



The Evolution of U.S. Strategy from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific Region

Dr. Aram Ahmad WSO
Department of Law, College of Humanities, Raparin University, Rania, Kurdistan Region-Iraq.
Email: aram.ahmad@uor.edu.krd
Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Majeed
Department of International Relations & Diplomacy, Collage of Political Sciences/ Salahaddin University-Erbil, Erbil, Kurdistan Region-Iraq.
Email: mohammed.majeed1@su.edu.krd

ID No. 3541 (PP 252 - 280) https://doi.org/10.21271/zjlp.23.38.11	Received: 23/01/2025 Accepted: 22/04/2025 Published: 04/06/2025	KeyWords: Asia-Pacific , Indo-Pacific , Containment Strategy , United States of America, China
---	--	---

Abstract

This research aims to shed light on America's strategic changes in the Indo-Pacific region. The Indo-Pacific region, due to its numerous maritime straits and waterways, plays a vital role in international trade and is viewed as a base for forming alliances and balancing international powers. Since 2009, this region has gained increased importance in American foreign strategy, particularly during the presidencies of Obama, Trump, and Biden. Using qualitative methodology and a descriptive-analytical approach, the research attempts to answer the fundamental question of why American strategy has prioritized the Indo-Pacific region. The research begins with the premise that political, economic, and security changes in the Asian continent, especially the growing roles of China and India, have become a driving force for America to implement a new and more comprehensive strategy in the region. The research findings reveal that despite various challenges, the United States has attempted to expand its regional strategy from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific in order to achieve its geostrategic objectives, while countries in the region are working to form prudent alliances to counter the American Indo-Pacific strategy and the QUAD - AUKUS agreement.

Introduction

The Indo-Pacific region has become a focal point of global geopolitics due to its strategic importance, numerous maritime routes, and role in forming international alliances. Major powers such as the United States, Japan, India, Australia, and China dominate the regional and global systems, driving shifts in geostrategic directions and alliances. For the U.S., countering China's expanding dominance through containment and encirclement strategies has been a central policy focus. This shift is evident in the Obama administration, further developed by Trump under the "Indo-Pacific" concept, and emphasized by Biden through multilateral alliances. These changes are driven by



regional power shifts, including the rise of China and India and their influence over strategic waterways and trade routes.

The Indo-Pacific concept expands the Asia-Pacific framework, reflecting broader regional cooperation. It has gained prominence due to Japan and India's initiatives and U.S. adoption as part of a strategy to maintain its hegemony while fostering alliances with regional powers.

The primary research problem addresses the strategic transformation of U.S. policy in the Indo-Pacific region post-2009, primarily driven by China's regional dominance and ambitions. To counter these developments, the U.S. has adopted a containment policy, forming alliances with key regional players such as India, Japan, and Australia.

The research holds significance in three dimensions: First, The strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region as a geopolitical axis, maritime hub, economic gateway, and demographic center. Second, the evolution of U.S. foreign policy as a superpower addressing regional strategic challenges. Third, analyzing U.S. strategy to counterbalance China's dominance and foster multilateral alliances. The research aims to analyze the transformation of U.S. strategy from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific, focusing on the drivers behind this shift. The research examines how China's emergence as a regional power and its economic initiatives have influenced U.S. policy adjustments. This research encompasses several key questions, including; Why has American strategy since 2009 focused on the Indo-Pacific region? What factors motivated the U.S. strategic re-emphasis on the Asia-Pacific? What mechanisms does the U.S. employ to implement its Indo-Pacific strategy?

The main hypothesis of the research predicts that the rise of China and India has prompted the United States to adopt a comprehensive Indo-Pacific strategy, which combines containment measures and multilateral alliances to balance China's influence and reassure regional allies.

Literature Review

The U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy and its effects on regional power dynamics—specifically, U.S.-China relations—are examined in this overview of the literature.

Abbas, Qazi, and Ali's (2023) research analyzes U.S. strategy in the Asia-Pacific region and its impact on China. The researchers highlight America's efforts to contain Chinese hegemony through security arrangements like QUAD and AUKUS, along with increased military presence in the region.

Von (2007) emphasizes the strategic changes in the region in his research. He identifies several key factors: China's rapid strengthening, complexities in North Korea and Taiwan, and the threat of radical Islamic groups. As solutions, he suggests strengthening alliances with Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

Zeng and Zhang (2021) analyze the shift in U.S. strategy from "Asia-Pacific" to "Indo-Pacific" in their research. This change occurred during the Trump administration and represents a profound shift in U.S. geopolitical strategy. The objectives of this strategy include strengthening alliances, increasing military presence, and countering China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Ali and Kamraju (2019) highlight the importance of the Indo-Pacific region and its implications for India and China. The research emphasizes India's efforts to balance



Chinese influence and the importance of multilateral diplomacy with ASEAN, the United States, and regional partners.

The principal gap in previous scholarship lies in their predominantly narrow focus on the Asia-Pacific conceptual framework and bilateral U.S.-China relations. This research distinguishes itself by critically examining the evolutionary trajectory of U.S. strategic doctrines post-2009, conducting a comprehensive analysis of containment and engagement policies as distinctive strategic mechanisms deployed by the United States in the region.

Specifically, this study emphasizes how these dual policies represent a strategic paradigm shift in America's approach to counterbalancing China's growing influence. It provides an in-depth analysis of how the U.S. strategic paradigm transformed following the global financial crisis and China's emergence as an economic and military power. Furthermore, this research presents a nuanced examination of the pivotal roles that regional powers such as India, Japan, and Australia play in the regional power equilibrium, analyzing their complex interactions within this strategic framework in ways that previous studies have not systematically or comprehensively addressed.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of Realism provides an appropriate framework for analyzing the transformation of U.S. strategy from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific. According to Neo-realism, as developed by Kenneth Waltz (1979) in his book "Theory of International Politics," the international system exists in a state of anarchy, meaning the absence of a supreme authority above states. Waltz emphasizes that in this anarchic system, states are compelled to rely on military power and alliances for survival and security (Waltz, 1979: 88). Additionally, Waltz argues that states naturally seek to strengthen their position and tend to balance power. From this perspective, the shift in U.S. strategy toward the Indo-Pacific can be analyzed as a mechanism of self-preservation and defense of its interests against China's power.

According to Waltz's Neo-realist principles, the international system continuously seeks to find a balance of power, especially when a new power (like China) rises and creates a threat to the dominant power (the United States). Waltz suggests that in such a system, states are forced to develop new strategies to maintain their position. Within this framework, changes in U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region can be interpreted as part of the dynamics predicted by Waltz, particularly regarding the importance of polarity systems (bipolar or multipolar) and the effect of these systems on state behavior and the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region.

Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative methodology to present the evolution of U.S. strategy from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific. The study is based on a descriptive-analytical approach, through which the Indo-Pacific region is examined as an area of international powers' interest, with emphasis on how U.S. strategy has developed significantly in the new century. For data analysis, the research utilizes a neo-realist theoretical framework which aids in understanding power dynamics and strategic competition. This study also



applies in-depth qualitative analysis to track changes and continuity in American policy, and relies on books, academic journals, research from strategic centers, and electronic resources for data collection.

1. The Geostrategic Composition of the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific Regions

The Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions, with their notable changes over the past three decades, play a crucial role in global geopolitics, to the extent that these changes in the twenty-first century are reshaping the global balance of power. Within this framework, we aim to present an introduction to these regions, their importance, and their threats.

1.1. Introduction to the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific Regions

Within the framework of political and diplomatic geography development, the concept of Asia-Pacific has undergone methodological evolution since the 1960s. According to Japanese Foreign Minister Takeo Miki's perspective in the 1960s, this concept emerged as a new geopolitical paradigm with ever-changing boundaries. The true core of this concept consisted of Northeast Asian and Southeast Asian countries (China, Korea, Japan, and the ten ASEAN nations), but its outer circle has been continuously changing, which can be viewed as a living geostrategic concept in constant motion and transformation. Academically, the proliferation of studies on Asia-Pacific increased over four decades, which was a clear indication of this region's geopolitical importance and sensitivity in the international system (Eades and Cooper, 2010: 3). For more information about the Asia-Pacific region, see Map (1.1)



Source: Maps of World



Observing world geography, it becomes apparent that regional naming is based on imagination. States generally want regional definitions to be established according to their intended policies. The Asia-Pacific concept dates back to the 1960s and 1970s. This concept (Asia-Pacific) was developed by Australia, Japan, and the United States to connect East Asia with the Pacific region (McDougall, 2021). Fundamentally, the term Asia-Pacific emphasizes only the Asian dimension and separates the Pacific region. Therefore, it can be noted that the term East Asia is geographically more limited and includes powers like Australia and America; moreover, the Far East term has historical roots and is Euro-centric. In this context, America wants to legitimize its intervention in East Asian countries' relations through the term "Asia Pacific." Although America doesn't define itself as an Asian power, its extensive involvement in the Asia-Pacific region ensures that America is defined as part of Asia-Pacific; in other words, the main factor in forming this concept is American support (Buzan, 2013: 86).

Western countries (including New Zealand, Canada, and Australia) that are central to the Pacific, like America, haven't had significant participation in shaping the concept, but they have had similar motives and support continuing this narrative. In this framework, like Japan, which has a supportive background in this concept, wants to continue multilateral participation in its relations with East Asia. If tensions between America and Japan arise, Japan can create opportunities to eliminate these tensions at a broader regional level (Durmuş, 2023: 196).

Of course, the term Pacific region isn't a specific concept to be used for Asia, but rather it's the main alternative regional structure that distances Western countries like America from East Asia. From 1981 to 2003, the main supporter of this idea was Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. Although Malaysia is a member of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), established in 1989, Mahathir Mohamad preferred the East Asian Economic Group (Temiz, 2019a). After the Asian economic crisis in 1997, ASEAN Plus Three was established with the participation of South Korea, Japan, and China, bringing new dynamics to the East Asian region. Finally, after a meeting in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, a new group was formed called the East Asia Summit (McDougall, 2021: 21-22).

In general, the Asia-Pacific region encompasses East Asia and Western Pacific countries such as New Zealand, Canada, Australia, and the United States. East Asia can be divided into two groups: Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. Northeast Asia includes Mongolia, Russia, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and China. Southeast Asia includes Vietnam, East Timor, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Laos, Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Brunei. All Southeast Asian countries are members of ASEAN, except for East Timor (Durmuş, 2023: 198). Additionally, New Zealand and Australia are the main countries of the South Pacific, while the entire Pacific Islands region is part of Asia-Pacific. The allied island states near New Zealand and Australia (such as Fiji and Papua New Guinea) form the most important Pacific Islands forum. It should be noted that some definitions of Asia-Pacific include not only Canada and the United States but also Latin American Pacific Rim countries. For example, Chile, Peru, and Mexico are members of APEC. Furthermore, India interacts with Asia-Pacific in various ways (McDougall, 2021: 22).



Indo-Pacific refers to the connection between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, extending from East Africa to the Pacific coasts of the Americas on one side, and from the Bering Strait to the Southern Ocean waters on the other. This geographical concept of the Indo-Pacific region reflects the increased commercial and human movement in South and East Asia (Matar w Tahir, 31:2022).

Regarding the Indo-Pacific concept, historically it dates back to the 1920s, when German thinker Karl Haushofer developed it within the framework of geopolitical space theory. The main characteristic of this concept was initially associated with anti-colonial discourse and efforts to restructure the international system. Haushofer, from a strategic perspective, saw both China and India as two major regional powers capable of standing against Euro-American imperial hegemony. Despite the depth of Haushofer's theory, it had little impact outside German academia. Later in 1940, Indian historian Kalidas Nag revived this concept in his book "India and the Pacific World." However, a significant shift in understanding the concept came from Mohammad Hatta, Vice President of Indonesia, who in 1953 presented a new framework for understanding the Indo-Pacific region in Foreign Affairs magazine. Hatta, from the perspective of a newly independent state, emphasized two main dimensions: first, the importance of social justice and welfare, and second, the need for balance in foreign policy between the two global power poles. This vision later became the main foundation for establishing the Non-Aligned Movement at the 1955 Bandung Conference (Schoeman and Wu, 2022:13). The academic and theoretical understanding of the Indo-Pacific concept remained within a limited framework in the early twenty-first century. However, a significant shift in understanding this concept occurred in 2005. This transformation came through New Zealand strategic analyst Peter Cozens, who presented a new framework for understanding the Indo-Pacific space in an article published in the *Maritime Affairs* journal. In his maritime-strategic perspective, Cozens viewed Indo-Pacific geography as an integrated unit extending from the northern Indian Ocean to South Asia, Southeast Asia, Australasia, and the islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, and East Asian nations. The significance of Cozens' analysis lies in his representation of the Indo-Pacific as a 'non-Atlantic worldview,' essentially returning to Karl Haushofer's 1920 conceptualization. Thus, Cozens managed to build a bridge between classical theories and contemporary understanding of the Indo-Pacific region (Khurana, 2019: 3).

As a geostrategic concept, in 2007, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in an address to the Indian Parliament discussing the confluence of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, advanced the proposal of an 'Arc of Freedom and Prosperity' in Asia, emphasizing the shared interests among international powers connected to both oceans in trade and economic geography, comprising the United States, Japan, India, and Australia (Abe, 2007).

Conversely, the United States presented the strategic concepts of 'Indo-Pacific' and 'Freedom and Prosperity' as counter-concepts to reshape the structure of the region that China is developing through its Belt and Road Initiative (Shicun and Colombage, 2019). Despite China being a principal actor in the Indo-Pacific region, it remains hesitant about redefining the very concept of Indo-Pacific and the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity in the region. China has not even referenced the term Indo-Pacific in its



official documents, though China's economic and strategic aspirations via the Indian and Pacific Oceans are clearly evident (He and Mingjiang, 2020).

At the institutional level, the Indo-Pacific idea represents the construction of regional institutions and the formation of a broader concept than the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). From an institutional dimension, reference can be made to the U.S. alliance system in the region, as it can manage 'conflicts' and promote 'cooperation-coordination,' which are two completely different concepts in nature (Medcaff, 2016: 7). Considering the levels of this concept and the absence of a unified vision for the geographical boundaries of this concept, each state has defined a strategic concept for this region that aligns with both its geographical position and national interests. Thus, due to the existence of various perspectives on this region, the concept varies among countries associated with the region, in a way that aligns with their interests and political, security, and economic implications (Shicun and Colombage, 2019).

Despite Australia and the United States sharing a similar geographical vision regarding the Indo-Pacific, the concept is much broader for Japan and India, as it encompasses both the Asian and African continents as well as the Pacific and Indian Oceans" (He and Mingjiang, 2020). See this map:



Source: Jindal Global University (JGU)

1.2. The Importance of the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific Regions and Their Security Threats

The Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions are of vital importance, given their significant geostrategic value to many global powers, most notably the United States and China. These regions possess distinct characteristics, encompassing half of the world's population and many key global allies, which has influenced the formation of security risks to the national interests of regional states.



1.2.1. The Importance of the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific Regions

Generally, Asia-Pacific nations can be categorized according to their development levels: Indonesia, Philippines, and Brunei are known for raw materials and agriculture, representing the least developed category. South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Australia are newly industrialized and more advanced. Japan and China are among the most developed Pacific nations (Hubersky, 1998: 14-15).

Examining the economic conditions of Asia-Pacific countries, these nations entered a rapid economic development process in the second half of the 20th century. Through industrialization and technological advancement, regional countries achieved independence from colonial powers and integrated into global capitalism. Consequently, these nations became actors in forming global capitalism. However, the power vacuum following the Soviet Union's collapse led to a series of ethnic, religious, and economic conflicts in the region. Following the 1997 economic crisis, U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq for global peace were significant regarding security objectives and regional developments (Caşin, 2003: 143-144).

The Asia-Pacific region holds global significance, both economically and strategically, comprising these key elements (Vekasi, 2023):

1. **Economic Power:** The Asia-Pacific region is one of the world's fastest-growing economic areas, home to major economies like China, Japan, South Korea, and India, comprising a significant portion of global trade.
2. **Natural Resources and Energy:** The region is rich in oil, natural gas, and minerals, with ownership and control providing strategic advantages to regional powers (China and India) and global players.
3. **Innovation and Technological Development:** Countries like China, Japan, and South Korea are global leaders in artificial intelligence, communications, semiconductors, and renewable energy, making the region a global center for technological development and production.
4. **Strategic Maritime Trade Routes:** Important waterways like the South China Sea and Malacca Strait are located in this region, through which most global trade occurs. The security of these routes is crucial for global energy and commodity flows (Storey, 2017:48).
5. **Geopolitical Contestation Zone:** The Asia-Pacific region is a focal point of persistent great power competition, where intersecting strategic interests generate significant interstate tensions. China's territorial claims, the Taiwan question, and North Korea's nuclear program are major sources of regional instability (Kim, 2020: 1-27).
6. **Demographic Capital:** The region encompasses approximately 60% of the global population, representing a dynamic and extensive labor market that significantly contributes to the global economy through consumption patterns, production capabilities, and innovation potential.
7. **Climate Security:** The Asia-Pacific region is highly vulnerable to climate change, especially sea-level rise and natural disasters. These environmental threats pose



significant security challenges and enhance the region's strategic importance (Busby, 2019: 3-15).

These seven elements of the Asia-Pacific region reshape international relations dynamics through: creating economic and technological competition between great powers, generating conflicts over control of natural resources and strategic trade routes, intensifying geopolitical competition in the region due to China's territorial claims and the Taiwan issue, using demographic power as leverage in relations, and employing climate change threats to form new alliances and expand the international security domain to include environmental security. Together, these factors have made the Asia-Pacific region the primary center for determining the global power equation in the 21st century.

Regarding the Indo-Pacific region, it is one of the world's most sensitive and important geostrategic areas, being the third-largest ocean after the Pacific and Atlantic. The region's importance manifests in several dimensions: demographically, approximately 35.7% of the world's population resides around this region. Geographically, it occupies 20% of the world's maritime area and shares borders with several strategic regions, including the Indian subcontinent, Arabian coast, Africa, Indonesia, Australia, and Thailand. Geopolitically, this region possesses seven strategic points: the Suez Canal, Horn of Africa, Strait of Hormuz, Bab el-Mandeb, Malacca Strait, and the Sunda and Lombok Straits. These points significantly impact international trade and energy security. While this region was relatively marginalized during the Cold War, it has now become an arena of competition between international and regional powers, with 38 littoral states having maritime borders with the Indian Ocean becoming part of this strategic equation. Thus, the Indian Ocean region emerges as a central hub in Asia's political theater, particularly in economic and geopolitical terms (Ali and Kamraju, 2019:7).

1.2.2. Security Threats in the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific Regions

The Asia-Pacific region has faced significant security threats in recent years. This region is at the forefront of global concerns due to various security issues such as great power competition, nuclear arms race, maritime border disputes, and terrorism. The intensifying rivalry between the U.S. and China has prompted regional countries to reassess their strategic positions, affecting regional security balance and leading to new alliances while generating new tensions.

Primary factors threatening Asia-Pacific security include: proliferation of ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction, arms race, and potential U.S. military presence in the region. Increasing energy demands, regional states' efforts to modernize defense forces, border disputes, and conflicts between other regional actors all increase the likelihood of new conflicts (Taştekin, 2009: 24).

Rising energy demand plays a crucial role among factors threatening regional states' security. The increasing share of Asia-Pacific countries in the global economy has led to heightened energy demand. The energy requirements of developing economies in the Asia-Pacific region extend beyond regional energy reserves to include transportation



and utilization of energy resources from Eurasia and the Caspian region, areas where global powers compete for influence (Erkan and Ateş, 2019).

Another regional energy issue arises from Asia-Pacific countries turning to nuclear energy to address energy shortages, with Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and North Korea leading this trend. This proliferation of nuclear energy production and usage increases the likelihood of additional regional conflicts. The emergence of new tensions and instability forces regional countries to seek strategic alliances to protect their energy security and strategic interests, which further deepens power competition in the region (Caşın, 2003: 145).

Demographic and environmental challenges appear likely to become major issues in the near future, though regional countries have yet to reach consensus on these matters. The increasing interests of global actors such as (G-8, ASEAN, NATO, UN, EU, Russia, India, Japan, China, and the U.S.) enhance regional security importance. In brief, persistent mistrust among Asia-Pacific nations remains a key factor in failing to achieve stability (Durmuş, 2023: 201-202).

The trilateral power dynamics in the region are predominantly shaped by the United States, China, and Japan, whose divergent security perceptions and strategic interests impede the establishment of a collective security framework. The region has witnessed an unprecedented acceleration in the arms acquisition trajectory, with nations allocating substantial fiscal resources to defense expenditure. This security dilemma manifestation is evidenced by the dramatic surge in defense spending across regional actors in recent years.

Empirical data indicates significant defense budget augmentation among key regional actors including Taiwan, China, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia, with multibillion-dollar investments in advanced weapons systems and military modernization programs. The militarization imperative among Asia-Pacific nations stems from rational security considerations, given the protracted nature of regional security challenges (Ekrem, 2006).

A primary destabilizing factor in regional security dynamics is the South China Sea dispute. China's expansive maritime territorial claims, coupled with its military presence proliferation and artificial island construction initiatives, generate significant concerns regarding energy security and commercial navigation paradigms. This strategic environment necessitates sustained U.S. military presence and enhanced security cooperation frameworks with Asia-Pacific partners (Storey, 2017: 47).

Territorial disputes represent primary conflict catalysts in regional interstate relations, manifesting in several critical contestations: First: The Senkaku Islands sovereignty dispute, involving competing claims from Taiwan and China against Japan's de facto control; Second, The Paracel Islands dispute between Vietnam and China; Third, The multilateral territorial contestation over the Spratly Islands, involving Taiwan, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and China. Furthermore, maritime hydrocarbon exploration disputes in the Pacific present significant conflict potential. Internal security challenges constitute additional destabilizing variables, exemplified by Cambodia's political instability, China's policies in Tibet and Xinjiang,



and secessionist movements such as East Timor in Indonesia. These intrastate dynamics hold significant potential for future regional destabilization (Torun, 2006).

Contemporary security challenges include the Myanmar crisis, potential military coercion against Taiwan by China, and North Korea's nuclear program, representing principal threats to regional peace. The post-9/11 security environment has necessitated nation-states within the international system to recalibrate their regional and continental foreign policy frameworks to address the rapidly evolving crisis dynamics. From contemporary geopolitical and geo-economic perspectives, the Asia-Pacific represents a vast strategic expanse between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, constituting a critical global security nexus. This strategic significance is amplified by the region's substantial production capabilities and demographic weight, encompassing 56% of the global population (Gottemoeller, 2015)."

Interstate conflicts over stability mechanisms have generated new power dynamics. Since the Cambodian conflict (1975), significant institutional developments have emerged facilitating Asia-Pacific integration, including: ASEAN's establishment (1967), The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) formation (1992); Sino-Russian rapprochement and regional integration within APEC (established in the 1980s); The Shanghai Five initiative (1996), later transformed into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with Uzbekistan's inclusion, significantly enhancing Chinese and Russian regional influence across Asia (Karaca, 2003: 95-110).

The Asia-Pacific region is experiencing a fundamental transformation in the 21st century, characterized by an eastward shift in capitalist hegemony and its emergence as a new power center. China's rapid ascendance, escalating terrorist threats, nuclear proliferation dynamics, and the presence of anti-democratic regimes constitute critical variables driving profound global systemic changes. China's emergence as an economic and political power plays a pivotal role in this transformative process. Concurrently, political instability and terrorist threats have transformed the region into a sensitive arena for international confrontation. The nuclear arms race and presence of authoritarian regimes have further amplified regional security challenges.

Regarding the Indo-Pacific region, several security threats have drawn policymakers' and governments' attention since the early twenty-first century. Within the maritime security strategy framework, several significant threats with direct regional impact have been identified. A primary threat relates to great power competition, particularly between the United States and China. This rivalry has created substantial pressure on small and medium-sized regional states, forcing them to align with one of the major powers. Additionally, human trafficking, piracy, and terrorist threats pose significant risks to regional maritime security. These threats directly impact trade and maritime transportation, damaging regional economies. Moreover, marine environmental degradation and illegal maritime migration represent two other significant challenges facing the region. This situation has been complicated by uncoordinated efforts in maritime security and the weakened role of international organizations in problem-solving. Concerningly, there are divergences in regional countries' strategies for confronting these threats; each state acts according to its interests, weakening collective security efforts in the region (Tuan, 2020: 130-131)."



2. The Evolution of U.S. Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region

At the onset of World War II, the United States' global role became distinctly evident. Alongside the Allies, America confronted the Axis powers led by Germany. Prior to the war's conclusion, the U.S. and its allies initiated negotiations to formulate a new political, military, security, and economic strategy for the world. This strategy was established through two primary pillars: the formation of military and security alliances, and the signing of the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944, which led to the establishment of crucial institutions that governed the global economy. This marked the historical beginning of American strategic development in the Asia-Pacific region, which will be examined through different phases.

2.1. U.S. Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region During the Cold War

Following World War II, the United States developed a comprehensive plan to secure its global position and hegemony. American strategic thinking during this phase took a holistic view of its interests and objectives. The U.S. role in the Asia-Pacific region was viewed within the framework of its grand strategy and rivalry with the Soviet Union. The world's division into two primary poles - the Liberal bloc led by the United States and the Socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union - was one of World War II's significant outcomes. Both sides endeavored to draw nations into their political, military, and economic alliances, leading to the widespread emergence of alliance systems in international relations.

The Asia-Pacific region was one of the most critical areas of contestation between these two powers. The United States attached particular strategic importance to this region due to its geostrategic significance, which aligned with Zbigniew Brzezinski's understanding of the region.

The latter half of the 1940s represents a foundational period for the development of America's role in the Pacific region. Following World War II, the United States emerged as a dominant power and according to the document "continued toward the stage of emergence as a global power". This emergence manifested itself within the framework of two main strategies: the "containment" strategy to counter the Soviet Union and the strategy of economic reconstruction based on the principle of "opening markets to one another" (Riham, 2020: 53-54).

The post-World War II circumstances motivated the United States to assume a significant role in the region; U.S. strategy was built on three main pillars (Kazim, 2006: 10):

1. Preventing the hegemony of any major power in the region
2. Maintaining the region's openness to American investment and commercial companies
3. Spreading democratic values and systems.

America maintained a comprehensive strategy regarding international affairs, thus its strategy in the Asia-Pacific region was not isolated from its Grand Strategy. Fundamentally, the U.S. attempted to employ the Containment Policy to encircle and



limit Soviet hegemony in the region, as it served as a crucial instrument for expanding America's role in regional affairs, enhancing its military capabilities, and developing bilateral and multilateral relations with regional countries. Therefore, the Containment Policy is considered the beginning of America's project to actualize its supreme role. Subsequently, the intensification of the Cold War between the two blocs further highlighted America's political, military, and security role in the region, which can be summarized in these points (Kazim, 2006: 11):

1. Strong military presence in Japan, South Korea, and Thailand
2. Formation of bilateral alliances with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines (Subh, 2006: 88)
3. Establishment of multilateral alliances such as ANZUS between America, Australia, and New Zealand for Pacific defense
4. Additionally, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) (Subh, 2006: 88)

The success of the Communist revolution in China had a significant impact on the international political arena and the nature of U.S. relations in East Asia. After 1949, China became a Communist state and Soviet ally, causing fear and perceived threats among neighboring countries. This new situation resulted in alliances between the U.S. and some regional countries that relied on American power against the threat of Communist expansion. These security tensions led to the Korean War (1950) and the Sino-Indian War (1962), creating regional conditions that allowed America to continue implementing its containment strategy under the pretext of building a defense system in Southeast Asia.

Within its strategic framework, America reconsidered the necessity of reviving Japan's role in the region to align with new developments. Japan's geopolitical position was crucial, and the presence of several U.S. military bases in Japan, which was a historical rival of both the Soviet Union and China, led America to propose the U.S.-Japan Alliance in 1951 for comprehensive cooperation, particularly in security. America took several significant steps to give Japan new strength for its revival. While working to rebuild Japan's political relations in support of its containment plan against the Soviet Union and China, it pursued the same diplomatic approach with South Korea, ultimately succeeding in establishing a network of regional relations and alliances (Han, 1983: 137-140).

Furthermore, due to the wave of Communist expansion in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly after China's Communist revolution, America signed a series of security agreements with regional countries to strengthen its influence and prevent Communist spread, especially with Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines. As the Cold War continued, the United States intensified its regional intervention, which resulted in the Vietnam War in 1955 as part of its efforts to achieve hegemony (Talhat, 1998: 22).

To attract regional countries into the capitalist bloc under its leadership, America intensified its diplomatic efforts to reach security agreements with some of these countries. For example, in 1962, it signed the Rusk-Thanat Agreement with Thailand, committing America to defend the country and assist with its military budget, primarily aiming to prevent Communist hegemonic expansion and keep Thailand within the Western alliance (Jad, 1998: 148). Consequently, Thailand and the Philippines



supported America in the Vietnam War by sending troops to South Vietnam to support U.S. forces in 1965. Although American strategy at that time considered China a direct threat, new realities led American strategic thinking in the 1970s to reorganize priorities, making China a "strategic necessity" for regional power balance (Kazim, 2006: 16).

Based on these previous indicators, we can highlight that the United States' role in the Asia-Pacific region during the Cold War was the most important in regional interaction. American policy in this region was fundamentally an attempt to prevent the spread of Communism, which subjected countries to an anti-Western ideological, political, and economic model, considered the primary threat to American and allied hegemony. During this period, America deployed various foreign policy tools and channels in its efforts to assume a strong and influential role in this region (Chung, 2000: 1).

2.2. U.S. Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region in the Post-Cold War Era

U.S. strategy in the Asia-Pacific region after the Cold War was built upon strengthening alliances with countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, as well as managing China's growth in the region. In this section, we examine the evolution of American strategy following the emergence of the unipolar system.

2.2.1. The Evolution of U.S. Strategy from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific

After the Cold War, the United States proclaimed the concept of a "New World Order" to establish itself as the sole actor and primary pole in managing international relations. This phase is characterized by America's clear role and profound influence on other international powers' roles, as Washington relied on elements of comprehensive power, including military, economic, and technological capabilities. Although America reviewed its military force deployment to adapt to the requirements of the new international system environment, it maintained its centrality in regional relations. In this context, aiming to build a stable international environment compatible with its interests and values, it sought to integrate security, economic, and democratic issues into a single strategy, thereby strengthening its leadership position in the global system.

After the end of the Cold War, U.S. strategy in the Asia-Pacific region underwent changes and required reformulation. While during the Cold War era, the "containment" strategy was America's primary approach, after this period ended, American policymakers struggled to formulate a new strategy suitable for the new circumstances. The main objective shifted to preserving the liberal international order and preventing the emergence of a new global competitor, as well as emphasizing the development of economic relations with countries in the region (Cossa et al., 2009:12-14).

This perspective constituted one of the fundamental pillars of the American proposal for building a new regional community in 1992, which manifested itself primarily through economic cooperation and support for countries in the region during the post-Cold War era. The evolution of this aspect became one of the most crucial objectives of America's role in the region, calling for multilateral regional cooperation, first evidenced in Bill



Clinton's 1992 proposal for building a "New Pacific Community" based on shared capabilities (Kazim, 2006: 98-101).

During this phase, prosperity, shared democratic values, the construction of America's role, and a new environment became the foundation for multilateral security. The adoption of mechanisms and establishment of new institutions to prevent conflicts - meaning the construction of a network of relationships within the framework of bilateral reorganization - resulted in the formation of a complementary security community. This complementarity emerged based on broad and effective awareness of the necessity for bilateral relations between them (Xinbo, 2001: 69).

Within the framework of its grand geopolitical strategy, the United States has continued to solidify a network of bilateral agreements throughout the Pacific region, particularly with key powers such as Japan and Australia. These strategic relationships, which initially emerged from Cold War concerns, have now been enhanced and strengthened as mechanisms to counter China and its growing influence. The center of gravity of these alliance programs has recently expanded to encompass a set of new security partnerships that have developed in the eastern part of the region, including relations with Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia, and particularly India (Scott, 2018: 32).

A series of security developments following the events of September 11, 2001, brought about significant changes in U.S. foreign policy not only in the Asia-Pacific region but globally, creating a new international environment. In light of these emerging changes, including the rise of terrorism as the most important security issue and a real threat to international peace and stability, America used this as justification for military action in several countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan (Al-Dulaimi, 2005: 12-14). Nevertheless, America focused its attention on Southeast Asia, a region where the potential emergence of ideological extremism is high, which could lead to the rise of terrorism and extremist and terrorist groups due to various factors (Banioi, 2003: 102). In the Philippines and Indonesia, radical Islamic groups emerged as significant security threats in the region.

2.2.2. America's Strategic Pivot to the Indo-Pacific Region During the Barack Obama and Donald Trump Administrations

During the Obama and Trump administrations, the United States implemented a strategic pivot toward the Indo-Pacific region, focusing on strengthening alliances with regional partners to establish a strategic counterbalance against China's growing hegemonic influence. This reorientation emphasized enhanced military presence and diplomatic engagement in the region.

2.2.2.1. The American Strategic Pivot to Indo-Pacific During the Obama Administration

Following Barack Obama's inauguration in early 2009, the United States initiated a substantial reorientation of its foreign policy through the "East Asia Strategy." This strategic shift redirected American attention from Europe and the Middle East toward South and East Asia, with particular emphasis on China's neighboring states. The strategy encompassed strengthening bilateral security alliances, fostering relationships with emerging powers including China, engaging with regional multilateral institutions,



expanding economic partnerships, maintaining comprehensive military presence, and promoting democratic governance and human rights (Saeed and Atta, 2024: 239).

In a pivotal Foreign Policy article from 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated: "To position ourselves to sustain our leadership, secure our interests, and advance our values, we must be smart and systematic about where we invest time and energy over the next decade. Therefore, one of America's most important tasks in the coming decade will be to substantially increase investment — diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise — in the Indo-Pacific region." She further emphasized the region's significance as a driver of global politics, describing its expanse from India to America's western shores, encompassing both the Pacific and Indian Oceans, noting its strategic maritime importance and role as home to major economic drivers and emerging powers like China, India, and Indonesia (Clinton, 2011). For example, Strengthening US relations with Japan and South Korea, increasing military presence in the Philippines and Australia, and developing relations with Vietnam and India.

Clinton's diplomatic initiative included unprecedented visits to Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, and China, marking a departure from her predecessors' focus on Europe and the Middle East. These visits symbolized America's "return to Asia and the international arena." In "Hard Choices," Clinton emphasized the imperative of expanding Sino-American relations and prioritizing Indo-Pacific diplomacy (Clinton, 2014: 4).

The Obama administration formalized this approach through several key policy documents, including the National Security Strategy (2010), the New Defense Strategy (2012), the Defense Review, and an updated National Security Strategy (2015) (Clinton, 2014: 171-172).

The American Pivot to Asia strategy evolved through two distinct phases during the Obama administration:

Phase One (2011-2012): This phase focused on military initiatives and maintaining force levels in the Indo-Pacific region, despite significant budgetary allocations. Key American moves included (Falah, 2019: 26-27):

1. Intensifying military presence in the northern and western parts of the region, implementing flexibility principles in military roles rather than establishing permanent bases.
2. Signing the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) with the Philippines in 2014 to strengthen security partnership, enabling increased U.S. military presence, training Philippine forces, and conducting joint exercises.
3. Increasing advanced U.S. cooperation with regional countries, considering post-9/11 support. Within this framework, America granted \$100 million to the Philippines and \$50 million to Indonesia in 2002 for counter-terrorism efforts. That same year, ASEAN and the U.S. signed a joint counter-terrorism agreement.
4. Working on defense agreements with Japan and a 10-year military presence agreement with the Philippines, aiming to contain China's position while strengthening U.S. regional hegemony. The U.S. also criticized China's industrial island construction in the South China Sea.



Phase Two (Post-2012): Following criticism of military emphasis, the U.S. administration shifted focus to economic-diplomatic initiatives in late 2012, developing closer relations with China to reduce tensions. This led to proposals for establishing a fair, free, and transparent trade system based on formal principles, resulting in the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement (Sutter and Others, 2013: 14).

The Obama administration's Indo-Pacific strategy aimed to restore balance to U.S. defense policy globally. This strategy received enhanced economic focus and dynamism, particularly through reducing hegemony while increasing commitments to the Asia-Pacific region. Under this policy, the Obama administration sought to reconcentrate its diplomatic and military role toward the region, reflecting the shift in global strategic and economic center of gravity. This meant the United States intended to focus more on a region that had gained increased importance following the 2008 global economic crisis.

2.2.2.2. The American Strategic Pivot to Indo-Pacific During the Donald Trump Administration

Upon Donald Trump's election victory in 2017, the United States withdrew from several international agreements, including the Paris Climate Agreement, Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA), Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), reflecting the view that America should no longer bear global burdens and should prioritize self-interest. Regarding China containment, Trump adopted a different strategy, initiating a trade war in 2018 (Arezina, 2020: 6). Analysis of Trump's speeches and the 2017 National Security Strategy indicated his administration's focus on maintaining American security and hegemony, suggesting that the best way to contain China's growth was to move away from liberal and globalization principles (Arezina, 2020: 6).

Analysis of US strategy in the Indo-Pacific region reveals a significant shift between the Obama and Trump administrations. This major change fundamentally stems from their different leadership styles; Obama pursued a cautious and calculating foreign policy approach, while Trump adopted a distinctly different approach. This stylistic difference led to practical shifts in several aspects: the Trump administration introduced an unpredictable element into foreign policy, intensified military operations in the South China Sea, openly designated China as a "revisionist" power, and initiated an unprecedented trade war. Although this shift appears to have altered the trajectory of US-China relations, both administrations fundamentally shared the goal of maintaining American hegemony in the Indo-Pacific region, albeit through different approaches (Heydarian, 2020: 36-38).

Trump raised the "America First" slogan and criticized previous administrations. His first major action was withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) in 2017, which he described as the worst agreement. This withdrawal occurred during significant American economic decline, with Trump attributing blame to U.S. allies. The negative impacts included (Mejier, 2019: 60):

1. Difficulties in global goods distribution
2. China's gains through creating alternative trade and investment realities



3. A year after that withdrawal in 2018, the remaining eleven nations, under Japan's leadership, decided to forge a new agreement without the United States, renaming it The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) as an alternative to America's retreat from the agreements. However, Donald Trump's November 2017 visit to Japan, South Korea, China, and the Philippines transformed his aggressive stance into a more conciliatory approach, particularly during discussions regarding the significance of America's East-oriented policy pursued by previous administrations, especially President Obama. He also emphasized that the United States should not adopt an isolationist policy in the region, marking a subtle shift towards relying on the Indo-Pacific concept rather than the Asia-Pacific framework. The employment of this concept became more evident as a consequence of Trump's visits to Asian nations (Elms and Lim, 2019).

Australia swiftly responded to this proposal, culminating in the incorporation of the Defense White Paper "Australia in the Asian Century." This white paper, issued by the Australian Department of Defense, aimed to engage Southeast Asian nations in aligning their roles with this concept. Subsequently, during a significant address at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Indonesia's Foreign Minister presented their vision for the Indo-Pacific concept, proposing several international and regional policy measures centered on building bilateral trust, peaceful conflict resolution, and strengthening collective security (Matar w Tahir, 2022: 31).

This trajectory expanded during Joe Biden's presidency, as evidenced by two decisive actions taken within just thirty days, from August 15 to September 15, 2021. Biden continued Trump's policies while implementing his own approach. The timing of these decisions proved somewhat surprising to many nations globally, including NATO allies. The first decision involved the rapid U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan, announced on August 15, 2021, and executed within two weeks. The second decision, made on September 15, 2021, established a new strategic security alliance in the Indo-Pacific region known as the AUKUS Alliance, comprising the United States, Britain, and Australia—an acronym derived from the initial letters of the member states (Aabdulrazaaq, 2022: 76).

3. America's Strategy in the Indo-Pacific Region and the Advancement of Multilateral Relations

The United States has established multiple alliances to counter the growth of certain nations in the Indo-Pacific region, aiming to maintain the balance of power and strengthen multilateral security relations in this strategic area. The primary objective is to create a robust network of allies to counter Chinese influence and protect their economic and military interests.

3.1. American Presence in the Indo-Pacific Region

Currently, from a geopolitical perspective, America is primarily viewed as an Atlantic-centered nation on European maps. However, with Asia's continental power emergence,



this perception is shifting. As stated in the Indo-Pacific Strategy document (2019), America is and has historically been a Pacific nation, possessing five Pacific states: Hawaii, California, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska, along with the Northern Mariana Islands, Wake, American Samoa, and Guam. Within this framework, America maintains its presence in the Asia-Pacific region through both its western mainland states and islands near China, establishing military bases and ports in these territories (The U.S. Department of Defense, 2019).

San Diego in California, the primary port for the U.S. Indo-Pacific fleet, hosts a permanent naval installation comprising over 50 vessels and 20,000 personnel (Scott, 2020: 56). Hawaii is regarded by many U.S. officials as the Indo-Pacific gateway. The presence of 80,000 American troops on the island is crucial in supporting America's position in the Western Pacific, with naval and air bases providing operational force and logistical support. Hawaii has become a vital hub for undersea cables facilitating global communications and data transfer. For instance, the United States Indo-Pacific Command, headquartered in Hawaii, is responsible for the geographical area from the U.S. West Coast to India (Durmuş, 2023: 210).

Guam represents another crucial area ensuring America's geopolitical presence, gaining increased Indo-Pacific significance during Barack Obama's presidency. Guam serves as America's vanguard, hosting U.S. military installations while securing a vital geostrategic position in America's Indo-Pacific strategy. From the U.S. perspective, Guam's presence enables participation in Western Pacific symposiums (Scott, 2020: 56). Additionally, the Andersen Air Force Base in Guam has housed B-220 bombers since 2005; Guam also maintains four nuclear submarines and two additional naval bases for submarine provisions. Another strategic importance of Guam lies in its provision of ammunition and fuel for U.S. strategic military forces in the Indo-Pacific region (Koyuncu, 2021: 20).

In the framework of its Indo-Pacific strategy, the United States continues to expand its presence in the Pacific Ocean, taking steps against emerging powers like China through economic and military cooperation with regional allies. Mark Alexander Milley, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, during his 2019 visit to Japan, characterized China as a strategic competitor and emphasized the importance of maintaining alliances with Australia, South Korea, and Japan (The U.S. Department of Defense, 2019).

This emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region was not limited to the Trump administration; his successor (Joe Biden) maintained this focus. However, instead of Trump's "America First" rhetoric, Biden sought to achieve greater cooperation and partnership regarding the region. In this context, during U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's 2021 visit to India, he emphasized issues of expanding defense relations (Kugelman, 2021). Subsequently, the primary agenda of U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's visit to Japan in the same year demonstrated that necessary measures should be taken against China's aggressive posture (Strother, 2021).

3.2. The United States' Strategic Treaties in the Indo-Pacific Region

Since the mid-nineteenth century, America has viewed itself as a leading Pacific nation. This region's significance is far greater today, as economic growth has become a



geopolitical competition point between the United States and China, making the Indo-Pacific region central to U.S. defense policy. Intelligence and military resource gaps in the Indo-Pacific region prompted America to emphasize military and security alliances and partnerships to maintain its hegemony in this sensitive region.

The American role in the Indo-Pacific region relies on constructive engagement policy, based on military, security, and economic principles. In this context, several factors have increased this region's importance to America, most notably Kazim, 2006: 98-100):

1. The United States is historically and geographically a Pacific nation.
2. A significant portion of regional nations desire continued American presence, stemming from several key regional perceptions:
 - Regional countries' desire to activate economic relations with the American market.
 - The positive factor in establishing regional stability and security.
 - Preventing political and security vacuums that could lead to rivalry and competition among major regional powers.
3. Several American allies in the region rely on the U.S. for regional security matters.

3.2.1. The Five Eyes Agreement: A highly integrated intelligence sharing partnership encompassing the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, originating from the 1946 UKUSA Agreement. During the Cold War, it focused on intelligence operations targeting Soviet activities. Over time, the alliance evolved to address various global security challenges, including terrorism, cyber threats, and advanced technology. In the Indo-Pacific region, Five Eyes currently plays a crucial role in monitoring Chinese military activities, countering cyber espionage, and ensuring security of critical maritime routes. Australia and New Zealand, as key geographical members, provide strategic surveillance capabilities for the agreement, for instance, monitoring intelligence activities in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia (Muhhamed and Otheres, 2023: 15). The agreement's strength lies in deep technological integration, enabling information sharing across all domains such as cybersecurity, satellite surveillance, and advanced data analysis. Despite the agreement's operational successes, there is a perspective that the Five Eyes agreement cannot prevent China's hegemony and influence in the Indo-Pacific region, leading America to establish several more significant strategic alliances like Quad and AUKUS (Muhhamed and Otheres, 2023, 15).

3.2.2. The Quad Alliance or Quadrilateral Dialogue (Quad): This alliance brings together the United States, Japan, Australia, and India, aiming to transform the Indo-Pacific region into a free and open area through the commitment of all four states. These four nations held a mini-congress in Manila, the Philippines' capital, in November 2017, on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit, initiating the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, which was subsequently abbreviated to "Quad" (Snan, 2017: 86).



The activities of the "Quadrilateral Dialogue" are built upon several primary objectives: first, strengthening regional security; second, developing economic cooperation in areas of climate change, technology, and health security; and third, annual military exercises. These foundations have deepened capabilities among members and strengthened collective defense. These relationships reflect a broader commitment to addressing maritime threats and securing vital sea lanes crucial for global trade and energy supply (Chanlett-Avery and Others, 2022: 2).

3.2.3. The AUKUS Alliance: A new strategic development in U.S. policy toward the Indo-Pacific region manifested in the establishment of the trilateral AUKUS alliance. This alliance was announced on September 15, 2021, during a leadership meeting of the three participating nations, attended by President Joe Biden, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison. AUKUS, derived from the initial letters of Australia (AU), United Kingdom (UK), and United States (US), represents a new security-military framework. Strategic analysts and experts maintain that this alliance constitutes a direct response to China's expansionism and growing military hegemony in the Indo-Pacific region. The cornerstone of this strategic agreement lies in providing nuclear submarine technology to Australia with technical support and assistance from both the United States and Britain, which fundamentally alters the regional power dynamics (Örmeci, 2021: 10).

The AUKUS alliance members have committed to strengthening joint security and defense capabilities and establishing long-term bilateral relations; moreover, they have demonstrated readiness for intensified information exchange and advanced defense technology integration. They also emphasized shared values and support for Australia's acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines for its naval forces, aimed at confronting challenges and threats in the new century (Matar w Tahir, 2022: 36).

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison declared at the press conference that "the three nations have elevated their cooperation to a new phase, having always viewed the world from a similar perspective." Morrison emphasized that developments in the Indo-Pacific region are closely linked to the future of all three nations, which operate according to principles such as state sovereignty, rule of law, human rights, and democracy (BBC, 2021). In response, then-British Prime Minister Boris Johnson indicated that AUKUS's primary objective is "ensuring security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region," while emphasizing their commitment to "acquiring nuclear-powered submarine capabilities for Australia." Similarly, U.S. President Biden emphasized the profound connection between the three nations, stating that "this agreement would enhance their security as they enter the twenty-first century, and cooperation for the Indo-Pacific region would continue not only against current threats but also against potential future challenges and contingencies" (Durmuş, 2023: 215).

The centralization of the U.S. role in the Indo-Pacific region has become imperative, as the regional environment inherently aligns with American objectives and interests. Additionally, the United States pursues several objectives in the region, including (Kazim, 2021: 51-52):



1. Preventing the emergence of any dominant power in the region.
2. Activating economic factors and maintaining regional economies within the free and open economic system.
3. Promoting and supporting the development of a multilateral regional environment.
4. Ensuring security and stability for allies and friends, including Japan, Australia, South Korea, and Taiwan.
5. Building a network of alliances and bilateral relations, while integrating allied nations through a new regional system.
6. Guaranteeing prevention of weapons of mass destruction proliferation, ensuring no additional states acquire ownership, technology, or access to such weapons.

U.S. roles and objectives extend beyond these stated points, encompassing additional secondary goals of comparable significance, some of which intersect with the aforementioned objectives and are framed within the context of America's overall role. The most significant of these include (Kazim, 2006: 112-113):

1. Creating a suitable security environment for resolving the North Korean nuclear crisis.
2. Encouraging and activating relations with potentially significant global economic players, such as Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Malaysia.
3. Establishing missile defense systems to counter ballistic weapon threats and protect allies.
4. Engaging with Japan to maintain its primary role in the region.
5. Maintaining operational engagement with Australia and South Korea.
6. Further developing bilateral and multilateral strategies, particularly with ASEAN nations.

It can be highlighted that the United States has taken significant steps to protect its interests in the Indo-Pacific region through various alliances such as Five Eyes, QUAD, and AUKUS. While these alliances operate through different mechanisms, they all revolve around a common objective: countering Chinese hegemony and ascendancy in the region. This multilateral U.S. strategy in the region demonstrates that Washington systematically seeks to maintain its supremacy in an area that could become an arena for international competition in the future.

Conclusion

This research examined the transformations of US strategy from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific region. It revealed that since 2009, particularly during the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations, the United States has placed increased emphasis on this region. This strategic shift resulted from multiple political, economic, and security factors, especially the rise of China and India as regional and international powers. The United States has attempted to limit China's influence and hegemony in the region through establishing multilateral alliances such as QUAD (US, Japan, Australia, and India) and AUKUS (US, UK, and Australia). The transformation from the "Asia-



Pacific" to "Indo-Pacific" concept demonstrates the expansion of America's strategic perspective in the region. Despite challenges, the United States has succeeded in creating a network of alliances and bilateral and multilateral relationships in the region to protect its interests and prevent the emergence of a dominant power in this strategically vital area.

References

First: English Sources

A. Books

- Banloi, R.C. (2003). *Southeast Asian perspectives on the rise of China: Regional security after 11/9*. US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute.
- Buzan, B. (2013). 'The Asia-Pacific: What sort of region in what sort of world?' in Brook, C. and McGrew, A. (eds.) *Asia-Pacific in the new world order*. Routledge.
- Cossa, R. A., Glosserman, B., McDevitt, M. A., Patel, N., Przystup, J., & Roberts, B. (2009). *The United States and the Asia-Pacific Region: Security Strategy for the Obama Administration*. Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security.
- Chanlett-Avery and Others (2022). *The "Quad": Security cooperation among the United States, Japan, India, and Australia*. Congressional Research Service.
- Chung, O.N. (2000). *Solving the security puzzle in Northeast Asia: A multilateral security regime*. Brookings Institute, Washington D.C.
- Clinton, H.R. (2014). *Hard choices*. Simon & Schuster, U.K.
- Elms, D.K. and Lim, C.L. (2019). *The Trans-Pacific Partnership: A quest for a twenty-first-century trade agreement*. Cambridge University Press.
- Han, S.J. (1983). 'South Korea and the United States: Past, present and future', in Curtis, G.L. and Han, S.J. (eds.) *The U.S.-South Korea alliance*. Toronto: Lexington Books.
- Majier, H.L. (2019). *Asia Pacifique dans le débat stratégique américain: Obama, Trump et la montée en puissance de la Chine*. L'Harmattan.
- Heydarian, R. J. (2020). *The Indo-Pacific: Trump, China, and the New Struggle for Global Mastery*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scott, D. (2020). 'US strategic re-positioning to the "Indo-Pacific": A paradigm shift', in Rossiter, A. and Cannon, B.J. (eds.) *Conflict and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: New geopolitical realities*. Routledge.
- Sutter, R.G., Brawn, Michael E., Adamson, Timothy J. A., Mochizuki, Mike M., and Deepa Ollapally (2013). *Balancing acts: The U.S. rebalance and Asia-Pacific stability*. Sigur Center for Asian Studies, The George Washington University.
- Waltz, K.N. (1979) *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
-



B. Journals

- Abbas, H., Qazi, B.H. and Ali, J. (2022). 'Asia Pacific geopolitics: US strategies and its implications for China', *Asia-Pacific-Annual Research Journal of Far East & South East Asia*, 40.
- Ali, M.A. and Kamraju, M. (2019). 'Indo-Pacific significance: A study on geopolitical impact on India and China', *International Journal of Law and Politics Studies*, 1(1).
- Busby, J.W. (2019). 'Climate change and security: A new framework', *Global Environmental Politics*, 19(4), pp. 3–15.
- Eades, J.S. and Cooper, M.J. (2010). 'Introduction: The Asia-Pacific world: A summary and an agenda', *Asia Pacific World*, 1(1).
- Erkan, A.Ç. and Ateş, A. (2019). 'Will Russia be a threat to China? Sino-Russian energy relations via energy weapon model', *International Journal of Eurasia Social Sciences*, 10(36), pp. 431–445.
- Khurana, G.S. (2019). 'The "Indo-Pacific" idea: Origins, conceptualizations and the way ahead', *Journal of Indian Ocean Rim Studies*.
- Kim, S. (2020). 'The future of U.S.-North Korea relations: Strategies for denuclearization', *International Security Journal*, 28(4), pp. 1–27.
- Medcalf, R. (2019). 'Australia and China: Understanding the reality check', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 73(2), pp. 109–118.
- Petri, P.A. and Plummer, M.G. (2016). *The economic effects of the Trans-Pacific Partnership: New estimates*. Peterson Institute for International Economics.
- Schoeman, M. and Wu, Y.S. (2022). 'The evolving Indo-Pacific region: An introduction to external perspectives on Africa's role and position', *The Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 44(2).
- Scott, D. (2018) 'The Indo-Pacific in US Strategy: Responding to Power Shifts', *Rising Powers Quarterly*, 3(2), pp. 19-43.
- Shicun, W. and Colombage, J. (2019). *Indo-Pacific strategy and China's response*. Institute for China-America Studies.
- Smith, J. (2021). 'The evolution of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD): From disaster relief to strategic alignment', *Journal of Asian Security Studies*.
- Storey, I. (2017). 'The South China Sea dispute: Outlook and implications', *Southeast Asian Affairs*, pp. 46–56.
- Tuan, T.A. (2020). 'Maritime security in the Indo-Pacific: Mixed opportunities and challenges from connectivity strategies', *Responding to the Geopolitics of Connectivity*.
- Tow, W. (2017). 'The origins and future trajectory of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*.
- US Department of Defense (2019). *Indo-Pacific strategy report: Preparedness, partnerships, and promoting a networked region*.
- Vaughn, B. (2007). *US strategic and defense relationships in the Asia-Pacific region*. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service.



- Wu, X. (2001). ‘To be an enlightened superpower’, *Washington Quarterly*, 24(3).
- Zeng, X. and Zhang, S. (2021). ‘From “Asia-Pacific” to “Indo-Pacific”’: The adjustment of American Asia-Pacific strategy from the perspective of critical geopolitics’, *East Asian Affairs*, 1(2).

C. Websites

- Abe, S. (2007) *Prime Minister of Japan at the Parliament of the Republic of India*, New Delhi, August 22, 2007. Available at: <https://rb.gy/gypt6y> (Accessed: 6 September 2024).
- Clinton, H. (2011) ‘*America’s Pacific century*’, Foreign Policy. Available at: <https://rb.gy/ji8is1> (Accessed: 10 July 2024).
- Gottemoeller, R. (2015) *The role of the United States in Asia-Pacific security*. The U.S. Department of State. Available at: <https://rb.gy/flcff9> (Accessed: 25 October 2024).
- He, K. and Mingjiang, L. (2020) ‘*Four reasons why the Indo-Pacific matters in 2020*’. Available at: <https://shorturl.at/wfGUy> (Accessed: 19 November 2024).
- Kugelman, M. (2021) ‘*What to expect from Lloyd Austin’s trip to India*’, Foreign Policy. Available at: <https://shorturl.at/QvKeS> (Accessed: 17 November 2024).
- Kahn, L. (2023) ‘*AUKUS explained: how will the trilateral pact shape Indo-Pacific security*’, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 12 June. Available at: <https://rb.gy/d482rl>. Accessed: (11 March 2025).
- Strother, J. (2021) ‘*Top US officials in Asia on first overseas visit*’, VOA News. Available at: <https://rb.gy/q01pxb>.
- Vekasi, K. (2023) ‘*Critical minerals trade and the green energy transition: The role of APEC*’, June 14, 2023. Available at: <https://shorturl.at/GL5Cb> (Accessed: 3 November 2024).

Second: Turkish Sources:

A. Books

- Caşın, M.H. (2003). ‘*Küreselleşmenin Doğu ve Güneydoğu Asya’nın güvenlik stratejilerine yansımaları*’, Küreselleşme ve Uluslararası Güvenlik: Birinci Uluslararası Sempozyum Bildirileri, İstanbul. Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi.
- Karaca, R.K. (2003). *Dünyadaki yeni güç Çin: Tek kutuptan çift kutuba*. İstanbul: Sanat Yayıncılık.
- McDougall, D. (2021). *Dünya siyasetinde Asya Pasifik*. İstanbul: Astana Yayınları.

B. Journals

- Durmuş, Z.A. (2023). ‘*Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemden günümüze ABD’nin Asya Pasifik stratejisi*’, NOVUS ORBIS Dergisi, 5(2). Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, Stratejik Araştırma Merkezi.



- Ekrem, N.H. (2006). *‘Türk-Çin ilişkilerinin gelişmesi’*, Uzak Doğu-Pasifik Araştırmaları Masası, 22.
- Hubersky, L. (1998). *‘Avrupa ve Asya-Pasifik bölgesinde güvenlik sistemlerinin karşılaştırmalı bir analizi’*, Avrasya Etütleri, 14, pp. 111–128.
- Koyuncu, M.C. (2021). *‘Amerika Birleşik Devletleri’nin Hint Pasifik bölgesinde Çin’i çevreleme politikası’*, Bölgesel Araştırmalar Dergisi, 5(1), pp. 13–47.
- Örmeci, O. (2021). *‘ABD dış politikasında öncelikli gündem Asya-Pasifik’*, Bilge Strateji, 12(22), pp. 9–18.
- Temiz, S. (2019). *‘ASEAN yolunda Maphilindo: Malezya, Filipinler ve Endonezya arasında pan-Malayizm temelli Güneydoğu Asya teşkilatı ve Güneydoğu Asya bölgeselciliğine etkisi’*, Asya Araştırmaları Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 3(2), pp. 227–252.
- Torun, E. (2006). *‘Asya-Pasifik bölgesindeki çıkar çatışmaları ve Türkiye’nin güvenlik boyutuna yansımaları’*, Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Yayınları Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi, 4(7).

C. Theses

- Taştekin, Ş. (2009). *Asya-Pasifik bölgesindeki gelişmeler ve bunların Türkiye’nin güvenliğine olan etkileri*. Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi, Gebze Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.

Third: Arabic Sources

A. Arabic Books

- Subh, Ali (2006). *Alsirah Aldawlii Fi Nisf Alqarn 1945-1995*, Dar Al-Manhal Al-Lubnani for Printing and Publishing, Beirut.
- Abdulsalam, Muhamad w Yunus, Ali (2021). *Aljughrafia Alsiyasiat Dirasat Watibiyqaat Alamia*, Dar Al-Wafa For Publishing And Distribution, Cairo.

B. Journals

- Kazim, Baqir Jawad (2021). *Albiya Al'asasiat Fi Shimal Sharq Asia Bayn Alnufudh Al'amrikii Waltaathir Alsiny*, Journal of Political Science, Issue (61), College of Political Science, University of Nahrain.
- Talhat, Eabd Almuneim (1998). *Aliastiratijia Alamrikiya Fi Sharq Asia (Siaghat Asiawia)*, International Politics Journal, Issue (131), Center for International Studies, Cairo.
- Falah, Amina (2019). *Alistratijia Alamnia Alamrikiya Aljadida Fi Mintaqat Janub Sharq Asia Min Siasat Altacjahul ila eadat Altawazn*, Journal of Asia Issues, Issue (2), Arab Democratic Center for Strategic, Political and Economic Studies, Berlin.



- Matar, ebrahim Hardan w Tahir, Randa Wudah (2022). *Altatawr Alastiratij Min Asia Albasifik Alaa Alendu - Basifik, asia Issues Magazine, Issue (13), Arab Democratic Center for Strategic, Political and Economic Studies, Berlin.*
- Snan, Muhamad (2017). *Alhiwar Alrubaeiu / Tahjim Alnufudh Alsiynii Fi Janub Sharq Asia - Event Trends Journal - Future Center for Studies and Research - Issue 24, Abu Dhabi.*
- Aabdulrazaaq, Ziad Tariq (2022). *Tahaluf "Aukus" Min Alhilf Alatasii Alaa Hilf Alhadi, Dirasat Mustaqbaliatan Litabieat Altahaluf Wa'asbab Ta'aluqih Walmuakilih Hasab Tathir Alqua Albahria Jywsiasia, Issue 13, Arab Democratic Center for Strategic, Political and Economic Studies, Berlin.*
- Jad, Emad (1998). *Itijahat Takamul Aliqlimy n Muhammad Al-Saleem, editor, Asia and Global Transformations, Center for Asian Studies, Cairo University.*
- Muhamad, M Eabdalmuneim Albadri W Akharun (2023). *Almunafisun Al'amrikiwn Fi 'iindu Nasifik Ruyia Alwaqiea Alastiratiji, Egyptian Enterprise Center for Policy and Strategic Studies, Egypt.*

C. Theses

- kazim, baqir jawad (2006). *alabead alastiratijia aladwar quaa alkubraa fi qiam asia - basifik, PhD Thesis, College of Political Science, Nahrain University.*
- Riham, K.A. (2020) *Alstratijiya Alamrikiya Aljadida Biitijah Mintaqat Asia Alhadi Bahda Alharb Albarida Dirasat: Alsiyn. PhD Thesis. University of Algiers.*

Fourth: Kurdish Sources

Journals

- Saeed, Hiwa w Atta, Hoshman (2024). *Rawti paywndyakani chin w amrika dway janggi sard, une 2024 Halabja University Journal 9(2):2412-9607.*



پەرەسەندى ستراتېژىيە تى ئەمىرىكا لە ناوچەى ئاسىيا-پاسىفىك بۆ ھىندو-پاسىفىك

د. ئارام احمد وسو
بەشى ياسا، كۆلىژى زانستە مروفایە تىيە كان، زانكۆى راپەرىن، رانىە، ھەرئىمى كوردستان - عىراق.
ئىمىل: aram.ahmad@uor.edu.krd
د. محمد احمد مجيد
بەشى پەيوەندىيە نىودەولە تىيە كان و دىپلۇماسى، كۆلىژى زانستە سىياسىيە كان، زانكۆى صلاح الدىن-ھەولېر، ھەولېر، ھەرئىمى كوردستان - عىراق
ئىمىل: Mohammed.majeed1@su.edu.krd

پوختە

ئەم توپۇنەنە ھەول دەدات تىشك بخاتە سەر گۆرانكارىيە ستراتېژىيە كانى ئەمىرىكا لە ناوچەى ھىندو-پاسىفىك. ناوچەى ھىندو-پاسىفىك بە ھۆى بوونى چەندىن گەرووى دەريايى و رېپەوى ئاوى، پۆلىكى گىنگى ھەيە لە بازىرگانى نىودەولە تىدا و ھەك بىكەك سەير دەكرىت بۆ دروستكردى ھاوپەيمانىتى و ھاوسەنگى ھىزە نىودەولە تىيە كان. لە دواى سالى 2009، ئەم ناوچەى گىنگىيەكى زىاترى پەيدا كىردووە لە ستراتېژى دەرهوى ئەمىرىكا، بە تايبەت لە سەردەمى سەرۆكايەتى ئوباما، ترەمپ و بايدىن. توپۇنەنە ھەكە لە رېگەى مېتۆدى چۆنەتى و رېيازى ھەسفى-شىكارى، ھەول دەدات ھەلامى ئەو پىرسىارە سەرەككىيە بداتە ھەكە بۆچى ستراتېژىيەتى ئەمىرىكى بايەخى بە ناوچەى ھىندو-پاسىفىك داوھ. توپۇنەنە ھەكە لەو گىرمانەيە ھەكە دەستپىدەكەت كە گۆرانكارىيە سىياسى، ئابوورى و ئاسايشىيە كانى كىشورەى ئاسىيا، بە تايبەت كەشە كىردى رۆلى چىن و ھىندستان، بوو ھە پالئەرىك بۆ ئەمىرىكا تاوھكو ستراتېژىيە تىكى نوى و گىشتكىرتىر لە ناوچەكەدا پەپىرە بكات. دەرتەنجامە كانى توپۇنەنە ھەكە دەرىدەخەن كە سەرەپاى ئالنگارىيە جۆراو جۆرە كان، وىلايەتە يەككەرتووە كانى ئەمىرىكا ھەول فرأوانكردى ستراتېژى ھەرئىمى خۆى لە ناوچەى ئاسىيا-پاسىفىكە ھە ھەرە ھىندو-پاسىفىك داوھ، لە كاتىكدا ولاتانى ناوچەكە ھەول دروستكردى ھاوپەيمانىتى ژىرانە دەدەن بۆ بەرەنگار بوونە ھە ستراتېژى ئەمىرىكى ھىندو-پاسىفىك و رېككەوتنى كواد و ئوكۆس.

كىلە وشە كان: ئاسىيا - پاسىفىك - ھىندو-پاسىفىك - ستراتېژىيەتى لە خۆگرتن - وىلايەتە يەككەرتووە كانى ئەمىرىكا، چىن.



تطور الاستراتيجية الامريكية من منطقة آسيا-الباسيفيك إلى الهندو-باسيفيك

د. ثارام احمد وسو
قسم القانون، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة رابهرين، رانية، إقليم كردستان/العراق.
البريد الالكتروني: aram.ahmad@uor.edu.krd
د. محمد احمد مجيد
قسم العلاقات الدولية والدبلوماسية، كلية العلوم السياسية/ جامعة صلاح الدين-أربيل، أربيل، إقليم كردستان العراق
البريد الالكتروني: Mohammed.majeed1@su.edu.krd

الملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل التحول الاستراتيجي الأمريكي من منطقة آسيا-المحيط الهادئ إلى منطقة المحيطين الهندي والهادئ. تلعب منطقة المحيطين الهندي والهادئ، بمضائقها وممراتها المائية الحيوية، دوراً محورياً في التجارة العالمية وتشكل أساساً للتحالفات الدولية وموازن القوى. ومنذ عام 2009، اكتسبت هذه المنطقة أهمية متزايدة في الاستراتيجية الخارجية الأمريكية، خاصة في عهد الرؤساء أوباما وترامب وبايدن. وباستخدام المنهجية النوعية والمنهج الوصفي التحليلي، يتناول هذا البحث أسباب تحول الاستراتيجية الأمريكية نحو منطقة المحيطين الهندي والهادئ. ويفترض البحث أن التطورات السياسية والاقتصادية والأمنية، لا سيما صعود الصين والهند، قد استلزمت وضع استراتيجية أمريكية أكثر شمولية. تكشف نتائج البحث أنه رغم التحديات المختلفة، حاولت الولايات المتحدة توسيع استراتيجيتها الإقليمية من منطقة آسيا والمحيط الهادئ إلى منطقة المحيطين الهندي والهادئ لتحقيق أهدافها الجيواستراتيجية، في حين تعمل دول المنطقة على تشكيل تحالفات حكيمة لمواجهة الاستراتيجية الأمريكية للمحيطين الهندي والهادئ واتفاقيتي QUAD و AUKUS .

الكلمات المفتاحية: آسيا-المحيط الهادئ، المحيطان الهندي والهادئ، استراتيجية الاحتواء، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، الصين.