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The Role of Anglo-Saxon Countries in Maintaining the American-led Order in the Indo-Pacific Region

Abstract: The analysis is based on theoretical assumptions characteristic of the multi-order world by Trine Flockhart concept. The main factor influencing the situation in the Indo-Pacific region is the conflict between two international orders, Chinese-led and American-led, which is economic but may take a military form in the future. The practical limitations of the article result from the complex process of analyzing and forecasting political phenomena *in statu nascendi*. The analysis contributes to the scientific discussion on the future of international relations in the Indo-Pacific region. The American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region is based on the institutionalized forms of cooperation involving Anglo-Saxon states based on identity factors determining their effectiveness. The US strategy for the Indo-Pacific is mainly based on the network of partnerships with the region's countries and countries from other parts of the world supporting the American-led order in the region, especially the Anglo-Saxon countries. In addition to identity factors, the positive long-term experience of military cooperation between the Anglo-Saxon countries is significant. The escalation of the global conflict between the US and China will be conducive to further tightening this cooperation.

Keywords: *Indo-Pacific, multi-order world, Anglo-Saxon countries, USA, China*

Introduction

Among the many theories whose starting point is the collapse of the rules-based global order and the crisis of the liberal international order, the concept of a multi-order world by Trine Flockhart deserves special attention. It consists of the following theses:

- Relations between various international orders, and not between sovereign states, are of fundamental importance in the contemporary world.
- International order is a group of states gathered around the leading state voluntarily or under the influence of force.

Trine Flockhart wrote in 2016 that “the multi-order world is not yet a reality and that there is still time to prepare for it” (2016). In an article written by Elena Korosteleva in 2022, she states in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine that “the world of many orders” is already a reality. According to Flockhart and Korosteleva (2022), in the new multi-order world, alongside the hitherto dominant liberal order, the Chinese-led “Belt and Road order” and the Russian-led “Eurasian order” clearly articulated their doctrines. Other regional orders may emerge in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and the ambition is to create an Islamic-led “Sharia order”. These orders are *in statu nascendi*, and it is uncertain whether they will eventually form.

The term she uses, “liberal international order”, should be clarified because it concerns two similar but still different orders: European-led “liberal order” and American-led “liberal order”. These orders should be distinguished even though the European Union’s foreign and security policy depends on the US. This manifests in several issues, such as the conflict in Ukraine and Gaza. However, the asymmetry of economic, political, and military potentials causes the European Union to seek a change in its status vis-à-vis the US by gaining strategic autonomy. Despite the far-reaching commonality of interests, this is generating a series of tensions between the two liberal orders concerning, among other things, the financing of defense spending under NATO and economic relations with China. Gregory T. Papanikos describes an international economic order of three blocks: American, Asian, and European, in which the USA, China, and Germany dominate. He claims that it is quite possible that, by 2050, China will be overtaken by India, as before Japan was overtaken by China. In turn, the US dominates its region and leads the rest of the world (Papanikos, 2022, p. 199). By focusing on economic factors, such a division is also convincing, as Russia has much less economic potential than the US, China, and even Germany. Moreover, under the influence of Western economic sanctions, this potential may shrink. In the economic dimension, Russia plays the role of China’s junior partner and supplier of raw materials. On the other hand, American world leadership is beginning to shrink to the area of liberal international order/orders. The leaders of China and Russia know that the West is in decline and are trying to take advantage of this situation to recalibrate the global order (Cafruny et al., 2022, p. 13).

The emerging multi-order world differs fundamentally from the world divided into two blocks during the Cold War. We can indeed talk about the Soviet and American bloc

in this period, but both significantly differ from today's: the Russian-led Eurasian and American-led orders. The Soviet Empire, like the Eurasian order being created today, was eager to apply pressure to countries within its sphere of influence. However, its main goal was to implement real socialism in the dominated area, according to a single prevailing model taken from the USSR. Imperial interests were guarded by such institutions as the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). The Warsaw Pact grouped "brotherly armies" of socialist countries, which, following Brezhnev's doctrine of limited sovereignty, were ready to "defend the gains of socialism" in individual member states, as was the case with Czechoslovakia in 1968. The CMEA effectively subordinated the "fraternal socialist countries" to the Moscow headquarters, among others, by forcing mutual financial settlements in the so-called transfer ruble. In the Eurasian order it creates, Russia seeks a dominant position through political and economic pressure. This is meeting with resistance among elites in Central Asian states with strong Chinese influence. However, the scale of these phenomena is incomparable with the Soviet-led order.

The relationship between the US and its allies has also changed since the Cold War. First of all, the dominant countries in the European Union, Germany, and France, pursue policies that are in many respects contrary to American interests. Germany has become dependent on Russia for energy and on China for exports and, like France, cannot wait for the end of the war in Ukraine so that it can continue to run business as usual with Russia. Therefore, due to the differences in interests between the European Union and the USA, in today's world, we should distinguish not one but two democratic orders: American and European.

The world has ceased to be bipolar because a new contender for global hegemony has emerged, China, creating the "Belt and Road" order. In the first phase of the Cold War, supported by the Soviet Union after Stalin's death and Khrushchev's condemnation of the cult of personality, they pursued a policy of "fighting with two fists" directed against both the US and the USSR, accused of trying to dominate China in the 1960s (Cheng, Zhang, 1999). After the aggravation of the conflict between the USSR and China and the armed clashes over Ussuri in 1969, China became a de facto partner of the USA. President Trump wanted to normalize relations with Russia so the US could focus solely on the conflict with China. However, due to tensions between Russia and NATO, Russia has become China's 'no limit' partner, despite the differences in interests between the Eurasian and the Belt and Road orders in Central Asia. In addition to the most critical global orders in the modern world, revisionist orders have also appeared, operating on a smaller scale, e.g., the Islamic order striving to create a caliphate. A characteristic feature of the discussed orders is the decisive role played by identity and pragmatic rather than ideological factors in their creation.

Theoretical and methodological framework

The current relationship between US-, Chinese – and Russian-led orders confirms the tenets of offensive neorealism:

- The reason for the actions taken by states is the structure of the international system.
- The fundamental aspiration of states is to increase their potential.
- Distinguish between states defending the status quo and revisionist states seeking to change it and prone to risky behavior.
- The impossibility of concluding lasting agreements between states.
- Distinguish between the state's potential and its defense capabilities.

It turns out that in the multi-order world, the above assumptions apply to individual countries and entire orders. So there is the American-led order, the Chinese-led order, and the Russia-led order, and there are countries of the global south looking for the best place for themselves around these orders or aspiring to create separate orders. Attempts to reach an agreement between the existing orders have recently failed due to the aggressive stance of Russia, which attacked Ukraine, and China seeking to annex Taiwan.

The ideal type of the international community created by Flockhart (2016) is defined by the following components:

- “The power component” includes both hard and soft power resulting from the potential of the lead state.
- “The identity component” derived from self-awareness, fundamental values, norms, and social practice.
- “The primary institution component”, comprising enduring patterns and practices followed by a group of countries.
- “The secondary institution component” (formal) that may have a high or low level of constitutionalism.

The authors of the article aim to solve the main research problem:

- What is the role of Anglo-Saxon countries in maintaining the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region?

This leads to further research questions:

- What measures is the US using to achieve its goals in the Indo-Pacific region?
- What is the component of the identity of the Anglo-Saxon states functioning as part of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region?
- What is the primary institutional component in the Anglo-Saxon states functioning as part of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region?
- What factors will have a decisive impact on the future of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region and the intensity of the Anglo-Saxon states' support for it?

The initial answer to the main scientific problem is the following main hypothesis:

- The American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region is based on institutionalized cooperation involving Anglo-Saxon states based on identity factors determining their effectiveness. Positive verification of this hypothesis confirms the thesis of Flockhart (2016) that:

In the new system, order membership is, therefore, more easily attainable for states sharing common identity signifiers but separated by distance. In that sense, identity, rather than region, is likely to be the major defining feature of new orders.

The following hypotheses are the initial answers to the detailed research questions:

- The means to implement the US strategy for the Indo-Pacific is the “network of partnerships”.
- The identity component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region concerns neoliberal values and organizational culture.
- The main institutional component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region is the over 100-year-old model of military cooperation.
- The escalation of the global conflict between the US and China will have a decisive impact on the future of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region.

The first part is an analysis of the US Strategy for the Indo-Pacific. The means to achieve its goals is a “network of partnerships” composed of more or less formalized organizations with varying degrees of constitutionalism. The second part concerns the identity component of the Anglo-Saxon states maintaining the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region. The sociological theory of the Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede concerning the relationship between organizational culture and national culture was used for the analysis. The third part discusses the primary institutional component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region, which is the stable and recognized model of military cooperation between the Anglo-Saxon states that maintain it, which has existed for over 100 years. Part four examines the formal aspects of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific and the related political mechanisms that led to its creation by or with the participation of Anglo-Saxon countries. Part five presents the geopolitical effects of the American-led order in the region, resulting from the potential of the participating Anglo-Saxon countries and the primary and secondary institution components. Part six considers the future of American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region and the involvement of Anglo-Saxon countries¹ in its maintenance. The starting point for this consideration is the thesis about the inevitable

¹ The term “Anglo-Saxon states” should be understood as those states that, despite the change in ethnic composition and the promotion of multiculturalism, have retained the main political institutions of British origin.

escalation of the global conflict between the US and China as part of the Thucydides trap concept popularized by Graham T. Allison.

As part of the research on the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the USA, one of the authors interviewed between April and May 2022 scientists and experts from research centers in Washington D.C. and New York. Interviewees include Columbia University, George Washington University, and Brookings Institution representatives. The interviews were individual, non-standardized, and in-depth. Ethical approval has been obtained from the relevant ethics committee. The committee approved that the participants' verbal consent to participate in the study was adequate.

Indo-Pacific Strategy of the USA

Friction between the United States on the one hand and China and Russia on the other is currently the most severe flaw in international politics and a significant symptom of the new Cold War. China is highly integrated into the global circuits of capitalism. However, it is excluded from the alliance system created by the USA since the Second World War (Choonara, 2022, p. 9). The main question is whether China seeks to take over the global role of the US. Most experts believe China's goal so far is hegemony in Asia, which will ensure its security and enable it to maintain dynamic economic development. However, there are experts, including in China, such as Senior defense strategist Liu Mingfu, according to whom China's goal is to displace the US as the "number one in the world" (Budd, 2021, p. 133). While the question of challenging US global domination is debatable, the fact is that China has already threatened regional US hegemony, particularly in the South and East China Seas.

The development of China's economy and military is challenging for the US. According to Researcher #1 from the interviews, China would be a more potent rival than the USSR. It has successfully integrated into the global economic system created by the West, but now it forms a "parallel order". There's a lot of mistrust between the US and China, but neither of them wants a complete break of the relationship because the countries are still heavily interdependent. The economic interdependence between the West and China has been shown by the turmoil in global supply chains, which has caused the US and Europe to run out of many goods. As a result, President Joe Biden's administration considered lifting the tariffs previously imposed by President Donald Trump's administration on Chinese goods. However, as noted by Researcher #2 from the interviews, China, as a strategic competitor of the United States, has economic interests that clash with US interests. President Biden decided to impose restrictions on semiconductor exports to China, allowing the US and the West to maintain economic primacy over their rival. This action will have consequences in intensifying the economic rivalry between the US and China and will deepen the division between these countries.

The divisions between the US-led and the Europe-led liberal orders and the China-led and the Russia-led authoritarian orders have been deepened heavily by the war in Ukraine and increased tensions around Taiwan. Researcher #3 from the interviews claims that despite the war in Ukraine, the United States should not lose focus on the number one challenge and priority, which is China, not Russia. He believes that tensions may arise in the debate about the distribution of the center of gravity between commitment to Asia versus commitment to Europe. The stationing of US forces in the Middle East will also play a role in this debate. As a result, he believes that the order of priority will be East Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Researcher #4 from the interviews believes that to contain China in East Asia, the United States will primarily mobilize allies and partners from Asia-Pacific: Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, India, and Vietnam. According to him, it may be sort of like a NATO East. When it comes to European allies, the US will first want to ensure that highly sensitive security technology does not get transferred to China. The exception will be the United Kingdom, which might play a much more significant role in maintaining the US-led liberal order in the Indo-Pacific.

The Indo-Pacific is a priority of US foreign policy. This is evidenced by the concepts of successive presidents: Obama's "Pivot to East Asia", Trump's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific", and Biden's "Indo-Pacific Strategy". However, none of them have been implemented satisfactorily, partly due to the US involvement in conflicts in other parts of the globe. In American journalism and official statements, "Indo-Pacific" is used interchangeably with "Asia-Pacific". The term "Indo-Pacific" was coined in 1924 by the German general and geopolitician Karl Haushofer (Li, 2022, pp. 807–833).

The primary goals of the American Indo-Pacific strategy are:

- Defending the status quo in the region by maintaining the US hegemonic position.
- Restricting Chinese expansion by defending the region's countries against pressure from China.
- Maintaining supply chains by securing sea and air routes.

The 2021 "Interim National Security Strategic Guidance" points to the Indo-Pacific ahead of Europe and the Western Hemisphere, where the most vital US interests are located. Therefore, the US presence and cooperation with allies and partners will be most robust in the Indo-Pacific. It is required to deter adversaries and defend interests. According to the document, the rapidly growing assertiveness of authoritarian China in the international arena poses a severe threat to security and stability. The United States must increase its enduring advantages to "prevail in strategic competition with China or any other nation". (The White House 2021, p. 10, 15, 20).

The 2022 "National Security Strategy" confirms China's capacity-building and intentions "to reshape the international order in favor of one that tilts the global playing field to its benefit". The document emphasizes that to counter this, "the most important strategic asset" of the USA are "alliances and partnerships around the world", including in the Indo-Pacific.

They deter aggression and “provide a platform for mutually beneficial cooperation that strengthens the international order” (The White House 2022b, p. 11).

In “Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States” (The White House, 2022a, p. 2), conclusions were made regarding implementing the American goals in the region. The document reads about deepening existing alliances with Australia, the United Kingdom, Japan, the ROK, the Philippines, and Thailand and strengthening relations with leading regional partners, including India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam and the Pacific Islands.

According to the document’s authors, economic cooperation development in the region should balance Chinese activities in this area. To this end, the United States intends to tighten cooperation with its partners. Hence “citizens on both sides of the Pacific reap the benefits of these historic economic changes while deepening our integration” (The White House, 2022a, p. 11). This cooperation includes improving trade and data flow and developing and securing supply chains. The document shows that security in the region should be ensured by a system of military alliances aimed at defending the sovereignty of the US allies by increasing their combat capabilities and by appropriate deployment of armed forces. To this end, treaties with Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand will be developed. The US, like the other Anglo-Saxon states, seeks “to maintain stability and reject coercive exercises of power” and “to build resilience in the regional rules-based order” (The White House, 2022a, p. 12). The document also announces the development of defense cooperation with India. Its authors emphasize their tough stance on the security of the Taiwan Strait. They write that their approach is in line with the one-China policy. However, at the same time, they promise to support Taiwan’s defense capabilities so that its future will be “determined peacefully following the wishes and in the best interest of Taiwan’s people” (The White House, 2022a, p. 12). In summary, the authors of the document state that the United States has entered a new period of foreign policy as the protection of its vital interests encounters increasing difficulties, and “the future depends on the choices we make now” (The White House, 2022a, p. 18).

Anglo-Saxon states and the identity component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region

According to Flockhart (2016, p. 41):

The identity component is derived from the order of self-understanding, core values, and vision expressed through shared norms and social practice. The identity may be rooted in religion, culture, ethnicity, ideology, or other strong signifiers. The identity is also likely to be reflected in the internal domestic governance arrangements.

Concluding the durability of pacts, coalitions, or other national communities based on religious, ethnic, or cultural proximity can be misleading, especially when one does not consider such an essential factor as state sovereignty. A typical example is Nepal, bordering India and China, the majority of whose population adheres to Hinduism but is ruled by the pro-China Maoist party. More helpful in determining the durability of international coalitions is to compare what Flockhart (2016) calls “internal domestic governance arrangements” within the member states. This term could be defined as an organizational culture characteristic of a given nation. A factor that undoubtedly favors cooperation between states is a common identity, which manifests through moral and social norms, a system of values, and management principles at various levels based on regional institutional and cultural frameworks.

The Dutch sociologist Geert Hofstede (2001) conducted research in this direction. He developed the concept of empirically measurable indicators of the cultural model based on surveys conducted among IBM employees in various countries. The relationships he discovered between organizational culture and national culture were presented in the following dimensions:

- The Power Distance Index (PDI) shows the relationship between society and the government. The distance is low in countries with a democratic governance system and high in authoritarian countries (Hofstede et al., 2005).
- Individualism (IDV) shows the degree of cohesion of social groups, which, according to Hofstede, is correlated with the level of wealth in society and with the PDI index (Brewer, 2011).
- Masculinity (MAS): Cultures with predominantly male characteristics put more emphasis on competition, while cultures with predominantly female characteristics focus on harmonious cooperation (Hofstede, 1998).
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) – According to Hofstede, this is the degree of risk experienced in situations requiring action related to the risk (Venaik & Brewer, 2010).
- Long-Term Orientation (LTO) – introduced by Michael Bond, communities that represent a long-term orientation focus on the future, while communities that represent a short-term orientation focus on the present and past (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010).
- Indulgence (IDL) – distinguishes between communities that are not restrictive and those that emphasize the suppression of natural reflexes and drives (Hofstede, 2011).

According to Hofstede’s cultural model, the individual indicators of Anglo-Saxon countries are similar:

- PDI – low level.
- IDV – the highest level.
- MAS – high level.

- UAI – low level.
- LTO – low level.
- IDL – high level.

Applying Hofstede's cultural model to the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific demonstrates the potential sustainability of close cooperation between Anglo-Saxon countries in the region. The table below shows that the individual dimensions for the USA, the UK, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand are similar:

Country	PD	IDV	MAS	UAI	LTO	IDL
United Kingdom	35	89	66	35	51	69
USA	40	91	62	46	26	68
Australia	38	90	61	51	21	71
Canada	39	80	52	48	36	68
New Zealand	22	79	58	49	33	75

Source: Table based on Hofstede Insights. <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>.

In the Hofstede model, there is an extensive spread between the scores given to countries in each category; for example, IDV for Guatemala is six and for the US is 91, MAS for Sweden is six and for the United Kingdom is 66, UAI for Singapore is eight and for Australia is 51, IDL in Russia is 20 and for New Zealand is 75. The discrepancy between the entities shown in the table above is relatively small for the differences that occur in the Hofstede model, which makes it possible to group the five countries shown in it. The lower level of PD in New Zealand is due to the country's size. The lower UAI and higher LTO in the UK than in other Anglo-Saxon countries is a result of the conservative attitude of the English public.

Anglo-Saxon states and the primary institution component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific

The importance of Anglo-Saxon cooperation as a critical component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region results mainly from the essential institution, a permanent and recognized model of military cooperation between the two countries.

In the battles of World War I, apart from the British and Americans, soldiers from countries formally subordinate to the British crown also fought. With a population of 8 million, Canada fielded an army of 659,000 soldiers, of whom 66,000 died. Canadians fought on the Western Front from 1914, including the Battle of the Somme. During World War I, Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) soldiers took part in the fighting in the Middle East, on the Western Front, and in the Battle of Cape Gallipoli. The scale of the ANZAC's involvement is evidenced by the losses suffered during the fighting. Out of 4.5

million Australians, 421,809 served in the military, of which 61,829 died. Similar proportions are found in the case of New Zealand’s population of one million in 1914: during World War I, 100,444 New Zealand soldiers served, of whom 17,000 died.

On September 3, 1939, members of the British Commonwealth, Australia, and New Zealand declared war on Germany, and on September 10, Canada did so. This country of 11.5 million inhabitants organized an army of 1,159,000 soldiers, of whom 44,000 died on the battlefields. The Canadian Army suffered hefty losses during the Dieppe Raid in 1942 and during the invasion of Normandy in 1944. The Australians and New Zealanders fought in Europe, North Africa, and the Pacific. Australia, with a population of 7.5 million, fielded an army of 462,725 soldiers, of which 27,073 died. With a population of 1,600,000, New Zealand raised an army of 154,549 soldiers, of whom 10,000 died.

Joint military involvement of Anglo-Saxon states also took place in armed conflicts after World War II. The table below shows the number of soldiers from Anglo-Saxon countries involved in the First and Second World Wars and conflicts between 1945 and 2022.

War / State	First World War	Second World War	Korean War	Vietnam War	Gulf War	Second Gulf War	Afghan War
USA	4,734,991	16,112,566	1,789,000	2,594,000	584,342	250,000	832,000
United Kingdom	5,146, 798	5,000,000	60,000	-	53,462	45,000	150,000
Australia	330,000	413,000	17,808	60,000	1800	2,000	26,000
New Zealand	100,444	128,500	6,000	3,000	119	-	3,500
Canada	418,035	629,000	26,000	30,000	4000	-	40,000

Source: Own work.

Considering the number of soldiers called to arms, the above table shows Australia, New Zealand, and Canada’s relatively high level of involvement in the total population of successive armed conflicts involving the UK and the US.

Anglo-Saxon states and the secondary institution component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific

The primary method Americans use to stem Chinese expansion in the Indo-Pacific region is to maintain and develop a “network of partnerships”. The institutional architecture that manages relations between states under the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific region consists of a network of more or less formalized organizations with varying degrees of constitutionalism. It includes defense organizations from the intricate power sphere, such

as AUKUS, ANZUS, AUSCANNZUKUS, Quad, and FVEY, as well as regional economic organizations from the soft power sphere, such as APEC, EAS, and IPEF:

- AUKUS is a strategic pact concluded between the USA, Australia, and the United Kingdom concerning providing military technology to Australia for constructing nuclear submarines and developing cutting-edge military technologies. Over the previous decade, Australia had tried to maintain a relative balance between the most important trading partner – China, and the most important strategic partner – the USA. However, due to aggressive Chinese policy in the South China Sea and cases of corruption, espionage, and economic blackmail in Australia, the Australian strategy changed, and the American offer was accepted. For Australia, AUKUS means the end of the policy of balancing between China and the USA and choosing one side. The United Kingdom joined AUKUS because it transfers modern military technology to Australia, seeks to conduct global policy in response to Brexit, and wants to maintain and deepen its special relationship with the USA.
- ANZUS (Pacific Security Treaty) is a defense treaty signed in 1951 between Australia and New Zealand and Australia and the USA, the purpose of which is to create mutual security guarantees. In the case of New Zealand, the main obstacle to developing military cooperation with the USA is the South Pacific Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty signed in 1986 on Roratonga Island.
- AUSCANNZUKUS is an agreement establishing the principles of cooperation between Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the USA at the C4 level – Command, Control, Communications, and Computers.
- FVEY (The Five Eyes) is an agreement of the intelligence services of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the USA; contrary to other agreements of this type, FVEY expressly declares its existence. Canada, despite close economic ties with the USA, is trying to maintain sovereignty in its neighbor's international policy. Therefore, it cooperates with the US primarily within NATO structures, while in the Indo-Pacific region, it is limited to intelligence cooperation.
- Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) is to be a leading platform for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region between the USA, Australia, India, and Japan. In addition to defense issues, it will address new technologies and their implementation, supply chains, the sharing of satellite data valid in maritime navigation and climate policy, and cyberinfrastructure development in the region.
- APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation) is an informal organization founded in 1989 by representatives of ASEAN and Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Japan, and South Korea, whose main goals are technological and economic cooperation.
- Since the organization's 2004 summit, EAS (East Asia Summit) has been a regional forum following the annual Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) leadership meetings.

- IPEF (Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity) was initiated in 2022 by President Joe Biden to maintain supply chain resilience and trade development. This organization includes Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam.

AUKUS, ANZUS, AUSCANNZUKUS, and FVEY are organizations composed exclusively of Anglo-Saxon countries. This is particularly important in growing tensions regarding security and defense in the Indo-Pacific region. Due to their economic and technological potential, these countries play a crucial role in other organizations operating in the Indo-Pacific region, such as Quad, APEC, EAS, and IPEF. The USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, starting in the 1990s, developed their relations with ASEAN countries in three areas: trade, development aid, and security, strengthening their position in this region (Hang, 2018). The closest US ally has become Vietnam (Tung, 2022), while the other ASEAN countries are trying to maintain a central position between the US and China (Cook, Hoang 2020).

Anglo-Saxon states and the power component of the American-led order in the Indo-Pacific

Determining the differences between the military potentials of different countries requires not only a comparison of the size of the armed forces but also several additional factors, such as the number of reservists and paramilitary units that can take over some of the tasks of the regular army. An essential measure of a country’s mobilization capacity is the number of soldiers in the active army and the total number of soldiers able to participate in an armed conflict per 1,000 inhabitants. A comparison of the military capabilities of the five Anglo-Saxon countries combined and China and Russia in 2022 is shown in the table below:

Country	Active Duty	Paramilitary	Reserves	Total Personnel	Total Per 1K	Active Duty Per 1K
USA	1,388,100	-	844,950	2,233,050	6.6	4.1
UK	148,500	-	78,600	227,100	3.4	2.2
Australia	58,600	-	30,100	88,700	3.4	2.2
Canada	67,400	4,500	35,600	107,500	2.8	1.7
NZ	9,000	-	2,300	11,300	2.2	1.7
Together	1,671,600	4,500	991,550	2,667,650	-	-
China	2,185,000	660,000	1,170,000	4,015,000	2.8	1.5
Russia	1,014,000	554,000	2,000,000	3,568,000	24.7	7.0

Source: Based on Military Size by Country 2023. <https://wisevoter.com/country-rankings/military-size-by-country/>.

China and Russia have an advantage over Anglo-Saxon countries in terms of troop numbers. However, their level of training and combat value may raise some questions, as the Chinese army has not conducted military operations since 1979 and is primarily a conscript army. According to Peter E. Robertson (2022), comparing the military expenditures of different countries is necessary for assessing the military capabilities of potential adversaries and planning our defense spending. However, simple comparisons of military spending can be misleading due to differences in equipment and training costs between countries.

The fact that the Anglo-Saxon states spend more than three times as much on armaments as China is misleading, given that the same piece is much cheaper in China than in the United States. The same applies to training, logistics, and army maintenance costs. The conscripted army is much cheaper than the professional army; this regularity also applies to the Chinese army. Therefore, it should be assumed that the level of China's defense expenditures does not differ as much from the corresponding expenditures of Anglo-Saxon countries as it would appear from official data.

Conclusion: Anglo-Saxon states and perspectives of the American-led “liberal order” in the Indo-Pacific region

The primary factor influencing the situation in the Indo-Pacific region is China's policy, and the fundamental question is whether the clash of the two international orders, Chinese-led and American-led, will be only economic or it can take a military form. According to Nuno P. Monteiro (2014), individual strategic options (offensive and defensive domination and withdrawal) adopted by the superpower are cyclical and depend on internal and international factors. The current state of US-Chinese relations seems to confirm the prediction of John J. Mearsheimer (2001), who, based on the theses of offensive realism, predicts the inevitability of an armed conflict when China, due to economic development, reaches a sufficiently high military potential. Therefore, in the long term, the United States will seek to build coalitions capable of counterbalancing China's power.

In the last chapter of the updated edition of “Tragedy of Great Powers Politics”, Mearsheimer (2014) asks the rhetorical question, “Can the rise of China's power take place peacefully?” He replies that from the point of view of the theory of offensive realism if China continues to develop at such a pace, it will try to dominate the eastern hemisphere like the western United States. Mearsheimer concludes that the USA is engaged in a cold war with two adversaries, China and Russia, while it should focus on resisting Chinese expansion by normalizing US-Russian relations.

A significant challenge for the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan is China's attempts to change the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region by acting against the region's small island states of the region. The situation is complicated because China is a significant trading partner for many regional countries, including US allies.

According to Gabriel Merino (2023), due to the scale of China's involvement, we can even talk about a hybrid war going on there. In 2014, the Chinese built a port in Vanuatu, which, due to its size, can be used as a naval base. From the point of view of the US maritime strategy, the Freely Associated States (FAS) area comprising the independent countries of the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) are of crucial importance. Communication lines connect the United States with Australia and the strategic base on the island of Guam (Meick et al., 2018).

For this reason, the region has become particularly attractive to China, which has capitalized on growing US involvement in other parts of the world over the past two decades (Wesley-Smith, 2021). According to Jonathan Pryke (2020), China's influence over the past two decades in the South Pacific has grown much faster than its economic potential. Therefore, it becomes legitimate to ask about China's regional goals and the risks involved.

In May 2022, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, and Fiji to discuss a plan for a regional agreement. A month earlier, China signed a pact with the Solomon Islands under which ports on the islands would be accessible to the Chinese navy and protected by the Chinese police and military. The Chinese side has committed to investing around \$800 million in the islands' infrastructure.

The Donald Trump administration introduced a strategy for the Indo-Pacific. However, it was ineffective in the economic and diplomatic fields for many reasons. In turn, the Joe Biden administration announced its strategy for the Indo-Pacific during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. According to Paul Haenle (2022), it has achieved some diplomatic successes but has not yet implemented an effective economic strategy. Therefore, despite the ineffectiveness of past US strategies in the region, US attempts to implement various economic programs for Pacific Island countries are to be expected.

In addition to military agreements, i.e., those belonging to the sphere of hard power, the US, to counter Chinese influence, will increasingly develop soft power aimed at countries in the Indo-Pacific region. It also addresses economic programs for strategically important Pacific islands covered by the US Free Association Agreement (Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau) and those whose economy is predominantly Chinese (Solomon Islands and Kiribati).

From the point of view of the United States, an important country in the conflict with China will be India, which has so far maintained an equal distance from the liberal, Eurasian, and Belt and Road order. India has good relations with Russia, the leading supplier of military equipment to the Indian army. After the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, India has further strengthened relations with Russia due to the possibility of cheaper purchase of raw materials (mainly natural gas) in Russia, whose export capacity has been reduced as a result of sanctions imposed after the attack on Ukraine (Umbach, 2022). India has oil and natural gas deposits, but their production levels are insufficient, leaving it condemned to import them. India's relations with Russia's ally, China, are relatively correct despite the

long-standing conflict with China (in 1962, the Chinese army defeated the Indian army by occupying a small area of Aksai in western Tibet). However, India's policy may change as the Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean develops, as evidenced by China's debt-taking of the strategic port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka, which will soon become the base of the Chinese navy. Such Chinese actions contradict the Nehru doctrine, which is still in force in India, assuming Indian hegemony in the Indian Ocean (Holslag, 2009). Suppose China continues to pursue its policy in this region consistently. In that case, strategic considerations will become more important for India than economic considerations, which may also lead to a change of attitude towards the military alliance with the US.

A complicating factor in US-Indian relations is the issue of the Chagos archipelago located in the British Indian Ocean Territory, one of the 14 remaining British Overseas Territories. U.S. military installations are located there, which could be used in a possible armed conflict with China. The largest island in the archipelago, the atoll of Diego Garcia, was a British colony that was first granted the status of a dependent territory and then, in 1966, was leased for 50 years to the Americans, who displaced the previous inhabitants and established one of the most important military bases. On Diego Garcia, there is a runway that allows the landing of B2 bombers and the heaviest transport aircraft, as well as a party and fuel base operated by some 2,000 American troops. The base was used during Gulf War I and II and the Afghan War. Diego Garcia's strategic location allows the Americans to project power on all azimuths effectively: in East Africa, the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, and even the South China Sea.

Mauritius, a former British colony that gained independence in 1968, claimed the right to the Chagos archipelago. India supports Mauritius' claim, which aligns with its anti-colonial rhetoric. Also significant is that 68 percent of the country's population is Indian. Such Indian policies cause direct conflict with the United Kingdom and the US (Baruah, Joshi, 2021). Also complicated is the situation of Mauritius, whose main trading partners are the US, China, and India. This island state has become one of the most significant tax havens in the world today, thanks to its offshore strategy (Betchoo, 2023).

The situation of the Chagos Archipelago will have to be settled sooner or later since most countries see its current legal status as an obvious relic of colonialism. However, it is difficult to imagine an American and British withdrawal from Diego Garcia because the joint base that exists there enables them to control maritime trade routes in the Indian Ocean effectively. Regardless of India's geopolitical option, the dispute over the Chagos archipelago will result in even greater Chinese involvement in the region and a tightening of US-British relations.

In response to the Chinese challenge, the US has put forward the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) concept. The future of US governance in the Indo-Pacific depends on the acceptance of this narrative by other countries in the region. It has been adopted mainly by the Anglo-Saxon states of Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and, to a lesser extent, Canada. In each case, this has occurred for different reasons. The United Kingdom

government, after Brexit, began to pursue a foreign policy similar to the US concept of the Indo-Pacific, not so much because of its involvement in the region but primarily fearing Chinese domination of the global economy (Breslin, Burnham, 2023). According to Brendan Taylor, the Australian government's enthusiasm for the Indo-Pacific concept stems from its compatibility with the principal and hitherto conflicting visions of Australian foreign policy: an ally dependent on the US and a middle-sized country pursuing a relatively independent policy (Taylor, 2020). Australia's accession to AUKUS and the preceding discussion confirm Taylor's diagnosis. Despite not joining AUKUS, New Zealand wants to strengthen cooperation with the US, Australia, and the United Kingdom along the lines of the Indo-Pacific concept. New Zealand's attitude stems from concerns raised by China's increasingly assertive regional policies. There is a widespread belief among both political elites and the Canadian public that Canada needs to change its existing foreign policy in the new geopolitical realities set by the rise of China's role. Canada is likely to adopt the option in the future, which is consistent with the American concept of the Indo-Pacific. This option can guarantee the security of the region and can provide economic benefits from Indo-Pacific trade in the future (Nagy, 2021).

US and Chinese soft power actions set the stage for hard power actions. A typical example is the US cooperation with India, Japan, and Australia under Quad (with the possibility of extending cooperation with other partners through Quad Plus), covering scientific and technology cooperation. Another example is Chinese investments in the Indo-Pacific region, ending with the takeover of ports, which became the basis of the Chinese fleet. Russia's policy is an additional factor influencing the political situation in the Indo-Pacific region. According to Józef M. Fiszer (2022, p. 20), the situation in the Asian region is also influenced by Russia pursuing its imperial ideology in cooperation with China. Putin believes that the best way to break the American hegemony in the world is the Russian-Chinese alliance, which is why his relations with China are a priority.

The economic rivalry between the regimes led by China and its ally Russia and the conflicted US will intensify. From the perspective of the Global South, which has suffered the most due to global crises, including ASEAN countries, South Asia, Eurasia, the Middle East, and Africa, this is a huge opportunity. Because the priorities of these countries differ significantly from those of the United States, China, and Russia, they will not join any of the competing world orders. However, they can choose the most favorable offers of economic cooperation offered by them. Recently, the offer of the Chinese Belt and Road order has turned out to be more attractive for many Indo-Pacific countries than the offer of the American-led liberal order. There are several reasons for this: China has a currency surplus, can abandon protectionist policies in many areas, and dump economic exchanges. Currently, the US administration cannot pursue similar policies, as evidenced by the Democrats' rejection in late November 2023 of Joe Biden's initiative for an economic pact with 13 other Indo-Pacific countries. In the long term, however, it cannot be ruled out that if China's economic momentum weakens, its offer to Indo-Pacific countries will be outbid by the US liberal order.

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