

Multi-interests of external powers in the Pacific

Abstract

Realistic Conflict Theories (RCT) is used in the analysis, since the complexity of factors raised in the questions of interest (internal and external) in the Pacific region. This writing is only a glance look at the diversity of the problem, and far away from efforts to offer a one solution for all of these problems, actually. RCT offers an explanation for negative attitudes toward racial integration and efforts to promote diversity (which looks real in the interaction between internal actors/ leaders and external actors/ real as “super Powers”) in the area.

Keyword

Pacific region- interests- variables and factors for potentials– defense pact-nuclear development program

Introduction

USA's first involvement to create Chinese Yangtze River Patrol in 1854, which ended in 1949, was US naval commitment, the longest one, in American history.

Antipiracy operation in waters from Japan to South China Sea have been included in the U.S.A naval operation in the Indo-Pacific region since the 18 century. (Squadron continued, major actions included expedition to Formosa in the year of 1867, operation in Korea 1871. As the early 19 century ended, US presence in Indo Pacific increased. For example in 1905 the Treaty of Portsmouth that ended war between Japan and Russia, was mediated by President Theodore Roosevelt.

The beginning of the Pacific War that was opened on 8 December 1941 with attack Allied bases from Pearl Harbour to Malaya, Guam fell on 10 December and Wake Island 23 December and Hongkong and Christmas Island on 1941. Finally, the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August 1945, plus entry of the Soviet Union into the war compelled Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945, World War II, thus ended with the US in a pivotal position in Asia, which it maintains to this day.

3 decades after Japan's surrender were the decades of conflicts between Communism and the West. Korean War around the 1950's, Vietnam War around the 1970's in Obama administration, US Strategy focus most on Asia. (Kolakowski, Christopher L, *A Short History of US Involvement in the Indo-Pacific*, *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, Fall 2018, pages 14-20).

The US Indo-Pacific strategy, is primarily a defense policy, illustrates the entanglement of geopolitical goals with goals to “free” and “open” region. Even though nuclear testing still made islanders of the Pacific states traumatized. Many schemes of security pacts were introduced by the US in the region. (Henryk Szadziewski, Finding the Pacific in the Indo-Pacific, 22 March 2022, Asia and The Pacific Policy Society, The Forum, page 1-3)

US’s Indo-Pacific strategy caused by : Indo-Pacific as :

- A. World most populous area,
- B. World most democracy and Moslem religion beholders,
- C. Half of global population,
- D. 9 biggest seaport of the world,
- E. 9 busiest seaport of the world, F. 60% of global maritime trade transit,
- G. 1/3 global shipping happening in this region.

(The Department of Defense of the USA, INDO-PACIFIC –Strategy Report-Preparedness, partnership & promoting a Networked region, June 1, 2019, pages 1)

Issues to be brought up from the US’s perspectives:

- A. The Indo-Pacific, in the last 70 years, was the allies and partner of the US. The US vision for an open and free Indo-Pacific encompassed values shared, and upholding mutual respect, responsibility, transparency, and accountability.
- B. US would continue to invest, act and orient itself to ensure that the international order will benefit others and the US.
- C. USA will contribute to investing, cooperating, providing access, and participating a free and open Indo-Pacific and implementing international-based order in the region for ensuring the prosperity of the region and the people. INDO-PACIFIC Report, idem)

Methods

Since the huge data is not really available for the writer, one thing to start seeing the topic is to look back to : history, potentials, facts and few figures in the area. And the qualitatively trying to gather all of that mentioned for looking a One-hit discussion. Hopefully could trigger more information in the future.

Result and discussions

After looking to some data; even though secondary ones, writer would try to seek a suitable theory to explain what is Indo-Pacific strategic would be implemented in the future.

Economic cooperation and global issues such as tackling climate change

Global challenges can be resolved only through joint action. This is particularly true when it comes to tackling global warming and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Five of the ten biggest carbon dioxide emitters are coastal states on the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Ministerial forums of European Union for cooperation held on February 2022 talked about the issue of climate change, since it is so important for stability and prosperity of the Europe too. (<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/regionaleschwerpunkte/asien/baerbock-indopacific/2512714>)

Issues in the writing:

- A. Rivalry of the US and EU: U.S. and EU interests in the region largely overlap but do diverge in significant ways. While both Europe and the United States are keen on increasing trade flows and addressing unfair Chinese economic practices, the EU's emphasis on free trade has allowed it to either complete trade agreements or launch new negotiations with regional partners like Australia, Japan, and Singapore. (Brattberg, idem)
- B. Risk-based international order: The evolving strategic dynamics in the Indo-Pacific are of paramount importance for the future of the rules-based international order. While the United States is redirecting strategic focus to the region as part of its Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy, Europe is also stepping up its role—leveraging a strong economic profile, long-standing bilateral ties, and active engagement in various regional multilateral forums. The European Union (EU) and its member states can make distinct contributions to an open, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based regional order, though not necessarily always in lockstep with Washington.
- C. French Policies in the Indo-Pacific: The top French priorities in the region are protecting its overseas territories (New Caledonia and French Polynesia in the Pacific Ocean and La Réunion in the Indian Ocean), its extensive exclusive economic zone, and the over 1.6 million overseas French citizens who reside in the region. France always wants to increase its defense export, implementing nuclear proliferation and terrorism, maintaining maritime security and protecting its trade connections, and also upholding the rule based international order in the region. (Brattberg, Erik & Le Corree Philip, The Case for Transatlantic Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, December 18,2019, PAPER Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

- D. US-Chinese Rivalry in the Pacific areas: China warned Tuesday that the U.S. and its nuclear allies Australia and the United Kingdom were heading down a "path of error and danger" after they unveiled a deal that will see Australia purchase nuclear-powered attack submarines. The submarine purchase is aimed at modernizing Australia's fleet amid growing concern about China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region. (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/china-us-uk-australia-nuclear-submarines-path-of-error-and-danger>)
- E. Nuclear deal between US-UK and Australia : endangered peaceful co-existences of the Pacific countries in the long-run. Starting this year, Australian military and civilian personnel will be embedded with members of the U.S. and U.K. navies to best learn the technology, eventually holding rotations docking the submarines with Australia beginning in 2027. Pending congressional approval, the U.S. will seek to sell Australia three Virginia class nuclear-powered submarines beginning in the early 2030s. The U.S. is willing to sell up to five submarines, if needed. "This first project is only the beginning. More partnerships, more potential for peace and security in the region lies ahead," (<https://www.cnbc.com/2023/03/13/australia-to-receive-nuclear-powered-submarines-in-deal-with-us-uk>)

F. European Union's interest in the Pacific

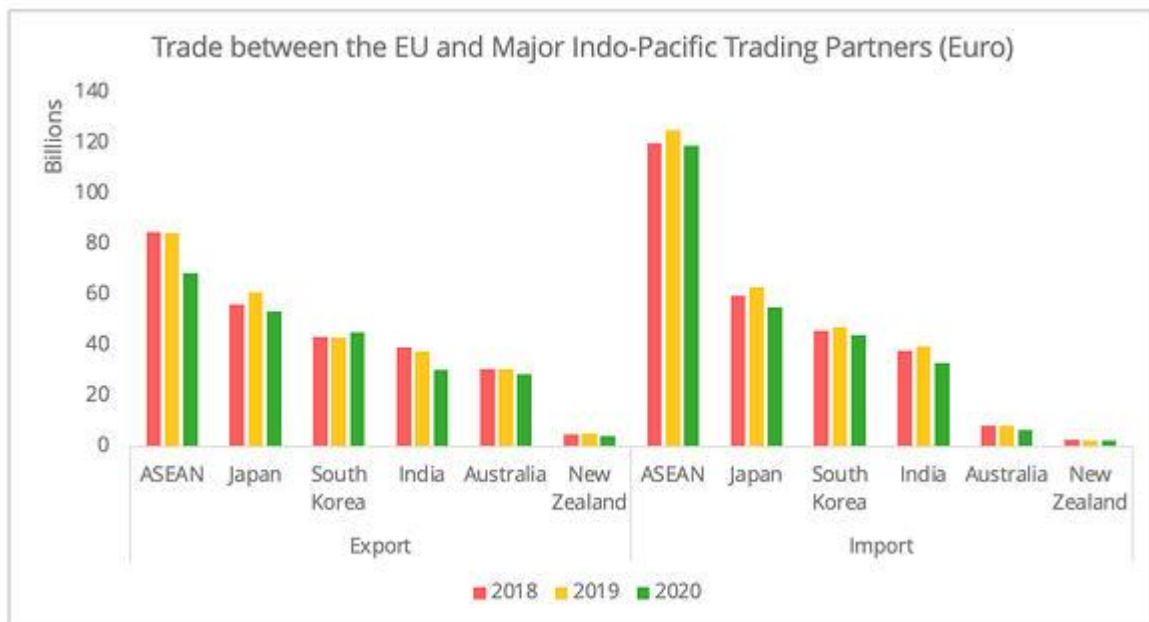


Fig. 1. Trade between the EU and Major Indo-Pacific Trading Partners (Euro)

EU's interests in the Pacific is to seeking alternative approach to the Chinese Belt & Road Initiative, even though it is not yet clear and several challenges to be faced:

- a. compete with Chinese investment that already well-established in the Pacific,

- b. Existences of other countries' procurement regulation which not suitable with the EU's standard, for example in transportation project of Japan in the region
- c. Conflict interest with Australia's Free Trade Agreement (Zhang, Ganyi, Europe wants to increase its role in transport connectivity, Supply.com, 15 October 2021)

US's Influence recent years

Other fact in today's world political sphere is that according to the Defense Intelligence Enterprise (DIE), which issued a confidential document indicating that the US is on a losing streak in the era of Great Power Competition (GPC). Based on the points mentioned in the document, the US has confessed that its national defense foundation is lapsing to develop and prosper to observe the dynamic shift in the global landscape while its rivals including Iran, China, and Russia are forging ahead with plans to grab opportunities in a bid to dwindle and cut US leverage and hands in the world. (www.mehrnewsagency.com/ 150323)

Theories

1. **Realistic conflict theory** (initialized **RCT** is a social psychological model of intergroup conflict.^[3] The theory explains how intergroup hostility can arise as a result of conflicting goals and competition over limited resources, and it also offers an explanation for the feelings of prejudice and discrimination toward the outgroup that accompany the intergroup hostility.^{[1][3][4]} Groups may be in competition for a real or perceived scarcity of resources such as money, political power, military protection, or social status. (also known as **realistic group conflict theory** (initialized **RGCT**) Jackson, Jay W (1993). "Realistic Group Conflict Theory: A Review and Evaluation of the Theoretical and Empirical Literature". *Psychological Record*. **43** (3): 395–415.
2. ^ Baumeister, R.F. & Vohs, K.D. (2007). "Realistic Group Conflict Theory". *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology*. **2**: 725–726.)

Analysis:

Feelings of resentment can arise in the situation that the groups see the competition over resources as having a zero-sums fate, in which only one group is the winner (obtained the needed or wanted resources) and the other loses (unable to obtain the limited resource due to the "winning" group achieving the limited resource first).

The length and severity of the conflict is based upon the perceived value and shortage of the given resource. According to RCT, positive relations can only be restored if superordinate goals are in place.

RCT offers an explanation for negative attitudes toward racial integration and efforts to promote diversity.

Conclusions

We really need to draw a Table, and step by step calculating conflict of interests in the region; factors of real potentials, challenges, hinderances and solution, as norms, values, facts in the Pacific, rather to invent a one-solutions for all, because each countries already carries differences derived from its own past.

References

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