

Indo-Pacific Region: The Rise of “Quad” and Future Clash of Civilizations

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Abstract : The balance of power and geostrategic competition that occurs in Indo-Pacific region currently is a reflection for the rise of China’s power which potentially could be a new hegemonic actor in the broader regional order. This phenomenon has led to the resurgence of Quadrilateral Cooperation (Quad) alliance, run by the United States, India, Japan, and Australia by forming steps together in coordinating the Indo-Pacific regional establishment goals as a free, transparent, and based on international law area. The momentum of Quad cooperation that ignore China’s membership and implicitly framed in the axis of democracy is certainly lead to the conflict escalation, where China has gradually succeeded in using their growing economic power as well as the strategic conditions of its military forces to spread the great influence in Indo-Pacific geopolitics. This condition brings China is regarded as a major threat and indirectly creates problems that lead to a ideological competition in this region. Thus, this research aims to describe the dynamics of existing problems in Indo-Pacific region by orienting focus discussion on How is the state of Indo-Pacific region along with the existence of Quad Cooperation and China’s response that could trigger the occurrence of clash of civilizations?. This research is a descriptive-analysis research by using the regionalism approach and clash of civilizations theory. The research result is going to indicate that geopolitical governance and Quad cooperation in Indo-Pacific that should have a good impact precisely create for new conflicts within the region.

1 INTRODUCTION

The movement of global political currents that being oriented toward the east has made the region formerly called Asia-Pacific go through a broader transformation in regional frames into “Indo-Pacific”. Indo-Pacific region can be seen as a contemporary term to describe the integration of countries that are generally located in the continent of Asia, and the Pacific mainland especially in the western part. Realizing the importance to see the geopolitical connection between the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the Western Pacific Region (WP), which can be a part of single maritime entity with more strategic economic and security potential has been one of the main reasons why then the establishment of this region is intensified and interesting to be studied deeply (The Diplomat, 2018). The formation of geo-economics along the Indo-Pacific region is predicted to be able to facilitate relations between countries to promote trade activities as well as to facilitate the movement of goods and people that can affect economic

development and certain sectors (Shankari, 2017). While on the other hand, emerging the security concern has basically become the primary factor behind the existence of Indo-Pacific itself. However, the security of the maritime sector is the main security in this regard intends to improve the capacity of maritime management in anticipation of threats arising, especially with the issue of territorial dispute in the South China Sea that has not been resolved optimally. In this regard, the efficiency of Indo-Pacific should be able to create a regional framework that can facilitate the potential of this economic and security strategy (Jeffrey D. Wilson, 2017).

Since it was first initiated by Japan prime minister Shinzo Abe in 2007, India was the first country to approve Japanese aspirations to bring together the Indian and pacific oceans along with the goal of creating freedom and prosperity within the wider Asian region. Followed in 2010 United States officially calls for diplomatic recognition of the existence of the Indo-Pacific which can be seen as an opportunity to develop its military cooperation

with India in the Pacific, as well as to improve the efficiency of global trade which at the time was aligned with Barack Obama's policy of "Pivot to Asia". And in 2013 after its defense white book was released, Australia is also certain to support the development of the Indo-Pacific region by recognizing the centrality and eastern orientation of India in its regional construction (Khurana, 2017). What is make it interesting is that when Indo-Pacific developed very dynamically, the establishment of Indo-Pacific region specifically directed into what is called the new geostrategic intended to offset the rise of China strength and influence in the Asian region itself. This is shown by the establishment of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific initiated by Japan, India, the US and Australia in the Quadrilateral Cooperation Alliance (Quad) and exclude China membership. Quad itself prioritizes a consolidation of free, transparent values, enforce rules-based rules, and respect for international law where it is still a part of the democratic system which later became the basis of the regional framework as well as the goal of regional establishment (Cogan, 2017). Then the question is why then China is seen as a threat to the Quad in this region? and on the other side does China also feel threatened by the alliance?

Through this, some may realize that basically the problem is the fear of most of countries in the world towards rise of China power through rapid economic progress and it gives great potential to increase the military power of China that eventually made this country as a new hegemonic actor and even in the new Indo-Pacific region. And beside that, China aggressiveness toward the South China Sea issue also strengthens the assumption that this situation will be a threat to the regional security and stability. But in this case we will not discuss deeply about the threat of military power that is the main issue in this case, but more than that, we see that there is a more serious potential threat that is with the threat of civilization that will be core of the split of conflict in indo-Pacific. And apart from that, no wonder the Quadrilateral alliance later emerged as a "security keeper" as it was aimed to ensuring that regional security would be achieved by applying western-style democratic values that were emphasized. But nevertheless we consider that China will never be one of the countries that heed it because if we see historically, the democracy that became the blood of the flesh of western civilization was never able to have a unity with the China in which it is not because of the roots of civilization that owned is really different. The potential threat of this civilization at once prove the predictions assumed by

Huntington with the continuing clash of civilizations that occur between the West and China and will be even more significant in the 21st century along with the overlapping geopolitical interests. In the end we will come to the core question of How is the state of Indo-Pacific region with the existence of this clash of civilizations? And how will this affect to pain out the geostrategic competition in the future?

2 METHODS

This research is a descriptive-analysis research by using the regionalism approach and clash of civilizations theory.

2.1 Regionalism Approach

The regionalism approach to studying an area in general is more than just discussing geographical territorial positions. This approach is generally abstract and more appropriate to see how countries can integrate with each other under their own interests. This is also happen for the conceptual changes that have taken in Asia-Pacific to become an Indo-Pacific region. In this case, Regional awareness and identity inserted into a "mental map" and probably becomes something that encourages Japan to initiate of combine the Indian and Pacific oceans. In a regionalism approach it is called by the term "cognitive region" where an area can be defined on the basis of certain characteristics as the binding element of the area. It is also encouraging how in a process of making Regional awareness and identity based on the cognitive region model will emphasize three main aspects : 1) The language and rhetoric were then considered appropriate to explain conceptual change in Asia-Pacific. 2) The redefinition of regionalism and regional identity can continue to be followed by the development of existing political processes. 3.) Regional awareness should also refer to a general understanding of a political activity undertaken by the actors involved (S., Silvy and Sudirman, 2010). Looking back at the last two points, the redefinition of the Asia-Pacific region and its relation to the formation of Indo-Pacific regionalism can be seen as a product of the political developments taking place between key player countries in the Indian and Pacific Oceans and then creating new labels on regional definitions which is considered more relevant. And moreover, the presence of the Quad Alliance in the midst of this region can clearly signal that the region is

essentially being developed into an anti-China region as part of the ongoing geopolitical strategy.

2.2 Clash of Civilization Theory

This theory is widely known as the thought of Huntington who sees that conflicts that occur in the post ideological era are fueled by differences in identity, religion, or more generally culture (Orsi, 2018). Basically these aspects are a core of the civilization that became the view of human life. Relations between civilizations should be dynamic, where civilizations sometimes experience fame and development, rise and fall, and unite or separate, but in the context of differences in civilization will tend to subdue, eliminate, or intend to get rid of other civilizations where this is the root of the clash between civilizations. The development of civilizations in practice is not in an equal position especially when it has been incorporated into a world political arena. Therefore, the position of civilization by Huntington then divided into two, first that acts as a primary force or the main power and has a significant influence and authority against other civilizations, and second is the secondary power civilization dependent on primary power (Huntington, 2005). And in the broader context civilization can include values, norms, institutions and patterns of thought that are the most important part of a society. Identity, Culture, Language, and Religion are important parts of civilization where in the decades of world development this has been proven to play a central role in political activity (Jackson and Sorensen, 2014).

In his book Huntington shares some of the major civilizations in the contemporary era which include: Chinese Civilization, Japanese civilizations, Hindu Civilization, Islamic Civilizations, Western Civilizations and African Civilizations. And for about two decades after the end of the Cold War, the western civilization represented by the United States has become the only civilization with primary power that has given its influence to other civilizations. Therefore it is not surprising that this civilization is able to make United States as a super power state that instill values and norms in the international community order through the process of westernization and modernization. But since the rise of China in the 21st century, western civilization seems to have serious rivals where China and its civilization potentially shift the western civilization that has been considered the most universally powerful civilization. As a result, the so-called political uncertainty of the world entered a dilemma

with competition between Western and Chinese civilizations. The terms of substantive underlying clash is nothing else that the revival of China marks a rise of Asia that seeks to show the validity and their values that are considered superior to Western civilization that assume their values as universal and able to influence domestic policy and overseas countries in Asia. What happened to Japan, North Korea, and even Taiwan is a concrete example to justify it. How these countries have succeeded in demonstrating the process of modernization that led to westernization by adopting western values such as freedom, equality, democracy, individualism, limits on the power of government against authoritarian rule, conducting checks and balances, promoting competition, and making decisions with fast, although sometimes ignore the impact on the long term. But this was immediately challenged by the presence of power and ethos Confucian owned by the Chinese to show to the Asian community the importance of promoting the values of authority, hierarchy, subordination of the rights and interests of the individual, the need for consensus to avoid conflicts and build peace, recognizing the state's superpowers on society and individuals and emphasizing decision-making based on long-term goals (Huntington, 2005). Based on the fundamental difference between the values and norms assumed by western and chinese civilization this is what makes the civilization relationship between the two are not able to convert and tends to cause clash between civilizations itself. Therefore it is not surprising that in relation to the formation of democratic indo-pacifism under the initiation of Quad states united in the alliance of western civilization and a counterbalance to threats of Chinese civilization which is nothing but fear-based where they perceive China potential power will destroy the democratic system and create a new system in a regional order based on the values of civilization.

3 RESULTS

Continuity of use of the name of the Indo-Pacific is continued until today although basically this idea is at risk due to their own countries Quad early days of its establishment it did not work to maintain their alliance. Australia withdraws from Quad membership which is considered controversial, then became one of the main causes of the vacuum of the security alliance even up to a decade. In November 2017, the leaders of the United States, Japan, India,

and Australia met with the aim of reviving the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) and urged cooperation to form the Indo-Pacific region that is more free and open. Quad himself explained that the establishment of the regions geopolitics is a strategy that has relevance stronger than before (Vatsyayana, 2017). If the trigger factor for the formation of this alliance either in the past or in this current situation is because of concerns about the rise of power and influence of China, the relevant driving factor to see why this alliance is coming back is because the power of China is now at a very strategic point. where the South China Sea Issue is no longer the sole urgency of the issues that the Quad must pay attention to, but more than that the emergence of a New Silk Road or One Belt One Road as a major geostrategic force owned by China also appears to be a major threat to be faced by the alliance.

But on the other hand some observers like Graham Allison are more optimistic to see the rise of China where he assures that basically the western need not worry about the power of China when in the end the country is predicted to follow the footsteps of Germany and Japan that have a major transformation under the influence of more systems liberal by inclusivising themselves on democratic-based agendas such as in free trade (Demdigest, 2017). Especially now with the presence of Quad in Indo-Pacific with super power countries that have significant influence, will greatly assist the democratization process of other countries in the region where China will be one of them. But this can not be justified in full and it will be broken with the pessimistic assumption that China will never be one of those democratic states, just as China has never had a historical record of abandoning its identity and civilization as a state authoritarian and become a more democratic country. and with the rise of Quad from their long sleep and also with the priority of cooperation to create a democratic Indo-Pacific regional order increasingly makes the dynamics of regional security especially in Asia so complex.

On the other hand, the significance of the Quad revival may be interpreted as an emotional act of its member states that indeed perceives the threat of civilization with the rise of Chinese power. Japan as a proclaimer who calls for the establishment of this security alliance must have a goal to counter China hegemony in the East Asia region and create multipolarity in the inclusive "Broader Asia" scheme. Japan decision to create a more autonomous relationship with the US does not provide a boundary between the merging of the Japanese and Western civilizations that led to its second unity

under democracy. Japan itself, has long established itself as a normative force that builds democracy in Asia by respecting fundamental values such as human rights, liberties, legal supermarkets and market economics that are considered a fundamental milestone of a political stability. Therefore, in view of China decisive action on its claims to the South China Sea, it does not position Japan to justify it which is seen as an attempt to undermine the status quo by coercion that is inconsistent with the rules of international law. Therefore, in the Indo-Pacific systematics, Japan is very eager to make the region as Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). India, which is also an alliance of democratic cooperation, basically also wants to increase its power with a new geopolitical strategy to support its geopolitical rivalry with China. In addition, the presence of the silk route project, which has been crossed Sri Lanka and even Pakistan has successfully incorporated the influence of China which is feared will encircle India, given that China and Pakistan even an existing strategic alliance in Indian Ocean. By India joining Quad, the Indo-Pacific scheme is seen to support India's defense with the strategic engagement of US and Japanese forces, especially to deal with the potential escalation of the territorial conflict between India and Pakistan allied to China for the Kashmir region. With India joining Quad, the Indo-Pacific scheme is seen to support India's defense with the strategic engagement of US and Japanese forces, especially to deal with the potential escalation of the territorial conflict between India and Pakistan allied to China for the Kashmir region. Australia, after being out of the Quad in 2008 and now Australia chose to rejoin the Quad are basically motivated by the fact that Australia's economic dependence on China are not guarantees of these countries are in a healthy cooperative relationship. where China implicitly has increased its influence in the country by targeting political system and educational establishments Australia by providing cash donations to the major parties and politicians Australia as well as increased number of diaspora China that as a student in Australia has led to the pro-China and campaigns to raise Chinese influence. Therefore, after Australia rejoin with Quad is expected to support firm attitude to limit China influences, And on the other hand it is expected that the Indo-Pacific alone will be able to be an alternative way to allocate the Australian economic dependence in addition to China. And last is the United States that is actually a major force in this alliance are seeing that the Quad has given room for the central role of the US to enter into more strategic

areas to maintain US supremacy regional level. China's revival of power is highly disruptive to the United States because of its potential to shift US hegemony and create a new history to emerge as a superpower as a non-democratic country that will come face-to-face with the United States. therefore strategies to counterbalance Chinese power by embracing partnership with powerful nations throughout the Indo-Pacific alliance Quad is an important asset for the US (Julkaistu, 2018).

Comprehensively, this alliance embraces the interests of the four Quad states to form a balance of power with the intent of counterbalancing China. The apparent interest is to find alternatives to how these countries can suppress the influence of China that ultimately can not be separated from the threat of identity and civilization that they have. If in modern times the US, Australia, and Japan have united in western civilization under the democratic system, India is still at an analytical stages ambiguous to see more defense against its democratic side while its acknowledgment of China contribution to helping Pakistan in the Kashmir region dispute clearly shows the defense against Hindu civilization can not be excluded. But however it works, according to Huntington the circumstances in which two different civilizations (west and hindu) can alliance are due to common interests arising out of a common enemy and coming from a third civilization (China) (Huntington, 2005). Then to address it, actually what has been done by the Quad?

As has been pointed out in the earliest discussion that the formation of Indo-Pacific region itself is a manifestation of the geostrategy by Quad to suppress the influence of China especially in Asia. This region even includes complex economic and security dimensions to see opportunities and challenges in the regional order. As for the security sector, Quad itself has long been conducting a military operation known as Operation Malabar or which is essentially an attempt to increase the capacity of military power between the US and India. In 2007, Operation Malabar itself was officially followed by All Quad members along with Singapore so that this Operation became the largest scale exercise on the scale of the sea that ever existed at that time. This operation continues to run continuously and vacuum after Australia decided to get out and leave the alliance. But two years before the rise of the Quad, this operation was re-organized by the US, India, and Japan that run until today. But Australia desire to retake the military operation was rejected by India. According to the military operation in general this operation is certainly intended to increase the

military strength of the countries involved to confront a particular issue in this case is intended to counter China aggressiveness in the South China Sea (Julkaistu, 2018). In the economic field itself there is an Indo-Pacific economic corridor project built on the principle of freedom and international rule-based as a tool to compete with China's silk road strategy. This economic corridor underscores the importance of collaborating economic growth in South and Southeast Asia that is intended to influence the orientation of countries in Southeast Asia as well as to tend to increase its trading activities through the Indo-Pacific mechanism rather than relying on China's Silk Road (Shankari, 2017). It is of course very helpful to counterbalance China's silk road project which is seen as a serious threat where the project is basically a China way of controlling world trade and potential trade areas. Furthermore, the development of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) financial institution that is also part of the project is increasingly posing a serious threat especially to America because it can weaken the dollar-based international system and will strengthen the China currency itself (Chakhoyan, 2015).

In this situation, China response is not different from pessimistic predictions about how China will never follow the flow of political democracy. If the Indo-Pacific is formed neutrally, then China definitely does not matter that especially if this regional expansion will go hand in hand with the Chinese road silk project. But along with the development of Indo-pacifism followed by the formation of the Quad alliance made China feel discriminated that it is very unfortunate by China who think that a regional cooperation should not be politicized especially to exclude its members as has been done by Quad against China (SCM News, 2017). Similarly, the democratic values and norms that serve as the basic foundation of the Indo-Pacific to smooth the democratization process implicated by the Quad are considered futile and will not change the state of China as a country that continues to develop into a large non-democratic force that will shift the hegemony US. and this effort is in line with the development of Silk Road that continues intensified by China to believe that this geostrategy will help China to realize the strength of its hegemony.

At the same time conceptually a civilization will always see itself as the center of the world and declare itself to be the center of the history of human life. This perspective automatically highlights the monosivilational element that diminishes the relevance of a world that is interpreted in a

multisivilational way (Huntington, 2005). The geostrategic rivalry between the Quad and China in the regional order and Indo-Pacific security will ultimately bring about a clash of civilizations in which western civilization with its universalist values will contradict with the Confucian principle values in the China civilization which forms the basic milestone of ambition. China strategic is to continue increase its power and influence in the world political arena. This Confucian belief is a traditional Chinese view of the hierarchical order of society described in a folioshy "There are no two sun in the sky, therefore there can be no two empires on earth" this is what causes China not to be sympathetic to multipolar security concepts or even multilateral as represented by the Quad itself. There is also another reason why China should never accept Western universalism because of its own China principles that will never forget its history and its masses especially notes about its identity and civilization which are fundamentally derived from a civilization state. Civilization is a fixed price which is upheld by China because because of civilization the Chinese society can then form a unity. Therefore they believe in their own civilization superiority and will be disrespectful of those who are not (Jacques, 2010).

4 DISCUSSION

Seeing that Western and Chinese civilization have the same potential to make its core state as a primary power and hegemon actor in the Indo-Pacific, the dynamics of future development of this region are predicted to be nothing more than a battleground of both civilizations. Starting from the clash of civilizations which, in turn, became the source of post-cold conflict conflicts in the Indo-Pacific context, it will be more complicated by involving the security aspects of the regional order. By making India as a connector of IOR and WP connectivity does not mean the south-east Asian, south-east, and Pacific security dimensions will be assured in this new geostrategic framework. However, what China offers in its OBOR geostrategic with its efforts to maintain its influence in Asia-Pacific also attracts the attention of the related countries so that the discourse on the establishment of a sustainable Indo-Pacific framework is not believed by China where it is even predicted that soon will disappear (Birtles, 2018).

If we try to link it in regionalism study, China's assumption of the temporary existence of the

region could theoretically be justified in that the integration of the dominant actors in this region even makes a common interest against China as the fundamental reason that brought them together. In other words, the Indo-Pacific is more suited to be said to grow based on the demands of the interest than to see the aspect of the similarity of characteristic and the contrasting identity of the record. Hindu civilization which forced itself to involve with western civilization even under the banner of democracy, did not deny that one day they are more aware that it does not work efficiently to create sustainable cooperation when the common interest has been deemed to be over or even should change orientation in accordance with the development politics that goes hand in hand with predictions of the rise of China's hegemony as the great monosivilisational in the future. If the evidence of Huntington's assumptions about the clash of civilizations between the West and China increasingly significant in the 21st century is justifiable, it is not impossible that the counterbalancing done by the US, Japan, India and Australia is not really capable of providing security regional but which will lead to a new conflict that is more serious than just a threat of civilization, although not directly lead to a war.

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