philippines, Thailand Australia.

- boosted trade ties, primarily through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

- strengthened ties with Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Indonesia, and India.

- fostered a productive relationship with China,

- reinforced the institutional structure of the region to support a rules-based order

- supported the ongoing transition to democracy of Burma,

- enacted the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative program (White House, 2015).

The Factsheet reserves a section for China for the first time. In the section, it is mentioned that China is a responsible participant in international relations, thus the US welcomes its peaceful, stable, and prosperous rise. But its peaceful and stable rise comes after the US' other objectives. The administration was particularly focused on multilateral connections in the region (Trans-Pacific Partnership)[5] and its relations with partners as a whole. For now, China was not perceived as a threat in the region. This geopolitical imagination, however, was soon to change. And it can be seen that the US adaptation of the Indo-Pacific discourse became more apparent in the second Obama administration. And the discourse that imagines the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean as one, concrete, connected region increasingly gained visibility as the years passed. At the core of this

---

[5] The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was a trade agreement among countries bordering the Pacific Ocean. It was formulated during Obama's administration.

imagination, the borders of the region stretch from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas, covering two oceans. And as with other imaginations, it centers around freedom of navigation, prosperity, stability, and connectivity.

4.1.b. Enlargement and Deepening of the Indo-Pacific During Trump Administration (2016-2020)

Fly argues that Trump advocated a confrontational approach toward China while the Obama administration had outlined its "rebalance" to Asia in non-aggressive terms, foreseeing the negative effects of China as an important country was on the rise and upsetting the rules-based international order while also holding out hope for cooperation with Beijing (2018, 3). This observation is in line with the points of the *Factsheet: Advancing the Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific* mentioned above. The Obama administration did not explicitly target China when it reterritorialized the Indo-Pacific, and multilateralism was at the center of the administration's engagement with the region.

During his election campaign, Donald Trump stated that if elected president, he will cancel the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and pressure Mexico and Canada to make significant revisions to the North American Free Trade Agreement (Miller 2016). After winning the 2016 United States Presidential Elections, one of the first acts of President Trump was to keep his promise and pull the USA out of TPP, which was proposed as a

trade agreement between the US and her Asian partners[6] signed in 2016. However, unlike the Obama administration, the Trump administration avoided multilateral initiatives and pursued bilateral agreements. It was during his term in the office that the Indo-Pacific discourse grew as a strategy and reterritorialized with a new character that was constructed around strict criticism and exclusion of China from the Indo-Pacific construct, as well as institutional changes following the adoption of the Indo-Pacific Strategy. The imagined borders of the Indo-Pacific were not deterritorialized and carried the formulation of Hilary Clinton, but the adjectives and what is expected from the region have changed. In late 2017 and early 2018, this particular type of Indo-Pacific discourse in the Trump administration became apparent. The Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis and the Indian Minister of Defence Nirmala Sitharama released a Joint Press Conference in which they said:

> A peaceful and prosperous future in the Indo-Pacific region is based on a strong rules-based international order and a shared commitment to international law, to peaceful resolution of disputes and respect for territorial integrity. U.S-India defense cooperation has steadily expanded in recent years, underpinned by a strategic convergence between our two countries based on common objectives and goals in the region (2017).

From the start, the Trump Administration successfully adopted the words 'peaceful' and 'prosperous', which were the central adjectives to identify the Indo-Pacific concept of Japan and India. The importance of India, in the eyes of the American political elite,

---

[6] Autralia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam (Signators); New Zealend and Japan (Ratifiers)

continued in the Indo-Pacific. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson delivered a speech entitled "Defining Our Relationship with India for the Next Century: An Address" at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. In the speech, the common themes of the Indo-Pacific remained the same. He emphasized the United States' ambition of a free and open Indo-Pacific; the region's importance in the twenty-first century (covering the entire Pacific and Indian Oceans); and the Indo-Pacific's centrality in global politics (Tillerson 2017). In the 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue, one day after Modi's geopolitical representation of India, Mattis revealed the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the Trump administration. Mattis's talk showed that the Trump administration deterritorialized the Indo-Pacific previously constructed as accepting China and having multilateralism at its core and reterritorialized it as a region where China is being hostile to its identity (Mattis 2018). As he noted that China's actions, such as militarization, in the South China Sea stand against the openness of the Indo-Pacific. However, they (the US) did not ask anyone to choose between them because a friend did not ask you to choose among them (Mattis, 2018). In the meantime, to build the Indo-Pacific, in which norms such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and freedom are safeguarded, the US will work with India, ASEAN, treaty allies, and partners (Mattis 2018). The gravity of Mattis's speech cannot be overstated. While making and constructing the Indo-Pacific with a vision that includes adjectives like "safe, secure, prosperous, and free," he puts the USA and China on opposite sides. This binary representation and exclusionary language are also present in the official reports of the USA but will be mentioned later.

In 2018, Alex N. Wong, Deputy Assistant Secretary for North Korea in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, delivered a special press briefing entitled "The Indo-Pacific Strategy" in Washington, D.C. His speech is important for several reasons. First, he summarized what the US meant by FOIP Strategy. At the international level, for the states to be able to move forward with their plans for the region, "free" meant being free from coercion. On a national level, it indicated that societies were becoming more liberated in terms of transparent good governance, basic rights, and freedom. '"Open" denoted open channels of communication for the sea and air, open logistics, and open investment (Wong 2018). This implied critique of China's conduct in the South China Sea, as well as its treatment of other nations within its borders, which raised concerns about internal issues. Second, he claimed that the Indo-Pacific is lacking infrastructure and that the US wanted to assist it in building it correctly, which would increase GDP and promote regional integration rather than burden it. This was a criticism of China's regional initiative, the Belt and Road (Wong 2018). Third, he said, The US chose the term Indo-Pacific over Asia-Pacific for two reasons. India in particular, which has played a significant role in the Pacific, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, was recognized as a historical force in South Asia by the Indo-Pacific. And because India was a democracy investing in a free and open order in the Indo-Pacific, it was in the interests of the US and the region for India to play a significant role in it (Wong 2018). According to the US view, the "Indo" portion of "Indo-Pacific" pointed not just physically to the Indian Ocean but an important historical actor, India. This territorialization identified India as a key regional player in the region. From the last sentence, it can be seen that for the US, both

countries acted as anchors of the regional order—India in the West and the US in the East. The same discourse can be found in the speech delivered by the newly-appointed Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, to the US Chamber of Commerce three months later, with the title "America's Indo-Pacific Economic Vision." In his speech, he summarized 'free' as free from coercion and protection of sovereignty for states and good governance for the people. By 'open,' he meant open access to ways of air and see. The vision of the US for the Indo-Pacific excluded no nation (Pompeo 2018).

The reterritorialization of the Indo-Pacific as a more confrontational region by the Trump administration can be summarized as follows: The Trump administration formally adopted a strategy titled FOIP to project its power to the region and represent the region, and in that strategy, it represented the region with the two adjectives 'free' and 'open.' Unlike other countries and the previous administration, they elaborated on what these adjectives meant for the identity of the region. Furthermore, The US reterritorialized the 'Indo-Pacific' by deterritorializing the "Pivot to Asia-Pacific' as hostile to China. It was reterritorializing as such because of the growing hostilities between the US and China stemming from trade and China's actions on the South China Sea. While the administration stresses that the region excludes no nation and the US does not want other countries to take sides, the discourse makes it seem as if there is a choice that other countries can make, a choice that is binary and not explicitly stated. And like all other countries, the administration emphasizes the prosperous, stable, and connected identity of the region. Under the Trump administration, the Indo-Pacific moved from including

China to excluding China. Japan and India, however, did refrain from such territorialization.

4.1.c. Official Documents on Indo-Pacific During Trump Administration

Practical geopolitical discourse could be inferred from the official documents of a government in addition to the speeches of the political elite. The word 'Indo-Pacific' started to be employed in official documents during the Trump administration, such as *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (2017), *National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge* (2018), *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision* (2019) by the Department of State, and lastly, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region* (2019) by the Department of Defense.

The 2017 *National Security Strategy* document devotes a heading to the Indo-Pacific under the "The Strategy in A Regional Context" section. In the text, In the Indo-Pacific, which is an area that runs from the west coast of India to the western coastlines of the United States, it is suggested that two world orders—free and oppressive—are clashing. This binary perception of the world is something underlined by critical geopolitics, which focuses on the discursive capability of political elites in envisioning the world through contrasting categories. Hence, the Trump administration's binary representation of the world between good vs. bad, democratic vs. authoritarian was totally in line with critical geopolitical thinking. Trump administration emphasized that indeed in Indo-Pacific, the US was ready to cooperate with China. However, the document notes that China's actions

threaten the sovereignty of other states, endanger regional stability, and reinforce its geopolitical aspirations (2017, 46). Additionally, the North Korean regime's possession of nuclear weapons is shown as a threat that could result in the spread of nuclear weapons throughout the Indo-Pacific area. In other words, while the 'good and democratic' US considers collaborating with regional powers to ensure regional stability and prosperity, 'bad and authoritarian' regional actors resist this collaborative attitude by disturbing the regional order.

The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge is a short document. It does not contain a specific section for the region but mentions 'Indo-Pacific' eleven times, usually associating it with China as a threat. Firstly, the document claims that China leverages its military, influence operations, and predatory economics to exert pressure on other nearby nations to reorganize the Indo-Pacific to its favor (2018, 2). Second, on pages 4, 6, and 10, it makes a clear distinction between the Indo-Pacific, the Middle East, and Africa.Unlike Japan and India, whose Indo-Pacific maps cover the Middle East and Eastern parts of Africa.

A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing A Shared Vision is one of the first documents, which was solely devoted to the region. In the document, the values that the Trump administration champions in the region are summarized as follows: 1) upholding the sovereignty and independence of all countries; 2) resolving conflicts diplomatically; 3) fostering free, equitable, and reciprocal trade based on transparent investments and connectivity; and 4) obeying to international law, especially freedom of navigation and

overflight (2019, 6). Referring back to the 2017 *National Security Strategy*, this document says that nations in the region are facing challenges to these problems. The paper acknowledges the dichotomy between repressive and free global visions, and it adds that authoritarian revisionist countries want to advance their illiberal interests at the expense of others (2019, 5). From now on, the word 'revisionist country' will be linked to China, although it is not explicitly said in this paper.

Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region (2019), which was published by the Department of Defense, is the final document of the Trump administration on the Indo-Pacific. The document acknowledges the importance of the Indo-Pacific region to the US's future and argues that the US is a Pacific nation (2019, 1). It sums up Indo-Pacific's adjectives, safe, secure, prosperous, free, and open, and argues that China is a revisionist power in the region seeking regional hegemony in the short-term and global preeminence in the long term (2019, 3-4). Hence, the geopolitical representation of the US on the FOIP perceives China as a threat to the free Indo-Pacific by eroding the sovereignty of states (international level) and mistreating its Muslim population (lack of good governance at the national level), and it poses a grave danger to the open Indo-Pacific by disturbing the maritime domain of the region.

The way official documents represent the Indo-Pacific is similar to how individuals represent and imagine the region. What Alex N. Wong, Mike Pompeo, Rex Tillerson, and Jim Mattis represented for the region is more or less the same in the official documents.

The region's identity encompasses adjectives such as peaceful, prosperous, and connected, as well as norms such as freedom of navigation and overflight. The latest official documents argue for two regional orders -free and oppressive- emerged as binary geopolitical representations. These regional orders want to shape the identity of the region according to their norms and it is this oppositional distinction that stood out in the US discourse. This was not an outright inside/outside distinction created by the border-drawing practices, but the binary distinction created by the battle of identity regarding the region. In this clash, it is China that is undermining the regional order as a revisionist power. It represents the oppressive regional order, while the US and its allies represent the free regional order. Indeed, the US does not want countries to take sides, but it makes it clear which regional order champions freedom and which order champions oppression. By doing so, official documents published during the Trump administration acknowledge that China is in the region and trying to shape its identity in its own right, but China is not included in the regional order the US wants to build, thus excluding China.

4.1.d. Changes in United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM)

It would be odd not to include the discourses of the US navy when talking about the confluence of the two seas. Just as in the discourses of Japan and India, American naval officers delivered speeches on the Indo-Pacific. But what is more, the US Indo-Pacific Command is unique. Its name is a signifying practice in the geopolitical discourse, just as the change from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific is a signifying practice, which is not limited to the linguistic realm. The previous name of this force has been United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) when it was founded on January 1, 1947, located in

Hawaii, until 2018. During the Trump administration, on May 30, 2018, Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis announced that the United States Pacific Command will be renamed into United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), in acknowledgment of the growing connectivity between the Indian and Pacific Oceans (Copp 2018).

According to Scott, 'Indo-Pacific' had been explicitly recognized by PACOM leaders since 2012, and the term 'Indo-Asia-Pacific' became a common term used at PACOM between 2013 and 2017 (2018, 24-25). For instance, the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, held a gaming workshop whose title was "Indo-Pacific War Game 2012 Design Workshop".[7] And in the same year, Admiral Samuel Locklear, the Commander of US Pacific Command, invoked the Indo-Pacific twenty-one times when he delivered a speech to the Australian youth organization, Kokoda Foundation (2012). Although the usage of 'Indo-Pacific' became common, the name of the US Pacific Command, as mentioned above, did not change until 2018. Its name had been changed on the day of the change of command ceremony. Later, reflecting the change that happened during the Trump administration, Admiral Harry Harris, then the Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, said in his last testimony to the US Senate Armed Forces Committee that China's buildup could soon challenge the US in every domain, it will undermine the rule-based international order (2018). Moreover, he added, China uses its

---

[7] For the document, see: https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/50875994/indo-pacific-war-game-2012-design-workshop-us-naval-war-

influence operations, and predatory economics to apply pressure on other nearby nations (Harris, 2018). The exact wording that could be found in the *National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge*. What is important about Indo-Pacific Command is that first, the institution adopted the 'Indo-Pacific' term. Second, USINDOPACOM offers a map covering its area of responsibility. Eventually, the area of responsibility of the institution overlaps with the territorial borders of the Indo-Pacific offered by Clinton. Although it is not clear if Clinton was inspired by the map of the area of responsibility, there is a clear similarity. The name of the command had changed to highlight the growing importance of the region to the US, so its role and responsibility.

Map 4.1. The Area of Responsibility of USINDOPACOM (USINDOPACOM, 2022)

4.1.e. Indo-Pacific Strategy of Biden Administration (2021-2022)

So far, the election of the Biden administration and Biden's only two years in office have resulted in only a few statements on the Indo-Pacific. This is understandable given that the Biden administration had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and the escalating crisis in Ukraine. This does not mean, however, that they are not concerned with the Indo-Pacific. It was during Biden's administration that the AUKUS pact was signed, and a new official document was published. And the first statement about the Indo-Pacific came from the Secretary of State, Anthony J. Blinken, when he delivered a speech at the Universitas Indonesia in Jakarta, Indonesia in December 2021. Not surprisingly, he repeated that his administration would promote a free and open Indo-Pacific. On an individual level, a free and open Indo-Pacific means that people will be free and live in open societies; on a state level, it means countries will be able to choose their path. Adding a regional characteristic to that dimension, it was underlined that in this part of the world (Indo-Pacific), troubles will be dealt openly, rules will be achieved transparently and applied fairly, and people, ideas, and goods will flow across the land, cyberspace, and the open seas. And in the region, ASEAN's centrality is at the heart of the US's approach to other regional actors (Blinken 2021). His speech combines the free-ness and open-ness of the regional order and draws attention to China's aggression in the South China Sea and, as a result, their determination to ensure freedom of navigation. In August 2021, Vice President Harris delivered a speech entitled "On the Indo-Pacific Region" in the Gardens by the Bay during her visit to Singapore (2021). She said that The US will work to ensure that the Indo-Pacific region is free and open and serves the interests of the US

and its partners. They don't intend for their engagement to favor one party over another since they think the Indo-Pacific will be the focal point of history in the twenty-first century. Instead, it aims to advance a positive vision for the area (Harris 2021). She repeats what Mattis said in 2018, that the USA does not want you to choose between sides as the region is not directed against any country, but Blinken's speech does not reflect that.

Just two months into 2022, the Biden Administration released the "Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States" document. The document did not change too much of what has accumulated in the discourse of the Indo-Pacific. The document reiterates the borders of the region stretching from our Pacific coastline to the Indian Ocean and the importance of the Indo-Pacific to the security and prosperity of the US (2022, 4). The document says that as the allies and partners of the USA are turning their attention to the region, there is a broad bipartisan agreement in the US Congress that the US must, too, turn its attention to the region (2022, 4). The bipartisan agreement could also be seen in the document. The document says that the intensifying American focus is due to the upcoming challenges in the region, particularly from China, because China is combining its military, diplomatic, technological, and economic might to pursue a sphere of influence in the region through economic coercion of Australia, conflict with India, pressure on Taiwan, and bullying its neighbors. The US does not wish to challenge China in the region, but rather to shape its strategic environment in favor of the US and its allies, as well as their values and interests (White House 2022, 5). Similar to discourses that focus on China during the Trump administration, the document acknowledges that China is trying to shape the identity of

the Indo-Pacific. Lastly, the document notes that the US is dedicated to an Indo-Pacific region that is free, open, connected, economic, secure, and resilient and it will pursue five objectives in the region: (1) advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific, (2) building connections within and beyond, (3) driving regional prosperity, (4) bolstering Indo-Pacific security, (5) Building regional resilience to transnational threats.

So far, these remarks reflected the latest US practical geopolitical discourse on the Indo-Pacific. The status of China has been the glaring distinction between the strategy of the Trump administration and the approach of the Obama administration. The approach of the Obama administration to China in the region was relatively cooperative and peaceful. It weaned away from talking about China as a dangerous actor. For example, even after China declared an 'Air Defense Identification Zone' covering the disputed territory of the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea and the two countries had raised tension over it, Obama reassured Japan that the alliance treaty covers all territories under the Japanese administration, including Senkaku Islands but he repeated that Washington is refusing the take position on the sovereignty of islands and advised both parties to sort out their dispute through dialogue. To further complicate matters, the Obama administration said nothing when China seized the disputed Scarborough Shoal from the Philippines in 2012 despite the US and Manila having a mutual defense treaty (Chellaney 2018, 46). As opposed to the previous administration, the Trump administration promised Japan that it will be protected by the US against China in the Senkaku Islands dispute (Chellaney 2018, 46). This is also clear in their discourses. The Trump administration promoted a free and open Indo-Pacific by referring to China's regional project – the BRI.

The language of the Trump administration was different from the language of the Obama administration in that it emphasized "free and open," called for good governance, and focused on domestic problems in the region, while targeting China. The importance of the Trump administration and the accumulation of the Indo-Pacific discourse were inherited by the Biden administration. The Biden administration stressed the importance of China and its behavior in the region as it tries to shape the identity of the region according to its norms. The US no longer engages with China in the region and wants it to rise peacefully. On the contrary, the rise of China can change the identity of the region, and the US does not want that to happen. While the US perception and territorialization of the region have changed over the years, one thing remained more or less constant: the imagined borders of the region. It remained unchanged since Clinton drew them. The US neither moved the borders of the Indo-Pacific to Africa or the Middle East nor did she talk of the connection between the two continents.

4.2. Australia's Embrace of the Stable and Prosperous Indo-Pacific

The territorialization of the Indo-Pacific by the Australian government started as early as 2011 and the word appeared in the official documents in 2013. As other regional actors started to represent their geopolitical imaginations, so did Australia; but instead of creating a genuine geopolitical discourse, they copied the territorial boundaries of the American geopolitical imagination and did not elaborate on the spatial identity of this newly territorialized region but accepted that the region itself will shape the identity of

Australia. And later, the USA and Australia established the AUKUS alliance, which brought the imagination of the Indo-Pacific closer.

The first mention of the Indo-Pacific from the political elite came in 2011, when Stephan Smith, the Minister for Defence, delivered a speech entitled "Australia and India Building the Strategic Partnership" to the Indian non-profit organization, Asia Society. He used the term twice in connection with India's rise and the security context. According to him, India's ascent to global power status and the need to maintain maritime security in the Indian Ocean is at the center of Australia's foreign policy, and the country views the Indian Ocean as a region of crucial importance. Consequently, the two nations make ideal Indo-Pacific security allies (Smith, 2011). This speech, which highlights the importance of India and the security characteristics of the region, was delivered two months after Clinton's article in *Foreign Policy*. From now on, Australia will embrace the word and the concept quickly.

A year later, the Gillard government released their first document that contained the Indo-Pacific, entitled "Australia in Asian Century," whose name resembles the title of Clinton's article, "America's Pacific Century". The title is self-explanatory. The US sees itself as the central actor in the Pacific and the title of Clinton's article reflects this centrality. Whereas Gillard government's document title, "Australia in the Asian Century", reveals as if Australia is not the dominant actor in the region but an actor that tries to find its place and be part of it. In the document, it is noted that some observers have raised the term 'Indo-Pacific," which combines the western Pacific Ocean and the

Indian Ocean into one strategic arc and the concept is driven by the growing economic activities and the importance of energy in the Indian Ocean (Australia 2012, 74). Peter Varghese, the then-Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, citing the document in his briefing entitled "Australia and Asia in the Asian Century" during his visit to Sydney, said the security climate of Australia will change as the Indo-Pacific region continues to develop. Moreover, the Indo-Pacific concept can help Australia to make sense of its place in Asia because, after all, Australia spans both oceans (2013). Here, Australia has a different perception of the region because the spatial identity of the Indo-Pacific gives Australia a target to make a sense of its place in Asia. As Taylor points out, some Australian commentators see the Indo-Pacific merely as a means of ensuring continued regional engagement, as Australian political elites have long been concerned about economic and political exclusion from Asia (2020, 75). He cites Samuel Huntington's characterization of Australia as a 'torn country' and due to its 'otherness' in the eyes of Asian elites, it faced an uphill battle in its efforts to engage with Asia (Taylor 2020, 75). As a result, deterritorializing Asia-Pacific and reterritorializing Indo-Pacific in their terms allows Australia to remain an active actor in Asia, be perceived as an Asian actor, reinforce its actorness, and continue its engagement in the region. In the 2013 *Defence White Paper* document, Australia officially adopted the Indo-Pacific. The 2013 *Defence White Paper* devoted a heading to the Indo-Pacific under "Chapter 2. Strategic Outlook". The Indo-Pacific header consists of eleven articles, which all reflect and explain the Australian position in the region. First, it referred to the 2009 *White Paper*'s judgment that economic growth and international interests of larger powers in

Asia, such as China and India, have had more impact worldwide, and this judgment is now becoming clear. And it reinforced the importance of US-China relations in shaping the strategic environment of Australia, and this relationship is affected by the rebalancing of the US and the rise of China (Department of Defense of Australia 2013, 7). Second, the Indo-Pacific strategic arc is now beginning to emerge, connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans through Southeast Asia. *The National Security Strategy* and *Australia's Asian Century White Paper* papers both investigated the idea. Numerous factors influenced the concept, including India's growing importance as a diplomatic, economic, and regional actor and 'looking East,' as well as increased trade, investment, and energy flow in the broader region (Department of Defense of Australia 2013, 7). Third, the Indo-Pacific is an extension of the wider-Asia[8] concept mentioned in the previous *White Paper*, and the Indo-Pacific alters the strategic priority of Australia to the emerging arc (Department of Defense of Australia 2013, 7). Fourth, The security landscape in Australia will be significantly impacted by the Indo-Pacific. In the long run, US-China relations and the rise of India will dominate the area, despite the fact that other regional powers like Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Indonesia are growing more significant (Department of Defense of Australia 2013, 7-8). Fifth, and finally, the Indo-Pacific is a maritime environment with its center located in Southeast Asia, meaning ASEAN political cohesion will be important in the management of the Indo-Pacific. As a result,

---

[8] Mentioned on pages 12 and 42 of 2009 Defence White Paper, the wider-Asia-Pacific region was territorialized as ranging from North Asia to the Eastern Indian Ocean. The region included countries such as Japan, China, Republic of Korea and India. Indo-Pacific became an extended version of this concept, ranging from to Pacific (East) to India.

Asian countries will balance their interests and partners in this complex environment, and the voice of Australia needs to be strong to influence the outcomes, as it is harder for Australia to do so (2013, 8). From this document, the Australians understand that the Indo-Pacific, as a regional construct, will shape Australia profoundly. Moreover, the identity of the region and how it will grow are going to be shaped by the rivalry between the U.S. and China and the rise of India. Though Australia sees other countries as important in the region, they are not as important as the US and China. Rather than completely affecting and shaping the identity of the region itself, Australia will be affected by the region as a whole and make the necessary adjustments so that it can fit the region, whose center is in Southeast Asia, making ASEAN centrality an important concept.

Between the 2013 *Defence White Paper* and 2016 *Defence White Paper*, there have been few discourses on the Indo-Pacific. At any rate, the first discourse we can trace comes from Peter Varghese, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He delivered a speech titled "Mapping the Future" at the Australian think tank, the Lowly Institute, based in Sydney. In the speech, Varghese mentions the Indo-Pacific by saying that conceptual maps should be examined regularly, and that a twenty-first-century mental map for Australia is an arc spanning across the eastern Indian Ocean, through Southeast Asia, and into the Pacific Ocean's far side (2014). The significance of this mental map is that it reconnects India with Asia's strategic environment. Additionally, the area serves as Australia's economic and strategic interests' center of gravity as it

encompasses both its most important trading partner, China and its most important strategic ally, the United States (Varghese 2014).

A year later, again in the same institute, Peter Varghese delivered a speech entitled "An Australian World View: A Practitioner's Perspective". In the speech, he devoted two headings to the Indo-Pacific. In the section entitled "From the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific," he noted that Asia is crucial for the interests of Australia, and in the past, Australia used the Asia-Pacific to fit the USA, South Asia, and Southeast Asia into the system. But recently, they had to think about where India fits, because the interests and security dynamics in East Asia are expanding. In line with this, the Indo-Pacific captures and recognizes the geo-strategic position of Australia, which faces both oceans (Varghese 2015). In the following heading, "Indo-Pacific Challenges", he notes that the story of Asian growth happened due to the stability offered by the USA, but that the Indo-Pacific region is moving toward a multipolar system. Therefore, Australia's security depends on how Russia, China, the USA, Japan, India, and others manage their relationships. Among them, the US-China relationship is the single most important factor influencing stability in Asia, and for Australia, its strategy is based on its alliance with the US (Varghese 2015). He mentions that stability in Southeast Asia is central to Australia's security, and thus ASEAN as an institution matters so much to Australia. Finally, a system that promotes open societies, economic integration, inclusion, and forward-thinking is best for Australia's interests (Varghese 2015).

A year later, before the publication of the 2016 *Defence White Paper*, Australia's High Commissioner to India, Harinder Sidhu delivered a speech in Asia Society entitled "The View of Asia from Australia". She said that Australia traditionally looked North but now it is increasingly looking West and from the perspective of Australia the Indo-Pacific represents three things: (1) By returning India to the strategic frame of the region, it reflects its engagement in East Asian Affairs through East Asian Summit, (2) Indo-Pacific is a maritime concept, thus maritime stability, open sea lines will provide the economic prosperity in the region, (3) Combining two oceans, it recognizes the geo-strategic position of Australia, a continent facing two oceans (Sidhu 2016). Harinder Sidhu's third point is a repetition of Peter Varghese and combined with the other two points, it reflects Australia's general understanding of the Indo-Pacific. However, the adjectives such as free, open, stable, and prosperous in front of the region have not taken place in Australia's official vision, yet. It changed with the 2016 *Defense White Paper*. The paper mentioned the 'Indo-Pacific' seventy times. In this paper, in bold style, it has been emphasized that Australian security depends on a stable Indo-Pacific and a rule-based global order (Australia 2016, 33), which would ensure Australia's access to an open, free, and secure trading system (Australia 2016, 70). In the region, Australia supports the role of the US to provide regional stability and security which could not be achieved without US support (2006, 41-42-123-33). A year after the 2016 *Defence White Paper*, Australia released the 2017 *Foreign Policy White Paper*, which is the complete vision of Australia on the Indo-Pacific and its final, complete territorialization. Previously, Australian political elites talked about the Indo-Pacific and even understood the security issues of the region, where

the region stands, what it means for Australia, and how Australia perceives and assesses its importance. Now with this paper, Australia territorialized the identity of the region as "a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific", coming close to the other constructions by the three actors that were discussed previously. The question is how can we assess that this *Foreign Policy White Paper* is at the center of Australia's vision for the Indo-Pacific? During his visit to Japan, Australian Prime Minister Turnbull released a joint press statement with Japanese Prime Minister Abe. In the statement, both nations acknowledged that their shared vision for the Indo-Pacific is in line with their respective foreign policies: the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper of Australia and Japan's FOIP (Turnbull 2018, 1). This is reinforced by Harinder Sidhu's address to the Indian National Defence College in New Delhi. Under the heading "Australian Foreign Policy and the White Paper", she mentions that she wants to talk about the Indo-Pacific regional vision of Australia that is stable and prosperous (2018). Later, in her lecture at the Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore in 2019, she mentioned that the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper outlined two essential ideas that are pertinent to our discussion today two years ago: the first is India's status in Australian foreign policy and second is the fleshed out Australian conceptualizing of the Indo-Pacific in the White Paper (2019).

On the first page of the 2017 *Foreign Policy White Paper*, Australia defines the borders of the Indo-Pacific as ranging from the eastern Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, connected by Southeast Asia, including India, North Asia, and the United States (Australian Government 2017, 1). The borders of the region are close to the borders defined by the USA, which means they differ from both India and Japan. Chapter 3 of the

document is entitled "A Stable and Prosperous Indo–Pacific". In the section, it is argued that Australia supports a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific, which complements the trade, investment, and economic engagement of Australia. Due to the importance of the US alliance to Australia's security, the alliance will be strengthened and expanded to encourage continued US involvement in the region's economy and security (Australian Government 2017, 37). Australia will engage with like-minded countries, such as Indonesia, India, the RoK, Japan, and the USA, to realize the Indo-Pacific vision that they support (Australian Government 2017, 38). Through these, Australia supports a region in which: (1) countries resolve disputes peacefully under international law; (2) the presence of free markets is encouraged; (3) economic integration that is inclusive and open to all economies in the region is fostered; (4) the freedom of navigation, overflight, and the rights of small states are protected; (5) the US presence, which shapes institutions and norms in the fields of security and economics, is acknowledged; and (6) China's taking the lead in fostering regional pillars based on these principles is underlined (Australian Government 2017, 38). Devoting another heading to China, the paper argues that the stability of the region depends on China-US relations (Australian Government, 38). The USA is a crucial ally to Australia as it offers security, technology, information, and economic advantages, thus Australia supports the USA's involvement in the economic and security issues of the region. While the growing tensions between countries are troubling, Australia will engage with China so that it can enhance stability, and reinforce international law (Australian Government 2017, 39).

The 2017 White Paper, which describes Australia's present Indo-Pacific vision and strategy, is strong in that it acknowledges the region's difficulties as well as the promising futures associated with the idea of the Indo-Pacific as an open, inclusive, and affluent region (points 2 and 3) region where the rights of states are respected. The spatial identity of the Indo-Pacific represented and its territorialization according to the adjectives used by Australia is close to the discourses of India and Japan. The remarkable difference for Australia is that the geographical scope of the Indo-Pacific region is seen as answering long-standing Australian concerns about being marginalized in the region. The speeches of Peter Varghese (2013, 2015) and Harinder Sidhu (2016) reflect the issue of Australia's territorialization of the Indo-Pacific, as this recognizes the geo-strategic importance of Australia, facing two oceans. The Indo-Pacific recognizes the importance of Australia, it also helps Australia to make sense of its place in the current events in Asia. Hence, Australia can establish itself as an actor in the affairs of its neighbors and engage with them to shape new emerging constructs. In this region, the norms and security provided by the US are important to Australia. However, there is an innate problem stemming from Australia's over-emphasis on the USA. Observers of the Australian discourse in the Indo-Pacific expressed concern about two competing visions: "rules provided by the US "and "international rule-based order." From his point of view, Gyngell contends that the term "rule-based order" was employed by Australian politicians to refer to everything from US-led norms to the United Nations Charter (2018). And there is only one rule-based order applying to Australia, which is now under threat: the one that was created by those who won World War II and built around multilateral institutions. The US promoted global

trade and contributed to its expansion, while its network of alliances offered security in Asia (Gyngell 2018). Although Australia acknowledged the Chinese engagement in the region, she imagines a rule-based order in a region whose center is, according to Australia, in Southeast Asia and a region where the US acts as a security provider. Is this regional order based on the UN Charter or based on the security the US provides? If the former, Australia's desire for the US to serve as the region's security provider appears to conflict with what is being said in the documents. If it is the latter, then the regional order will be constructed around the US discourse, which is in line with the arguments in the documents. The most recent American discourse on the "free and open Indo-Pacific" represents China as an actor in the region but labels the country as a revisionist power, undermining the rule-based regional order, and championing an oppressive order. In any case, Australia cannot have it both ways. Australia wants deeper engagement from the US as a security provider in the region, and the US accepts China in the region, but simultaneously, the US excludes China from the geopolitical imagination.

4.3. The Indo-Pacific Imagination of the US and Australia: Different but Entangled

The Australian territorialization of the Indo-Pacific could be summarized as follows: (1) Security and stability provided by the USA, (2) China playing a leading role that fosters regional-based pillars based on these principles, (3) the existence of open markets, (4) inclusive economic integration open to all economies, (5) freedom of navigation and overflight, (6) ASEAN centrality, (7) a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific, and (8) the borders stretching from the eastern Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, linked by Southeast Asia, including India, North Asia, and the United States. The US

territorialization of the Indo-Pacific is based on "A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing A Shared Vision", "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region," and government officials like Alex N. Wong, Mike Pompeo, Rex Tillerson, and Jim Mattis. The US imagination can be summarized as follows: (1) Free and Open Indo-Pacific; (2) peaceful dispute resolution; (3) free, fair, and reciprocal trade based on open investment, transparent agreements, and connectivity; (4) compliance with international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight; and (5) Indo-Pacific: a region extending from India's west coast to the western shores of the United States, (6) Indo-Pacific, a region where two types of world orders are at war.

Country	Australia	The United States of America
Position regarding China	Excluding	Excluding
Adjectives	- Rule-based order, security, and norms provided by the US - Peaceful resolution of disputes - Open, inclusive, and prosperous - Freedom of Navigation, overflight - ASEAN Centrality - Stable and Prosperous Indo-Pacific	- Rule-based order based on freedom as opposed to oppression - Free on state and society level; open meaning sea lines, overflight - Stable, peaceful, prosperous - ASEAN Centrality - Free and Open Indo-Pacific
Borders of the Indo-Pacific	Indo-Pacific, connects the eastern Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, via Southeast Asia, including India, North Asia, and the United States	Indo-Pacific connects the Indian Ocean to the western shores of the Americas, the region covers two oceans — the Pacific and the Indian.

Table 4.1. The Conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific Region by Australia and the United States of America

The first divergence between discourses can be seen in the adjectives that the Indo-Pacific takes. For Australia, a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific is the defining characteristic of the region. However, for the USA, it is *FOIP*, placing a specific emphasis on 'free', as in free from coercion and open to good governance, and 'open', as in open sea lines of communication, airways, logistics, and investments. Hence, for Australia, economic concerns and stability in the region come first, but for the US, it is the idea of freedom for countries/people and openness in terms of infrastructure. The second divergence is the territorialization of the borders. The Indo-Pacific region, which includes Australia, extends from the eastern Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean via Southeast Asia, which also includes India, North Asia, and the United States, whereas, for the US, it starts from the western shores of the United States to the west coast of India. Eastern Africa and the Middle East are not officially part of the Indo-Pacific of Australia and the USA. This divergence also contributes to their convergence when compared with Japan and India because it makes them the only countries to territorialize the borders of the region starting from the United States and ending in the Indian Ocean. In their imagination, there is no union of two continents, nor the inclusion of the Gulf States or the Middle East. There is just the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. The issue of China and the overall regional order contributes to their convergency. As mentioned in the last pages of Australia, Australia wants both China and the USA to engage in the region. On the surface, it seems as if Australia does not exclude China, but Australia has overemphasized the role of the US as a security provider in the region and wants the institutions and norms of the region to be shaped by the US. China is pushed out of the regional order with the aim to have

the US dominate the economic and security landscape. As the "free and open Indo-Pacific" geopolitical discourse of the US does accept that China is in the region, and labels it as a revisionist power trying to undermine the regional order that like-minded countries are trying to build. Thus, China becomes excluded from the Indo-Pacific imagination and can only be part of the region if it complies with the regional order that the USA wants. Lastly, the US, the UK, and Australia formed the AUKUS pact (the UK, the US, and Australia). As mentioned before, the pact will help Australia acquire submarines powered nuclear reactors. The new trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States is not part of the QUAD, which includes four big countries that are defining the discourse of the Indo-Pacific. This makes the US and Australia closer in their security approach to the region, and it satisfies what Australia wanted in the region: the USA as a net security provider and shaping the norms and institutions of the region.

CHAPTER V

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE INDO-PACIFIC

Over the last two decades, the main actors of the Indo-Pacific – Australia, the US, Japan, and India – have tried to come together in different organizations to realize the region. But the institutions they have tried to build, foster, and expand did suffer from delays, pauses, and unwillingness from actors to commit. Moreover, they tried to attach already existing institutions to the Indo-Pacific institutions. There is indeed no institution carrying the Indo-Pacific in its name, but countries tried to build institutions or transform them during their discourse on the Indo-Pacific forming. The QUAD is one such example of this. It started back in 2004 to help India with disaster relief after the great tsunami hitting southeast Asia. It was disbanded after its mission but revived in 2007 when the Indo-Pacific discourse of Shinzo Abe was gaining momentum. On the other hand, the Malabar naval exercise was already an ongoing exercise starting in 1992, but it was also politicized by the Indo-Pacific discourse in 2007 and later in 2020. Lately, AUKUS was created out of nowhere, signaling the division among the main actors of the Indo-Pacific discourse. Yet, they are unable to create a strong institution with a name denoting Indo-Pacific as a clearly defined region and having a clear purpose.

5.1. QUAD 1.0 and Malabar Exercises

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), also known as the QUAD, is a strategic security dialogue between Japan, Australia, India, and the United States, which is maintained through bilateral talks. Its roots could be traced back to the tsunami that happened in the Indian Ocean– Boxing Day Tsunami – on December 26, 2004. An earthquake hit the coast of Indonesia, creating a huge tsunami that killed approximately 240,00 people. The international community decided the help the region devastated by the effects of the tsunami and earthquake. Few after the incident, the US announced that the United States, along with Australia, India, and Japan are going to set up a coalition to coordinate assistance efforts in the tsunami-hit areas (Haidar, 2017). These nations afterward served as the major responders until turning the task up to the United Nations in mid-January 2004. Their immediate objective had ended when they handed over the control to the UN, but a new framework emerged at the time: the QUAD. The first speaker was Shinzo Abe, the then prime minister of Japan, who shared his long-held goal of an "arc of prosperity and freedom" that would include India and bring it closer to a maritime framework with Japan, the United States, and Australia, all of which were already close military allies (Haidar, 2017). In March 2006, the foreign ministers of Australia, Japan, and the USA met to discuss how to strengthen the strategic dialogue and show the importance that these countries place on further trilateral collaboration in resolving contemporary security concerns (MOFA, 2006). The main focus of the talk was to support the growth and consolidation of democracies, as well as to build cooperative frameworks, in the Asia-Pacific region. A few months later, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

visited the officials in Japan, and in a joint statement, India announced that both countries share the belief that dialogue on mutually beneficial topics between India, Japan, and other like-minded countries in the Asia-Pacific region is beneficial (MEA of India, 2006). Then, despite reservations from some officials of the Bush administration, reports emerged that US Vice President Dick Cheney approved the notion of a quadrilateral encompassing Australia, Japan, the US, and India, in addition to the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue that the first three had initiated in 2002. On a visit to Australia in February 2007, he discussed it with Prime Minister John Howard. The next month, when Howard and Abe visited Tokyo, they emphasized the four countries' shared democratic ideals. The Indian foreign minister paid a visit to Japan a few days later, and in April, Aso traveled to India and Abe to Washington (Madan, 2017). A year later, in May 2007, the first-ever exploratory quadrilateral meeting took place, before Abe's famous talk titled 'CTS' in August. The gathering was described as an 'informal grouping' that discussed topics of mutual interest among the partners, such as disaster aid (Australia, 2007). But the grouping was fragile, and it quickly fell apart. After the meeting, China officially protested the meeting and asked countries about the objective of the meeting (Varadarajan, 2007). After the protest, Australian Defence Minister Brendan Nelson made it clear that their government is not pursuing the so-called Quadrilateral dialogue with India, and Australian Foreign Minister Stephan Smith told China that Australia will leave the QUAD. (McDonell, 2007; Bagchi, 2008). In addition, India later clarified that the dialogue was not about security (Chellaney, 2007). Prime Minister Abe's resignation in September 2007 was the final nail in the coffin. In summary, the story of this initiative has been

famously nicknamed 'QUAD 1.0' and it highlighted the problems of the Indo-Pacific concept early on. First, any grouping between countries could be seen as a containment problem for China, thus leading to protests and disagreements. This is the reason some countries do not try to frame the Indo-Pacific as containment or balance-of-power strategy focused on China. For example, apart from the US, Australia, Japan, and India do not actively frame China as a revisionist and dangerous country in the region, they merely accept its presence in the region without negative connotations. Second, the reservations Australia and India had undermined the initial QUAD, and the reservations of Australia about forming a multilateral security group have not changed since the announcement of AUKUS 2021. Third, QUAD 1.0 reflects the first conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific in the name of the CTS. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the pioneer of QUAD and the concept of CTS. These two initiatives aimed to bring India back to the Asian security environment.

The second institution bringing the discussants of the Indo-Pacific concept together was not a political but a military initiative. Malabar is a multinational naval exercise that first took place in 1992. It began as a bilateral exercise between the US and Indian fleets. There were two further versions of the exercise in 1995 and 1996, after which there was a gap until 2002, following India's nuclear tests. Japan, Singapore, and Australia joined in 2007, bringing the total number of participants to five. Two Malabar exercises took place in 2007, one in April 2007 between India and the US, and another in September 2007. The latter took place after the QUAD meeting in May. It was the only QUAD 1.0-related, expanded version of the US-India Malabar exercise. The four navies, along with

the Singaporean Navy, participated in the second Malabar exercise of 2007 (Malabar 07-02) in the Bay of Bengal. Personnel exchanges and training in sea control and multi-carrier operations, among other abilities, were part of the maneuvers. As discussed above, the Malabar (07-02) exercise was the first iteration of QUAD 1.0; and after it took place, the QUAD collapsed shortly after. After the collapse of QUAD and changes in domestic political leadership, the Malabar exercise lost its largest scale. From 2008 to 2014, the naval exercise took place only between the US and India, with Japan joining only once in 2009 and 2014. In 2014, India and the US decided to step up maritime security cooperation to ensure freedom of navigation and unhindered movement of commerce and economic activity in conformity with recognized international law standards. To achieve this goal, the two sides discussed strengthening technology ties for India's Navy, including analyzing potential areas of technological cooperation. They also agreed to improve their current bilateral exercise, MALABAR (White House, 2014). After this point, the Malabar exercise started to grow and incorporate the original countries in 2014, and it also reflected the discourse on the Indo-Pacific with goals such as freedom of navigation and international law. A year later, after the statement, Japan was invited to the Malabar Exercise and became a permanent member.

5.2. The Reboot of QUAD, the Expansion of Malabar, and the Formation of AUKUS

Two years after Japan became a permanent member of Malabar exercises, the QUAD was rebooted as QUAD 2.0. At this point, Japan had already declared its FOIP strategy

in TICAD, India was increasingly using the word Indo-Pacific, the Trump administration came into office with a particular focus on China, and Australia used the term in its 2016 *White Defence Paper*. Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono told the Japanese news agency *Nikkei Asia* that a high-level discussion with Australia, India, and the US will be offered to Japan (Hayashi and Onchi, 2017). Shri Raveesh Kumar, an Indian official spokesperson, also confirmed that India is willing to collaborate with like-minded countries on matters that advance the interests of India and promote its point of view (2017). On November 12, 2017, delegates from the four countries met in Manila (at the assistant secretary level) and released "Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultations on the Indo-Pacific"[9] briefings, which briefly touched on their conversation about how to guarantee an open, free, and legal international order in the Indo-Pacific (MOFA, 2017). They started releasing the same briefing, "Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultations" a year after their first meeting. These are in order: Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultations; 7 June 2018; 15 November 2018; 31 May 2019; 4 November 2019; 18 December 2020; 25 September 2020; August 12, 2021. After the last consultation was released in August 2021, QUAD meetings were upgraded from senior officials and foreign ministers' level to a leaders' summit. One on 13 March 2021 (QUAD Leaders' Joint Statement: The Spirit of the QUAD), the other on September 24, 2021 (Fact Sheet: QUAD Leaders' Summit). It is not possible to access the entirety of the meetings or what

---

[9] Details of all countries are in the bibliography.

was said in detail apart from the statements and fact sheets are given to the public. In all of them, concerning the Indo-Pacific, the countries discussed the realization of a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific', founded on free and open international order, the rule of law, freedom of navigation and flight, and ASEAN centrality (White House 2021, White House 2021a). What never came to the surface were the imagined borders of the Indo-Pacific. In none of the consultations, did states discuss what the region of the Indo-Pacific meant to each, nor did they question what the QUAD and the Indo-Pacific meant for China. But in all consultations, they emphasized the adjectives all used: open, freedom of navigation, rule of law, and respecting state rights. They knew that they all brought their diverse perspectives to the discussions but shared the idea of a free and open Indo-Pacific which is based on freedom, open, inclusive, healthy, and anchored by democratic values free from coercion.

As the meetings between parties were happening, the Indian Ministry of Defense released the only statement on the 2020 Malabar Exercise, saying that the Australian Navy will participate in the upcoming exercise, and all the participants in the exercise are trying to enhance safety and security in the maritime domain and that all participants support a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific and stay dedicated to a rules-based international order (Ministry of Defence India, 2020). A month after the last consultation was released and the last Malabar Exercise, the USA, the UK, and Australia announced AUKUS. AUKUS is important and relevant in the context of the QUAD for two reasons. First, the three presidents highlighted the value of continued alliances with ASEAN, the QUAD, and other Indo-Pacific partners, including European allies, when they announced

the trilateral security relationship, and secondly, it is argued that AUKUS will also strengthen our involvement in our expanding network of alliances in the Indo-Pacific region (White House, 2021b). From this perspective, it does not interfere with or hurt the QUAD. On the other hand, it is argued that AUKUS does leave others out of a security arrangement in the region, creating a division among the grouping. A former naval chief, Admiral Arun Prakash, highlighted this problem, saying that the formation of the AUKUS could be seen as an attempt to convey a stronger message to China, and China's depiction of this alliance as an 'exclusionary bloc' should give two members of the QUAD/Malabar institutions— India and Japan — a pause because only have these countries been excluded from this grouping (the Anglosphere), but they were also unable to, even with their close ties to the US, get technology transfer (Prakash, 2021).

In summary, over the past years, the main actors of Indo-Pacific managed to resolve their issues centered around lack of, or fear of, commitment, weak institution building, and cooperation to realize and foster Indo-Pacific in institutions such as Malabar and QUAD. Up until late 2021, mutual commitment to QUAD and Malabar Exercise showed that the actors did gather around shared norms and institutions. However, the announcement of AUKUS showed that the Indo-Pacific discourse of Australia, which always wanted the US to provide security to the region and accepted their version of the Indo-Pacific as reality. Moreover, as seen above, in QUAD meetings, countries always shared their different versions of the Indo-Pacific while keeping some shared adjectives. They always had their own distinct and different versions of the Indo-Pacific, and it

became even more apparent with the announcement of AUKUS. AUKUS grouped like-

minded Anglosphere countries, leaving Japan and India behind.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The argument of this thesis started from the notion of the Asia-Pacific and its transformation to the Indo-Pacific. The thesis pointed out the fact that the notion of Asia-Pacific was a construct of the nineteenth century. As discussed in the second chapter, it was used to justify the involvement of the US in Asian affairs, consequently, it excluded India from broader Asia. After discussing these points, the thesis focused on the Indo-Pacific. With the end of the Cold War and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the very balance and understanding of global affairs have changed. First, the world saw the rise of China as important in both global and regional politics. Not only did it impact politics, but its rise also transformed the global economy and supply chains. Thus, it brought the Indian Ocean into prominence. Secondly, along with China, India started to become an important actor, both on the global and regional scene. Hence, it is safe to say that the early twenty-first century saw an acceleration of important political processes relating to what would eventually be known as the Indo-Pacific. When these two political developments combined, a new construct to imagine Asia-Pacific was born. The Indo-Pacific construct, as an imagined, defined, and territorialized geopolitical construct, was a response to these changes in the imaginations of actors in Asia. The Indo-Pacific is now increasingly shaping how countries in the region are understanding the geopolitical space in the twenty-first century. This understanding, however, is not singular but plural.

The main arguments of this thesis were to about be proving this point, while carefully tracing its genealogy. Throughout its emergence and gradual evolution, this thesis argued that the Indo-Pacific remained as a discursive geopolitical construct, which could not be understood as a singular region, and that the borders of the region were drawn differently by actors to locate who is inside/outside of the region. To this day, the Indo-Pacific, whether created as an oceanic area, super-region, or non-region, is now a contentious map-making phenomenon among the big four definer countries. It might be argued that the Indo-Pacific construct is more about acknowledging the Indian Ocean's emergence as a global power base rather than offering a true focus on the entire Pacific Ocean. However, the Indo-Pacific has caught up with different understandings of the oceans and continents. Here, the thesis argued that it is possible to see two different territorializations of the Indo-Pacific to understand their borders and their identity of it. After the deterritorialization of Asia-Pacific, one group – Australia and the USA – reterritorialized the newly Indo-Pacific construct as a maritime region. At the start, the region did not include anything excluding China. While the borders of the region remained the same, the Trump administration reterritorialized the region in a way that excludes and labels China. First and foremost, this territorialization connects the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. Doing so acknowledges the importance of India in the wider maritime region. Moreover, it establishes China as a revisionist power that tries to spread its oppressive order in the region. This is not surprising because the heart of the maritime Indo-Pacific is at the Malacca Strait. Being one of the shortest routes between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, the strait connects the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea. The

activities of China in the South China Sea and its claims inside the nine-dash line are making other countries uncomfortable on the coast. Hence, this territorialization excludes China and frames it as dangerous to the notions of 'free' and 'open'. The main aim of this territorialization is to contain China in this century. The other group – Japan and India – reterritorialized the Indo-Pacific, first, as a region that connects two seas. Then, they reterritorialized it as a region that connects two oceans -the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean- and two continents, Africa, and Asia. In this territorialization, the borders of the Indo-Pacific stretch far and wide, reaching Africa and the shores of the Persian Gulf. It could not be understood predominantly as a maritime construct, despite its maritime name. Priorities of Japan and India go far west than that of Australia and the US. It is mainly concerned with the dangers that exist on the western side of the Indian Ocean, the energy supply, and the threats to the straits of the Indo-Pacific. The nature of this territorialization also accepts the importance of India in the wider region. But starkly, this construct does not express exclusiveness. While there are concerns about the freedom of navigation, free trade, and prosperity, the region remains inclusive to all countries. China's place in the geopolitical construct is not labeled as revisionist, undesired, or unwanted. Thus, the territorialization of the Indo-Pacific by Japan and India stands in contrast to the territorialization of the US and Australia. The only thing they share is the adjectives free and open.

Then, what is the identity of the Indo-Pacific? The Indo-Pacific construct promotes intersecting issues (freedom of navigation/flight, prosperity) and reveals vague conceptual boundaries. Even while using the same language, the proponent states have

diverse strategic interests and geographical scopes. The Indo-Pacific is only free and open in name but different in its identity and scope. There is no one Indo-Pacific that can be generalized or conceptualized. There are, in fact, many Indo-Pacific constructs.

So far, this thesis tried to contribute to understanding and making sense of the construct of the Indo-Pacific by using the lenses of critical geopolitics. Two main contributions of this thesis are the usage of critical geopolitics to understand a regional identity using the discourses of different actors and showing the fragmented discourse of the Indo-Pacific construct. However, this thesis is limited in a few ways. Only the English-translated official documents and speeches were used to trace the identity of the construct. A study that can focus use the Japanese and Hindi languages can capture speeches missing from the translated documents and speeches. Plus, it traced the identity of this construct up until 2022 but it will continue to change. What can be said about the identity of the Indo-Pacific now might not be said years later. The identity of the Indo-Pacific, what it means, and how it is territorialized will change and evolve in ways that it is not possible to be decisive about it. The territorialization of the Indo-Pacific might evolve to be even more fragmented in discourse as other countries can adopt the Indo-Pacific in their documents and speeches. In addition, this thesis only looked at four countries, as they are the main constructors, to identify the plurality of this construct. But further studies can contribute to the arguments of this thesis in two ways. First, irrespective of context and various interpretations of the Indo-Pacific, most Chinese scholars and practitioners see the Indo-Pacific as an anti-Chinese construct, established by the US and its closest regional allies with its essential Anglosphere foundation. Thus, instead of analyzing the Indo-Pacific

from the eyes of the other actors, one study can focus on how China understands the Indo-Pacific and what is its territorialization of the region. In this context, the BRI is an important initiative to understand Chinese geopolitical activities. Secondly, a study from the perspective of Critical Geopolitics can also focus on how the identity of the Indo-Pacific emerged in the context of ASEAN and the European Union. The EU adopted the "EU Strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific" document back in 2021, and ASEAN adopted a similar document titled "ASEAN Outlook On the Indo-Pacific" document back in 2019. A study can compare and contrast the territorialization efforts done by the intergovernmental organizations and countries in the organization. This kind of study could move away from state-centric stories to organization-centric stories that territories a space. A focus on how intergovernmental organizations perceive and territorialize a geopolitical construct would contribute greatly to the literature on the Indo-Pacific and Critical Geopolitics.

	The wider Indo-Pacific		The maritime Indo-Pacific	
Countries/Properties of the Indo-Pacific	**Japan**	**India**	**Australia**	**The US**
Similarities	-Inclusive regarding China - Free and Open, from the Pacific to Shores of Africa. -Rules-based Order -UN-based norms		-Exclusive regarding China - Free and Open, from the eastern Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean - Rules-based order, security and norms provided by the US	
Differences	-Includes the Middle East - Policy of Free and Open Pacific Strategy/Vision (FOIP) - Remnants of the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity in the FOIP	-Includes the Gulf States - The Indo-Pacific is seen as the product of the policy of Act East	- Stable and Prosperous as the main adjectives - Security and norms provided by the US -Emphasizing mainly the role of Australia as a secondary actor. -Territorialization following the US	- The US defending the norms of freedom as opposed to norms of oppression -Different explanations of the adjectives "free and open".

Table 6.1. Final Conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific four Main Actors

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abe, Shinzo. 2007. *"Confluence of the Two Seas", Speech by H.E.Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.* August 22. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0708/speech-2.html.

—. 2016. Address by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the Opening Session of the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI). August 27. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/afr/af2/page4e_000496.html.

—. 2012. "Asia's Democratic Security Diamond." *Project Syndicate.* December 27. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/a-strategic-alliance-for-japan-and-india-by-shinzo-abe.

—. 2013a. *Japan is Back.* February 22. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/pm/abe/us_20130222en.html.

—. 2013. *The Bounty of the Open Seas: Five New Principles for Japanese Diplomacy.* January 18. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/pm/abe/abe_0118e.html.

Agnew, John , and Stuart Crobridge. 1995. *Mastering Space.* London: Routledge.

Agnew, John. 2009. "Territorialization." In *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, by Derek Gregory, Ron Johnston, Geraldine Pratt, Michael J Watts and Sarah Whatmore, 745. Chicester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Agnew, John. 2013. "The Ashgate Research Companion to Critical Geopolitics." In *The Origins of Critical Geopolitics*, by Klaus Dodds, Merje Kuus and Joanne Sharp, 19-32. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Aso, Taro. 2006. *Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons.* November 30. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0611.html.

Australia, Department of Defence of. 2016. "2016 Defence White Paper." *Department of Defence of Australia.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.defence.gov.au/about/publications/2016-defence-white-paper.

Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2012. "Australia in the Asian Century." *APO.* October. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2012-10/apo-nid31647.pdf.

Australia, Parliament of. 2007. "STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE." *Parliament of Australia.* May 28. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=(Dataset:commsen,commrep,commjnt,estimate,commbill%20SearchCategory_Phrase:committees)%20CommitteeName_Phrase:%22standing%20committee%20on%20foreign%20affairs,%20defence%20and%20trade%2.

Australian Government. 2017. "2017 Foreign Policy White Paper." *Austrlian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/2017-foreign-policy-white-paper.pdf.

Bagchi, Indrani. 2008. "Australia to pull out of 'quad' that excludes China." *The Times of India.* February 6. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Australia-to-pull-out-of-quad-that-excludes-China/articleshow/2760109.cms.

Bayram, Duygu Çağla. 2021. *Çalkantılı Sularda Yeni Rota.* Ankara: Nobel Bilimsel Eserler.

Blinken, Antony J. 2021. "A Free and Open Indo-Pacific." *U.S Department of State.* December 14. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.state.gov/a-free-and-open-indo-pacific/.

Cerr, Valerie, and Sweta Chaman Saxena. 2002. *What Caused the 1991 Currency Crisis in India?* IMF Staff Papers, International Monetary Fund. https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/staffp/2002/03/pdf/cerra.pdf.

Chellaney, Brahma. 2018. "Japan's Pivotal Role in the Emerging Indo-Pacific Order." *Asia-Pacific Review* 25 (1): 38-51.

—. 2007. "LEADER ARTICLE: This Quartet Has A Future." *The Times of India.* July 18. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/edit-page/leader-article-this-quartet-has-a-future/articleshow/2212192.cms.

Choong, William. 2019. "The return of the Indo-Pacific strategy: an assessment." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 73 (5): 415-430.

Clinton, Hillary Rodham. 2011. "America's Pacific Century." *Foreign Policy.* October 11. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/.

—. 2010. "America's Engagement in the Asia-Pacific." *U.S Department of State.* October 28. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2010/10/150141.htm.

Colin, Flint. 2006. *Introduction to Geopolitics.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Copp, Tara. 2018. "INDOPACOM, it is: US Pacific Command gets renamed." *Military Times.* May 30. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/05/30/indo-pacom-it-is-pacific-command-gets-renamed/.

Dahlman, Carl T. 2009. "Geopolitics." In *Key Concepts in Political Geography*, by Carolyn Gallaher, Carl T Dahlman, Mary Gilmartin, Alison Mountz and Peter Shirlow, 87-98. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Dahlman, Carl T. 2009. "Territory." In *Key Concepts in Political Geography*, by Carolyn Gallaher, Carl T Dahlman, Mary Gilmartin, Alison Mountz and Peter Shirlow, 77-86. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Das, Premvir S. 2006. "Violence in the Indian Ocean – Challenges and Responses." *Indo-Japan Dialogue on Ocean Security.* Tokyo: Ocean Policy Research Foundation. 108-121.

Department of Defense of Australia. 2013. "Defence White Paper 2013." *Global Security.* Accessed June 10, 2022.

Dodds, Klaus. 2005. *Global Geopolitics A Critical Introduction.* London: Routledge.

Doyle, Timothy, and Dennis Rumley. 2019. *The Rise and Return of the Indo-Pacific.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fly, Jamie. 2018. "Trump's Asia Policy and the Concept of." *Die Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.* October 2. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/projekt_papiere/Fly_BCAS_2018_Indo-Pacific_10.pdf.

Gearóid , Tuathail Ó, and Timothy W Luke. 1994. "Present at the (Dis)Integration: Deterritorialization and Reterritorialization in the New Wor(l)d Order." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 84 (3): 381–398.

Gülmez, Seçkin Barış. 2009. "Denizlerin Jeopolitiği: Alfred Thayen Mahan." In *Batı'da Jeopolitik Düşünce*, by Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, 21-34. Ankara: Orion Kitapevi.

Gyngell, Allan. 2018. "If Trump just quits the rules-based order – what happens next?" *Financial Review.* July 23. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.afr.com/opinion/if-trump-just-quits-the-rulesbased-order--what-happens-next-20180723-h130ds.

Hagel, Chuck. 2014. "Remarks to the Observer Research Foundation - New Delhi, India." *U.S Department of Defense.* August 9. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/606907/.

—. 2014b. "Remarks With Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop, and Australian Minister of Defense David Johnston." *U.S Department of State.* August 12. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/08/230525.htm.

Haidar, Suhasini. 2017. "After the tsunami: how the 'Quad' was born." *The Hindu.* November 16. Accessed 6 10, 2022. https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/after-the-tsunami/article20461149.ece.

Hang, Nguyen Thi Thuy. 2016. "The US Rebalance towards the Asia-Pacific: Really Realist?" *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs* 3 (3): 291–306.

Haokip, Thongkholal. 2011. "India's Look East Policy: Its Evolution and Approach." *South Asian Survey* 18 (2): 239–257.

Harris, Adm. Harry. 2018. "Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) Opening Statement." *U.S Indo-Pacific Command.* May 20. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Speeches-Testimony/Article/1470271/senate-armed-services-committee-sasc-opening-statement/.

Harris, Kamala. 2021. "Remarks by Vice President Harris on the Indo-Pacific Region ." *White House.* August 24. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/08/24/remarks-by-vice-president-harris-on-the-indo-pacific-region/.

Hayashi, Saki, and Yosuke Onchi. 2017. "Japan to propose dialogue with US, India and Australia." *Nikkei Asia.* October 26. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Japan-to-propose-dialogue-with-US-India-and-Australia2.

Herb, Guntram H. 2008. "The Politics of Political Geography." In *The SAGE Handbook of Political Geography*, by Kevin R Cox, Murray Low and Jennifer Robinson, 21-40. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Hosoya, Yuichi. 2019. "FOIP 2.0: The Evolution of Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." *Asia-Pacific Review* 26 (1): 18-28.

Jaishankar , Subrahmanyam. 2019. *Valedictory Address by External Affairs Minister at 11th Delhi Dialogue.* December 14. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/32212.

Kelly, Phil. 2006. "A Critique of Critical Geopolitics, Geopolitics,." *Geopolitics* 11 (1): 24-53. doi:10.1080/14650040500524053.

Kerry, John. 2015. "Remarks With Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida." *U.S Department of State.* September 29. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2015/09/247485.htm.

—. 2015b. "Strengthening the U.S.-Sri Lanka Partnership for Human Rights and Lasting Peace." *U.S Department of State.* May 2. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2015/05/241421.htm.

Kerry, John, and Penny Pritzker. 2015. "How India and the United States Are Building a 21st-Century Partnership." *Foreign Policy.* September 24. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/09/24/how-india-and-the-united-states-are-building-a-21st-century-partnership/.

Khurana, Gurpreet S. 2007. "Security of Sea Lines: Prospects for India–Japan Cooperation." *Strategic Analysis* 31 (1): 139-153.

Khurshid, Salman. 2013b. "External Affairs Minister at the launch of ASEAN-India Centre." In *India's Foreign Relations-2013: Documents*, by Atvar Bhasin, 295-298. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs of India.

Khurshid, Salman. 2013. "External Affairs Minister's Speech at Rikkyo University, Tokyo." In *India's Foreign Relations-2013: Documents*, by Atvar Bhasin, 1172-1178. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs of India.

Khurshid, Salman. 2014. "Keynote Adress." In *Indo Pacific Region: Political and Strategic Prospects*, by Rajiv K Bhatia and Vijay Sakhuja, ix-xii. New Delhi: Vij Books India Pvt Ltd.

Kumar, Shri Raveesh. 2017. "Transcript of Weekly Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson." *Ministry of Extarnel Affairs of India.* October 27. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://mea.gov.in/media-

briefings.htm?dtl/29065/Transcript_of_Weekly_Media_Briefing_by_Official_Spokesper
son_October_27_2017.

Li, Hansong. 2021. "The "Indo-Pacific": Intellectual Origins and International Visions in
Global Contexts." *Modern Intellectual History* 1 (1): 1-27.

Locklear, Adm. Samuel J. 2012. "Kokoda Foundation Australia." *U.S Indo-Pacific
Command.* November 15. Accessed June 10, 2022.
https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Speeches-Testimony/Article/565149/kokoda-foundation-
australia/.

Lynch III, Thomas F, and James J Przystup. 2017. *India-Japan Strategic Cooperation
and Implications for U.S. Strategy in the Indo-Asia-Pacific Region.* Strategic
Perspectives, Institute for National Strategic Studies, Washington D.C: National Defense
University Press, 1-45.

Mackinder, Halfrod John. 1904. "The Geographical Pivot of History." *The Geographical
Journal* 23 (4): 421–437.

Maclean, J.L. 1989. "Indo-Pacific red tides, 1985–1988." *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 20
(7): 304-310.

Madan, Tanvi. 2017. "The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of the 'Quad'." *War on the Rocks.*
November 16. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://warontherocks.com/2017/11/rise-fall-
rebirth-quad/.

Mathai, Ranjan. 2012. *Speech by FS at the Center for Strategic andInternational Studies
on "Building on Convergences: Deepening India-U.S. Strategic Partnership".* February
06. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://mea.gov.in/press-
releases.htm?dtl/18274/Speech+by+FS+at+the+Center+for+Strategic+and+International
+Studies+on+quotBuilding+on+Convergences+Deepening+IndiaUS+Strategic+Partners
hipquot.

Mattis, James N. 2018. "Remarks by Secretary Mattis at Plenary Session of the 2018
Shangri-La Dialogue." *U.S Department of Defense.* June 2. Accessed June 10, 2022.

https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/1538599/remarks-by-secretary-mattis-at-plenary-session-of-the-2018-shangri-la-dialogue/.

Mazumdar, Arijit. 2021. "FROM "LOOK EAST" TO "ACT EAST": INDIA'S EVOLVING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION." *Asian Affairs* 52 (2): 357-374.

McDonell, Stephen. 2007. "Nelson meets with China over military relationship." *ABC*. July 9. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2007/s1973940.htm.

Medcalf, Rory. 2013. *The Indo-Pacific pivot.* May 13. Accessed June 13, 2022. http://archive.indianexpress.com/news/the-indopacific-pivot/1113736/.

Miller, S A. 2016. "Donald Trump vows to cancel Trans-Pacific Partnership as president, puts NAFTA on notice." *The Washington Times.* June 28. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/jun/28/donald-trump-vows-to-cancel-trans-pacific-partners/.

Ministry of Defence of India. 2020. *Malabar 2020 Naval Exercise.* October 19. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1665830.

Ministry of Extarnel Affairs of India. 2016. *India-Japan Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister to Japan.* November 11. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/27599/IndiaJapan+Joint+Statement+during+the+visit+of+Prime+Minister+to+Japan.

—. 2006. "Joint Statement Towards India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership." *Ministry of Extarnal Affairs of India.* December 15. Accessed 6 13, 2022. https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/6368/Joint+Statement+Towards+IndiaJapan+Strategic+and+Global+Partnership.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. 2017. *Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultations on the Indo-Pacific.* November 12. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_001789.html.

—. 2017. "Diplomatic Bluebook 2017." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000290287.pdf.

—. 2018. "Diplomatic Bluebook 2018." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000290287.pdf.

—. 2019. "Diplomatic Bluebook 2019." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000290287.pdf.

—. 2020. "Diplomatic Bluebook 2020." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000290287.pdf.

—. 2021. "Diplomatic Bluebook 2020." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000290287.pdf.

—. 2015. *Japan and India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership.* December 12. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sw/in/page3e_000432.html.

—. 2014. *Japan-India Summit Meeting.* November 14. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sw/in/page24e_000065.html.

—. 2007. *New Pillar for Japanese Diplomacy: Creating an Arc of Freedom and Prosperity.* Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2007/html/h1/h1_01.html.

—. 2006. *Trilateral Strategic Dialogue.* March 18. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/joint0603-2.html.

Modi, Narendra Damodardas . 2018. *Prime Minister's Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue (June 01, 2018).* June 1. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-

Statements.htm?dtl/29943/Prime+Ministers+Keynote+Address+at+Shangri+La+Dialogu e+June+01+2018.

Mohan, C Raja. 2012. *Samudra Manthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific.* Washington D.C: Carnegie Endowment for Int'l Peace.

Motegi, Toshimitsu. 2020. *ASEAN Policy Speech by Foreign Minister MOTEGI Toshimitsu.* January 10. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sea2/page3e_001148.html.

Mountz, Alison. 2009. "Border." In *Key Concepts in Political Geography*, by Carolyn Gallaher, Carl T Dahlman, Mary Gilmartin and Peter Shirlow, 198-209. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Müller, Martin. 2010. "Doing discourse analysis in critical geopolitics." *Les théories de la Géopolitique* 12.

Nevins, Joseph. 2002. *Operation Gatekeeper : the rise of the "illegal alien" and the remaking of the U.S.-Mexico boundary.* New York: Routledge.

Nicholson, Brendan. 2007. "China warns Canberra on security pact." *The Age.* June 15. Accessed June 12, 2022. https://www.theage.com.au/national/china-warns-canberra-on-security-pact-20070615-ge54v5.html.

Osterud, Oyvind. 1988. "Review of The Uses and Abuses of Geopolitics, by Geoffrey Parker, Pascal Girot, Eleonore Kofman, and Patrick O'Sullivan." *Journal of Peace Research* 25 (2): 191–199. http://www.jstor.org/stable/423922.

Ouellette, Megan E, and Tomáš Weiss . 2015. ""This Marvelous Symbol of Our Identity": The Czech Republic in American Practical Geopolitics." *Geopolitics* 20 (2): 267-286.

Paasi, Anssi. 109-122. "Territory." In *A Companion to Political Geography*, by John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell and Tuathail Ó Gearóid , Oxford. Oxford: Routledge.

Painter, Joe. 2008. "Geographies of Space and Power." In *The SAGE Handbook of Political Geography*, by Kevin R. Cox, Murray Low and Jennifer Robinson, 57-72. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Pan, Chengxin. 2014. "The 'Indo-Pacific' and geopolitical anxieties about China's rise in the Asian regional order." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 68 (4): 453-469.

Panikkar, Kavalam Madhava. 1951. *India and the Indian Ocean : an essay on the influence of sea power on Indian history.* London: Allen & Unwin.

Pardesi, Manjeet S. 2020. "Australian Journal of International Affairs." *The Indo-Pacific: a 'new' region or the return of history?,* 74 (2): 124-146.

Parrikar, Shri Manohar . 2016. *Speech of the Defence Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar at the Shangri-La Dialogue .* June 4. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://idsa.in/resources/speech/defence-minister-manohar-parrikar-shangri-la-dialogue.

Pearse, JS, and BF Phillips. 1968. "Continuous reproduction in the Indo-Pacific sea urchin Echinometra mathaei at Rottnest Island, Western Australia." *Australian Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research* 19 (2): 161 - 172.

Pete, Tanvi. 2020. "Re-(Modi)fying India's Israel Policy: An Exploration of Practical Geopolitical Reasoning Through Re-representation of 'India', 'Israel' and 'West Asia' Post-2014." *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs. 2020;* 7 (1).

Pompeo, Mike. 2018. "Secretary Pompeo Remarks on "America's Indo-Pacific Economic Vision"." *U.S Embassy & Consultate In The Republic of Korea.* July 30. Accessed June 30, 2022. https://kr.usembassy.gov/073018-secretary-pompeo-remarks-on-americas-indo-pacific-economic-vision/.

Prakash, Admiral (Retd.) Arun . 2011. "Rise of the East: The Maritime Dimension." *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India* 7 (2): 1-13.

Prakash, Admiral (Retd.) Arun. 2021. "The new AUKUS alliance holds some lessons for India." *The Indian Express.* October 22. Accessed June 13, 2022.

https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/aukus-alliance-new-partnerships-realpolitik-7523384/.

Prasad, Nidhi. 2019. "India's Foray into the Indo-Pacific: Embracing Ambiguity through Strategic Autonomy." Research Report, Institute of Developing Economies, Chiba. https://www.ide.go.jp/library/Japanese/Publish/Reports/InterimReport/2018/pdf/2018_2_40_011_ch07.pdf.

Rossiter, Ash, and Brendon J Cannon. 2020. *Conflict and Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific New Geopolitical Realities.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Sack, Robert David. 1986. *Human Territoriality. Its Theory and History.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saran, Shyam. 2011. "Mapping the Indo-Pacific." *The Indian Express.* October 29. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/mapping-the-indopacific/.

Satake, Tomohiko, and Ryo Sahashi. 2021. "The Rise of China and Japan's 'Vision' for Free and Open Indo-Pacific." *Journal of Contemporary China* 30 (127): 18-35.

Schuh, Randall T, and Gary M Stonedahl. 1986. "HISTORICAL BIOGEOGRAPHY IN THE INDO-PACIFIC: A CLADISTIC APPROACH." *Cladistics* (2) 4: 337-355.

Scott, David. 2018. "India and the Indo-Pacific Discourse." In *New Directions in India's Foreign Policy: Theory and Praxis*, by Pant V Harsh, 195-214. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scott, David. 2012. "The "Indo-Pacific"—New Regional Formulations and New Maritime Frameworks for US-India Strategic Convergence,." *Asia-Pacific Review* 85-109.

Scott, David. 2018. "The Indo-Pacific in US Strategy: Responding to Power Shifts." *Rising Powers Quarterly* 3 (2): 19-43.

Shah, Rahat. 2020. "Will the Indo-Pacific strategy besiege China?" *Australian Journal of Maritime & Ocean Affairs* 12 (3): 125-137.

Shotaro, Yachi, interview by Nippon. 2013. *Behind the New Abe Diplomacy: An Interview with Cabinet Advisor Yachi Shōtarō* (August 8). Accessed June 2022, 13. https://www.nippon.com/en/currents/d00089/.

Sidhu, Harinder. 2018. "High Commissioner's Address to the National Defence College on Australia and India in the Indo-Pacific." *Austrlian High Commission.* May 3. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://india.highcommission.gov.au/ndli/HOMspeech030518.html.

—. 2019. "High Commissioner's Remarks at Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore." *Austrlian High Commission.* October 14. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://india.embassy.gov.au/ndli/HOMspeech141019.html.

—. 2016. "THE VIEW OF ASIA FROM AUSTRALIA." *Austrlian High Commission.* April 12. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://india.highcommission.gov.au/ndli/asiasociety0416.html.

Singh, Manmohan. 2012. *Opening Statement by Prime Minister at Plenary Session of India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit.* December 20. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/20981/Opening+Statement+by+Prime+Minister+at+Plenary+Session+of+IndiaASEAN+Commemorative+Summit.

Singh, Sanjay. 2013. "Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region: Asian Perspectives." In *India's Foreign Relations-2013: Documents*, by Atvar Bhasin, 291-295. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs of India.

Smith, Stephen. 2011. "Australia and India Building the Strategic Partnership." *Parliament of Australia.* December 9. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/media/pressrel/1418962/upload_binary/1418962.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf.

Takeuchi, Keiichi. 2000. "JAPANESE GEOPOLITICS IN THE 1930s AND 1940s." In *Geopolitical Traditions: Critical Histories of a Century of Geopolitical Thought*, by David Atkinson and Klaus Dodds, 72-92. London: Routledge.

Taylor, Brendan. 2020. "Contested Concept: Unpacking Australia's Indo-Pacific Debate." *Asian Politics & Policy* 12 (1): 71-83.

Thankachan, Shahana. 2017. "Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy": Reality before the Rhetoric?" *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India* 84 (91): 84-91.

The White House - Office of the Press Secretary. 2015. "FACT SHEET: Advancing the Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific." *The White House.* November 16. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/11/16/fact-sheet-advancing-rebalance-asia-and-pacific.

The White House. 2017. "National Security Strategy of the United States of America." *Trump White House Archives.* December. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf.

Tillerson, Rex. 2017. "Defining Our Relationship with India for the Next Century: An Address by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson." *Center for Strategic and International Studies.* October 18. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/event/171018_An_Address_by_U.S._Secretary_of_State_Rex_Tillerson.pdf.

Tuathail, Gearóid Ó. 1996. *Critical Geopolitics.* London: Routledge.

Tuathail, Gearóid Ó. 2002. "Theorizing practical geopolitical reasoning: the case of the United States' response to the war in Bosnia." *Political Geography* 21 (5): 601-628.

Tuathail, Gearóid Ó, and Simon Delby. 1998. *Rethinking Geopolitics.* London: Routledge.

Tuathail, Gearóid Ó, and John Agnew. 1992. "Geopolitics and discourse: Practical geopolitical reasoning in American foreign policy." *Political Geography* 11 (2): 190-204.

Turnbull, Minister. 2018. "Joint Press Statement Visit to Japan by Australian Prime Minister Turnbull." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.* Jaunary 18. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000326262.pdf.

U.S Department of Defense. 2019. "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region." *U.S Department of Defense.* June 1. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/-1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF.

—. 2018. "National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge." *Department of Defense.* Accessed June 10, 2022. https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf.

U.S Department of State. 2019. "A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision." *U.S Department of State.* November 3. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.state.gov/a-free-and-open-indo-pacific-advancing-a-shared-vision/.

—. 2021. *U.S.-Australia-India-Japan Consultations (the "Quad") Senior Officials Meeting.* August 12. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.state.gov/u-s-australia-india-japan-consultations-the-quad-senior-officials-meeting/.

U.S Indo-Pacific Command. 2022. *USPACOM Area of Responsibility.* March. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/.

Varadarajan, Siddharth. 2007. " Chinese demarches to 4 nations ." *The Hindu.* June 14. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-international/Chinese-demarches-to-4-nations/article14777267.ece.

Varghese, Peter. 2015. "An Australian world view: A practitioner's perspective." *Lowy Institute.* August 20. Accessed June 30, 2022. https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/address-peter-varghese-ao-australian-world-view-practitioners-perspective.

—. 2013. "Australia and Asia in the Asian Century." *Asia Society.* April 29. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://asiasociety.org/australia/australia-and-asia-asian-century.

—. 24. "MAPPING THE FUTURE." *Lowy Institute.* February 2014. Accessed June 30, 2022. https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/council-councils-lecture-mapping-future-peter-varghese-ao.

White House. 2021. *Fact Sheet: Quad Leaders' Summit.* September 24. Accessed June 30, 2022. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/09/24/fact-sheet-quad-leaders-summit/.

—. 2022. "Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States." *White House.* February. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf.

—. 2021a. *Quad Leaders' Joint Statement: "The Spirit of the Quad".* March 12. Accessed June 30, 2022. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/12/quad-leaders-joint-statement-the-spirit-of-the-quad/.

—. 2021b. *Remarks by President Biden, Prime Minister Morrison of Australia, and Prime Minister Johnson of the United Kingdom Announcing the Creation of AUKUS.* September 15. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/15/remarks-by-president-biden-prime-minister-morrison-of-australia-and-prime-minister-johnson-of-the-united-kingdom-announcing-the-creation-of-aukus/.

—. 2014. *U.S.-India Joint Statement.* September 30. Accessed June 29, 2014. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/30/us-india-joint-statement.

Wong, Alex N. 2018. "Briefing on The Indo-Pacific Strategy ." *U.S Department of State.* April 2. Accessed June 10, 2022. https://2017-2021.state.gov/briefing-on-the-indo-pacific-strategy/index.html.