

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

*Quasi-Alliances, Managing the Rise of China, and Domestic
Politics: The US-Japan-Australia Trilateral
1991-2015*

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**A thesis submitted to the Department of International Relations of the London School of Economics
and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
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DECLARATION

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACSA Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement

ADB Asian Development Bank

AIIB Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

ANU Australian National University

ANZUS Australian New Zealand US

ARF ASEAN Regional Forum

ASDF Air Self Defense Force (Japan)

ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute

ASW Anti-Submarine Warfare

AUSMIN Australia-US Ministerial Consultations

A2AD Anti-Access, Area Denial

C4ISR Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, & Recon.

CBA Capacity Building Assistance

CCP Chinese Communist Party

CCS Chief Cabinet Secretary

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

CO Cabinet Office / *Kantei* (Japan)

COP Common Operating Picture

CSCAP Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific

CSIS Center for Strategic and International Studies

DASD Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (US)

DIA Defense Intelligence Agency (US)

DIO Defense Intelligence Organization (Australia)

DOC Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea

DOD Department of Defense (US / Australia)

DOS Department of State

DPJ Democratic Party of Japan

EAS East Asia Summit

EASI East Asia Strategy Initiative

EASR East Asia Strategy Report

FPA Foreign Policy Analysis

FPE Foreign Policy Elites

FSO Foreign Service Officer

GATT General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GDP Gross Domestic Product
GPR Global Posture Review (US)
GSDF Ground Self-Defense Forces (Japan)
GSOMIA General Security of Military Information Agreement
HA/DR Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief
HMAS Her Majesties' Australian Ship
IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency
INCSEA Incidents at Sea Agreement
JCG Japanese Coast Guard
JDA Japan Defense Agency (until 2007)
JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency
JMSU Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking
JSD Joint Security Declaration (US-Japan 1995)
KORUS Korea-US Free Trade Agreement
LDP Liberal Democratic Party
MDG Millennium Development Goals
MFN Most Favored Nation
MHI Mitsubishi Heavy Industries
MOFA Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Japan)
MOD Ministry of Defense (Japan)
MSDF Maritime Self-Defense Forces (Japan)
MSI Maritime Security Initiative
NAPCI Northeast Asia Peace Cooperative Initiative
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBR National Bureau of Asian Research
NCR Neoclassical Realism
NDPG National Defense Program Guidelines (Japan)
NDPO National Defense Program Outline (Japan)
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
NPT Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSC National Security Council.
ODA Overseas Development Assistance
ONA Office of National Assessments
OSD Office of the Secretary of Defense (US)
PACOM Pacific Command
PKO Peacekeeping Operations

PLA People's Liberation Army
PLAAF People's Liberation Army Air Force
PLAN People's Liberation Army Navy
PMO Prime Minister's Office (Japan/Australia)
PRC People's Republic of China
PSI Proliferation Security Initiative
QDR Quadrennial Defense Review
RAAF Royal Australian Air Force
RCEP Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
RIMPAC Rim of the Pacific Exercise (US, allies)
RIPS Research Institute for Peace and Security
ROC Republic of China (Taiwan)
ROK Republic of Korea
SACO Special Action Committee on Okinawa
SCC (US-Japan) Security Consultative Committee
SCO Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SDCF Security Defense Cooperation Forum
SDF Self-Defense Forces
SFS San Francisco System
SLOC Sea-lanes of Communication
SOFA Status of Forces Agreement
S&ED Strategic and Economic Dialogue (US-China)
TCOG Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group
TMDF Trilateral Missile Defense Forum
TPP Trans-Pacific Partnership
TSD Trilateral Strategic Dialogue
WTO World Trade Organization
UN United Nations
UNCLOS United National on the Law of the Sea
UNSC United Nations Security Council
USFJ US Forces Japan
USFK US Forces Korea

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION: WHY TRILATERALS?	12
1.1. The Riddle.....	13
1.2. The Argument	20
1.3. Literature Review.....	23
1.4. Selection of Case Study.....	31
1.5. The US-Japan-Australia Trilateral	32
1.6. Research Methodology.....	35
1.7. Contribution to Existing Research	37
1.8. Why does this research problem matter?.....	38
1.9. Structure of the Thesis	41
2. CHAPTER 2: MAKING THE CASE	43
2.1. Theories of International Relations	43
2.2. The Structure of the International System.....	44
2.3. Realism and Neorealism	45
2.4. Alliances	46
2.5. Two Types of Security Dilemma	49
2.6. The Security Dilemma with China	50
2.7. The Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma	52
2.8. Neoliberalism and Order-building	53
2.9. Constructivism and the English School	55
2.10. Neoclassical Realism as a “Middle Way”.....	57
2.11. Conclusion.....	60
3. CHAPTER 3: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND PERCEPTION	61
3.1. The International System.....	62
3.2. Pax Americana	63
3.3. The Asia Pacific	64
3.4. “The San Francisco System”	64
3.5. The Rise of China.....	67
3.6. Regional Integration.....	70
3.7. The Interaction of External and Internal Variables.....	70
3.8. Intervening Variables – Perception	71
3.9. Threat Assessments.....	71
3.10. Foreign Policy Elites and Threat Assessments	72

3.11.	The impact of History and Structure on Perception.....	75
3.12.	The Great China Debate.....	77
3.13.	Conclusion.....	78
4.	CHAPTER 4: FOREIGN POLICY ELITES AND HEDGING	79
4.1.	The State	79
4.2.	Level 1 FPEs.....	81
4.3.	The President and the National Security Council	81
4.4.	The Department of State	83
4.4.1.1.	The Department of Defense	84
4.4.1.2.	The Department of the Treasury.....	86
4.5.	Level 2 FPEs.....	86
4.6.	“Policy Academics”.....	88
4.7.	How Level 2 FPEs influenced Policy (1990-2016).....	90
4.8.	How Level 1 and Level 2 FPEs Interact.....	93
4.9.	Hedging	95
4.10.	Past Definitions of Hedging	95
4.11.	Systemic Causes of Hedging	97
4.12.	Domestic Causes of Hedging	100
4.13.	Conclusion.....	101
5.	CHAPTER 5: THE CLINTON PRESIDENCY (1993-2000)	102
5.1.	The First Term of the Clinton Administration (1993-1997).....	104
5.2.	Hub and Spokes to Security Community?	107
5.3.	Regional Security Reconsidered	108
5.4.	Japan, Korea, and the creation of the trilateral model	109
5.5.	Weakening of US Alliances	110
5.5.1.	Abandoning Japan?	111
5.6.	The China Factor	115
5.7.	The Second Term of the Clinton Administration (1997-2000)	116
5.8.	Moves toward Trilateralism.....	119
5.8.1.	The Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group.....	120
5.9.	Resurgence of the US-Australian Alliance.....	121
5.10.	US-China Relations in the late 1990s	124
5.11.	The Security Dilemma of the Taiwan Crisis	126
5.12.	Japan’s security policy-making structures.....	128

5.13. Conclusion.....	130
6. CHAPTER 6: THE BUSH PRESIDENCY (2001-2008)	132
6.1. The First Term of the Bush Administration (2001-2004)	134
6.2. The Origins of the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD).....	137
6.3. The 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami	141
6.4. A New Foreign Policy Nexus in Tokyo.....	142
6.5. The Rise of Sino-Japanese Tensions	144
6.6. The Second Term of the Bush Administration (2005-2008).....	148
6.7. The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Grows	150
6.8. Expanding Australia-Japan and trilateral Security Ties	153
6.9. The Quadrilateral Proposal and US-Japan-India Trilateralism.....	155
6.10. China and Regional Security	159
6.11. Conclusion.....	160
7. CHAPTER 8: THE OBAMA PRESIDENCY (2008-2015)	163
7.1. The First Term of the Obama Administration (2008-2012)	167
7.2. New Political Winds in Japan	169
7.3. The Pivot is Unveiled	173
7.4. The Evolution of the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral.....	176
7.5. Australia Debates its Strategic / Economic Choices.....	179
7.6. Dealing with a “newly- assertive” China.....	182
7.7. The Second Term of the Obama Administration (2012-2016)	185
7.8. <i>Mahanian Japan: The return of Shinzo Abe</i>	188
7.9. Australia’s Deep Hedge	191
7.10. The Growth of China’s Threat Status	193
7.11. Conclusion.....	194
8. CONCLUSION	196
8.1. Overview of Findings	196
8.2. Weaknesses in the Argument	201
8.3. Where next?	203
8.4. The Future of Policymaking in the Asia Pacific.....	204
9. REFERENCES	205
10. INTERVIEWS.....	225

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how the United States reacted to changes in its external environment in the Asia Pacific after the Cold War; in particular, this paper examines the creation of the security trilaterals in what had been a traditionally bilateral alliance system and seeks to explain this through Washington's complex relationship with the other great power in the region, China. American policy toward China has been marked by its policy complexity, in the sense that the US has seen China both as an important trade partner and a potential peer competitor.

While many scholars have covered both alliance theory and US approaches toward China, this thesis seeks to explore both together, seeking to put American strategy in the region writ-large within an overarching neoclassical realist (NCR) framework. As a result, this thesis prioritizes power and the structure of the international system, while also maintaining that external variables alone are insufficient to explain the complex behavior exhibited by the United States at this time. It therefore draws from domestic variables introduced Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), and examines them through the NCR conceptions of 'threat assessment'.

This thesis identifies four intervening variables as crucial to understanding the evolution of US policy in the region from 1993 to 2015. These include policy-coalitions of foreign policy elites (FPEs), their perception of the structure of the international system, the domestic political conditions in which they labored, economic inter-dependency to China, and threat-assessment debates. Applying those five to the independent variable of China's rise, this thesis argues that American foreign policy elites formed into two broad policy coalitions, who could not agree on whether to balance or to accommodate China's rise.

The quasi-nature of the trilateral, the failed attempt at a quadrilateral, and the off-and-on again nature of US-Japan-Australia alliance dynamics indicate that foreign policy elites inside all three states continue to debate China's threat-assessment status. Therefore, this thesis finds that at heart, hedging is the product of domestic variables, the inability of policy coalitions to triumph over their opposites.

1. INTRODUCTION: WHY TRILATERALS?

Of all the changes to power and diplomacy in the Asia Pacific over the past fifteen years, perhaps one of the most intriguing and under-researched has been the gradual proliferation of a new type of security cooperation, the trilateral. As an area of research, the trilateral has fallen between the cracks of rising power debates centered around China's rise¹, hegemonic stability discussions², debates on the future of the American "hub and spokes system"³, and Southeast Asian community-building and regional order studies⁴. Despite the relative paucity in research, the trilateral model has replicated itself throughout the region⁵, popping up between allies and even between peer competitors, fulfilling a range of functions; from political and economic, as with the China-ROK-Japan Trilateral Summit; to strategic and political, as with the Australia-India-Japan trilateral. Some are extra-regional in focus, as with the US-Japan-India Strategic Dialogue; some are primarily regional in focus, as with the US-Japan-Australia Security Dialogue; and some are primarily sub-regional in focus, as with the US-Japan-ROK model.

As the past four examples show, the United States has been a particularly prominent builder of trilateral relationships, developing three trilaterals around its Asia-Pacific alliance partners. Often, it has sought to link up allies with which it already has strong bilateral ties, but who lack their own bilateral, such as Australia and Japan. Often, as a result, the difference between bilateral and trilateral

¹ See for example: G J Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West" in *Foreign Affairs* Vol.87, No.1 (Jan – Feb 2008), pp.23-37; Nicholas D. Kristof "The Rise of China" in *Foreign Affairs* (Nov-Dec 1993); Aaron L. Friedberg *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York, W.W. Norton and Co. 2011); Henry Kissinger *On China* (New York; Penguin Group, 2011); Edward N. Luttwak *The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy* (Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012); Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge of China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 2005).

² See for example: T.J. Christensen, "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and US Policy toward East Asia" in *International Security*, Vol.31, No.1 (Summer 2006) pp.81-126; Rosemary Foot, "Chinese Strategies in a US-Hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging" in *International Affairs*, Vol.82, Issue 1, (January 2006) pp.77-94; William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World" in *International Security*, Vol.24, No.1 (Summer 1999) pp.5-41; Jorn Dosch, "Managing Security in ASEAN-China Relations: Liberal Peace or Hegemonic Stability" in *Asian Perspective*, Vol.31, No.1 (2007), pp.209-236; Christopher Layne "This Time it's Real: The End of Unipolarity and the Pax Americana" in *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.56, Issue1 (March 2012) pp.203-213.

³ See for example: Kent E. Calder, "Security Security through Prosperity: the San Francisco System in Comparative Perspective" in *The Pacific Review*, Vol.17, Issue 1, (2004), pp.135-157; Victor D. Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism: the US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1990); Victor Cha, "American Alliances and Asia's Regional Architecture Saadia Pekkanen, John Ravenhill, and Rosemary Foot (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia* (Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, Oct, 2014); Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the US-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia Saadia Pekkanen, John Ravenhill, and Rosemary Foot (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia* (Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, Oct, 2014); William T. Tow and Amitav Acharya, *Obstinate or Obsolete? The US Alliance Structure in the Asia-Pacific*, (Canberra, Dept. of International Relations, Australian National University, 2007),

⁴ Evelyn Goh, "Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies" in *International Security*, Vol.32, No.3 (Winter 2007/8) pp.113-157; Peter Katzenstein and Christopher Hemmer, "Why is there No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism." In *International Organization* Vol.56, No.3 (2002), pp.591-594 Amitav Acharya, "Culture, Security, Multilateralism: the 'ASEAN' Way and Regional Order" in *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.19, Issue 1 (1998), pp.55-84; David Martin Jones, "Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian Regional Order" in *International Security*, Vol.32, No.1, (Summer 2007), pp.148-184.

⁵ Michael J. Green, "Strategic Asian Triangles" in Saadia Pekkanen, John Ravenhill, and Rosemary Foot (eds.,) *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia* (Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, Oct, 2014) pp.1-13.

cooperation has been muddied, so much, that Desmond Ball, a prominent Australian scholar, has said: “it is often difficult and sometimes even impossible to distinguish purely bilateral activities from the myriad of multilateral activities in which Australia and Japan are engaged, and particularly from collaborative activities undertaken as part of the respective alliance arrangements with the United States.”⁶ This muddying of waters does not just cover what the trilaterals *do*, but also what the trilaterals *are*, since they lack one of the primary features of alliances, a formal or informal defence commitment between two allies. Noting this, William Tow – a prominent Australian scholar of trilateralism – describes them as a “unique theoretical challenge”⁷ for the international relations scholar, demanding either a redefinition of alliances or a redefinition of security cooperation. This lack of clarity has led to many scholars resorting to description as a form of definition. Michael Wesley calls the trilaterals, “expansive bilateralism”⁸, entailing “cooperative security behavior between three states or strategic polities”⁹. Certainly, it cannot be confused with “triangularity”¹⁰, a concept related to trilateral balancing (such as US-China-Japan triangularity). Despite this confusion, two commonalities reveal themselves in US-Japanese trilateralism: first, thus far, they all take place in the Asia Pacific. Second, they prioritize security over other forms of diplomatic activity.

1.1. The Riddle

In the early days of this project, I asked three different scholars to define the trilaterals. Perhaps, unsurprisingly, given the above discussion, I received three different answers. To one, it was clear that they were merely alliances-by-another-name. Another disagreed with this strongly, insisting they were about a US-Japanese attempt to further regional integration. A third argued they were part of an American containment strategy of China. This inability of three academics to agree on the nature of the trilaterals crystalized into the primary riddle of the trilaterals. It was clear that this definitional uncertainty would play a large part of my initial theoretical work. Were they alliances, as the first scholar insisted? Given their emphasis on security cooperation, they certainly seemed alliance-like, after all, they had no economic function, and nearly all their working groups and public statements focused on soft and hard security issues. On the other hand, they lacked the crucial element required by alliances: a stated or unstated defence obligation existing between one or more parties. However, if trilaterals are not alliances, what are they? And why would the United States be content with non-

⁶ Desmond Ball, “Whither the Japan-Australia Security Relationship?” APSNet Policy Forum, September 21, 2006, Available at: <http://nautilus.org/apsnet/0632a-ball-html/> (Accessed October 19, 2016).

⁷ William T. Tow, “Contingent Trilateralism: Applications for the Trilateral Security Dialogue” William T Tow, Mark J. Thomson (eds) *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (New York, Routledge for Australia Strategic Policy Initiative, 2007) pp.27.

⁸ Michael Wesley, “The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue’s Institutional Politics” *Ibid* pp.39.

⁹ William T. Tow, “Contingent Trilateralism: Applications for the Trilateral Security Dialogue” *Ibid* pp.27.

¹⁰ Camilla T. N. Soerensen, “Strategic ‘Triangularity’ in Northeast Asia: The Sino-Japanese Relationship and US Policy,” *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (2006), pp.99-128.

obligatory defence relationships, when it had such a bold tradition of alliance formation? Was this a form of *underbalancing*¹¹ by the US or its trilateral partners? Or was it a form of soft deterrence to rising powers like China? Were these inconsistencies caused by internal considerations like the US dependency on Chinese trade?¹² If China continued to behave assertively, they seemed to suggest, would the trilaterals become increasingly alliance-like in their mutual obligations? One prominent Australian official¹³ asserted that the trilateral was all about policy coordination – presumably at the grand strategy level – and therefore driven by a combination of external challenges and intra-group dialogues to deal with those challenges. While this would seem to have a large pinch of truth, particularly over the rise of China, it begs the question of why the trilateral continued to evolve so many hard power functions after the immediate dialogue was established.

It struck me that there was historical evidence for trilateralism in Europe. After all, wasn't the Triple Entente a sort of trilateral? It is a truism of schoolyard history that World War 1 was caused by alliances, but contrary to popular opinion, the Triple Entente was never a full alliance. As late as August 1914, Lord Grey sought to reassure an anxious House of Commons that "the Triple Entente was not an Alliance" but rather, it only a "diplomatic group"¹⁴. Despite close military ties to France, Grey told the Commons that "nothing which passed between [our] military or naval experts should bind either government or restrict in any way, their freedom to make a decision as to whether or not they would give that support when the time arose."¹⁵ Some historians, like Byron Dexter, have argued that in fact this lack of defence commitments resulted in grave consequences. For by not committing Great Britain more openly to France, and over-emphasizing the false distinction between the political and military spheres, he misled his own cabinet about the degree of obligation between the British and French militaries¹⁶, and in the process undermined what might have become a credible deterrent to German military adventurism. Why didn't Britain formally ally with France and Russia? And what were the consequences of that informality?

¹¹ Underbalance in a "timely and inefficient manner", as put forward by Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton, NJ: University of Princeton Press, 2006), p.10.

¹² Michael N. Barnett, Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: the Case of Egypt, 1962-1973," *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No.3 (Summer 1991), pp.369-395.

¹³ Miller, Amb. Bruce (Australia's Ambassador to Japan; aide to Ashton Calvert, Secretary of DFAT 1998-2004) Personal interview, Tokyo, 23 February 2015.

¹⁴ Statement by Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, HC Deb 03 August, 1914, Vol. 65, cc1809-32, available at: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1914/aug/03/statement-by-sir-edward-grey> (accessed November 11, 2016).

¹⁵ Statement by Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, HC Deb 03 August, 1914, Vol. 65, cc1809-32, available at: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1914/aug/03/statement-by-sir-edward-grey> (accessed November 11, 2016).

¹⁶ Byron Dexter, "Lord Grey and the Problem of an Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.30, No.1 (January 1, 1951), p.301.

One hundred years after the outbreak of the First World War, we are now seeing a proliferation of a similar type of non-committal defence cooperation to that which existed between Great Britain and the Franco-Russian alliance in 1914. This trilateral model seems to be spreading right across the Asia Pacific. The United States and Japan – two of the region’s largest economic and military powers – have by themselves paired up in no fewer than three such trilaterals: the US-Japan-ROK trilateral, the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, and the US-Japan-India trilateral. Despite the fact that American leaders have continually reassured China that they do not have the will or the ability to encircle or contain China, Beijing has followed the changes and updates to the US alliance system with barely-disguised concern. Chinese scholars have called the US-Japan-Australia trilateral an “Asian version of NATO”¹⁷, saying it represents “an important effort to balance China’s rise and military buildup in the region”¹⁸. Although one might dismiss this as a reflection of China’s worst-fear security apprehensions¹⁹, it is clear that the US-Japan-Australia trilateral is becoming ever-more able at cooperating during a conventional conflict²⁰. This in turn has seemingly been driven by what some have called “a symbiotic means to enhance the overall power of the United States and its allies and partners...and thereby maintain the existing power balance in the region.”²¹ Rightly or wrongly, the media in all three countries has often framed the trilateral in this geopolitical, China-balancing model. Even some policymakers have done so. In 2014, one Japanese diplomat called the burgeoning bilateral relationship between Tokyo and Canberra a “quasi-alliance”²² in remarks to the Australian media²³, highlighting this hard power trend. Many more used such terms in interviews conducted for this

¹⁷ Feng, Zhu, “TSD – Euphemism for Multiple Alliance?” in William Tow, et al, (eds.), *The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: Facilitating Community-Building or Revisiting Containment?* (Seattle, Washington: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), p.43.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Rick Wallace, “Japan Military Drill with US, Australia likely to upset China”, in *The Australian*, November 25, 2014; Rob Taylor, “Leaders of US, Australia, Japan to Meet, with Eye on China: Washington Seeks Help from Allies for Increased Cooperation in Asia” in *The Wall Street Journal*, November 13, 2014; Rory Medcalf and Dr. C Raja Mohan, “Responding to Indo-Pacific Rivalry: Australia, India and Middle Power Coalitions”, on the Lowy Institute website at <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/responding-to-Indo-Pacific-rivalry>, accessed on 5th of January, 2015; Robert Ayson, “Words fail Australia, and anger China, at the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue,” in *The Lowy Interpreter*, 11 October 2013, J. Berkshire Miller, “China Looms Over Abe-Obama-Abbott Trilateral at G-20 Summit”, in *The Asahi Shimbun*, November 21, 2014; Wang Hui, “Trilateral Alliance only Shores up Tensions” in *China Daily USA*, November 26, 2014.

²⁰ For a discussion of the TSD’s evolving character, see: James L. Schoff, “The Evolution of US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation”, Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Simson Center, 2015), pp.37-50; For a broader discussion of the evolution of institutions, see Iain Wilson, “Darwinian Reasoning and Waltz’s Theory of International Politics: Elimination, Imitation and the Selection of Behaviors,” *International Relations*, Vol.27. No.4 (2013), pp.417-438; Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Evolutionary Tendencies in Realist and Liberal IR Theory”, in William Thompson (ed.) *Evolutionary Interpretations of World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.62-109; Ian Lustick, “Taking Evolution Seriously: Historical Institutionalism and Evolutionary Theory” *Polity*, Vol.43, No.2, (2011), pp.4-8; Bradley Thayer, “Bringing Darwin Back in” *International Security*, Vol.25, No.2 (2000), pp.125-151.

²¹ Nina Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: US Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia,” *International Security*, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016), p.49.

²² Victor Cha called the US-Japan-ROK trilateral a “quasi-alliance” in his *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*, (Stanford, Ca., Stanford University Press, 1999); while Ralph Cossa called the it a “virtual alliance” in his edited volume *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a ‘Virtual Alliance’*, (Washington DC, The CSIS Press, 1999).

²³ John Garnaut, “Australia-Japan military ties are a ‘quasi-alliance’, say officials” in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 26, 2014.

research project. In all this, it has been clear that internal debates continue on the nature of the trilaterals. This may explain why American, Australian, and Japanese foreign policy elites went to the trouble of creating a security forum but were unable to or unwilling to create a full alliance with an obligation for mutual defence.²⁴ This might also explain why the United States has particularly found the trilateral format so useful in dealing with uncertain allies and a rising peer competitor.

This internal tension between Washington and its allies has been apparent from the very first beginnings of the trilateral. In a press conference following the 2001 AUSMIN talks held between Secretary of State Colin Powell and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, a journalist raised the possibility of a US-Japan-Australia trilateral taking shape. Foreign Minister Downer's conditional and carefully constructed response at the time is instructive: "So as not allow a hare to rush away here, we obviously – I think it must be obvious – wouldn't want new architecture in East Asia which would be an attempt to kind of replicate NATO or something like that. We are talking here just about an informal dialogue."²⁵ Was it obvious to Downer's audience? And why did he not want a "hare to rush away"? And do his comments still stand, despite the fact that the trilateral has expanded over time and the "informal dialogue" he proposed now boasts three separate government-to-government tracks of engagement, with multiple thematic working groups, covering a broad range of activities, including humanitarian assistance / disaster relief (HA/DR), maritime security, counter-terrorism, and capacity-building? Furthermore, the three have taken serious steps to institutionalize intelligence-sharing, and defence industrial cooperation. So, why did Downer take such pains to insist that the trilateral would only be an "informal dialogue"? Was his message primarily for Washington's benefit, or Beijing's, or both?

As Graeme Dobell, a Journalist Fellow at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) has written²⁶, Downer's message was aimed at warning both the United States and Japan that such a grouping did not limit Australia's freedom of action, while also seeking to reassure China. Both this incident, and Dobell's analysis suggest at least one theoretical answer to our deeper question on the nature of the trilaterals. By this reading, there are two "security dilemmas"²⁷ lurking in the background of security

²⁴ Hugh White, "Trilateralism and Australia: Australia and the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue with America and Japan", William T Tow, Mark J. Thomson (eds) *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (New York, Routledge for Australia Strategic Policy Initiative, 2007).

²⁵ State.Gov Website, Press Conference with Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, Minister of Defense Peter Reith, and Admiral Chris Barrie, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/4350.htm> (accessed June 16, 2016).

²⁶ Graeme Dobell, "The Downer Legacy: Northeast Asia," *The Lowy Interpreter*, The Lowy Institute for International Policy Website: <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2009/09/14/Downer-seminar-Northeast-Asia.aspx> (accessed June 7th, 2016).

²⁷ See, for example: John Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma", *World Politics* Vol. 2, No. 2 (1950), pp. 171–201; Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma", *World Politics* vol. 30, no. 2 (1978): 186–214 (Published

ties of these three states: the first security dilemma is purely internal, an *intra-alliance security dilemma*, in which “member states within an alliance are subject to feelings of insecurity toward one another”²⁸, swinging between the dangers of “abandonment” and “entrapment”; the second security dilemma has an external aspect, in that all three states are aware that whatever actions they take to bolster their security, there is a fourth state reacting to this by bolstering its own security. This state is, of course, China. These two security dilemmas would combine with economic inter-dependency with both the United States and China²⁹, serve to push and pull and pulling policymakers between balancing style behaviors and reassurance. As Dobell notes, Downer’s attempt at reassurance – and the many more since by US officials – have not prevented Chinese government officials and scholars from seeing the trilateral as a *containing* bloc or alliance. Nor has it hindered trilateral members from developing ever-greater alliance-like features. In a sense, the trilateral is the next-best thing for policymakers, who are unable or unwilling for domestic reasons to commit to full alliance status.

The primary research question to this thesis was to try and answer the following: why did American policymakers choose a format for US-Japan-Australia security cooperation which had an unclear sense of defence obligation over the more conventional one of an alliance? Secondary questions include, what exactly are trilaterals? Why is the United States utilizing them so much in the Asia Pacific? Are they a new type of institution, or part of a greater US strategy? If the former, do they deserve their own category? If the latter, what are the implications for the balance of power in the region? Should the trilaterals be classified as organizations, dialogues, processes, alignments or quasi-alliances; and if the latter, are quasi-alliances different from alliances and other classic forms of defence cooperation in international relations literature? What is the relationship between the US-Japan-Australia trilateral and China? What are the implications for security studies and international relations? How should we think about the relationship between Australia and Japan, who, despite the immense strides in security cooperation, have such an ill-defined relationship that their leaders cannot agree on what to call it? And above all else, why now? What is particular to the current environment in the Asia Pacific to provoke these new institutions or dialogues? Are they related to Japan’s unique pacifist constitution?

As a result of what I have called the definitional problem of trilaterals, scholars and practitioners have resorted to a broad range of terms to describe the trilaterals, including “informal dialogue”, “quasi-

by Cambridge University Press); Glaser, C.L. "The Security Dilemma Revisited", *World Politics* vol. 50, no. 1 (October 1997): 171–201.

²⁸ Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 180-201.

²⁹ Michael N. Barnett, Jack S. Levy, “Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: the Case of Egypt, 1962-1973,” *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No.3 (Summer 1991), pp.369-395.

alliance”, “minilateral”³⁰, “dialogue process”³¹, “security triangle”, “federated network”³², and “security community”.³³ Indeed, Thomas Wilkins, has created an excellent taxonomic table of different forms of “alignment” in order to bring the trilaterals in line with international relations theory³⁴. While such taxonomy has been useful to explaining *what*, they have not really explained *why* or *why now*. This thesis – while acknowledging the importance of the definitional debate to the international relations scholar – chooses to approach trilaterals in a different route. Indeed, rather than discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the various definitions, it chooses to focus on this interesting fact that scholars cannot agree on them, and makes this the starting point for our discussion. This lack of agreement in itself is fascinating in itself and says much about the trilaterals.

This thesis focuses primarily on the US-Japan-Australia variant of the trilateral and investigates its origin-story. In eschewing the definitional approach, and using an origins approach, one finds that the American foreign policy elite (FPE) groups³⁵ that manage US security and foreign policy in Asia have been divided about trilateralism from the very start. One actually finds that these divisions are also mirrored in the other two states’ FPEs, in Tokyo and Canberra. Roughly speaking, these FPEs are divided between those who view the trilaterals as a means of inter-connecting the traditionally bilateral San Francisco system, in order to deter and dissuade China from adventurism³⁶; and those who fear a self-fulfilling security dilemma with China,³⁷ and who have sought to bind Beijing through institutional and economic engagement. These two groups agree that China is a challenge, but they disagree on the solution, with one group acting in a traditionally defensive manner and the other practicing the adage “Hug your friends close, and your enemies even closer”. This split hinders clear policymaking. As Steven Lobell has argued, “when a shift in a component of power of a foreign state

³⁰ Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Stimson Center, 2015), p.15.

³¹ Purendra Jain, “Japan-Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and its Challenges,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, Issue 4, (2006).

³² Nina Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: US Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia,” *International Security*, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016).

³³ Sorpong Peo, “Security Community-Building in the Asia Pacific,” in William Tow, ed., *Security Politics in the Asia Pacific: A Regional-Global Nexus?* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 154-58.

³⁴ Thomas S. Wilkins, “‘Alignment’, not ‘Alliance’ – the Shifting Paradigm of International Security cooperation: Toward a Conceptual Taxonomy of Alignment,” in *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 38, (2012), pp.53-76.

³⁵ “Foreign policy elites” (FPEs) are defined in this thesis as members of the group, from government ministries – like the foreign, defence, intelligence, trade, and aid agencies – to members of the legislature or executive who partake in the external relations of a state. Complicating matters, there is a secondary layer of FPEs who have “privileged access” to this first layer, think tank researchers, academics, journalists, and members of funding foundations, who help shape the policy debates. The second layer of American FPEs are particularly influential because many are composed of former government officials, or government officials-in-waiting, and for this reason, US Government officials are more responsive to their influence.

³⁶ See for example, Michael A. McDevitt, James A. Kelly, “Chapter Ten: In Search of Stability: Designing for a Better Peace in East Asia,” in Ralph A. Cossa (ed.) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a “Virtual Alliance”*, (Washington DC, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), p.152; and Blair, Dennis C. and John Hanley Jnr., “From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia Pacific Security Arrangements”, *The Washington Quarterly*, No 24:1 (2001).

³⁷ Robert D. Blackwill, Ashley Tellis, “Revising US Grand Strategy Toward China”, *A Council of Foreign Relations Special Report*, No. 72, (March 2015), p.18.

disables a foreign policy coalition, (then) the FPE is constrained in its threat identification and inefficient counterbalancing can occur.”³⁸ Lobell uses the inability of British policymakers to agree on the threat posed by Germany in the early 1930s. The lack of agreement within American domestic foreign policy explored in this thesis relates to China, and matches both Lobell’s inability to carry out “threat identification” and the resulting “inefficient counterbalancing”. This “China Debate” has long been a facet of American foreign policy making. It divides the main political parties³⁹, it permeates the bureaucracy⁴⁰, and it even divides the domestic FPEs of America’s Asian allies.

Recognizing this debate and the factions that define it, one policy-academic Dr Michael Green coined the terms “*Mahanians*” versus “*Continentalists*”⁴¹ to describe them. For Green, the *Mahanians* have sought to bolster America’s ties with its allies and promoted trilateralism as a means of doing that, while *Continentalists* have prioritised diplomatic and economic engagement with China. When *Mahanians* held key posts in Washington DC – as in 2001 – the trilateral evolved quickly. When *Continentalists* held those positions in Washington – as in 2008 – the trilateral evolved less quickly or halted completely. Thus, trilateralism is the result of both domestic and external variables and might be seen as a form of alignment. This domestic stalemate produces the policy behavior commonly known as “hedging” among IR theorists. Typically, hedging is described as a policy basket, or a strategy, containing elements of engagement and elements of internal and external balancing, a combination that is meant to minimize a state’s risk. However, if trilateralism is the result of domestic policy battles, then we are left with the startling possibility that hedging is not a strategy at all, but an inefficient outcome, produced by contradictory policy impulses. At the risk of sounding flippant, United States policy toward China and the Asia Pacific – including the alignment behaviour of trilateralism - encapsulates “hedging” because American FPEs cannot agree on a threat assessment of China. It is not that US FPEs will never agree on a threat assessment on China – simply that they have not done so yet.

³⁸ Steven Lobell, “Threat Assessment, the State, and Foreign Policy: A Neoclassical Model,” in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy, (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp.42-75.

³⁹ See, for example, the “Red Team/Blue Team debate in Washington that characterized the late 1990s, early 2000s: Action on Hill Reflects Informal Group’s Clout” debates: Robert G. Kaiser, Steven Mufson, “Blue Team’ Draws a Hard Line on Beijing”, *Washington Post*, February 22, 2000; Jay Branegan, “The Hard-Liners”, *Time*, April 02, 2001; Michael J. Waller, “Blue Team Takes on Red China,” *Insight on the News*, June 04, 2001.

⁴⁰ Edward N. Luttwak, *The Rise of China VS. the Logic of Strategy*, (Cambridge, MA, the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), pp.213-247.

⁴¹ The author would like to acknowledge his debt to Michael J. Green for providing this analytical framework, as well as the actual terms. Others, like David A. Beitelman critique “simplified ‘panda hugger’ versus ‘China hawk’ characterizations”. “America’s Pacific Pivot,” *International Journal*, Vol.67, No.4, (December 2012), p.1074. These two terms are somewhat crude, pejorative, and differ in tone from *Mahanians* versus *Continentalists*. The latter terms come with policy packages, and implicit assumptions about alliances, values, and the nature of power in the region. Having said that, they serve a similar purpose, in that like-minded policymakers can organize around those networks.

1.2. The Argument

The main argument of this thesis is to assert that US grand strategy in the Pacific was shaped and constrained by domestic variables, namely the inconclusive threat-assessment debates between American foreign policy elites (FPEs) which accompanied – and occasionally triumphed over – the usual systemic external variables. Using the research programme offered by neoclassical realism, this paper puts forward the hypothesis that the confusing structural stimuli of the “double security dilemma”, has produced in the US inconclusive threat-assessment debates about China between two groups of American policymakers, the *Mahanians* and the *Continentalists*. In turn, these debates have created the oddly alliance-like-but-not-really-alliance US-Japan trilaterals – including the US-Japan-Australia variant. This – rather than strategic intent – is how we might better understand what scholars call hedging⁴², a behavior that is associated with Washington’s China policy. The argument of this thesis progresses in three-stages, which goes as follows:

Trilaterals:

This thesis notes that the definition of trilaterals is not settled; they are viewed by various academics and practitioners in widely differing ways, because while they engage in alliance-like security cooperation, and they even *contain* alliances, they are not themselves new alliances, say, between Australia and Japan. This is not to say they can never be alliances, but that they do not fit the requirements for alliance status at present. In making this argument, I avoid trying to definitely define the trilaterals. As raised in the last section, I think that this definitional problem is itself fascinating and a useful starting point for our inquiry. By avoiding the definitional game, we can instead focus on what drives the states in question to act this way, and we immediately discover that they are driven by conflicting structural drivers – the *double security dilemma* – sends conflicting messages to domestic elites on the nature of risk in the Asia Pacific. This, in turn leads to inconclusive threat-assessments (specifically, of China), which in turns leads to policy incoherence and inefficient balancing. On the one hand, domestic elites struggle to define the relationships of their states to each other, while third-party states undervalue the trilateral either as a “talk shop” or conversely overvalue the groupings as a “shadow alliance”⁴³. In attempting to understand trilateralism, it is tempting to take a structural approach, viewing the trilaterals through the lens of great power shifts. It is equally tempting to use a foreign policy analysis to explain why the US has chosen to engage in this particular trilateral with Japan and Australia. However, if one looks at the interaction between domestic and

⁴³ Purendra Jain and John Bruni, “Japan, Australia, and the United States: Little NATO or Shadow Alliance?”, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 4, Issue 2 (2004), pp.265-285.

external variables, particularly in relation to American domestic debates on the strategic meaning of China's rise in the power system, then the reasons behind policy confusion in the US becomes easier to explain. Using the double security dilemma, combined with the domestic debates sheds light on why American FPEs have not pushed Australia or Japan harder to formalize the relationship and presents an additional insight into Lobell's argument on why great powers underbalance against potential challengers.

Foreign Policy Elites (FPEs)

While admitting that there are many definitions of what constitutes a "state", neoclassical realists such as Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman (2010) define it as "a generic term for a variety of autonomous polities with different geographic scopes, internal attributes and relative material capabilities that coexist and interact in an anarchic environment."⁴⁴ They accept the explicit distinction between the state and society made by Otto Hintze⁴⁵, and the relative autonomy this affords the former. A number of NCR scholars call these foreign policymakers the "foreign policy executive". This is defined as the President, key members of the cabinet, and advisors, diplomats, and military officials who are charged with making and conducting foreign and defence policy⁴⁶. This thesis accepts this term, but seeks to broaden it to the wider term "foreign policy elites" (FPEs), which includes the community that influences policymaking decisions. It takes the foreign policy executive as defined by Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman, and instead labels this, "Level 1" of the FPE: those who directly carry out foreign and defence policy decisions or implement those decisions. It then adds to this, a "Level 2" of the FPE, which includes those who have privileged access to policymakers, or those who seek to directly or indirectly influence the shape of foreign and defence policy. This split is particularly suited to the pluralistic American model of policymaking in the Asia Pacific, where journalists, academics, and think tank analysts regularly meet in track 1.5 settings⁴⁷, and where a high number transition in and out of government or elected office throughout their careers.

In examining domestic debates that characterize US foreign policy in the Asia Pacific, this research uses a framework proposed by Michael Green, and divides American FPEs into two broad groups, the

⁴⁴ Steven Lobell, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy," in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.27.

⁴⁵ See, for example: Otto Hintze, "Military Organization and the Organization of the State," in Felix Gilbert, (Ed.,) *Historical Essays of Otto Hintze* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp.180-215.

⁴⁶ Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Steven E. Lobell, *Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), p.61.

⁴⁷ In settings, where both government and non-government officials are represented and where discussions are usually off-the-record.

“Mahanians” and “Continentalists”. In an interview⁴⁸ with the author carried out for this thesis, Green defined the term Mahanian in the following way: it included politicians or leaders who were “US-first, Japan-first, maritime, Mahanian, democratic value...Anglo-Sphere”. Later, in describing the short-lived Quadrilateral of 2007-2008, Green said: “it was a very Mahanian maritime concept with a democracy-and-values overlay, which Mahan had.” In addition to describing this coalition and its features, Green asserted that a number of politicians had opinions or policies that were typical of Mahanianism, including “John Howard, Tony Abbott, Julie Bishop, Andrew Shearer...[Richard] Armitage, me, Kelly, Kurt Campbell on the Democratic side, the “Popeye club” as Funabashi calls us, and then in Japan it includes [Ryouzou] Kato, [Shinzo] Abe, and [NobKaneharas]; To summarise Green’s description of these policy-Mahanians, they tended to emphasize close ties between allies on the one hand, and realist arguments about the possibility of a clash with China. Their name is derived from Alfred Thayer Mahan, the 19th century American naval thinker who emphasized US naval power, a common thread since Australia, Japan, and the United States are all dependent on naval power in the Asia Pacific – unlike China, a land power. For Mahanians, the *intra-alliance security dilemma* plays a large part in their calculations, so that they tend to prioritize alliance cohesion, the risk of abandonment, and reassurance.

In the same interview⁴⁹, Dr. Green also put forward the concept of the policy maker group, he termed the ‘continentalists’. Green stated, “In Australia, that was many people in DFAT, it was Hugh White among scholars, it was Michael L’estrangle, who replaced Ashton. In the US, it was kind of Zoellick, Tom Donillon,”. They were policymakers in Washington who saw China as the focus of US efforts in the region. Green continued, “their big game was China. And then in Japan, it’s a dwindling breed. But Takeuchi is a little bit in that camp, and that’s a traditional MOFA position: keep close to the US but avoid entrapment in any US-China confrontation. A trilateral that was implicitly about China would’ve been inimical to that school, but not to the Kishi, Abe, group.”⁵⁰ To summarize Green’s concept of ‘Continentalists’, they are American foreign policy elites – working on Asia – who have tended to emphasize “getting China right” over strong alliance relationships. They also argue that China has in fact behaved responsibly in the existing institutions of global governance. They continued to hold that liberal capitalism will help the United States manage China’s rise, through the development of a progressive-minded Chinese middle class or through the “socialization” of China into global norms and practices. Rather than stressing the intra-alliance security dilemma, they instead tend to prioritize the

⁴⁸ Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), Personal interview, CSIS, Washington DC, April 15, 2015.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), Personal interview, CSIS, Washington DC, April 15, 2015

conventional security dilemma between China and the US. And finally, some like Robert Zoellick, had a background in trade and saw US foreign policy through the prism of the US trade relationship with China.

In this way, *Mahanians* and *Continentalists* should be seen as a difference in degree rather than one of absolutes. One might support engagement with China and be supportive of America's alliances. That is not the issue. However, when it comes to which is more of a priority, this thesis argues that here there are discernible differences between one set of FPEs and another.

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Hedging

When American foreign policy elites – such as *Mahanians* and *Continentalists* – are unable to agree on the threat-assessment of a rising power like China, they are unable to implement clear policy directions. As we know from Schweller, states are only able to balance against a potential threat when there is “a strong consensus among elites that an external threat exists and must be checked by either arms or allies or both”⁵¹, but happens where is no strong consensus? In some cases, FPEs are pushed and pulled in various directions, which causes them to carry out a mixture of balancing *and* engagement strategies, depending on the constitution of the cabinet and how strong different FPEs are relative to each other in a given administration. They may happen by accident – as with the Bush Administration – or it may occur as a matter of deliberate policy choice – as with the Obama Administration. This policy incoherence constitutes a new theory of hedging, which builds on the two-pronged definition provided by Evan Medeiros. As a NSC staffer in the Obama Administration, Medeiros envisioned balancing and engagement strategies to be different sides of the same coin. However, at times, hedging has occurred because of on-going China-debates between the *Mahanians* and the *Continentalists*. The TSD itself is a microcosm of this larger trend toward hedging, taking place within the networks of FPEs in the United States and its allies.

1.3. Literature Review

We will now review some of the academic literature on trilateralism. As stated before, there is comparatively little academic work on trilaterals. The first trilateral in the Asia Pacific was the US-

⁵¹ Randall L. Schweller, “Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing,” *International Security*, Vol. 29, No.2 (2004), pp.170-171.

Japan-South Korean trilateral, which was created in 1994, by Carl Ford, a former US defence official⁵² in order to foster Japan-Korean bilateral dialogue, and thereby improve coordination between two of Washington's most important regional allies. As a consequence, much of the early theoretical literature on trilaterals focuses on this particular variant of trilateralism, which has consequences for the theoretical work already carried out. For example, the idea that trilaterals are incremental bodies evolving toward greater institutionalization stems from Korean and Japanese domestic sensitivities to developing a formal relationship too quickly. Much early literature focuses on the prosaic function of coordinating policy over North Korea. Joel S. Wit wrote, "Trilateral cooperation had been the cornerstone of American strategy for dealing with North Korea... [and] securing support from Seoul and Tokyo would be the first act in the unfolding drama of building a multilateral coalition supporting sanctions."⁵³ But even in these early works, there is some awareness that trilateralism has regional effects, important to the wider balance of power. As regional security began to worsen in the late 1990s, some American FPEs began to promote trilateralism as a US regional strategy aiming at closer alliance coordination and regional integration. Entrenched in these later debates, was a rarely acknowledged and contradictory debate about China, a debate which would ultimately bleed into every subsequent trilateral format. The integration of alliances through the trilaterals was thought to be a good thing, because it would deter Chinese adventurism, but formalizing such linkages was probably counter-productive and might create a security dilemma with Beijing. Academic discussions at the time borrowed heavily from alliance literature, particularly alliance formation, as well as from the less-clearly delineated area of institution-building and multilateral security architecture-formation. While, much of this research track was put in place for the US-Japan-ROK trilateral, it reoccurs with the TSD and sets the tone for much subsequent trilateral literature.

In some ways, think tanks have played an oversize role in the creation or facilitation of trilateralism in the Asia Pacific. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)⁵⁴, the National Bureau of

⁵² According to former Principle Deputy Secretary for East Asia (1991-1993), Carl Ford, these meetings were always government-to-government, but were treated as "unofficial" by Korean officials, concerned with the political sensitivities of close coordination with Japanese officials. Interview with Carl Ford, Telephone, March 29, 2016.

⁵³ Joel S. Wit, Daniel B. Poneman, Robert L. Gallucci, *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis* (Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institution Press, 2004), p.193.

⁵⁴ See for example: Andrew Shearer, "Australia-Japan-US Maritime Cooperation: Federated Capabilities for the Asia Pacific", *CSIS Asia Program*, (Washington DC, CSIS Press, 2016); Brad Glosserman, "Trilateral Cooperation in Northeast Asia: Expectations and Limitations," *Issues and Insights*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (January 20, 2015); David Santoro, Brad Glosserman, "Building Toward Trilateral Cooperation on Extended Deterrence in Northeast Asia: the First US-ROK-Japan Extended Deterrence Trilateral Dialogue," *Pacific Forum CSIS Issues and Insight*, 13, No. 14, (September 2013); Ernest Bower, Michael J. Green, US-Japan-ASEAN Strategic Dialogue, (CSIS Conference, Maui, Hawaii, January 5-7, 2011); Carl W. Baker, "US, Japan, and China Conference on Trilateral Security Cooperation," *Issues and Insights*, Vol.8, No.6, (June 2008); It should be noted that the author is an Adjunct Fellow at CSIS, which might be construed as influencing this finding.

Asian Research (NBR)⁵⁵, and the Stimson Center⁵⁶ have tended to dominate publications on trilaterals in the United States. This is partly because of the afore-mentioned definitional debate, and partly, because, as a phenomenon, they are relatively recent⁵⁷. By contrast, Australian and Japanese universities field a healthy number of scholars who write about trilaterals regularly. Framed primarily by the initial definitional riddle, scholars tend to push research into two different directions: the first approach examines the US-Japan-Australia trilateral through alliance literature⁵⁸, while the second examines the trilateral through multilateral security communities or regional integration. A sub-genre of the alliance-trilateral literature looks at Japan-Australia bilateralism, again, through the lens of alliance literature, as the “northern and southern anchors” of the US alliance system⁵⁹ or through the lens of the normalization of Japan’s security and foreign policy⁶⁰. Finally, a second off-shoot of the alliance-based literature frames trilaterals from a Chinese perspective, highlighting the concern that they might turn into a NATO-like structure⁶¹. This literature tends to see Japan and Australia as “the two claws of the US containment strategy”⁶².

Perhaps, the first serious work by a scholar to provide a theoretical framework for trilateralism was by Victor Cha, whose *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (1999), examined trilaterals through alliance theory. In *Alignment*, Cha sought to add the “quasi-alliance” to the lexicon of classical alliance theory⁶³, defining it as “one in which two states remain unallied but

⁵⁵ William Tow, Michael Auslin, Rory Medcalf, Akihiko Tanaka, Zhu Feng, and Simon Sheldon, *Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue*, NBR Special Report, (Washington DC, National Bureau of Asia Research, 2008).

⁵⁶ Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Stimson Center, 2015)

⁵⁷ There is, of course, scholarly work on the track 1.5 Trilateral Commission, but as this is and remains a non-government body, it is counted by this study as an all-together different type of institution.

⁵⁸ See for example, Thomas S. Wilkins, “Toward a ‘Trilateral Alliance?’ Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American-Japanese-Australian Relations,” *Asian Security*, Vol. 3, No. 3, (2007), pp.251-278; Victor Cha, “Complex Patches: US Alliances as part of Asia’s Regional Architecture,” *Asia Policy*, Number 11, (January 2011), pp.27-50; Richard Tanter, “The New American-led Security Architecture in the Asia Pacific: Binding Japan and Australia, Containing China,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal, Japan Focus*, Volume 5, Issue 03, Number 0 (March 2007).

⁵⁹ See for example, Malcolm Cook, Thomas Wilkins, “The Quiet Achiever: Australia-Japan Security Relations,” (Sydney, Australia, Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2011); Eiichi Katahara, “Japan-Australia Joint Security Statements and the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: A Japanese Perspective,” in William T. Tow, Rikki Kersten, (eds.) *Bilateral Perspectives on Regional Security: Australia, Japan and the Asia-Pacific Region*, (London, UK, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2012); Anna Searle, Ippei Kamae, “Anchoring Trilateralism: Can Australia-Japan-US Security Relations Work?” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 58, Issue 4 (2004), pp.464-478.

⁶⁰ Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan’s Remilitarization* (Abingdon, Oxford, Routledge, 2009), p.89.

⁶¹ Xiao Zan, “Mini NATO; in Asia-Pacific Region Plan by the US and Australia,” *Beijing Review*, 13 September, 2001, p.10; Purendra Jain and John Bruni, “Japan, Australia, and the United States: Little NATO or Shadow Alliance?”, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 4, Issue 2 (2004), pp.265-285.

⁶² Purendra Jain, “Japan-Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and its Challenges,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, Issue 4, (2006), pp.521-535.

⁶³ The classical texts, dealing with alliances include: George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Independence* (Baltimore, MA, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1962); Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1987); Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1997).

share a third party as a common ally.”⁶⁴ Drawing from Snyder’s alliance security dilemma⁶⁵ of “abandonment” and “entrapment”, Cha asserted that the willingness of Japan and Korea to develop closer security ties (alliance formation) was driven by a matrix of US engagement / disengagement and regional security / insecurity factors. The weaker US commitment seemed, the more both allies feared abandonment. This insecurity promoted closer Japan-ROK defence ties, however, the more secure they felt, then the more historical issues and domestic politics came to the fore, inhibiting ties. Although Cha’s work might be described as neoclassical realist, his analysis avoids analysis of different domestic groups within Japan, the United States, or Korea – one never gets a sense of how different FPEs in Seoul, for example, might differ in their approach toward Japan. Instead, domestic FPEs are differentiated from the state simply to demonstrate how nationalism and the historical issue influence foreign policy-making.

Also published in 1999, Ralph Cossa’s edited volume *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a “Virtual Alliance”* emphasizes the policy implications of the trilateral. As the President of Pacific Forum CSIS, the think tank in Hawaii that first hosted Ford’s track 1.5 US-ROK-Japan trilateral, Cossa’s volume is an early insight into trilateralism, involving many practitioners among the volume’s contributors. The book considers the trilateral through the lens of alliance formation, but introduces collective balancing and multilateral institution-building, linking these to wider concerns about regional stability. The pivotal chapter – for the purpose of this research – is “In Search of Stability: Designing for a Better Piece in East Asia,” by Michael A. McDevitt and James A. Kelly. Since both men have been intimately involved in the formation of US alliance policy⁶⁶, this chapter holds some key insights into the thinking behind the creation of the trilaterals. Their main argument is that “the best hope for a security framework for Northeast Asia lies in three overlapping triangular relationships, all of which include the United States and Japan”⁶⁷. One of these triangles, “the US-Japan-China triangle”⁶⁸ recognizes China as “the greatest independent variable in international politics”. Uncertainty – this line of reasoning holds – is connected to China’s rise, which in turn leads to regional “worries about Chinese assertiveness”⁶⁹. This causes states to “hedge”. As McDevitt and Kelly say, “Strategists attempt to

⁶⁴ Victor Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*, (Stanford, Ca., Stanford University Press, 1999), Chapter 2.

⁶⁵ Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 180-201.

⁶⁶ Two years after this article was published, in April 2001, James A Kelly went on to become the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs in President G.W. Bush’s Administration.

⁶⁷ Michael A. McDevitt, James A. Kelly, “Chapter Ten: In Search of Stability: Designing for a Better Peace in East Asia,” in Ralph A. Cossa (ed.) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a “Virtual Alliance”*, (Washington DC, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), p.152.

⁶⁸ For further analysis of what lay behind Cossa’s US-Japan-China triangle, see Ralph A. Cossa, “US-Japan-China Relations: Can Three-Party Harmony be Sustained?” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume VI, Issue 2, (Summer/Fall 1999).

⁶⁹ McDevitt, Kelly, p.154

shape outcomes and hedge against an uncertain future. The reinvigoration of the US-Japan relationship is a key element in such a hedging strategy. The long-term objective is to be prepared to restrain China, should it opt to misuse the economic and military strength it is rapidly accumulating. That is the best way to ensure the continued stability of East Asia.”⁷⁰ This first use of “hedging” in connection to the trilaterals is significant, and although neither McDevitt nor Kelly define hedging, or state how it might be done, its connection to trilaterals dates from this period.

As the US-Japan-Australia trilateral developed from 2001 onwards, scholars and policymakers also fell into the above-described binary, and in their efforts to explain the new “bilateral – multilateral security nexus” inherent in trilaterals, set about borrowing alliance and alignment concepts from classical and neoclassical realism, or borrowing institutional, organizational, and security community concepts from liberalism and neoliberalism. A third group even attempted to marry neorealism and neoliberalism, highlighting the conceptual fuzziness of the entire intellectual approach. Interestingly, nearly all literature on the TSD, treats it as an evolving or changing institution. It has not been born complete, as it were. In summary, much of the primary academic work begins with a definitional debate, and then attempts to understand which direction the trilaterals are “evolving”, with those who favor alignment literature seeing the trilaterals as evolving steadily more alliance-like features, and those who favor security regional integration, seeing them as building blocks to region-wide architecture. Scholars like Jun-hyun Paik and practitioners like Jim Schoff raise the prospects that trilaterals might “progressively develop” or “evolve”⁷¹ into something else. They are not static, but rather adapt and change according to internal and external environmental factors.

Let us first deal with the literature which treats trilaterals as agents of regional integration. Within this perspective, scholars write about “enriched bilateralism” as a means of “order-building”⁷² and “security community-building”⁷³. Scholars like William Tow, Kei Koga, Brendan Taylor, and Sorpong

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ There is a broad literature on the usage of Darwin’s concept of evolution as applied to institutions, within both economics and international relations scholarship, however, for the sake of brevity, we will just assume Beinhocker’s definition of evolution to be an “informational process” and adopt the assertion that it is a “function of environmental constraints, interactions between entities and code carried by their replicators.” Mark Blyth, “Introduction to the Special Issue on the Evolution of Institutions,” *The Journal of Institutional Economics*, Vol. 7, Issue 3, (2011), p.302.

⁷² William T. Tow, “The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, Minilateralism, and Asia-Pacific Order Building,” Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Stimson Center, 2015).

⁷³ See for example, Sorpong Peou, Security Community-Building in the Asia Pacific, in William Tow, ed., *Security Politics in the Asia Pacific: A Regional-Global Nexus?* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 154-58; Kei Koga, “The US and East Asian Regional Security Architecture: Building a Regional Perspective,” *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (January-March 2011), pp. 1-36; Tazio Watanabe, William T. Tow, “Trilateralism, Southeast Asia and Multilateralism,” in William T. Tow, Mark J. Thomson, Yoshinobu Yamamoto, Satu Limaye (eds.) *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle*, (Abingdon, Oxford, Routledge, 2007).

Peou⁷⁴ suggest that the TSD is a form of “order-building”. Taylor argues that there is a synergy in bilateral and multilateral approaches toward security, because they reinforce bilateral cooperation, allow small groups of states to coordinate common policy postures, while acting as a constraint on larger powers⁷⁵. Jun Hyun-paik calls trilaterals, “a recent trend in US-Japan security community-building”, which involve a “low-key expansion of the dyadic core to include a wider spectrum of strategic partnerships based on commonly held democratic values.”⁷⁶ Perhaps the most prominent example of the security community literature is the Washington Quarterly article: “Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific Security Arrangements,”⁷⁷ published by the former PACOM commander-in-chief Admiral Dennis Blair. The piece evokes Karl Deutsch to argue that military exercises, consultations, and meetings at the regional and multilateral level can lead to regional, multilateral approaches to common security challenges.

Let us now examine the literature which frames the US-Japan-Australia trilateral in alliance-terms. Purnendra Jain⁷⁸, Aurelia George Mulgan⁷⁹, Takashi Terada⁸⁰, Tomohiko Satake⁸¹, and Nina Silove⁸² have all written monographs that follow the tradition of Cha and Wilkins. Purnendra Jain and John Bruni note that there is “genuine concern by the Japanese, Australian, and United States governments not to be seen to be developing any formalized and open alliance.”⁸³ Another scholar, Thomas Wilkins, argues that the US-Japan-Australia trilateral is also a “virtual alliance”, and that traditional notions of what alliances are must be reconsidered⁸⁴. Rather than dealing with overt threat calculations, Wilkins

⁷⁴ Sorpong Peou, Security Community-Building in the Asia Pacific, in William Tow, ed., *Security Politics in the Asia Pacific: A Regional-Global Nexus?* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 154-58

⁷⁵ Brendan Taylor, “Conceptualizing the bilateral-multilateral security nexus,” in William T. Tow, Brendan Taylor, (eds.,) *Bilateralism, Multilateralism, and Asia Pacific Security: Contending Cooperation*, (London: Routledge, 2013).

⁷⁶ Jun-hyun Paik, “Chapter 8: Creating a Multilateral Cooperative Security System in East Asia,” Ralph Cossa (ed.) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a ‘Virtual Alliance’*, (Washington DC, The CSIS Press, 1999); p.128.

⁷⁷ Blair, Dennis C. and John Hanley Jnr., “From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia Pacific Security Arrangements”, *The Washington Quarterly*, No 24:1 (2001).

⁷⁸ Purnendra Jain and John Bruni, “Japan, Australia, and the United States: Little NATO or Shadow Alliance?”, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 4, Issue 2 (2004), pp.265-285; Purnendra Jain, “Japan-Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and its Challenges,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, Issue 4, (2006), pp.521-535.

⁷⁹ Aurelia George Mulgan, “Breaking the Mould: Japan’s Subtle Shift from Exclusive Bilateralism to Modest Minilateralism,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, Vol. 30, Number 1, April 2008, pp.52-72.

⁸⁰ T. Inoguchi, et al (eds.) *The US-Japan Security Alliance: Regional Multilateralism*, Takashi Terada, “Evolution of the Australia-Japan Security Partnership: Toward a Softer Triangle Alliance with the United States?” (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) pp.217-232

⁸¹ Tomohiko Satake, “The Origins of Trilateralism? The US-Japan-Australia Security Relations in the 1990s,” *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, Vol. 11, (2015), pp.1-28.

⁸² Nina Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: US Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia,” *International Security*, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016).

⁸³ Purnendra Jain and John Bruni, “American Acolytes,” in Brad Williams, Andrew Newman, (Eds.,) *Japan, Australia, and Asia Pacific Security*, (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006).96.

⁸⁴ See for example, Thomas S. Wilkins, “Towards a ‘Trilateral Alliance?’ Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American-Japanese-Australian Relations,” *Asian Security*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, (2007), pp.251-278; Thomas S. Wilkins, “‘Alignment’, not ‘Alliance’ – the Shifting Paradigm of International Security cooperation: Toward a Conceptual Taxonomy of Alignment,” in *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 38, (2012), pp.53-76; Thomas S. Wilkins, “Japan’s Alliance Diversification: A Comparative

states that “undeclared goals”, shared interests and values constitute the trilateral in an ever-evolving minilateral consortium⁸⁵. Of them, Satake’s monograph makes the clearest argument for the origins of the trilateral, pointing to increased regional insecurity in the late 1990s, and concerns in both Tokyo and Canberra with US staying power in the region. These fears led to both countries to push for a “redefinition of the US-Japan and US-Australia alliances...”, which caused both alliances to undergo “a systemic change in nature and role from a traditional bilateral defense arrangement to one that focused on addressing regional and global security problems.”⁸⁶ While much of his analysis is excellent and backed by empirical research, his argument does not really explain why the three chose the trilateral model in particular over other alternatives. His argument centers on alliance dynamics, and he pays only a slight attention to changes at the domestic level, arguing that while the “reaffirmed US-Japan alliance had an ‘implicit purpose’ of maintaining a stable balance of power in the region”⁸⁷, the alliance was more dedicated to regional crisis management and peacekeeping. In contrast, Silove uses a balancing rationale for the trilaterals – internal and external – and expands it, dramatically, dating the trilaterals to a Bush-era set of DOD initiatives to build “a federated set of capabilities and interoperability”, which would dissuade China from challenging the status quo. Based on US strategy “outputs” rather than “outcomes”⁸⁸, her account is highly persuasive, but she is unable to explain – using power transition theory – why the United States did not simply contain or balance China’s rise. She gives a good description of US strategy, but fails to explain why this was chosen over traditional balancing approaches. Furthermore, since she treats US allies as objects of US strategy (rather than actors themselves) she misses the fact that the trilateral was originally an Australian initiative⁸⁹.

Of this grouping of authors, only Jain and Wilkins attempt analysis at the domestic level. Wilkin’s cites Risso-Kappen and Snyder, asserting “the more closely the executive’s preferences and actions comply with those of society, the more autonomy they will have in alliance negotiations.”⁹⁰ This statement points broadly in the right direction, but does not explain the particular role that domestic politics had on trilateral-formation. Jain, by contrast, does attempt to formulate a bureaucratic politics approach toward trilateral-formation, asserting that the trilateral evolved “at a time when conservative

Analysis of the Indian and Australian Strategic Partnerships,” *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, Vol. 11, Issue 1 (2011), pp.115-155; Thomas S. Wilkins, “From Strategic Partnership to Strategic Alliance? Australia-Japan Security Ties and the Asia Pacific,” *Asia Policy*, Issue 20 (2015), pp.81-111.

⁸⁵ William Tow, “The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, Minilateralism, and the Asia-Pacific Order” Yuki Tatsumi (ed) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Simson Center, 2015), p.27.

⁸⁶ Satake, 2015, p.2.

⁸⁷ Satake, 2015, p.9.

⁸⁸ Nilove uses James F. Hollifield’s distinction of “outputs” meaning policies, and “outcomes” meaning the results of policies.

⁸⁹ Most interviewees agree that Alexander Downer and Ashton Calvert proposed the idea, but there is some support for the notion that Ambassador Ryozo Kato also played a key enabling role.

⁹⁰ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Towards a ‘Trilateral Alliance?’ Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American-Japanese-Australian Relations,” *Asian Security*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, (2007), pp.251-278.

neoliberal elements were at the helm in all three countries, carrying national policies on a similar ideological path under three individual leaders highly supportive of each other.”⁹¹ He also accepts that throughout the evolution of the trilateral strategic dialogue, “China as the rising power has been a serious sticking point”, indicating that inconclusive threat assessment plays a role. Thus, Jain’s analysis comes very close to the framework in this thesis. However, there are slight but important differences. He uses the terms “similar ideological” factors and “leadership” as a shorthand way of identifying how these coalitions of FPEs align themselves, but does not really attempt to systematically frame their alignment behavior. When Jain wonders what will happen to the trilateral if “governments of a different political/ideological stripe could be elected to power”⁹², he is assuming that executives and administrations define policy directions. Fieldwork for this thesis, however, suggests that two different policy coalitions can exist inside one administration, and that what sets them apart from each other – in regards to the trilaterals – is the strength of their threat assessment and attitude toward China, not their party affiliation or ideology. Some US-Japan-Australia monographs⁹³ put their emphasis on Japan since many count the Japan-Australia alliance-like relationship as a significant departure in Japanese security policy-making, which has historically preferred exclusively bilateral ties with the United States.

Finally, there is a sub-branch of this type of alliance literature which views the trilaterals from a Chinese perspective and asks if they are merely a tool for containment. Zhu Feng states, “The TSD is in effect an important effort to counterbalance China’s rise...without the specter of a rising China, Washington, Tokyo, and Canberra would not have begun intensifying defence cooperation.”⁹⁴ that the trilaterals might turn into a NATO-like structure⁹⁵. This usually arises from Chinese fears of containment, and the perception that Japan and Australia are “the two claws of the US containment strategy”⁹⁶. In a sense, these scholars are both correct and incorrect in their thinking. They are correct in assuming that the trilaterals are China-oriented, but are unable to account for the domestic split in a convincing manner. Despite this, many Chinese scholars fail to acknowledge that other factors might

⁹¹ Purendra Jain, “Japan-Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and its Challenges,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, Issue 4, (2006), pp.528.

⁹² Purendra Jain, “Japan-Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and its Challenges,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, Issue 4, (2006), pp.521-535.

⁹³ See for example, Aurelia Mulgan, “Breaking the Mold: Japan’s Subtle Shift from Exclusive Bilateralism to Modest Minilateralism,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, Volume 30, Number 1, (April, 2008), pp.52-72.

⁹⁴ Zhu Feng, “Euphemism for Multiple Alliance? In William T. Tow, et al, *Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue*, NBR Special Report, (Washington DC, National Bureau of Asia Research, 2008), p.43.

⁹⁵ Xiao Zan, “Mini NATO; in Asia-Pacific Region Plan by the US and Australia,” *Beijing Review*, 13 September, 2001, p.10; Purendra Jain and John Bruni, “Japan, Australia, and the United States: Little NATO or Shadow Alliance?”, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 4, Issue 2 (2004), pp.265-285.

⁹⁶ Purendra Jain, “Japan-Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and its Challenges,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, Issue 4, (2006), pp.521-535.

have played a role in driving the trilaterals into being. There are other regional security issues – such as disaster relief, counter-terrorism, and anti-piracy – which have motivated trilateral cooperation. Furthermore, while China is important to Mahanian policy-makers, Chinese scholars fail to see the role that China itself in strengthening the hand of Mahanians by behaving more assertively and building up their military. By contrast, China’s behavior has weakened the hand of Continentalists, whose attempts to promote China’s rise as a “responsible stakeholder” have been undermined by Chinese actions in the South China Sea. Finally, it should not be forgotten that there were other factors – besides the China factor – which played a role in developing the trilaterals, which had to do more with US alliance management, and intra-alliance politics, than to do with geostrategic planning. Other factors included Japan’s attempts to find a security role in the Asia Pacific, and dealing with Australian and Japanese abandonment fears, spawned by the perception that American foreign policy was overly-focused on the Middle East.

1.4. Selection of Case Study

In approaching US trilateralism, it was clear that selection of a good case study was crucial to any viable research project. This was partly because of the large number of samples (there are half a dozen trilaterals in existence, each with their own characteristics, membership, and purpose) and partly because security-oriented trilaterals are a rather recent phenomenon,⁹⁷ making archival research difficult if not impossible. As a result, it was clear that open-source materials, government documents, and interviews with policymakers would have to form the backbone of this study. Then, there was the question of how many case studies should be attempted. Given this project’s dependence on interviews, focusing on three trilaterals would have required the monumental task of visiting five different countries, and interviewing hundreds of individuals, an unfeasible expenditure of resources and time. While this study would focus on US motives and reasons for trilateralism, I decided early on, that policymakers from the other partners should also be interviewed. Therefore, I decided to explore one trilateral in depth and attempted to uncover those drivers and organizing principles that might also be applied to other trilaterals and to international relations theory in general. Some drivers were already evident prior to the formal fieldwork stage. For example, a brief examination of the various trilaterals revealed that – apart from the decidedly-economic China-Japan-ROK trilateral – nearly all of them are engaged in strategic cooperation. They were, as one Australian defence publication stated, “concerned with the art and science of employing national power in a synchronized fashion to achieve the national end state and national objectives.”⁹⁸ It was clear that this commonality was

⁹⁷ The Triple Alliance and Triple Entente both bear some scrutiny. They will be considered in Chapter 2.

⁹⁸ Australian Defence Force (ADF), *Australian Defence Doctrine Publication 5.0 – Joint Planning*, Edition 2, Defence Publishing Service: Canberra, 20 February 2014, p.1-3, available at: http://www.defence.gov.au/adfwc/Documents/DoctrineLibrary/ADDP/ADDP_5_0.pdf (accessed November 5, 2016).

pivotal to understanding how they came to be. Trilaterals assemble the diplomatic and defense personnel from three different countries to discuss the issues of the day and to attempt to develop common policy positions around them.

In examining the various trilaterals in which the United States was involved, it became clear that they all had varying degrees of institutionalization, and that there was some expectation – implied or stated – that they were *evolving* toward greater institutionalization and norm-setting. They were not, in other words, static institutions, but rather evolving processes, seeking greater formality and greater inter-operability. Of those trilaterals listed above, this thesis will focus on the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral because it was found to be the most institutionalized. Indeed, such is the high level of institutionalization of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, that I came to realize there are actually three government-to-government trilateral tracks dealing with US-Australia-Japan relations. There is the original diplomatic trilateral forum; (i) the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD), which deals with geopolitical issues, and is primarily the preserve of the three foreign ministries; there is also the (ii) Security and Defense Cooperation Forum (SDCF), which deals with closer military-to-military defence ties aims for ever-greater interoperability⁹⁹; and finally, there is the (iii) Trilateral Missile Defense Forum (TMDF¹⁰⁰), which examines cooperation over a potential ballistic missile shield from a technical standpoint, driven primarily by a small section of the defence ministries. Technically, the TMDF is a part of the DOD tranche of dialogue – cooperation, but has always insisted on independence from the SDCF¹⁰¹.

1.5. The US-Japan-Australia Trilateral

This thesis will examine overall track 1 trilateral cooperation between the US, Japan, and Australia. At times, this may seem confusing since there are three different “dialogues”. This confusion is accentuated by internal changes and inter-agency competition. According to Erum Jilani, a senior advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), there is competition between different agencies to “own” certain issues, such as maritime security, which means that knowing which dialogue or agency deals with what issues can be quite murky¹⁰². This section will merely present an outline of the type of activities carried out by the trilateral and cannot hope to give a 100 per cent accurate and

⁹⁹ James L. Schoff, “The Evolution of US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation”, Yuki Tatsumi (ed) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Stimson Center, 2015), p.43.

¹⁰⁰ This third trilateral, the TMDF, is the least transparent and is seldom discussed in the literature. Furthermore, repeated efforts to interview personnel from the US iteration of the TMDF, met in failure. This was most likely due to both the technical sensitivity as well as political sensitivity of the subject matter in potential ‘host’ countries such as Australia and Japan, as well as the implications for US grand strategy.

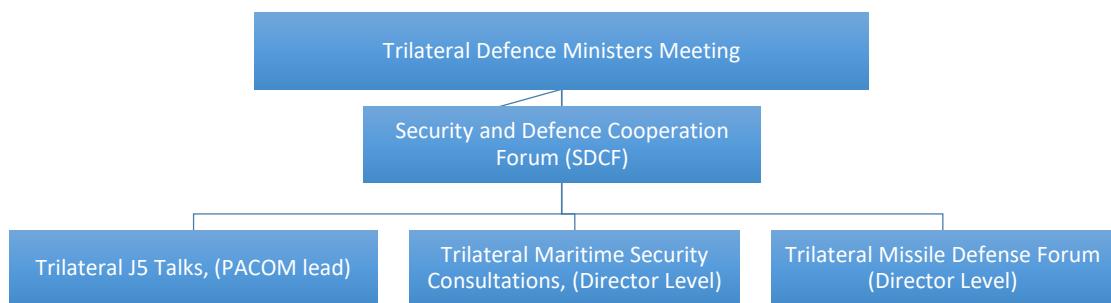
¹⁰¹ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

¹⁰² Jilani, Erum (Asia Pacific Advisor, OSD 2012-2016) interview with author, telephone. December 14, 2016.

up-to-date picture of the organization. Nevertheless, the organizational maps have been sourced from the US Department of Defense.



The TSD first met in July 2002, on the sidelines of an AUSMIN meeting and a Security Consultative Committee meeting at the Deputy Secretary, Vice-Minister, and DFAT Secretary level. It has also sought the greatest convergence of norms and standards, in approaches toward regional security. As the above diagram reveals, it has a number of working groups, and seems to mimic a national security council structure. Similar to national security councils, the TSD has the ability to drive the agenda, and to socialize its members into what the priority issues are at any given time.



The military variant, the SDCF first met in 2006 as a separate process to the Department of State (DOS)-led TSD. Although the SDCF is led by the Department of Defense (DOD), the DOS and other agencies do sit in on meetings. The SDCF promotes military integration – of capabilities, methods, and

tactics –between the three. It has a maritime component, a strategic component (led by PACOM), and a missile defence component. The most public feature of its cooperation has been the trilateral ministers’ meetings, usually held on the sidelines of regional events and the promotion of regular military exercises between the three, helping to “socialize” the three militaries on common objectives, and even common opponents.

It is difficult to tell how much regular military exercises constitute alliance-like behavior in the modern age, since they have become a regular feature for the US military in the Asia Pacific, and are instigated for all sorts of reasons: trust-building, defence sales, and regional integration all play a non-alliance role in fostering the many regional military exercises. However, one important point stands out regarding the SDCF exercises: all three of the main trilateral exercises prioritize conventional war-fighting, and do not attempt strategic ambiguity in areas of soft security. According to one senior US defence official, a theme running through all three has been to build a common communications infrastructure, common rules of engagement, as well as unit-level operational familiarity.¹⁰³ The ground troops exercise, known as *Southern Jackaroo*, which began in May 2013, is described by the Australian Department of Defence as reflecting, “the shared commitments of Australia, Japan and the US to strengthening defence and security cooperation, and working closely together to promote regional stability, peace and prosperity.”¹⁰⁴ The 2015 iteration of this exercise saw 2,000 Australian troops train with 150 US and Japanese service members in the Northern Territory of Australia. Then there is *Exercise Pacific Bond*, which was promoted by the Australian Department of Defence. The exercise involves training in anti-submarine warfare (ASW), with one Australian participant, Jonathan Earley, the Commanding Officer of HMAS Ballarat, commenting, “These exercises are about keeping [that] interoperability in good order, and building on it, so that we stand ready to form a coalition when the need arises.”¹⁰⁵ The Australian DOD has stated that the trilateral air exercise, *Cope North Guam*, seeks to “develop multilateral interoperability and coalition procedures in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, air power missions, to include *air superiority, close support interdiction, electronic warfare, tactical airlift, aerial refueling and airborne command and control*.[italics added]”¹⁰⁶ Graeme Dobell has argued that this “defence cooperation is a function of capability”.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Anonymous, (Joint Staff, DOD) interview with author, Washington DC.

¹⁰⁴ Australian Department of Defence, “Australia, Japan and US participate in inaugural exercise Southern Jackaroo” May 29 2013, available at Australian Department of Defence Website: <http://news.defence.gov.au/2013/05/29/australia-japan-and-us-participate-in-inaugural-exercise-southern-jackaroo/> (accessed November 3, 2016).

¹⁰⁵ Sarah West, “Bolstering Bonds in the Pacific,” Australian Navy Website, available at: <http://www.navy.gov.au/news/bolstering-bonds-pacific> (accessed on November 8, 2016).

¹⁰⁶ Exercise: Cope North Guam, Ministry of Defense Website, available at: <http://www.defence.gov.au/Exercises/CopeNorthGuam/> (accessed on November 3, 2016).

¹⁰⁷ Graeme Dobell, “The New Relationship of Japan and Australia,” *The Strategist*, July 14, available at: www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-the-relationship-of-japan-and-australia/ (accessed November 8, 2016).

It is clear that these exercises are evolving, and becoming increasingly complex and large as time progresses. The largest of these trilateral exercises has been the US-Australia combined forces *Talisman Sabre*, which involves air, land, and sea components and has featured more than 33,000 personnel. In July 2015, Japanese and New Zealand forces were included in the amphibious training exercise¹⁰⁸. Japan and Australia are also regular partners in large-scale American exercises, such as the US-Japan-India Malabar exercise, the annual air exercise *Red Flag* in Alaska, and the biennial *RIMPAC* maritime warfare exercise (the world's largest), often hosting up to 22 participant nations. As with previous areas of trilateral defence cooperation, the security dilemma with China provoked by trilateralism, has seen efforts to reassure China and to dispel the idea that these exercises are about "containing" or "encircling" China or balancing against Russia¹⁰⁹. In the case of *RIMPAC*, Russian forces were invited to take part in 2012¹¹⁰, while Chinese forces were invited to take part in 2014 and 2016¹¹¹. Nevertheless, perceptions within the region¹¹² as well as in China¹¹³ continue to see ever-closer trilateralism as provocative and unsustainable. In March April 2016, in the wake of tensions in the South China Sea, Chinese television released footage¹¹⁴ of a supposed US-Japan-Australia trilateral air and naval exercise in the South China Sea.

1.6. Research Methodology

As stated above, the relatively recent nature of the trilaterals makes archival research difficult for this study. Therefore, this thesis adopts a mixed method approach to understanding the trilaterals, using a combination of primary open-source document sources, key informant interviews, and supporting

¹⁰⁸ Seth Robson, "Three Nations Holding Exercise in Australia Ahead of Talisman Saber," *Stars and Stripes*, June 3, 2015

¹⁰⁹ See, for example: Seth Robson, "Plenty of Reasons for Marines to Train in Australia – Just don't Mention China," *Stars and Stripes*, July 15, 2013.

¹¹⁰ "RIMPAC 2012: Participating Vessels by Country," *Naval Technology* Website, available at: <http://www.naval-technology.com/features/featurerimpac-2012-vessels-aircraft-countries/> (accessed November 3, 2016).

¹¹¹ "RIMPAC Participating Forces," *Commander of the Pacific Fleet* website, available at: <http://www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac/participants/#cn> (accessed on November 3, 2016).

¹¹² Sam Bateman, "Brinkmanship in the South China Sea helps nobody," *East Asia Forum*, June 07, 2016; Peter Drysdale, "The new Geo-politics in Asia...and farewell" *East Asia Forum*, January 25, 2016; Rick Wallace, "Japan Military Drill with US, Australia likely to upset China", in *The Australian*, November 25, 2014; Rob Taylor, "Leaders of US, Australia, Japan to Meet, with Eye on China: Washington Seeks Help from Allies for Increased Cooperation in Asia" in *The Wall Street Journal*, November 13, 2014; Rory Medcalf and Dr. C Raja Mohan, "Responding to Indo-Pacific Rivalry: Australia, India and Middle Power Coalitions", on the *Lowy Institute* website at <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/responding-to-Indo-Pacific-rivalry>, accessed on 5th of January, 2015; Robert Ayson, "Words fail Australia, and anger China, at the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue," in *The Lowy Interpreter*, 11 October 2013, J. Berkshire Miller, "China Looms Over Abe-Obama-Abbott Trilateral at G-20 Summit", in *The Asahi Shimbun*, November 21, 2014; Wang Hui, "Trilateral Alliance only Shores up Tensions" in *China Daily USA*, November 26, 2014.

¹¹³ See, for example: Feng, Zhu, "TSD – Euphemism for Multiple Alliance?" in William Tow, ed., *The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: Facilitating Community-Building or Revisiting Containment?* (Seattle, Washington: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), p.43; Pang Zhongpen, "Japan's Plot to Contain China with US, Australia not viable," *The China Daily*, July 23, 2015, available at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-07/23/content_21389724.htm (accessed November 8, 2016).

¹¹⁴ "US, Japan, Australia hold joint exercises in South China Sea", *CCTV News Youtube Page*, April 25, 2016, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP4qnyBrT6I> (accessed November 3, 2016).

secondary texts. This thesis uses theoretically informed, historical process-tracing to chart the development of the trilateral between 2001 and 2010, with some focus on the role of Australian and Japanese diplomats intimately involved in the creation of the trilateral. Research examines three different sources of qualitative data.

Primary data: First, this thesis utilizes interviews with foreign policy elites (FPEs) in all three member countries; this includes key policy-makers, political leaders, academics, and think tank analysts close to the topic. As the trilateral was established by three senior foreign policy bureaucrats, Richard Armitage, Ryozo Kato, and Ashton Calvert, efforts were made to interview all three or – in the case of Calvert, who is deceased – their closest aides. As the Trilateral was created in late 2001, that period receives close attention, though this paper recognizes that the previous decade of US foreign policy in the region is important for context and background. Process-tracing around the trilateral continues from 2001, right through to 2015, in order to show how it has evolved under the influence of various policy coalitions. These interviews allow access to the motivations and thought processes not represented in documents and analyze the forces at work behind ‘policy-as-presented’. Part of the thesis, for example, examines China’s role as a motivation for Washington’s hedging strategy involving the TSD. Naturally, due to political sensitivities, Japanese, American, and Australian official documents and TSD official documents rarely name China as a motivating force. Instead, they utilize diplomatic and vague language to discuss “regional security”. In interviews, however – particularly with retired government officials – officials have been more candid about the China factor. At times, some of these officials have still been in office. In those cases, the interviews were carried out anonymously. When interview subjects were uncomfortable with being listed, they asked to be listed as anonymous. I have balanced their need for privacy with the needs for academic rigour by listing every person interviewed for this project in the index. I have also left out dates and affiliation since this would naturally help to identify those who wished to remain unrecognized.

Interviews were developed along a number of different tracks. Some were developed through contacts made by the author as a think tank analyst at RUSI, others were by introduction or the recommendation of other interviewees. Due to the author’s background in Japanese security studies, by far the most interviews took place in Tokyo¹¹⁵, with nearly thirty-four respondents taking place in either office or informal settings. Though many in this group were Japanese, some senior American and Australian figures based at the Embassies in Tokyo were also included. This was followed by

¹¹⁵ From November 2014 to March 2015, I was affiliated with Hitotsubashi University near Tokyo. The faculty include many foreign diplomats and foreign policy experts, and author was also able to engage in think tank events and conferences in order to develop further contacts.

eighteen interviews in Canberra and twenty-two interviews in Washington¹¹⁶ where the author was an adjunct fellow at the think tank CSIS. A further fifteen interviews were carried out in London, either in person or by telephone with subjects in the United States, Japan, and Australia. All interviews were developed organically, without the use of a question list. Instead, the author attempted to tailor each conversation to their ability to contribute raw data to the project. When interviewees were not particularly close to trilateral work, but were former senior officials working in this or that administration, for example, I asked questions about alliance dynamics, the dynamics of foreign policymaking, domestic issues, and regional security issues. Some policymakers were reluctant to speak on the record; others were concerned about imparting restricted information. In all cases, the author reassured interviewees of their anonymity and only requested information that they were comfortable imparting. The language used during the substantive parts of the interview were in English¹¹⁷.

Secondary Data: Secondary data included newspaper articles, reports, government statements, strategy papers, books, and other open-source materials dealing with the trilaterals, the US-Japan Alliance, the US-Australia alliance, and US foreign policy in the Asia Pacific. This included the publications of think tanks and universities that have a history of working on the trilateral, such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the National Bureau for Asian Research (NBR), the Wilson Center, the Japan Institute for International Affairs (JIIA), the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), the Lowy Institute, the Australian National University (ANU), and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). Secondary data also included newspaper articles from *The Australian*, *The Japan Times*, *The Diplomat*, *The New Sydney Herald*, and others. In addition, blogs like ANU's *East Asia Forum* and Lowy Institute's *The Interpreter* provided further material.

1.7. Contribution to Existing Research

This thesis makes the following contribution to existing research:

- a) It makes a comprehensive overview of the origins of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, through the collection of extensive interviews and official documents.

¹¹⁶ From April to July 2015, I was a resident Adjunct Fellow at the US think tank the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). It should be noted that Michael J. Green, the Japan Chair at CSIS and an influential figure in US-Japan Alliance matters, plays a pivotal role in the origins of the trilateral – both in practice and in theoretical underpinnings. Green was the author's immediate supervisor during this time.

¹¹⁷ This is because while I am comfortable in conversational Japanese, greetings, etc, I am not fully fluent in Japanese and would have missed much during the substantive sections. Fortunately, most Japanese experts working on the alliance with the United States and special relationship with Australia, are by necessity, fluent in English. Furthermore, MOFA and other Japanese government agencies provide many of the press statements, speeches, and documents in English on its website.

- b) It conducts research into the American policymaking process and makes a key revelation about that process when foreign policy elites are divided.
- c) It makes a connection between divided policy elites, the trilaterals, and hedging.
- d) It creates a new definition for hedging, proposing that it is a behavior, as well as a strategy.
- e) It contributes more widely to our understanding of alliance-formation, threat assessments, and how foreign policy elites make policy when confronted with a security dilemma.

This study should be of interest to those interested in US foreign policy in the Asia Pacific, alliance, alignment, and institutional theory, and neoclassical scholarship relating to policymaking. In terms of IR theory, it will be of interest to those interested in rising powers, alliance formation, foreign policy analysis, and balance of power strategies.

1.8. Why does this research problem matter?

There are three broad reasons that this research question is important. The first relates to how states are reacting to the changing power balance between the United States and China and the strategies they are adopting. The second relates to insights on how the US conducts foreign policy in the Asia Pacific, and the third contributes insights on what happens when domestic foreign policy elites disagree on the threat status of another state, and the impact that has on the making of clear policy.

This research also matters because the three states in the TSD also represent a significant aggregate of economic and military power in the region and will play an important part in the future peace and stability of the region. According to the CIA Fact book, all three states rank within the top 15 global economies (by GDP): The United States is either at 1st or 2nd, Japan and Australia rank at 3rd and 12th. Similarly, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) ranks all three states as being in the top 15 global military spenders: the US ranking at 1st, while Japan and Australia rank at 6th and 13th¹¹⁸ respectively. As well as their efforts to increase interoperability, the three are meaningfully engaged in the “revolution in military affairs”.¹¹⁹ Clearly, these states make up some of Waltz’s ‘principle parts’ in the Asia Pacific. The US-Japan Alliance – contained within the trilateral – is by far the largest security alliance in the Asia Pacific, and jointly comprises the most powerful aggregate of naval military power in the region, though whether this lead will last much longer is open to question. There are various functions, it would seem, carried out within the TSD, but amongst those explicitly mentioned are a number of implicit ones: balancing China’s rise is one, but providing public goods to

¹¹⁸ The 15 Countries with the highest military expenditure 2011, SIPRI website: http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/resultoutput/milex_15/the-15-countries-with-the-highest-military-expenditure-in-2011-table/view (accessed on 4th January, 2013).

¹¹⁹ Brendon Taylor and Desmond Ball, “Historical Overview” William T Tow, Mark J. Thomson (eds.,) *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (New York, Routledge for Australia Strategic Policy Initiative, 2007) pp.14

the region would seem to be another. There is a long history of joint-operations in the field between the US and Australia, perhaps second only to that between the US and UK. Though small by regional standards, Australian forces are highly trained and well equipped, and have a high level of interoperability with US forces. There is also a long history of joint intelligence cooperation between the US and Australia, and it is clear that the Five Eyes¹²⁰ component plays a role in the TSD, and Japan's pro-trilateral Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is said to favor closer relations between Japan's intelligence community and those of the intelligence group¹²¹. The intelligence General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) with Australia in 2012, Japan's domestic intelligence legislation in 2014, and the 2016 Trilateral Intelligence Sharing Agreement (TISA) go some ways toward bringing Tokyo closer to Five Eyes regulatory standards and intelligence-sharing procedures in addition to institutionalizing Japanese intelligence cooperation with two of the Five Eyes.

Second, this research matters because it sees the revival of Japan as a regional and global player, after nearly 60 years of near-dormancy. While it is true that Japanese government debt is more than double its gross domestic product (GDP), it is still the 3rd largest economy in the world, with a globally traded currency. Furthermore, its debt – while considerable – is held domestically, making it far less vulnerable than other states similarly situated. While Japan has traditionally avoided taking part in military conflicts in line with Article 9 of its Constitution, it has begun to play an auxiliary role to various US and UN operations and possesses a surprisingly large amount of hard power, ranking among the top 10 global defence spenders. Despite its commitment to only spending one per cent of its Gross National Product (GNP) on defence, Japan's military budget in 2013 was still the third largest in the region, and 7th largest in the world¹²². Its navy is the 4th largest in the world, and many would argue that in qualitative indicators such as equipment, training, and professionalism, it may well rank even higher. This latent power has long been recognized by US policy makers, who have sought Japan's help with US strategy in Asia, perhaps to play a similar role to the UK in Europe. Bureaucrats and American politicians regularly refer to the US-Japan Alliance as the "linchpin" or "cornerstone"¹²³ of regional security. In other words, American policymakers see Japan as a "swing state" in the global balance with China.

¹²⁰ The Five Eye's network is a loose way of discussing the various security and intelligence-sharing arrangements between the US, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, which have existed since the end of the Second World War.

¹²¹ Kotani, Ken (Senior Fellow, NIDS, 2014-2016) interview with author, Tokyo, January 8, 2015.

¹²² The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, "The 15 Countries with the Highest Military Expenditure in 2013" http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=476 accessed on November 26th, 2014.

¹²³ In her 2009 Senate confirmation hearing as nominee for Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton stated that the alliance was "a cornerstone of American policy in Asia, essential to maintaining peace and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region."

The hypothesis made in this thesis – that the creation of the trilateral was the result of domestic variables inside Washington, with American elites reacting to changes in the structure of power in the international system – is important for those who would seek to understand the role of foreign policy in international relations. To those who seek to understand American security and foreign policy in particular, the debate on why Washington chose to join the trilateral, illuminates the place of inconclusive debates among FPEs. On the one hand, there is a cadre of alliance managers, who work closely on the US-Japan alliance, who see the alliance as the cornerstone of US policy in the region, and a tool for greater regional security integration. Within this element are two story arcs: the first involves the impact of the nature of the American alliance with Japan, and the second involves the debate by American elites about Japan's regional and global role. Then, on the other hand, there is another cadre of FPEs who think that getting Asia right, means getting China right. They are mobilized by the traditional state-on-state security dilemma. They believe, that formal institutionalization of the trilateral would lead to counter-moves by China to build a coalition of like-minded allies, sparking a pre-1914 scenario. To many of these FPEs, the “big game” is China – and this has led to a number of different policy prescriptions over the past three decades: one policy trend has been to promote trade and high level political engagement with Beijing so as to foster domestic political reform and liberalization from within; a second later policy trend has been to accept China's domestic regime, and seek inter-dependence, so as to ameliorate structural tensions, and thus avoid a “Thucydidean Trap”¹²⁴, as described by Graham Allison.

While the United States' decision to cooperate within the trilateral framework is the focus of this paper, this paper also hopes to shed light on the wider theoretical question of why states align themselves, while eschewing collective defence commitments. Although it has been argued that the trilateral represents a “unique approach to alliance politics in Asia”¹²⁵, it shares similarities with the pre-1914 Triple Entente, since both contain alliances within them, but are not themselves, alliances. As Thomas Wilkins points out, the relationship between Australia and Japan – a significant new leg of the trilateral – does not qualify as an alliance, but rather is a “strategic partnership” or “security alignment”¹²⁶, which mirrors the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale, which was an agreement, rather than a full treaty.

¹²⁴ Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?”, *The Atlantic*, September 24, 2015.

¹²⁵ William Tow, “Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue” in *East Asia Forum*, 12 February 2009.

¹²⁶ Thomas S. Wilkins, “From Strategic Partnership to Strategic Alliance? Australia-Japan Security Ties and the Asia Pacific”, *Asia Policy*, Number 20, National Bureau of Asian Research, Seattle Washington, 2015, p. 81-111.

Thirdly and finally, this research question provides an interesting study of domestic and external variables in explaining state behavior during a time of great change in the structural balance of power. The story within this Sino-American rivalry is also the story of how domestic elites react to and disagree over threat assessments, and the resulting normative and policy choices. Australia's decision to align with Japan, its decision to develop with Tokyo and Washington a new type of alliance-like organization, but its unwillingness to formalize that in a treaty says much about how states hedge in the face of uncertain threats. Given the fact that the TSD is still at best a half-formed alliance – or some might even argue – an alliance-in-waiting, what does this say about the threat perceptions of American elites and the nature of its hedging strategy? There are all sorts of interesting side-questions on the types of hedging strategies adopted by states in a rising power situation which are of interest to alliance theorists, particularly how FPEs inside states perceive threats¹²⁷ and how those perceptions shape foreign policy outcomes.

1.9. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is composed of seven chapters. **This chapter** has sought to introduce the thesis by outlining the puzzle, the approach, methodology, and structure. **Chapter two** consists of a discussion of trilateralism, against the main theoretical schools of international relations, moving through alliance literature, neoliberal literature, constructivism and finally, foreign policy analysis and the role of foreign policy elites (FPEs). It then puts forward a neoclassical realism as possible framework, which has better explanatory power than the other three theoretical bodies of literature. **Chapter three** puts forward the argument, using the NCR framework, examining the relationship between the structure of the international system – and its components – and the perceptions. It also looks at how perceptions shape policymaking, and a discussion of how the policy preferences of foreign policy elites (FPEs) are influenced by beliefs, career, and outlook. In examining structure, this chapter analyzes the American alliance system in the Asia Pacific, since it shapes how American FPEs view American interests for the region, as well as identifying friends and enemies.

Chapter four explores more in depth the intervening variable of foreign policy elites (FPEs). Since much of this thesis relies on the testimony of FPEs, and relies on a particular model of FPEs, I make an effort to define them more carefully. My definition is not wildly original, but extends a little the usual grouping, commonly referred to as the foreign policy executive. I argue why the foreign policy elite framework is an improvement on this term, more telling in the creation of foreign policy, and

¹²⁷ The best discussion of Walt's threat balance from a non-material, ideational point of view, can be found in Michael N. Barnett's essay "Identity and Alliances in the Middle East", in *The Culture of National Security*, ed. Peter Katzenstein (New York: Columbia, 1996).

particularly relevant to the American political appointee system. **Chapters five, six, and seven** present a three-decade review of the trilateral, looking at Asia Pacific policy through three different presidents.

Chapter five examines alliance policy and regional security during the two terms of the Clinton Presidency (1994-2000). Essentially, this chapter is to provide the context for the creation of the trilaterals – since there is much empirical evidence that the origins of the trilateral rest in the 1990s, rather than the 2000s. This section also looks at the different forces pulling at FPEs in Washington at the time, from the idea of a “peace dividend” to discussions with allies, worried about major US troop withdrawals from the region. Concurrent with these debates, runs a neoliberal arc, in which regional states began examining ways to develop new multilateral types of political and security architecture. The US and its allies, were also motivated to join, develop, and foster this enthusiasm for multilateralism, with discussions of security community prevailing among the White House. **Chapter six** gives an account for the founding of the trilateral during the Bush administration (2001-2008) and provides some crucial empirical support for the using an NCR approach rather than neorealism or other approaches. It covers both terms and examines the Quadrilateral Initiative briefly. The last empirical chapter, **chapter seven** covers the expansion and evolution of the trilateral into its present “quasi-alliance” state.

Finally, the **Conclusion** of this thesis puts forward arguments for and against the new definition of hedging, before then reviewing the neorealist / neoclassical realist search for equilibrium between explanatory power and parsimony. It then sets out future research directions for trilateralism, including a future project comparing the 1914 Triple Entente and the 2001 Trilateral Strategic Dialogue. Their inability to shape the behavior of challengers of the status quo are perhaps a testimony to their inefficiency, but that does mean they have not served a purpose.

2. CHAPTER 2: MAKING THE CASE

This chapter examines the trilaterals through the three mainstream theoretical approaches of international relations, and argues that while the accounts of the trilaterals provided by neorealism, neoliberalism, and constructivism are useful, none provides a fully satisfactory explanation. Instead, this thesis finds that a *neoclassical realists* (NCR) approach is best¹²⁸ because it bridges constructivism and foreign policy analysis, providing more explanatory power, by using both internal and external factors. Even when the relative autonomy of American FPEs on Asia is considered, one must add the filter of perception to inputs, and the filters of domestic constraints, institutions, and bureaucratic politics to the foreign policy outputs.

2.1. Theories of International Relations

The field of international relations has produced a number of approaches to attempt to explain and understand the complexities of global politics. Often, there has been little integration or cooperation between these approaches, due to incommensurability and theoretical pluralism, a problem raised by Colin Wight¹²⁹. What is challenging about any analysis of the trilaterals is that these quasi-alliances appear to sit at the cross-roads of so many different theoretical approaches, as well as systemic levels of analysis. In trying to explain foreign policy outcomes using different levels of analysis, it is difficult to know which level of analysis should be prioritized. Some theorists like Kenneth Waltz have stressed structural or external factors like capabilities within the international system while others – like Graham Allison, Peter Trubowitz, and Robert Jervis – have focused on internal constraints or domestic geographic, economic, and bureaucratic constraints on foreign decision-makers.

At the structural level of analysis, there are a number of competing models. For example, many theorists have approached trilaterals through either realist alliance / alignment literature, while others have approached trilaterals through what Ole Holsti calls Global Society/Complex-Interdependence models¹³⁰. While both approaches have their uses, prioritizing one over the other can sometimes

¹²⁸ Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 51, No. 1 (October 1998), pp.144-172

¹²⁹ Colin Wight, "Incommensurability and Cross Paradigm Communication in International Relations Theory: What's the Frequency Kenneth?" *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Volume 25, (1996), pp.291-319.

¹³⁰ Ole R. Holsti, "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy," G. John Ikenberry, Peter L. Trubowitz, (eds.,) *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, 7th Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), p.17.

produce a surfeit of explanatory power, or produce too little, rarely providing a balance between the two. Then there are *innenpolitik* approaches, like constructivism, an approach associated with Alexander Wendt¹³¹, which emphasizes cultural and normative variables and their impact on shaping how policymakers perceive and interact with the world. While constructivism says little about alliances or trilaterals, one can note that norms, values, and culture all play a deep role in shaping threat assessments and perceptions of foreign policymakers. Thus, in alignment and alliance-formation, social construction does seem to play a role, though to what extent is debated within the academic community. Stephen Walt asserts that “the belief that ideology determines foreign policy will often be a self-fulfilling prophecy”, since states that behave as though ideology is important will cause other states to behave in ways that seem to confirm this belief. After all, all three states are liberal democracies and have consistently emphasized shared values and norms in their statements. This self-fulfilling prophecy that domestic regime type is important seems debatable however, as empirical research carried out for this thesis reveal that Australian policymakers had a much lower threat perception of China, though Australia is in no way less democratic. It would appear that its economic relationship with China rather than ideology is a factor. Thus the complexity involved in constructivist analysis makes predicting the alignment of states problematic, though not impossible. However, by taking an approach which considers structural capabilities, while still affording a generous place for domestic and socially constructed variables, this thesis puts forward

- I) A credible explanation for the trilateral, grounded in both theoretical and empirical research.
- II) A new NCR theory of hedging, which can be said to frame US foreign and security policy in the Asia Pacific since the end of the Cold War.

2.2. The Structure of the International System

Neoclassical realists begin with the assumption that the international system is the starting point of all foreign policy outputs. In his 1998 article, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy”, Gideon Rose states, “the scope and ambition of a country’s foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and specifically by its relative material power capabilities.”¹³² Naturally, this presupposition requires that we attempt to answer the question of what constitutes a system, what defines its system-ness, who are its main actors, and what are the underlying dynamics of that system. Then, there are a number of different theoretical approaches that one can take toward the analysis of the system’s structure. Such approaches can take place at the global or the regional

¹³¹ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization*, Vol.42, No.02, (Spring 1992), pp. 309-403.

¹³² Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics*, Vol.51, No.1 (1998), p.146.

sub-system level; or they might attribute qualities to the system by its power balances, its polarity or hegemony; it might view the system in terms of its institutional or organizational nature. In terms of the modern day system, many scholars and practitioners tend to mean the state-oriented system, which is traced historically –rightly or wrongly – to the Treaty of Westphalia.

As the next chapter will seek to demonstrate, different structures of power within the international system itself can play a role in shaping the perceptions choices of foreign policy elites both at the regional and sub-regional levels.

2.3. Realism and Neorealism

As the oldest approach towards international relations, realism is not a single unified approach, but rather a collection of different approaches that share some common assumptions. Classical realism presents a rich and complex framework of interdependence between the individual, the state, and the international system. What it provides in explanatory power, it lacks in parsimony. Lacking a rigorous theoretical framework, it was supplemented in 1979 with Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Relations* (1979) by the more elegant neorealism – a variant of realism – which prioritized structure and was able to provide clearer predictions of state behavior. As with classical realism, neorealism also included a focus on geographically-based unitary actors, such as states, empires, kingdoms, and nations, and the argument that such actors are driven by the self-help nature of the system to seek security, through a rational analysis of national interests in how to gain the maximum security in their environment. At times, realists suggest this is a normative exercise, at other times, they suggest they can find an objective truth in the system writ-large¹³³.

While many prominent realist theorists in the post-War era have included Americans,¹³⁴ mainstream theorists and practitioners within the United States tradition tend to view American foreign policy through the lens of liberalism or neoliberalism¹³⁵. However, even here, there is a blend as the liberal-oriented American foreign policy elites (FPEs) have overlaid the neoliberal economic system with a robust and long-lasting alliance network, which constitutes defence alliances or commitments with more than 54 countries, a share of 75 per cent of the global economy, with more than 2 billion people

¹³³ John J. Mearsheimer, "Introduction", in George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, 60th Anniversary Edition (Chicago & London, University of Chicago Press, 2012), p.x

¹³⁴ Prominent realists in this tradition include Hans Morgenthau, Reinhold Niebuhr, John Mearsheimer, George Kennan, Robert Gilpin, Henry Kissinger, among others.

¹³⁵ Former US Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney expressed liberal disdain for balance of power, saying "It is not in our interest or those of the other democracies to return to earlier periods in which multiple military powers balanced against another in what passed for security structures, while regional, or even global peace hung in the balance." Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.268.

under its sway¹³⁶. Clearly any analysis of US foreign policy or of the trilateral that ignores alliances and alliance theory will not do justice to how the United States acts on the international stage.

2.4. Alliances

Alliances have long been associated with the *balance of power* concept in the realist school; in *Politics Among Nations*, Morgenthau says they are a “necessary function of the balance of power operating in a multiple state system”¹³⁷. Alliances are both a source of security and insecurity, since they can adjust the balance of power between a particular bloc of states versus another bloc. Given the obvious nature of its similarities, the trilateral would seem to be alliance-like since it involves a high degree of security cooperation, intelligence-sharing, and expanding interoperability. Indeed, a number of theorists working on the trilateral – like Victor Cha and Thomas Wilkins – have sought to explain the trilaterals through the framework of alignment and intra-alliance dynamics. Both are useful in understanding how the trilaterals came about. Furthermore, the first term of the Bush administration – the period in which our case study originates – saw a foreign policy team that openly prioritized alliances, with the National Security Advisor, Torkel Patterson, briefing Michael Green, Director of Asia, to “strengthen alliances” in the region.¹³⁸

In *Theory of International Politics*, Kenneth Waltz attempts to explain why states align themselves in one direction or another by putting forward the argument that the distribution of material capabilities is the most important variable in deciding state behavior under anarchy¹³⁹. Balance of power theory predicts that states respond in two ways to this distribution: (1) states will *balance against* threatening powers; or (2) that states *bandwagon with* threatening powers. Balancing takes the form of *external balancing*¹⁴⁰ such as alliance-building; “soft” balancing¹⁴¹, or “internal balancing” such as the internal build-up of economic, and industrial foundations of military strength¹⁴². It is also affected by geographical proximity, offensive capability, and offensive intention. Bandwagoning is when a state chooses to move closer to a great power in the anticipation of avoiding harm or winning rewards for doing so and can take limited political or military support. When thinking about these two types of movements *between* states, the term *alignment* is used.

¹³⁶ See US Collective Defense Arrangements: <http://www.state.gov/s/l/treaty/collectivedefense/> (accessed November 28, 2016).

¹³⁷ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace 5th Edition* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985)

¹³⁸ Patterson, Torkel, (National Security Advisor, 2001-2002), Personal interview by author, telephone, April 12, 2016.

¹³⁹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

¹⁴⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p.168.

¹⁴¹ Robert A. Pape, “Soft Balancing Against the United States” *International Security*, Vol.30, No.1 (Summer 2005), pp.7-45

¹⁴² Jack. S Levy, William R. Thompson, “Hegemonic Threats and Great Power Balancing in Europe, 1495-1999” *Security Studies* Vol.14, No.1 (January 2005) pp.1-33.

The fact that this thesis does not consider the US-Japan-Australia trilateral a full alliance is of fundamental importance and it is worth taking some time to explain why – despite the views of some – it does not constitute a full alliance. This thesis agrees with Thomas Wilkins' argument that alignments constitute “mutual expectations”¹⁴³, but these are vague and there are few penalties if they are not met. Alignment is a broader concept than alliance since it does not focus solely upon the military dimensions of international politics. Furthermore, there are degrees of alignment, which can take place “in political economic, military and cultural spheres present[ing] a multifaceted sculpture of national and supranational postures.”¹⁴⁴ Part of the confusion between the two terms stems from the fact that alliances and alignment are very closely linked: Snyder says that, “Formal alliances are simply one of the behavioral means to create or strengthen alignments...and thus are a subset of alignments...”¹⁴⁵. However, if we are rigorous with our definitions, we see that alliances have minimum requisites to be considered alliances. For example, Stephen Walt, argues that at a minimum, an alliance “...assumes some level of commitment and an exchange of benefits for both parties; severing the relationship or failing to honor the agreement would presumably cost something, even if it were compensated in other ways.”¹⁴⁶. This emphasis on a stated or unstated obligation – formal or informal – is also common to definitions of quite a number of alliance scholars, including Snyder¹⁴⁷, Diebel¹⁴⁸, Osgood¹⁴⁹, and Evans and Newnham¹⁵⁰. Why States decide to align or ally is of fundamental concern to the international relations scholar and to the statesman, and there are a number of reasons – external and internal – why they might not develop a full-fledged alliance.

While it is true that the US-Japan-Australia trilateral contains one full treaty alliance – the US-Japan Alliance – and one quasi-alliance, the US-Australia defence pact,¹⁵¹ the trilateral itself cannot be considered a full alliance because of a lack of a *de jure* or *de facto* defence commitment in the third dyad, Japan-Australia. One might argue that there is a moral imperative or even an argument of enlightened self-interest for Japan to defend Australia if it were attacked or for Australia to defend Japan if it were attacked, but both of these arguments are entirely different from a formal and

¹⁴³ Thomas S. Wilkins, “‘Alignment’, not ‘Alliance’ – the Shifting Paradigm of International Security cooperation: Toward a Conceptual Taxonomy of Alignment,” in *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 38, (2012), p.55

¹⁴⁴ Michael D. Ward, *Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics* (Denver, CO, University of Denver, 1982), p.7

¹⁴⁵ Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p.8

¹⁴⁶ Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987) pp.12-13

¹⁴⁷ Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY Cornell University Press, 1997) p.4

¹⁴⁸ Terry L. Diebel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy: Logic for American Statecraft*, (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2007) p.230

¹⁴⁹ Robert E. Osgood and John H. Badgley, *Japan and the US in Asia* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1968), p.17

¹⁵⁰ Graham Evans, Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, (London: Penguin Books, 1998) p.15

¹⁵¹ While US officials have viewed the ANZUS as a defence alliance, there is a debate within the Australian political class about the ambiguity of the commitment “to consult” and to “act” if another partner is attacked. See, for example, Fact Check: Does ANZUS Commit the US to Come to Australia’s Aid, as Julie Bishop Claims? ABC.Net.Au. July 23, 2014, available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-07-08/does-anzus-commit-us-to-come-to-australias-aid-fact-check/5559288> (accessed November 28, 2016).

understood treaty obligation. While some might argue that this is immaterial, the fact is that practitioners do not think so because of the fears brought about by the security dilemma. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer's speech in 2001,¹⁵² for example, emphasized the fact that Australia's leaders did not want a new alliance, while Japan is said to have turned Australia's offer of a formal treaty down in 2007. Lord Grey and Lloyd George both repeatedly reassured Britain's Parliament that they were not obliged to join Russia or France in a war against Germany in the fateful summer of 1914, before Germany invaded Belgium and the Lowlands¹⁵³. Decision makers can thus be extremely careful in laying out their positions, and carefully – and at times, jealously – guard their states from entrapment.

States also avoid becoming fully-entangled in alliances when there are strong domestic variables at play. As Barnett and Levy discuss in "Sources of Alignments and Alliances", Egyptian alliance behaviour included domestic political and economic drivers, and that the insecurity of the regime or concerns about its economy could play an important role in driving the regime to form an alliance. They assert, "domestic political and economic constraints may limit a state's ability to mobilize internal resources for external security without adversely affecting the domestic political interests of the elite in power and thus may provide powerful incentives for leaders to prefer external alignments to internal mobilization as a strategy to provide for their security in the face of external threats."¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, those regimes that may suffer from internal strife may choose to develop a partnership with a larger ally that provides both resource gains for the security services and some legitimacy for the state (though of course, this can play both ways for a nationalist population). While many of the conditions that shaped the alignment behaviour of third-world states like Egypt are missing in the context of the US¹⁵⁵, the trilateral could be said to have a domestic component for the United States, in that foreign policy elites who favour a Continentalist "China-first" approach may have strong business ties to US-China trade. Some like Robert Zoellick, will have actually had experience as trade diplomats in the US Government. As this thesis seeks to demonstrate in the next chapter, Continentalists have often been

¹⁵² State.Gov Website, Press Conference with Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, Minister of Defense Peter Reith, and Admiral Chris Barrie, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/4350.htm> (accessed June 16, 2016).

¹⁵³ Statement by Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, HC Deb 03 August, 1914, Vol. 65, cc1809-32, available at: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1914/aug/03/statement-by-sir-edward-grey> (accessed November 11, 2016).

¹⁵⁴ Michael N. Barnett, Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: the Case of Egypt, 1962-1973," *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No.3 (Summer 1991), p.370.

¹⁵⁵ The US, for example, does not seek alliances to bolster its government against internal opposition since it is a liberal democracy, and while it seeks economic gains from the relationship with China, it has rarely justified internally or with its domestic supporters, alignment or alliance-formation for economic gains. Indeed, pre-1945 United States had a slightly odd political culture in that it sought to avoid "entangling alliances", and was only reluctantly pulled into them by the First and Second World Wars. Broadly speaking, the alliance system was an aberration created by the US allied victory of Nazi Germany and the simultaneous rise of Soviet expansionism into Eastern Europe and Northeast and Southeast Asia.

a restraining force on those in the US government who would seek to push the trilateral to full-alliance status.

In terms of external variables, alliances are not only motivated by insecurity and security dilemmas. There are other security considerations that drive alliance-formation. Patricia Weitsman¹⁵⁶ points out that alliances take shape even when there is “no clear and present danger”, while Celeste Wallander¹⁵⁷ points out that other alliances like NATO behave like security institutions, or as means of harnessing the power of large states, or restraining the power of previously-aggressive member states. Both Osgood¹⁵⁸ and Pressman¹⁵⁹ discuss at length, the restraining imperative for alliance-formation. Ajin Choi and William Tow, point out that in exchange for cooperation on Washington’s non-proliferation policy and war on terrorism, “Australia and Japan view their TSD involvement as a means to further solidify US guarantees to their own security via continued and reliable access to US intelligence and technology.”¹⁶⁰ As we will see, these factors certainly play their part in the creation of the alliances, but interviews and empirical evidence suggest while the three states have different motivations for taking part in trilateral cooperation, insecurity has played a strong common factor for all three.

2.5. Two Types of Security Dilemma

This thesis argues that structural power balances alone cannot direct a foreign leader to the best course of action. This is because sometimes the system suggests conflicting paths to greater security. This is evident in the double security dilemma that exists in realist theory. The first security dilemma is the structural variant that asserts that even when states do little more than attempt to seek to buttress their security, their actions will alarm and threaten other states, who – mobilized by their own insecurity – will react in turn by doing the same. This is because weapons can be used for both offense as well as defence, and the uncertainty of any given state’s intentions. As Robert Jervis says, the theory puts forward the idea that “the means by which a state tries to increase its security decreases the security of others.”¹⁶¹ At a diplomatic or strategic level, this means that one state allying with another causes a third to feel heightened insecurity and seek its own security partners. At the tactical level, it might mean that one state’s tactics for gaining a preponderance of forces or for gaining tactical advantage, will cause other states to react by developing counter-tactics. However, this is not

¹⁵⁶ Patricia Weitsman, “Alliance Cohesion and Coalition Warfare: The Central Powers and the Triple Entente,” *Security Studies*, Vol.12, No.3 (2003), pp.79-119.

¹⁵⁷ Celeste Wallander, “Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO after the Cold War,” *International Organization*, Vol.54, No.4 (2000), p.705.

¹⁵⁸ Richard E. Osgood, *Alliances and American Foreign Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), p.21.

¹⁵⁹ Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).

¹⁶⁰ Ajin Choi, William T. Tow, “Bridging Alliances and Asia-Pacific Multilateralism,” William T. Tow, Brendan Taylor (eds.,) *Bilateralism, Multilateralism and Asia Pacific Security: Contending Cooperation* (London: Routledge, 2013), p.28.

¹⁶¹ Robert Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma,” Vol. 20, No.2 *World Politics*, (1978), p.167.

the only security dilemma at work. This thesis also considers a second type of security dilemma, that which takes place *between* allies, and involves the insecurity caused by the “entrapment/abandonment” trap. In this internal security dilemma, explored by Glenn Snyder¹⁶², FPEs are torn between their desire for security and their concern that their state will become entrapped in an alliance with another state, fighting in conflicts that are only peripheral to their interests. This chapter will now examine the two types here in order to understand the part they play in the creation of the trilaterals and in the wider hedging behavior which characterizes American policymaking.

2.6. The Security Dilemma with China

What does the first type of security dilemma look like in the context of the Asia Pacific? A major feature of the American alliance system in the region is its exclusion of China, one of the region’s great powers and a historic leader of the system. Zhu Feng, Hugh White, and Lyle Goldstein have all written on how the trilateral with Australia might possibly trigger – or has already triggered a security dilemma between the trilateral partners and China in the region. While China has been integrated into global institutions, such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank (WB), as well as regional institutions like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), it remains external to the regional network of security alliances in its home-region. Chinese scholar Zhu Feng notes that as the US fortifies its regional alliances, Beijing feels increasingly isolated and surrounded¹⁶³. The fact that China’s historic foe, Japan, is Washington’s partner of choice, heightens this dilemma. “Since 1995” Lyle Goldstein writes, “the capabilities and preparedness of the US-Japan Alliance have been ratcheted up to such an extent that the alliance itself is triggering a security dilemma that reflects Beijing’s acute security anxieties.”¹⁶⁴

In his edited volume, *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Towards a Virtual Alliance* (1999), Ralph Cossa shows how this same security dilemma was present in the minds of American FPEs in the 1990s, when the US-Japan-ROK trilateral was developing on the Korea Peninsula. The body, he claimed, served an alliance-like function of bringing “the three sides closer in a way that serves all three nations’ national security interests and the broader goal of regional stability.”¹⁶⁵ However, he argued that a formal security alliance would not really serve the interests of its members, since it would “unnecessarily alarm neighbouring countries, like China or Russia, who would be inclined, regardless

¹⁶² Glenn H. Snyder, “The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics,” *World Politics*, Vol.36, No.4 (July, 1984), pp.461-495.

¹⁶³ Zhu Feng, “TSD – Euphemism for Multiple Alliance?” in William Tow, et al, (eds.), *The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: Facilitating Community-Building or Revisiting Containment?* (Seattle, Washington: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), pp.41-49.

¹⁶⁴ Lyle J. Goldstein, *Meeting China Halfway: How to Defuse the Emerging US-China Rivalry* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015), p.251.

¹⁶⁵ Ralph Cossa, Preface, in Ralph Cossa (ed.) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Towards a Virtual Alliance* (1999), p.xvi.

of the actual motives, to see such an effort at containment or encirclement.”¹⁶⁶ In other words, the trilateral is security cooperation frozen by its member states at a stage where it affords the benefits of collective security without the risks of entrapment and entanglement.

Another example of the security dilemma at work in this thesis involves the Quadrilateral between the US, Australia, Japan, and India, a Japanese initiative which initially had strong support from the US National Security Council, the Office of the Vice –President, as well as the Australian Prime Minister’s Office (PMO)¹⁶⁷. One year after the Quadrilateral was created, after a number of meetings and after the four had hosted the Malabar 07 military exercise, Australia unilaterally withdrew from the grouping. This took place for two reasons: (1) China had issued demarches to all four states; and (2) Australia held a national election, and a new *Continentalist* Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, took office. In this case, structural reasons cannot explain on their own, why Australia would have attempted to join an initiative and then, just as quickly, quit it. Furthermore, it is clear that structure alone would not suggest to Australian leaders the correct choice. Whichever way they turn, they are foregoing some measure of security. Given its economic ties to China and fears of entrapment in an anti-China bloc, there are few reasons for Canberra to reach out to this grouping, since its security needs are already covered by the US-Australia defence pact. However, a neoclassical realist approach – using the intervening variable of domestic policy coalitions – allows for these types of miscalculations and provides a richer level of analysis.

Despite the fact that Australia dropped out of the Quadrilateral Initiative, it has continued trilateral activities with Washington and Tokyo. Over the same space of time, Beijing has begun to pursue the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) – a sub-regional security grouping of states – which has sometimes been explained as a reaction to overall feeling of encirclement by US allies. From the US perspective, the growth of Chinese military capabilities, the development of its naval power, and its anti-access, area denial (A2AD) strategies, have led American FPEs to question both Chinese regional intentions and to question the ability of American forces to protect US allies and interests. The focus of the US military on A2AD, its own tactical responses – such as Air Sea Battle, and the US-Japan-Australia military exercises on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) can all be taken as indications of the security dilemma at work. In many ways, the guiding concept of the age, particularly of China’s rise and the system of American alliances, could be said to be shaped around the security dilemma.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.xvii.

¹⁶⁷ Anonymous (Senior Australian Diplomat) interview with author, Tokyo.

2.7. The Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma

Within alliances too, Snyder notes that a type of “anarchy” prevails, with members worrying that they will either be abandoned by their allies when danger is at its greatest, or pulled in, entrapped by their ally in unnecessary wars¹⁶⁸. Commitment, interest, and entanglement are all elements fraught with danger for the statesman, considering the national interests of his own nation. Victor Cha writes on how this type of *internal* security dilemma defines what he calls the US-ROK-Japan “quasi-alliance”¹⁶⁹, which moves according to the same logic as a formal alliance. As Cha explains: “Japan and Korea are not party to a mutual defense treaty, but that does not preclude the existence of alignment patterns between the two states. As a result of their geographic proximity, prominence in the region, common security threats, and the triangular alliance arrangements with the United States, the two nations exhibit alignment patterns and *de facto* security ties that play an important part in their overall relationship.”¹⁷⁰

While there are differences between the US-ROK-Japan and US-Japan-Australia trilateral, this thesis holds that both are mobilized by this intra-alliance “balance of anxiety”. Cha’s argument broadly follows the same lines, but also seeks to harmonize a realist security dilemma drawn from the Western experience with the normative domestic factors that shape Japan-Korea relations. Thus, “history, perceptions, and commitments”¹⁷¹ play a role in distancing Seoul and Tokyo, despite their common security interests. However, when threatened with abandonment, both overcome these domestically-driven elements, to forge closer security cooperation. Despite acknowledging this internal security dilemma, Cha misses the possibility that a second security dilemma is at play (that with China). Furthermore, while he acknowledges domestic variables – like history – he does not acknowledge that the FPEs might be arrayed against each other into different factions. Rather, his domestic constituents are proxies for the Korean or Japanese state, with values and culture added.

The strongest argument for the intra-alliance security dilemma driving the creation of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral is made by Tomohiko Satake, a Japanese scholar and defence official, who argues that trilateralism has its origins in Japanese and Australian abandonment fears in the late 1990s. These fears were provoked by Washington’s intention to drastically reduce its military presence in the region

¹⁶⁸ Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* pp.181-186.

¹⁶⁹ See for example: Fukui, Yusuke, “Japan moves to make Australia ‘quasi-ally’ in National Security” *The Asahi Shimbun*, November 10, 2014, Asia & Japan Watch; Garnaut, “Australia-Japan Military Ties are a ‘Quasi-alliance’, say officials” *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 26, 2014, National Section; Wallace, Rick, “Shinzo Abe tipped to seek alliance between Japan and Australia”, *The Australian*, June 29, 2015.

¹⁷⁰ Victor Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*, (Stanford, Ca., Stanford University Press, 1999), p.50.

¹⁷¹ Victor Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*, (Stanford, Ca., Stanford University Press, 1999), p.5.

as outlined in the DOD East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI). According to Satake, “many Japanese policy analysts felt a ‘strong sense of crisis’ at the reduction in US forces, as they thought that this could lead to a new ‘isolationist’ US foreign policy posture”.¹⁷² He continues, “...Australian policymakers were apprehensive that Washington’s phased plan for military reduction would confirm their fears of a long-term decline in US strategic presence in the Western Pacific.”¹⁷³ Satake argues that these fears led directly to the resurgence of the two alliances – as carried out in the 1996 Sydney Statement (renewing the US-Australia alliance) and in the 1997 Joint Declaration (renewing the US-Japan alliance). He also argues that the renewal of both alliances facilitated the trilateral. As with Cha, Satake makes an excellent argument on how intra-alliance security dilemmas affect state alignment, but does not show how the FPEs of Japan and Australia, propelled by abandonment fears, sought greater alliance cohesion with the United States, thus provoking a further security dilemma with China. Clearly, neorealism alone cannot always suggest to FPEs the correct policy options that will maximize their own security.

2.8. Neoliberalism and Order-building

At the other end of the spectrum to neorealism’s structural approach, stands neoliberalism, which puts forward the notion that interests are much more diffused than is commonly held by realist accounts. Complex interdependence – a concept coined by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye¹⁷⁴ – recognizes that economic relationships forge new dynamics between states and ameliorate military competition and insecurity. Because of this preference for inter-dependence, neo-liberalism has favoured institution-building, norms, and the establishing of peaceful ways of dealing with the tensions of the anarchical system. As Tow and Acharya have sought to demonstrate, the new-networked alignments – like the US-Japan-Australia trilateral – have been increasingly focused on “order-building”¹⁷⁵ in their orientation. They identify the fact that the Asia Pacific still lacks strong regional multilateral security organizations as a major vulnerability for the fast-growing region. As North Korea’s nuclear issue continued to rise during the 1990s, this event did foster the initial attempts at institution-building. As described above, the US-Japan-Korea trilateral was developed at this time with the twin aims of coordinating policy over North Korea, and ensuring regional stability. Entities like ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the track 1.5 Council for Security Cooperation in the

¹⁷² Tomohiko Satake, “The Origin of Trilateralism? The US-Japan-Australia Security Relations in the 1990s” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.11 (2015), p.5.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Joseph Nye, Robert Keohane, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977).

¹⁷⁵ William Tow and Armitav Acharya, “The United States and Asian Security: from Bilateralism to Alliance Mutuality” *Working Papers: Department of International Relations, ANU* (2007), p.34; H.P.Envall, “Community Building in Asia?” Yuki Tatsumi (ed) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Simson Center, 2015), pp.51-60.

Asia Pacific (CSCAP), the Six Party Talks, and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI), have all followed as deliberate attempts to foster dialogue and communication between great powers in the region and sub-regional groups like ASEAN. However, the failure of these groups to deal with great power rivalry or with the larger problems of North Korea and Taiwan contrasts with the expansion and strengthening of the American Cold War-era alliance network¹⁷⁶ since 2001.

Brendan Taylor identifies four ways to understand the nexus between this American bilateral system and the regional multilateral system¹⁷⁷. The first merely sees the bilateral system and multilateral systems as completely and mutually separate. The second sees the two elements as able to cooperate, but prioritizes the bilateral security element, seeing multilateralism as a complementary addition. The third way sees the bilateral system as a “stepping stone” to a wider goal of multilateral security architecture, in which the two are integrated or synthesized into something new. Finally, the fourth approach sees bilateralism and multilateralism as complementary forces or “convergent security”, that will continue to work alongside each other. As the later chapter will show, different American foreign policy elites have taken different approaches toward the region. The early Clinton administration did in fact take the third approach, with President Clinton announcing a Pacific Community policy in a speech in 1993 in Seoul¹⁷⁸. While this ultimately failed to gain traction, the idea of the “security community” became prevalent among American policymakers, particularly in the military in Pacific Command. Admiral Blair, the Commander-in-chief at PACOM and a supporter of the “security community” concept, argued that “this idea of security communities would enable cooperation to happen even between countries that were not ideologically aligned with us, to do good things without bringing in the things like democracies versus autocratic governments, or China versus the rest.”¹⁷⁹

Despite the slight empirical evidence suggesting that FPEs treated the trilaterals as part of a wider neoliberal security project, alternative explanations favor the view that the growth of insecurity has led to a “hardening” of alliance trilateralism, with more hard power elements coming into play over eight years. Clinton’s Pacific Community language quickly fell from use in US policy documents during the Bush administration, as did similar schemes put forward by Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama. While neoliberalism is therefore useful to

¹⁷⁶ With the US trilaterals, the alliance with the Philippines, and deepening of bilateral ties with South Korea and Japan, as examples.

¹⁷⁷ Brendan Taylor, “Conceptualizing the bilateral-multilateral security nexus,” in William T. Tow, Brendan Taylor, (eds.,) *Bilateralism, Multilateralism, and Asia Pacific Security: Contending Cooperation*, (London: Routledge, 2013), p.9.

¹⁷⁸ William J. Clinton, *Remarks to the Korean National Assembly in Seoul*, The American Presidency Project: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=46829> (accessed February 6, 2016).

¹⁷⁹ Blair (Adm), Dennis, (CINCPAC 1999-2002), interview with author, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, May 6th, 2015.

understanding the context of trilateralism, the areas where the United States, Japan, and Australia have chosen to move forward on regional cooperation are clearly reacting to geopolitical changes in the region. Southeast Asian states – on the front line of China’s attempts to consolidate its hold over the South China Sea – have shown remarkably little cohesion over the issue. Often, they suffer from lack of resources, and are unable to even form a common operational picture (COP) of the maritime space. Consequently, trilateral capacity building assistance (CBA) has sought to strengthen these areas through the framework of maritime domain awareness (MDA) , providing funding through programmes like the Asia Pacific Maritime Security Strategy and the Maritime Security Initiative (MSI)¹⁸⁰.

2.9. Constructivism and the English School

Then there are constructivist and English School analyses of the trilaterals. Here, constructivist scholars such as Alexander Wendt and Evelyn Goh argue that the relatively static view of identity within realism is in fact “an ongoing boundary-drawing process”¹⁸¹, in which normative and ideational factors actually construct the political institutions and processes in which foreign policy elites operate. Bull, of the English School, states that the boundaries of international society are dictated by great powers that seek to turn their unequal power into authority through the provision of public goods¹⁸². Goh argues that the bilateral-multilateral nexus between trilateralism and regional multilateralism is really about “divergent visions of regional order”¹⁸³ between the US security network, the Chinese quest for a new regional “security concept”, and the ASEAN-led quest for a normative-Asian institution. According to Goh’s account, the US-Japan-Australia trilateral is the product of two commitments that occur between Washington and its allies; the first sees allies “tying down” the US to the predictable management of regional security issues; the second sees Washington recommit to playing the “benign alliance leader” that would act to “preclude the rise of a hostile hegemon through selective crisis intervention and through deployment of superior military power in the region.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁰ Van Jackson, Mira Rapp-Hooper, Paul Scharre, Harry Krejsa, Jeff Chism, “Transparency as Strategy: The Maritime Security Initiative and the South China Sea,” *Center for International Maritime Security* March 21, 2016, available at: <http://cimsec.org/transparency-strategy-maritime-security-initiative-south-china-sea/23299> (accessed 18 November 2016).

¹⁸¹ Bahar Rumelili, “Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding the EU’s Mode of Differentiation,” *Review of International Studies*, Vol.30, No.1 (2004), pp.31-33.

¹⁸² According to Hedley Bull’s realist conception of international society, great power management is a central pillar of international order, in which great powers seek to manage their relations with each other, so that rivalries do not spill out into conflict. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002), chapter 6.

¹⁸³ Evelyn Goh, “Conceptualizing the Relationship between Bilateral and Multilateral Security Approaches in East Asia,” in William T. Tow, Brendan Taylor, (eds.,) *Bilateralism, Multilateralism, and Asia Pacific Security: Contending Cooperation*, (London: Routledge, 2013), p.181.

¹⁸⁴ William T. Tow, *Asia Pacific Strategic Relations: Seeking Convergent Security*, (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.198.

The normative and ideational elements of the trilateral are explored more in depth by scholars like Thomas Wilkins¹⁸⁵, Zhu Feng¹⁸⁶, and Hauke Klevinhaus¹⁸⁷. Wilkins asserts that threat assessment – a binding factor for aligning states – at essence a social activity, and that regime type can help or hinder alliance cohesion. He notes the liberal values of three democracies plays a strong part to shaping how the three trilateral partners¹⁸⁸ view their own interests¹⁸⁹, which Zhu Feng notes, excludes China. Klevinhaus also examines the constructed side of order-building, draws from Immanuel Adler and Michael Barnett's "security community" concept to frame the language and coding used by the trilateral in mission statements, press releases, and policy outputs. Referring back to Admiral Dennis Blair's conceptualization of a regional security community, Klevinhaus notes that the trilateral's community of shared democratic values lends legitimacy to the American use of power and to Japan's search for a regional security role. After talks with American, Japanese, and Australian officials at the July 2001 ARF meeting, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage told reporters, "I've noted Australia has a very close – primarily political and economic – relationship with Japan. The United States has a very close economic, and political, military and security relationship with Japan. It seems to me we are all liberal democracies, we are all concerned with the fate of Asia and it seems to me a perfectly reasonable proposition that we ought to get together and talk."¹⁹⁰ Armitage's reference to common security interests and common political values seems a defining feature of *Mahanian* accounts.

Indeed, it would be difficult to understand American foreign policy decisions without reference to norms. Nor can trilateral cooperation be understood without these social and normative factors. However, constructivism's focus on identity and normative factors is often at the expense of greater trends in power balance. For example, constructivists might explain why the three aligned as they did, but not why they chose to do so at this point in time. This can only be understood if China's material rise is taken into account, an event with both societal and material elements. Furthermore, constructivism often seems to emphasize normative elements over power, forgetting that states that misjudge their power relative to other states can be swiftly punished. History, as the adage goes, is

¹⁸⁵ Thomas S. Wilkins, "Towards a 'Trilateral Alliance?' Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American-Japanese-Australian Relations," *Asian Security*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, (2007).

¹⁸⁶ Feng, Zhu, "TSD – Euphemism for Multiple Alliance?" in William Tow, et al, (eds.), *The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: Facilitating Community-Building or Revisiting Containment?* (Seattle, Washington: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), pp.41-49.

¹⁸⁷ Hauke Klevinhaus, *The Samurai Preparing for the Dragon's Attack? Normative Drivers and Strategic Foundations of Japan's Cooperation with Australia and the United States* (Hamburg, Anchor Academic Publishing: 2013).

¹⁸⁸ Wilkins does say that ideational factors should not be overstated since Japan has a very different ethnic identity and different political culture from the other two members.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas S. Wilkins, Towards a "Trilateral Alliance?" Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American-Japanese-Australian Relations, *Asian Security*, Vol.3, Issue 3 (2007), pp.251-278.

¹⁹⁰ "Armitage Backs US-Australia-Japan Security Talks, *Kyodo News*, August 2001.

littered with the remains of states which misperceived actual power balances. However, “correcting” reveals itself in technological advances, for example, which might accord adversaries particularly offensive advantages. It is really only through a combination of power balances *and* ideational elements that we find FPEs inside states “perceiving” other states as threats. And this nexus between the structure of power and perception of foreign policymakers is critical to our understanding how threats are defined, and what mobilizes states to align themselves in one direction or another.

2.10. Neoclassical Realism as a “Middle Way”

As can be seen, all the different mainstream schools of international relations offer helpful insights into American foreign policy and the origin of the trilaterals, but none, by itself, provides a satisfactory explanation of why the trilaterals developed as they did, *when* they did. **Neorealism’s** structural impulses are useful, but can also be quite contradictory, propelling states from one security dilemma to another. Only by accessing their domestic debates can we see how FPEs navigate these different options. **Neoliberalism**, on the other hand, offers us some indications of why states might seek collective security, or seek to build a security community, but this is not really a clear argument of why trilaterals developed as they did – over a different form of multilateralism. Arguably not. Neoliberalism really seems to have been used by practitioners as a fig leaf for alignment, ironically, with the intention to avoid a security dilemma with China. Few scholars looking at trilaterals now view them as “order-building”. Finally, **constructivism** does offer some valuable insights into how and why states align, but does not accord actual power balances a prominent place in that analysis.

It is only by adopting a mode of analysis which examines both structural *and* domestic variables that we can explain these inconsistencies and anomalies; we can see that systemic stimuli alone do not really suggest clear policy lines to FPEs, because (a) it is difficult for FPEs to agree on the threat assessment of states like China; and because of (b) the conflicting pressures of the double security dilemma. We can also see why the Korea trilateral is languishing under the burden of history, while the Australian variant has gone through higher and higher levels of institutionalization. We can thus see why similar states behave differently under the same environmental stimuli; we see why states don’t always decide on clear strategies for dealing with external threats; why states sometimes pursue strategies harmful to their rationally-calculated interests. After all, “there is no immediate or perfect transmission belt linking material capabilities to foreign policy behavior.”¹⁹¹ This thesis agrees with Nicholas Kitchen’s proposition that a state’s grand strategy can only come after an assessment of

¹⁹¹ Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics* 51, No. 1 (October 1998), pp.144-172.

power in the international system followed by a competition of ideas at the domestic level¹⁹². Certainly, the balance of material capabilities in the system is important, but the imperfect perception of those capabilities, and inability to agree over the threat status of third-party states, and competing policy solutions are equally important in shaping the foreign policy outcomes of states.



Neoclassical realists attempt to bridge the gap between *innenpolitik* and Waltz's systemic theory in what some have called the "second state debate"¹⁹³. Scholars like Steven Lobell have pointed out¹⁹⁴ that it is only by looking at the threat assessment stage that we see how states can come to react to similar stimuli in different ways. Indeed, the threat assessment stage is an integral part of the trilaterals, because if those debates are inconclusive, FPEs will not decide on a clear policy pathway. For example, American foreign policy elites find it difficult to assess China's threat status. This is partly because of the security dilemma, partly because of China's size, making it "too big to contain" and partly from Washington's pluralistic nature of decision-making.

Broadly speaking, the many voices speaking on America's Asia policy have coalesced around two policy-coalitions called *Mahanians* and *Continentalists*. This division was particularly useful during the Bush White House, since those factions implemented policy in variance to each other. However, in other times, they have attempted both approaches, as with the first Obama White House, which saw *Mahanian* and *Continentalist* approaches in the same administration. This unusual behavior stems from genuine confusion of foreign policy elites as to what to do about China. Influenced by a range of factors, "mainstream" policy shifts incrementally with each new presidency or cabinet reshuffle, resulting sometimes in confused and contradictory foreign and security policy behavior.

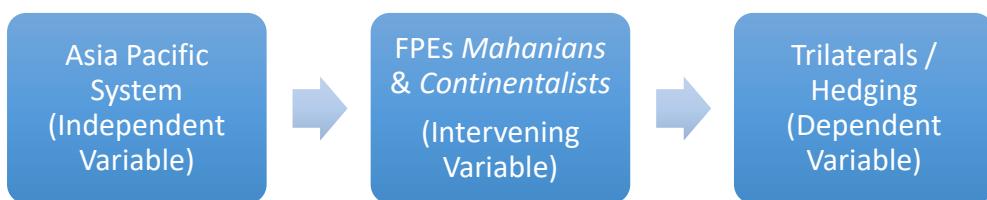
Like FPEs in other liberal democracies, American foreign policy elites have certain socio-political assumptions about the transformative and integrative nature of trade, and often used as an implicit argument against balancing policies. Dan Kliman has even argued that liberal democratic states find authoritarian states even more difficult to assess because their opaque foreign policy-making

¹⁹² Nicholas Kitchen, "Systemic Pressures and Domestic Ideas: A Neoclassical Realist Model of Grand Strategy Formation," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2010), pp.117-143.

¹⁹³ John M. Hobson, "The 'Second State Debate' in International Relations: Theory Turned Upside-Down" *Review of International Studies*, Vol.27, No.3 (July, 2001), pp.395-414.

¹⁹⁴ Steven Lobell, "Threat Assessment, the State, and Foreign Policy," in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, (eds.,) in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

structures “generate considerable uncertainty about [their] intentions.”¹⁹⁵ Faced with this indeterminate threat assessment, foreign policy elites carry out a mixture of engaging and balancing policies with a potential adversary. This ambiguity sits well in Kitchen’s “competition of strategies” and Lobell’s threat-assessment debates. In terms of the trilaterals, American FPEs debate whether they should balance against the rise of China (security dilemma), or attempt to broaden the alliances into a community-building exercise, risking a weakening of the old bilateral commitments (intra-alliance security dilemma).



In summary, this thesis argues that FPEs are pushed and pulled between (I) the two security dilemmas, and between (II) two policy options for dealing with China (balance or accommodate). At times, they even try to make a virtue out of this indecision. In *Hard Choices*, for example, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, gives a summary of the three strategic policy choices facing American policymaking in the Asia Pacific:

One option was to focus on broadening our relationship with China, on the theory that if we could get our China policy right, the rest of our work in Asia would be much easier. An alternative was to concentrate our efforts on strengthening America’s treaty alliances in the region (with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia), providing a counterbalance to China’s growing power. A third approach was to elevate and harmonize the alphabet soup of regional multilateral organizations, such as ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and APEC (the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation organization). [...] I decided that the smart power choice was to meld all three approaches. We would show that America was ‘all in’ when it came to Asia.¹⁹⁶

Her attempt to deal with the decision was actually to avoid making a choice, as a form of “smart power”. As this thesis will endeavor to show, Clinton is merely one in a long line of American

¹⁹⁵ Daniel Kliman, *Fateful Transitions: How Democracies Manage Rising Powers, from the Eve of World War I to China’s Ascendancy*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p.26.

¹⁹⁶ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), p.44-45.

policymakers who were uncertain about the correct policy choice to make in America's Asia policy because of conflicting structural drivers and conflicting internal variables.

2.11. Conclusion

In conclusion, trilaterals are not alliances. They are in fact quasi-in-nature because of the lack of a trilateral mutual defence obligation between the principal members. This halfway arrangement developed because the foreign policy elites of all three countries were pushed in two directions by two different security dilemmas. They were conflicted about whether a key power in the region – China – constituted a threat, and were unsure if balancing through alliance-formation would improve or worsen their overall security. This mixed with the intervening variables of policy debates in the American domestic system created conflicting policy outputs.

This domestic conflict is also a by-product of internal politics and debates on how to deal with a rising state. The two facets of China's rise which intensify this debate inside the US are Beijing's critical role as a trade partner and its importance to the global economy; and its rise as a possible challenger to US hegemony due to the increase in its military hard power. Faced with this unpredictable growth in power and intentions, surrounding states struggle to build a consistent approach toward the potentially threatening state. Kliman writes that democracies tend to favor binding as a strategy for dealing with a rising power challenge, but will incorporate hedging when dealing with 'closed system' states. Autocratic states like China have closed-system foreign policy-making processes, which defy prediction, have veiled intentions and have low permeability to external influence. As a result, democracies avoid binding as stand-alone policy, since that would likely open them up to concessions, appeasement, and military adventurism on the rising state. In addition, rising powers may not even know their own intentions, given the fact that rising powers have sudden growth in capacities. This may be described as 'rolling ambition', a process by which a state's policy objectives incrementally expand, matching the growth of its hard power capabilities.

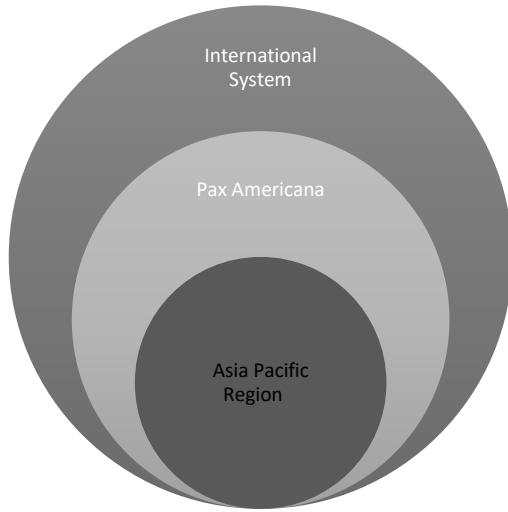
As may have been shown thus far, American foreign policy elites and their alliance counterparts are heavily influenced by ideas about international relations. These ideas – arising from the tradition and academic study of international relations – shape how FPEs see threats in the international system, how they prescribe various solutions, and finally, how they promote certain real-world policies over others. Given the fact that these theories disagree, they have been unable to chart a clear set of policies toward China. How was it possible for the United States to attempt to create a networked regional alliance in 2001, and then consider sidelining it only four years later? Simplistic though it

sounds, it came down to how two rival foreign policy coalitions viewed international relations in the Asia Pacific. On the one hand, *Mahanians* grouped around Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage were pessimistic liberals regarding China's ability or willingness to integrate into a liberal order, seeing values as a binding element with their allies. On the other, *Continentalists* grouped around Tom Zoellick, were optimistic liberals, and thought that shaping China's behavior through trade and engagement was paramount. Up until the present day, the Obama administration has tried to follow both policy paths, as a form of "smart power". It has carried out a push into Asia – the "Rebalance" or "Pivot" – which has attempted to strengthen US military, political, and economic influence in the region. It has strengthened its Pacific alliances, and continued the hard-power element of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral; it has opened up new avenues of engagement and trust building with China.

3. CHAPTER 3: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND PERCEPTION

This chapter seeks to examine the conditions that brought about the US-Japan-Australia trilateral by looking at the structure of the international system, how American FPEs perceive that system, and how the interplay of these two impacts US foreign policy outputs. The first part of this chapter will examine the proposition that structure is actually a complex arrangement of factors. For example, structure might be said to include (i) the international system; (ii) the so-called "Pax Americana"; and (iii) the Asia Pacific region. In turn, the Asia Pacific region can be broken down into three structural *features*. They include 1) the San Francisco System, particularly Japan's prominence therein; 2) nascent regional architecture in Southeast Asia; and 3) the position of China in the system. After looking at these structural features, this chapter will examine how FPEs assess structure and make decisions. Taking our lead from previous critiques of the rational actor model of decision making, we will then consider threat-assessment, and how that shapes – or hinders – effective policymaking. The role that indecision and inconclusiveness have in shaping mainstream American policy toward a rising China, for example, will be examined more closely, as we seek links between those debates and those surrounding the formation of the trilateral. Finally, this chapter will examine the decision-makers, namely the foreign policy elites (FPEs). Their inability to perfectly comprehend changes and possible threats in the international system is influenced directly by a range of factors, including professional

background, exposure to international relations and economic theory, as well as the usual range – bureaucratic, organizational, or otherwise – of foreign policy factors, explored in the FPA literature.



3.1. The International System

Kenneth Waltz and other realists put forward the idea that state behavior can be explained through systemic drivers. One of the intriguing questions of international power is that of hierarchy. As NCR approaches note, correctly perceiving power in the system stands as one of the greatest foreign policy challenges for statesmen. It is not clear that American FPEs are in agreement about hierarchies of power in the Asia Pacific system. Despite a traditional emphasis on anarchy among American realists, some scholars have argued that a strong historic feature of the Asia Pacific has been its hierarchical nature – as Kang has suggested in his work on the Chinese tributary system¹⁹⁷. Other theorists agree asserting that hegemonic stability – an influential theory put forward by economist, Charles Kindleberger¹⁹⁸ – underpins the current global order. This idea that the stability and openness of the system is critically dependent on the willingness and power of the United States to “lead” the system¹⁹⁹, has gained much traction among American scholars, with David Calleo writing, “the prevalent historical consciousness seems ensnared in the fantasy of a reborn Pax Britannica”, especially, “the American political imagination.”²⁰⁰ It is against the hierarchy of power within the global structure that the American alliance system within the Asia Pacific should be examined. Japan’s ambiguous role in that system, and the exclusion of China – by far the largest regional power and

¹⁹⁷ David C. Kang, “Hierarchy in Asian International Relations: 1300-1900,” *Asian Security*, Vol.1, Issue 1 (2005), pp.53-79.

¹⁹⁸ Charles Kindleberger, *The World in Depression, 1929-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), chapter 14.

¹⁹⁹ Kindleberger expressed discomfort with the term “hegemony” or “hegemonic”, seeing in it an implied threat of force.

²⁰⁰ David P. Calleo, *Beyond American Hegemony: The Future of the Western Alliance* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), pp.218, 220.

traditional regional leader – from that system are vitally important aspects of hierarchy in the Asia Pacific sub-system, and are critically important to this study.

3.2. Pax Americana

Before turning to the Asia Pacific region and the American San Francisco System, it is important to first examine the US post-war settlement which is the basis for the shape of the modern global order. In *After Victory*, Ikenberry describes the establishment of the “Western Settlement”, which was based on “economic openness, political reciprocity, and multilateral management of an American-led liberal political order.”²⁰¹ This led to the United States supporting the creation of a number of global international institutions and organizations in the immediate post-war period. These included the United Nations (UN), the Bretton Woods institutions²⁰², and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), among others. As this system was developed, it was clear that these institutions had a role to play in US foreign economic policy in Asia. Japan with its privileged position in the system, exemplified the three goals of the bilateral system and the trade system, namely defraying the costs of occupation, strengthening Japan’s economy as a bulwark against Chinese communism, and advancing the international free trade system. This Washington did by supporting Tokyo’s bid to join the advanced economies through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) between 1949 and 1955, securing for it Most Favored Nation (MFN) status, introducing the New Special Procurements program for the duration of the Korean war²⁰³, and encouraging Japan-Southeast Asian trade links. “The revival of Japan’s economy in the regional context was seen as a way to encourage burden-sharing, or to reduce the costs of US foreign policy in another significant way. A strong Japan, it was predicted, would facilitate the economic recovery of the entire Far Eastern region.”²⁰⁴ Additionally, the US supported other minor regional economic mechanisms, like the Sterling Area Trade Agreement, signed by Britain, Australia, India, New Zealand, and South Africa. Finally, it developed a foreign policy of regional economic aid²⁰⁵, after realizing that trade alone would not be sufficient for strengthening Southeast Asian economies in the short-term²⁰⁶.

²⁰¹ G. John Ikenberry, “The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.75, No.3 (May/June 1996), pp.79-91.

²⁰² Including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Development Association (IDA), collectively known as the World Bank.

²⁰³ Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.231.

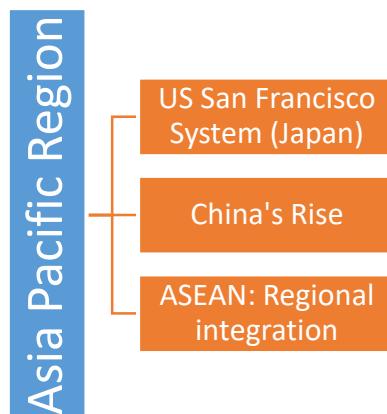
²⁰⁴ Galia Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World: The United States and Regional Cooperation in Asia and Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp.125.

²⁰⁵ These included the President’s Fund for Economic Development in Asia (1955), the Military Assistance Program (1949), the special technical and economic missions (STEMS) in Thailand, Burma, Indonesia, and Indochina (1950s), among others.

²⁰⁶ Galia Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World: The United States and Regional Cooperation in Asia and Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp.125.

3.3. The Asia Pacific

The Asia Pacific is the world's most populous region, and by some predictions, could account for 52 per cent of the global economy by 2050²⁰⁷. Despite this, it also represents some of the most dangerous flashpoints between great powers, as seen on the Korean Peninsula, in the South China Sea, and in the Taiwan Straits. Dominated by the Pacific Ocean, it is a uniquely maritime-dominated region, with major trade routes and energy sea lanes of communication crossing its eastern shores at critical chokepoints. While American FPEs see the alliance system, as "the pillars upon which the region's sustained peace and security rest"²⁰⁸, the system is, as William Tow asserts, "increasingly challenged by indigenously generated alternatives for defining and sustaining regional order."²⁰⁹ These have come both from the rise of China, and the evolution of ASEAN into a focal point for regional multilateralism.



It is in this context that the trilaterals have been generated, both as a response to the criticism that the old bilateral system was no longer relevant to modern human security challenges – as presented by the growing need for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) and – simultaneously, an as attempt to maintain US security interests in the face of a rising China.

3.4. "The San Francisco System"

At the end of the 20th Century, American power and influence in the Asia Pacific looked unassailable. The region was crisscrossed by a series of alliances between Washington and regional states. Unlike

²⁰⁷ *Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian Century*, Asian Development Bank Report Executive Summary, available at: <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/28608/asia2050-executive-summary.pdf> (accessed 26 November, 2016).

²⁰⁸ Kurt Campbell, Brian Andrews, "Explaining the US 'Pivot' to Asia," Chatham House Report, available at: https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Americas/0813pp_pivottoasia.pdf (accessed November 29, 2016).

²⁰⁹ William Tow, "The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: Facilitating Community-Building or Revisiting Containment?" in *Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, A Special Report*, (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), p.3.

the multilateral incoherence of NATO, this system was bilateral²¹⁰ in nature, marked by “exclusivism”,²¹¹ and resembled the “hub and spokes” of a wagon wheel, which increased the weight of American policy preferences in each capital. Sometimes called the San Francisco System (SFS) – after the peace conference and treaty that ended the war in the Pacific – the system was composed of separate basing arrangements, consultations, and training exercise arrangements between Washington and each of its allies, with little overlap or coordination between those allies. Kent Calder²¹² has summarized the following as features of the system: 1) a network of bilateral alliances; 2) an absence of multilateral security architecture; 3) deep asymmetry in alliance relations; 4) special place for Japan in the system; 5) liberal access to American markets, with basic development aid assistance.²¹³ Cha argues that the asymmetry of power between Washington and the allies that constituted the spokes, gave US preferences great weight in each capital, and offered members economic trade advantages, aid, and military assistance²¹⁴. Overseen by the joint work of the Department of State and Department of Defense, the US San Francisco System shapes how American FPs view the region, how they view their choices, and how America engages in the region. While much work is done in Washington, the Department of Defense carries out much defense diplomacy and operations through the Pacific Command (PACOM) headquarters in Honolulu, Hawaii. In addition to this four-star command post, it hosts a three-star command in Japan overseeing US Forces Japan (USFJ) and another four-star command in South Korea, overseeing US Forces Korea (USFK).

A major feature of the US system in the Asia Pacific is the fact that US military bases are hosted on the territories of its allies. This type of “forward-deployed” alliance system is historically atypical, and indicates to some extent a hierarchy of military, economic, and political capabilities between the US and its allies. Eminent historian John Dower states, “the San Francisco System and this militarized Pax Americana go hand in hand. They have defined the strategic status quo in the Asia Pacific since the 1950s.”²¹⁵ The system also creates a maritime order in which non-allied states reside, simply by virtue of their geography. Singapore – lacking a formal defence commitment from the United States

²¹⁰ Other attempts at security multilateralism include the Vietnam War Allies Conference in Saigon in the late 1960s, the Asia Pacific Council’s (ASPAC) attempt to develop collective defence in its charter in 1970; and the Five Power Defence Arrangement, which was consultative in nature.

²¹¹ William T. Tow and Amitav Acharya, *Obstinate or Obsolete? The US Alliance Structure in the Asia-Pacific*, (Canberra, Dept. of International Relations, Australian National University, 2007).

²¹² Kent E. Calder, “Securing Security Through Prosperity: The San Francisco System in Comparative Perspective,” *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 17, No.1 (March 2004), pp.135-157.

²¹³ Kent E. Calder, “Securing Security Through Prosperity: The San Francisco System in Comparative Perspective,” *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 17, No.1 (March 2004), pp.135-157.

²¹⁴ Cha, Victor, ‘PowerPlay: Origins of the US Alliance System in Asia’, ‘PowerPlay: Origins of the US Alliance System in Asia’, *International Security*, Volume 34, Number 3, Winter 2009/10, pp.158-196.

²¹⁵ John W. Dower, “The San Francisco System: Past, Present, Future in US-Japan-China Relations,” *The Asia Pacific Journal*, Vol. 12, Issue 08, (2014), p.2.

– is an example of a state that “sits” within this maritime order. As Melvyn Leffler has written, this maritime order has guided American conceptions of national security in the region ever since²¹⁶. American military strategy has consistently emphasized control of maritime choke-points²¹⁷, strategic areas of interest, and mastery of the seas²¹⁸, with the aim of defending the larger maritime trading order²¹⁹, mentioned above.²²⁰ In *Embattled Garrisons*, Kent E. Calder states, “Both nations (the US and the British Empire) wanted a stable, open global order, in which trade and cross-border investment could flourish.”²²¹ While the United States removed 60 percent of its bases after the Cold War, it has maintained many of its bases in Asia.

If one chose to paraphrase Lord Ismay’s pithy summary of NATO, one might argue that the San Francisco System was originally built “to keep the Communists out, the Americans in, and the Japanese down.” While the US often justified during the Cold War the US-Japan Alliance as a means for keeping a lid on Japanese militarism and as a means of preventing expansion by a Communist China, this reasoning has been absent from policy statements or papers from 1990. Indeed, the 1990s has been characterized by the opposite drive within US FPE circles. The US has promoted a “normal” security posture for Japan within the Asia Pacific, while sought greater trade relations with China. The promotion of China as a welcome member to the Asia Pacific served US post-Cold War notions of developing China into a responsible stakeholder, while also serving domestic economic interests, which benefitted from offshoring manufacturing to China²²². In regards to Japan, US pressure during the 1991 Gulf War, the 1996 Joint Declaration,²²³ and other occasions exemplify that shift within Washington to encourage Japan to contribute to regional security, albeit in the narrow area defined by Japan’s Constitution and public opinion. This push fell on fertile ground as politicians within Tokyo began to search for a post-Yoshida doctrine foreign policy for Japan. This break from Japan’s Cold War posture centered around Japanese politicians like Ichiro Ozawa promoting the shift into a “normal

²¹⁶ Melvyn P. Leffler, “The American Conception of National Security and the Beginnings of the Cold War, 1945-1948,” G. John Ikenberry, Peter L. Trubowitz, (eds.,) *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, 7th Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), Chapter 4.

²¹⁷ Euan Graham, *Japan’s Sea Lane Security: A Matter of Life and Death?* (London, UK: Routledge, 2006); Teik Soon Lau, Lai To Lee, (eds.,) *The Security of the Sea Lanes in the Asia Pacific Region*, (Heinmann Asia, 1988).

²¹⁸ Michael S. Sherry, *Preparing for the Next War: American Plans for Postwar Defense* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977), p.54.

²¹⁹ For more on this, see G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of the Order After Major Wars*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp.163-214.

²²⁰ Peter Dutton, “A Maritime or Continental Order for Southeast Asia and the South China Sea?” *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 63, No.3 (Summer 2016), pp.5-13.

²²¹ Kent E. Calder, *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), p.11.

²²²

²²³ The Joint Declaration of Security – Alliance for the 21st Century, 17 April 1996: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/security.html> (accessed March 23, 2016).

country²²⁴. This shift has been welcomed by some US allies, like Australia and the Philippines, but has been greeted by other states in the region with ambiguity and even hostility. This latter reaction has been prominent among Chinese and Korean foreign policy elites, who criticise Japan's historical legacy and seeming lack of remorse.

John Dower alleges the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the alliance system perpetuated a number of contradictions centered around Japan's posture in the region: first, it allowed five major territorial issues to go unresolved,²²⁵ three of which involved Japan; second it has maintained large forward-deployed forces in Japan, which ties Tokyo to the defence of US interests and vice versa; third, it has provided a buffer for Japan's historical responsibility in the region; fourth, it has extended the nuclear umbrella over Tokyo; and fifth, it has encouraged Sino-Japanese competition by excluding China from the alliance system. These "contradictions" form cracks that split off from Japan and extend far into the region.

3.5. The Rise of China

One of the most important structural features of the past two decades for American FPEs, has been the rise of China, and no study of trilateralism or US alliance policy would be complete without examining the role China plays in their formation. Using its new economic power, China is offering regional states a competing vision of order to the previous US-centric system, constructed around trade relationships, and various free trade regional groupings, part of an overall "charm offensive." This was facilitated when Washington put in place the One-China policy, effectively shelving the Taiwan issue. A tacit agreement held that as long as America's alliance with Japan suppressed that country's militarism, American regional leadership had some legitimacy²²⁶. While China was weak, Dower argues, this implicit deal was somewhat accepted by Chinese leaders, but as market-oriented reforms began to change the nature of China's economic standing, as well as its interdependence within the global economy – not least its interdependence with the American economy – this began to change. China began to assert itself as a great power – insisting on a "new model" of great power relations with the United States after Xi Jinping ascended to the role of leader. While this proposed that in exchange for the United States accepting the "peaceful rise" of China as a global power, China would accept a continued role for the US as a stabilizing presence in the Asia Pacific.

²²⁴ Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint for a New Japan*, 1994.

²²⁵ According to Dower, three out of five involved Japan. They include, the Northern Territories, the Liancourt / Takeshima islets, Senkaku / Diaoyu islands, the issue of Taiwan, and the Spratley / Paracel islands.

²²⁶ Thomas J. Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press, 2011), p.222.

While American FPEs continue to express a willingness to accommodate China's new role as a global power, this apparent willingness has been eroded by China's recent maritime assertiveness over waters in its near periphery. The increased assertiveness over these claims, matched by the growth in Chinese naval capabilities has triggered alarm in Washington, and among US allies, dependent on those waters for fishing, trade, and energy. Regional claimants, such as Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia have become unsettled by China's increasing willingness to threaten force or to use coercive diplomacy to effectively claim large swathes of the South China Sea. Critically, claimants also include US allies, Japan, and the Philippines, which thus raises questions about Washington's ability to protect shipping, about its willingness to maintain peace and stability in the region, and to deter Chinese adventurism with a rapidly dwindling military advantage. Such fears have been increased by the substantial and steady increase in Chinese military spending, which saw nearly two decades of double-digit increases. In 2015, China announced an increase of 10%, a drop from the previous year's 12.2% increase. This brings it to nearly \$150 billion. Although that is still a fraction of US defence spending²²⁷, and still only accounts for 1.33 per cent of China's total GDP²²⁸, some have argued that Chinese military expenditure is around three-quarters that of the United States on a purchasing power parity (PPP) basis²²⁹. It is also concentrated in one region, while US military power is spread across a number of regions. Additionally, the PLA has inaugurated numerous structural and administrative reforms, to increase combat capability, provide better training. Under Xi Jinping, the PLA reforms have reduced the autonomous military administrative hubs – such as General Departments and Military Regions – replacing them with Five Theater Commands – focused solely on operations. According to one account, "this bears substantial similarity to US military reorganization under the Department of Defense supervision through [1986] Goldwater-Nichols [Act]."²³⁰

More worrying than the actual military spending has been the impact of that spending on the military balance in the Asia Pacific. Chinese military spending and military modernization can be traced back to 1991, after the Persian Gulf War, when Jiang Zemin stated that the new PLA should be able to "win local wars that might occur under modern especially high-technology conditions". Since then, it has focused on developing information capabilities, precision-guided munitions, and space-based C4ISR capabilities that target the vulnerabilities of American systems. In 2015, following the Third Plenum of the 18th Central Committee President Xi Jinping inaugurated the PLA Rocket Force (PLARF), Strategic

²²⁷ For example, President Barack Obama asked for a defence budget of \$613.9 billion in 2013.

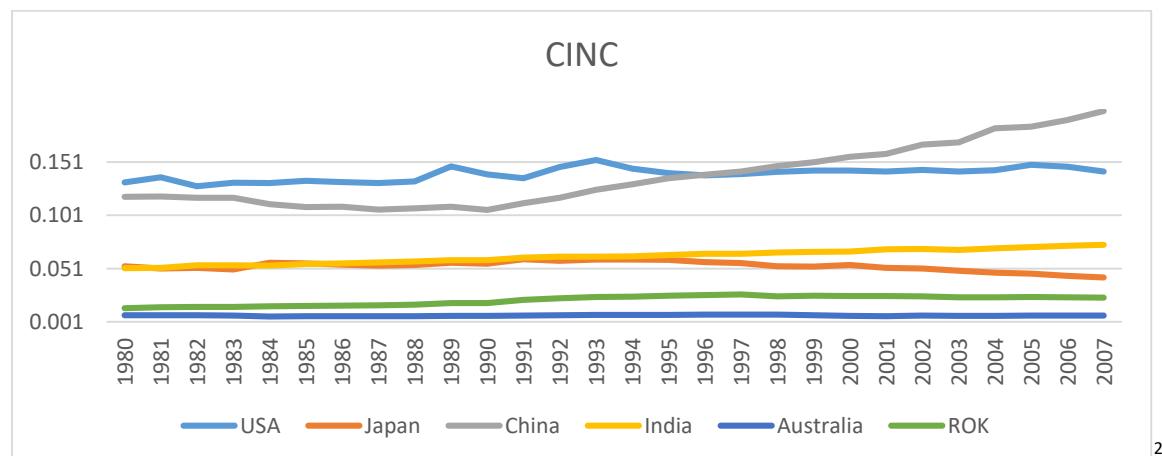
²²⁸ Editor, Huxia, "Xinhua Insight: China to Announce Lowest Defense Budget Rise in Six Years," Xinhua News Agency, available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-03/04/c_135156315.htm (accessed December 3, 2016).

²²⁹ China's Defence Budget, Global Security.org website, available at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/budget.htm> (accessed December 3, 2016).

²³⁰ Antony H. Cordesman, Joseph Kendall, "China's Evolving Military Strategy and the Reorganization of the People's Liberation Army," *The National Interest*, August 29, 2016.

Support Force (PLASSF), which will focus on space and cyber warfare. At a giant military parade in Beijing in 2015 to commemorate the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, China revealed dozens of “carrier-killer” anti-ship ballistic DF-21D missile systems. It has also procured from Russia or developed indigenously a range of weapons systems that have the ability to target US carrier groups²³¹. This includes Chinese aircraft carriers, anti-satellite weapons, J-20 stealth bombers, J-31 stealth fighters, J-15 aircraft carrier fighter planes, S-400 air defence systems, Type 052D guided missile destroyers. Additionally, it has increased its satellites from 10 in the year 2000 to more than 181 in 2016.

Tensions are likely to be accentuated by the advent of the Trump presidency. The Sino-American structural rivalry has been likened to a “Thucydides Trap”²³² by Graham Allison, indicating that current Sino-American tensions have deeper structural drivers.



²³³

By this account, there are three trends related to China’s rise: (1) China’s assertion of its place as a regional power; (2) the relative decline of American power; and (3) the demographic and economic decline of the Japan and subsequent normalization of security behavior. If we look at power transition and hegemonic stability literature, we find that scholars such as Ogranski²³⁴, Schweller²³⁵, Kliman²³⁶, Gilpin²³⁷ and others assert that rising powers seek to reorder the system to their advantage, often

²³¹ Sam LaGrone, Dave Mujander, “Chinese Weapons that Worry the Pentagon,” USNI News, June 9, 2014, available at: <https://news.usni.org/2014/06/09/chinese-weapons-worry-pentagon> (accessed December 3, 2016).

²³² Graham Allison, “Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?” *The Atlantic*, September 24, 2015.

²³³ Composite Index of National Capability (CINC Score), *National Material Capabilities (v4.0)*, Correlates of War Project Website: http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/folder_listing (accessed January 14, 2016).

²³⁴ A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, (New York: Knopf, 1958).

²³⁵ Randall L. Schweller, “Managing the Rise of Great Powers: History and Theory” Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross (eds.,) in *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power*, (New York: Routledge, 1999).

²³⁶ Daniel M. Kliman, *Fateful Transitions: How Democracies Manage Rising Powers from the Eve of World War I to China’s Ascendance*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

²³⁷ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

resorting to war, particularly when the gap between the rising power and the dominant state closes²³⁸. Given the massive gap between China and its nearest neighbours – which is increasing year by year – American FPEs have been concerned about the growing risk of conflict between China and the US or between China and one of its regional allies.²³⁹

3.6. Regional Integration

The region today is crisscrossed by a range of ASEAN-linked bodies, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Plus Three, the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism (ACCT), the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM). Notably, none of the region's great powers – China, Japan, the US, or Russia – is a member of ASEAN, though they all have engaged heavily with both ASEAN and its sub-organizations. One could argue that alongside the more traditional military competition, there is also a rivalry between the US, Japan, and China on who will lead regional integration. This competition revealed itself in Sino-Japanese rivalry in the early 2000s – as will be discussed in Chapter Seven – with Japanese conceptions of order vying with Chinese conceptions of order. This took the shape of competing plans of the Beijing-backed Asian-ethnic ASEAN Plus Three vision versus the Tokyo-backed inclusive ASEAN Plus Six vision. In the case of the latter vision, Japanese diplomats sought to get fellow democracies Australia, New Zealand and India included to balance what they perceived as a China-led club²⁴⁰. It has also seen the Chinese-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) competing with the Japan-led Asian Development Bank (ADB). This rivalry has also taken place between the United States and China in the economic sphere, with Chinese-backed proposals for Regional Cooperation Economic Partnership (RCEP) vying against the US-backed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

3.7. The Interaction of External and Internal Variables

As the above discussion demonstrates, the current security structure of the Asia Pacific can be broken down into three features: The American alliance system, the rise of China, and regional integration initiatives. As Hilary Clinton reveals in *Hard Choices*²⁴¹, American FPEs in the Obama administration viewed these three features as policy choices, seeing prioritization as a form of strategy. Debates among FPEs on which of these three areas should be prioritized are complicated by the two security

²³⁸ For a discussion of growing power parity between China and the United States, see for example: Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in East Asia*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 2011), pp.215-244; Yan Xuetong, "The Rise of China and its Power Status" in *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol.1, No.1 (2006), pp.5-33; John J. Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia", in *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol.3, No.4 (2010), pp.381-396.

²³⁹ Aaron Friedberg, "Will Europe's Past be Asia's Future?" *Survival*, Vol.42, Issue 3, (2000), p.150.

²⁴⁰ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat), interview with author, Tokyo, February 2015.

²⁴¹ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), p.44-45.

dilemmas, constrained by “butter versus guns” budgetary factors, and influenced by their *Mahanian* vs *Continentalist* approaches. Additional factors include bureaucratic interests, and domestic constraints. Moreover, this thesis notes that American FPEs in particular often define their policy objectives through the lenses of IR theory.

3.8. Intervening Variables – Perception

Neoclassical realism disagrees with neorealism on how external stimuli shapes state behavior in a number of different ways. Randall Schweller states that the balance of power idea is an ambiguous concept, which is “treated as a law of nature, where the whole universe is pictured as a gigantic mechanism or a clockwork created and kept in motion by the divine watchmaker.” The inherent weakness in any simple calculative model is, as Hans Morgenthau, Arnold Wolfers, and Aaron Friedberg have written, the difficulty in correctly perceiving the complex, shifting, changes of different resources in an ongoing, continuous manner, and updating policy accordingly. As Friedberg notes, “...in most structural realist formulations, assessment through rational calculation plays the part of a reliable but invisible transmission belt connecting objective change to adaptive behavior.”²⁴² Neoclassical realism examines intervening variables at the domestic level to get around this perception problem. One of the key variables in international relations – indeed, one upon which this thesis relies heavily – is that of *threat assessment*.

3.9. Threat Assessments

If we consider Wilkin’s argument that trilaterals are a form of alignment, then we are obliged to think about threat assessment.²⁴³ After all, Snyder points out that alignment theory “does not say much about what cases states in a multipolar system use to identify each other as friends or enemies or the consequences of such identification.”²⁴⁴ While Waltz’s neorealist framework has an attractive clarity, it does little to explain why some states are viewed as threats and why some are viewed as allies. Waltz asserts that states are able to perceive who their enemies are through the mechanism of the balance of power²⁴⁵. However, even a brief acquaintance with the history of nations tells us that this is simply not enough. Why didn’t Churchill accept overtures of peace from Hitler and align with Nazi Germany against Soviet Russia? Why didn’t Europe balance against American unipolarity after the

²⁴² Aaron Friedberg, *The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline 1895-1905*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988). p.13.

²⁴³ For a general discussion of the difference between alliance and alignment, I have drawn from Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* pp.6-16. Alignments are the expectations – both likely and “vague estimates” – that states have towards other states. One can align towards or against other states. They shift as power shifts and are less clear than alliances which introduce a tacit or explicit mutual agreement to come to each other’s aid.

²⁴⁴ Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p.32.

²⁴⁵ See chapter 6 in Waltz, Theory of International Relations.

Cold War? Why hasn't the United States balanced against China and created a full-treaty alliance like the NATO alliance in Europe? Since many of these examples might be explained as *underbalancing* – that is, not balancing to the level expected by circumstances predicted by neorealism – we must ask, why states underbalance?

Other *neorealist scholars* sensed that something more was required to Waltz's parsimonious explanation. Stephen Walt attempted to clarify this missing piece of the puzzle in *The Origins of Alliances*,²⁴⁶ when he wrote on different "sources of threat". He mentions a number of sources, which include "aggregate power", "geographic proximity", and "offensive power". In some ways, these are all strictly neorealist in nature, that's to say, they are elements of structure or *hardware*. However, he continues, mentioning "aggressive intentions" and "unifying ideologies", which are really domestic variables and are important in explaining many real world outcomes that neorealism cannot. These intervening variables might be called "threat assessment" and "regime type". This is relevant to the trilaterals because, as I argue throughout this chapter, they were formed in a specific way because of how American FPEs perceived regional security, and how they viewed the rise of China within that region. Instead of Waltz's power balances, this thesis thus explores three variables: structure of power, threat assessment, and regime type. I also note that this domestic interaction between foreign policy elites and the perceptions of systemic power, threat assessment, and regime type also occurred in Tokyo and Canberra when the trilateral was being developed.

3.10. Foreign Policy Elites and Threat Assessments

By examining the various groups that make up the domestic foreign policy elite of a country, we can understand why states do not always act in the same way under similar sets of circumstances. We understand that "Even if one acknowledges that structures exist, and are important, there is still the question of how statesmen grasp their contours."²⁴⁷ We can see from a number of foreign policy studies that the rational actor model is far from perfect. Scholars like Robert Jervis²⁴⁸, Jeril Rosati²⁴⁹, Alexander George²⁵⁰, Graham Allison²⁵¹, and Irving L. Janis²⁵², have all examined different ways in

²⁴⁶ Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), Ch.2.

²⁴⁷ Aaron L. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895-1905* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), p.8.

²⁴⁸ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1976),

²⁴⁹ Jeril Rosati, "A Cognitive Guide to the Study of Foreign Policy," in Laura Neack, Jeanne Hey, Patrick Haney, (eds.,) *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in its Second Generation*, (Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1955).

²⁵⁰ Alexander George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.13, No.2 (1969), pp.190-122.

²⁵¹ Graham Allison, Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, 2nd Edition* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999).

²⁵² Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink*, (Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cenage Learning, 1982).

which domestic variables impact policymaking outcomes. They also note that many domestic actors were unable to comprehend systemic features uniformly²⁵³. The rational actor model – as explained by Allison and Zelikov – distinguishes between *comprehensive* and *bounded* rationality. In the first instance, “the actor is assumed to have a utility function that consistently ranks all alternatives the actor faces and to choose the factor that has the highest utility.”²⁵⁴ *Innenpolitik* scholars, by contrast, accept that this model is more often the ideal than the reality, and that policymakers are bounded by constraints in knowledge, power, and organization, and often must play “two-level games”²⁵⁵ in order to pursue their chosen policies.

In *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (2009), Steven Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and others explore this relationship between external stimuli, domestic actors, and their policy responses. In particular, Lobell’s work explores how states assess threats, and what happens when state and societal leaders disagree about whether a foreign state is a threat²⁵⁶. Disagreements can come for a variety of reasons: In *Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics* (2016), they identify four: (1) leader images; (2) strategic culture; (3) state-society relations; and (4) domestic institutions. In turn these influence perception, threat-assessment, decision-making, and policy implementation.

In the case of China’s rise, the primary debate among American and allied FPEs has been on whether China has revisionist or limited-aims ambitions²⁵⁷. The implicit assumption is, of course, that a revisionist power will challenge the status quo – one established and maintained by the United States and its allies – and seek to overturn that order through force²⁵⁸. A limited-aims power on the other hand, may only seek changes that accord to its own preferences, while maintaining the overall integrity of the system. While Stephen Walt has argued that neoclassical realism tends to apply these

²⁵³ See for example, Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); Charles Kupchan, *The Vulnerability of Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America’s World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999)

²⁵⁴ Graham Allison, Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, p.20.

²⁵⁵ Robert D. Putnam, Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” *International Organization*, Vol. 42, Issue 03, (Summer 1988), pp.427-460.

²⁵⁶ Steven Lobell, “Threat Assessment, the State, and Foreign Policy,” in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, (eds.,) in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.45.

²⁵⁷ See, for example: David Shambaugh, “China or America: Which is the Revisionist Power? *Survival, Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001), pp.25-30; Alastair Iain Johnston, “Is China a Status Quo Power?” *International Security*, Vol. 27, No.4 (Spring 2004), pp.5-6; Randall Schweller, Xiaoyu Pu, “After Unipolarity: China’s Visions of International Order in an Era of US Decline,” *International Security*, Vol.36, No.1 (2011), pp.41-72; Jonathan Holstlag, “The Smart Revisionist,” *Survival, Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol. 56, No. 5 (2014), pp.95-116; Walter Russell Mead, “The Return of Geopolitics: The Revenge of Revisionist Powers,” *Foreign Affairs*, Issue 69, (May, June 2014), p.69.

²⁵⁸ The flip side of this has been the Chinese accusation that Japan is in fact a revisionist power, attempting to challenge the post-War order. See, for example, “Japan Attempting to Challenge Post-War Order by Saying to Scrutinize ‘Tokyo Trials,’” *People’s Daily*, June 19, 2015, available at: <http://en.people.cn/n/2015/0619/c90777-8908993.html> (accessed November 24, 2016); Jiang Janlu, “Commentary: Japan’s Provocative Action Defies Post-War Order,” *Xinhua*, September 12, 2012, available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2012-09/12/c_131846084.htm (accessed November 24, 2016).

intervening variables in an “ad hoc”²⁵⁹ manner, Ripsman et al, argue that these four groupings cover most various domestic level variables raised by FPA and NCR scholarship. They may come into operation because various domestic groups are competing for the goods produced by a state’s foreign and economic policies; they may represent different bureaucratic interests²⁶⁰; they may represent the different economic and regional²⁶¹ interests of a country.

Beliefs

One of the most important intervening variables concerns the beliefs, ideas, operating assumptions, and core values of the FPE. Their ideological or ethnic affiliation may affect their decision-making²⁶²; they may also disagree over the nature of the international system. While undertaking field interviews for this thesis, it was obvious that foreign policy elites within the United States disagreed on the nature of the international system, disagreed about what the rise of a challenging power meant, and therefore disagreed on the solutions available to them. Nicholas Kitchen has written a neoclassical realist account of the impact of ideas on strategy formation, which “occurs when individuals with shared ideas coalesce into groups, organizations, and common practices within the state to form institutions that operate in both formal and informal sectors of the policymaking process.”²⁶³ Certain groups of experts can form “epistemic communities”, acting as couriers for certain ideas in the policymaking process. A strong example of this might include the rise of the neoconservative movement in the United States in the late 1990s, early 2000s. As we often discover, there are many historical events cannot be fully understood, without reference to the history ideas. Some, like “Social Darwinism”, “human rights”, and the “responsibility to protect”, have such a glaring providence that we cannot ignore their force upon historical events.

Many of those concepts are used out of context, politicized at the party and societal level, but they often arise from greater academic debates. Liberalism and realism are such debates, which have been taking place for many centuries in the West. It is not surprising then, to find that certain assumptions from Realism or Liberalism bleed into the discussions and debates of practitioners. For example, FPEs

²⁵⁹ Steven Walt, “The Enduring Relevance of Realist Tradition,” in Ira Katznelson, Helen V. Milner (eds.,) *Political Science: State of the Discipline*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), p.211.

²⁶⁰ Steven Lobell, “Threat Assessment,” 2009, p.62; see more, Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 1974); Graham Allison, Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, 2nd Edition* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999).

²⁶¹ Peter L. Trubowitz, “Political Conflict and Foreign Policy in the United States: A Geographical Interpretation,” G. John Ikenberry, Peter L. Trubowitz, (eds.,) *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, 7th Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), p.17.

²⁶² Mark L. Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

²⁶³ Nicholas Kitchen, “Systemic Pressures and Domestic Ideas: A Neoclassical Realist Model of Grand Strategy Formation,” *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2010), pp.131.

influenced by the one might be more pessimistic about human nature, the nature of the system (and of states' motivations), while FPEs influenced by the other might be more optimistic about the power of institutions and trade to ameliorate conflict. Upon reflection, this relationship between theorists and practitioners is unsurprising. If we accept the constructivist assertion that all social and political reality is socially constructed, and we accept that ideas play a part in shaping the "working assumptions" of practitioners, then we must naturally accept that policymakers are affected by the realist and liberal debates and cleavages that broadly describe international relations. John Ikenberry has traced these debates in US foreign policy making in the Asia Pacific region, arguing that at times, it has exhibited either realist or liberal logic.²⁶⁴ This influence makes itself felt through the FPEs, who attempt to interpret or match concepts to the real-world problems they encounter.

3.11. The impact of History and Structure on Perception

This raises the interesting possibility that structure is not only perceived, but socially-created. As an example, consider how the Cold War played a central role in creating a "structure", the "teams", and the "rules of the game", which have shaped American foreign and security policymaking in the Asia Pacific region since 1945. This is particularly true of American FPEs who work on alliances and are thus socialized into its norms, structure, and objectives. As later chapters will show, American diplomats have life-long relationships with their alliance counterparts, which help establish trust and build sets of common "working assumptions". Ashton Calvert – the senior Australian diplomat, who is at times credited with proposing the trilateral – had been friends with his Japanese and American counterparts, Richard Armitage and Ryozo Kato for nearly 20 years, at the time. In creating something new with possible geopolitical repercussions – an act about which bureaucrats are not always enthusiastic – the three men had to understand each other's intentions and reservations at a very deep level. They also had to understand structure and possible threats to the structure in a similar way in order to agree to embark on a new institution.

Ideology also plays a role here. After all, it was the possibility of Communist expansion during the Cold War, which drove the US to develop a network of alliances that might not have come into being otherwise. Washington has defence pacts with Japan, Korea, Australia, and has complex alliance-like relationships with Thailand and Singapore. Conflicts over Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam have also shaped the military competition, while the ideological nature of the Cold War shaped American economic and trade policies for the region. It has defined much of American foreign policy toward the

²⁶⁴ John Ikenberry, "America in East Asia: Power, Markets, and Grand Strategy" in Ellis S Krauss and TJ Pempel (ed.) *Beyond Bilateralism: US-Japan Relations in the New Asia Pacific* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2004), p.41.

region, even as Cold War hostilities have waxed and waned, effectively by freezing a number of conflicts, such as the Korean Peninsula, Vietnam, and Taiwan. These became central features in defining what Christopher Hughes calls “the complex balance of power that evolved between the PRC, the Soviet Union, and the United States during the Cold War.”²⁶⁵

In the modern period, the legacy of US Cold War alliances can be seen in the continued American relationships with the Philippines, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan. However, the modern period has been marked by changes in the structure of the system, and this has been in two ways. First, perceptions of who constitute a friend and who constitutes an enemy have become less clear as ideological divisions have given way to economic partnerships across the broad spectrum. Australia and Japan may be strong allies of the United States, but geopolitical alignment over regional policies is not always guaranteed. Despite this, states outside the alliance system continue to view it as divisive. At the 2014 ARF Senior Officials’ Meeting, Chinese Vice Minister Liu Zhenmin stated that a “problem with military alliances is that [they] often draw a line between allies and non-allies when problems occur, without due regard to the merits of the matter. Support will be given to whatever the ally does regardless of whether it’s right or wrong.”²⁶⁶ In many ways, the defining feature of the foreign policy elites identified as *Mahanian* in this thesis, is their adherence and loyalty to the geopolitical concept of an open, maritime system and this network of allies. The extension of Chinese power over its near seas has been for *Mahanians* a deeply threatening event and explains both the trilateral and the wider hedging policy.

Over the past century, different American FPEs have viewed China through the prisms of ideology, transformative capitalism, and national interest. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to describe the back-and-forth of Sino-American relations for the entirety of the Cold War, the next three chapters will seek to explain changes in the US-Japan alliance and other American alliances by referencing changes in attitudes toward China. It will chart how American foreign policy elites debated whether China was adapting responsibly to the international system or challenging it, for more than three decades, and how – as Chinese military power and intention grew – those who viewed China as a threat – initially, a minority – have steadily grown in number. As those voices in Washington grew louder, so then did those who advocated the renewal and updating of the old postwar bilateral system upon which Washington’s Northeast Asian allies rely. As has been argued, the US system in the Asia

²⁶⁵ Christopher R. Hughes, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism: National Identity and Status in International Society* (New York: Routledge, 1997). p.16.

²⁶⁶ “Remarks by H.E. Liu Zhenmin, Vice Foreign Minister of China, at 2014 Senior Officials’ Meeting”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, June 16, 2014, available at: http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/t1165765.shtml (accessed November 29, 2016).

Pacific was defined by two settlements: a liberal, maritime-based trading order and a network of bilateral military alliances, both centered around Japan to some extent. In both cases, US security and economic policy were heavily defined by the Cold War.

3.12. The Great China Debate

No other power has excited quite the same level of debate among American policymakers and academics as China. The swift growth of its economy, paralleled by its rapid military modernization increasingly defined American foreign policy in the post-invasion of Iraq space, which in turn promoted concern among American *Mahanian* FPEs. China's increasing willingness to deploy its forces into the maritime space of US allies has raised both day-to-day policy challenges, as well as deeper strategic concerns about China's ultimate intentions. This debate has often pitted those within the realist tradition against neoliberal institutionalists. The history of China in American policy has an interesting arc. Following the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989, Sino-American relations underwent a deep freeze. Despite this, George H.W. Bush (1989-1993) encouraged the resumption of high-level political ties and vetoed attempts by Congress to link the political relationship to progress in human rights. There was a belief that economic liberalization would lead to political liberalization. Until that time, American policy would hedge against two outcomes: a friendly, liberal China and a strong, challenger China.

This binary reveals itself in the varying articles about China in the early 1990s. Was Asia ripe for rivalry? Friedberg's pessimistic 1993 *International Security* article thought so. Others – like David Shambaugh – wondered if the US should enact an engagement policy or containment policy. Some like Patrick Cronin, Kenneth Lieberthal, and James Shinn argued for various forms of engagement, which deeply colored President Clinton's policy on China. Others like Arthur Waldron, Gideon Rachman, and Gerald Segal recommended "constraint" or varying forms of containment. This debate spilled over into the policy community, in what became known as the "Red Team/Blue Team" debates. "Blue team" members included congressional staffers, journalists, and policy academics who were hawkish on China, while "red team" members preferred engagement and accommodation. Blue Teamers painted the 1996 campaign finance controversy as a sign of growing Chinese influence in Washington. In Congress, they publicized accounts of Chinese defence-related espionage – as described in the 1999 Cox Report – and sought to show how growing Chinese military capabilities would make it a threat one day, requiring from 2000 annual reports from the Defense Department and the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

American writing on China has seen a large uptick, commensurate with its standing as the world's next largest economy and military power. Writers have tended to come from two groups: China-watchers and IR scholars or security experts. China watchers like Alastair Iain Johnston, Harry Harding, David Lampton, David Shambaugh, Kenneth Lieberthal, and Michael Pillsbury have tended to adopt culturally nuanced approaches to policy, basing their analyses on cultural, linguistic, and network familiarity within China. Their tone varies widely between Shambaugh's, "The Tangled Titans: The United States and China" and Pillsbury's 2014 book, *One Hundred Year Marathon*. Many of these pieces trace the arc of America's China policy, looking at the high expectations within both countries. Those who have a more general IR background, focus on the US-China relationship or rising power debates. This includes a wide range of academics and practitioners, including Henry Kissinger, Henry Paulson, James Steinberg and Evan Medeiros who advocate a wait-and-see approach. Others like Aaron Friedberg, John Mearsheimer, Ashley Tellis, Robert Kaplan and Peter Dutton predict growing tensions or seek to explain growing competition.

Over the past decade, much of the debate has been on whether the engagement policy vis a vis China has been successful in the long-term. Harry Harding's *Washington Quarterly* piece, "Has US China Policy Failed?" traces the reasons for American disappointment in China, looking at Washington's hopes for political liberalization inside China as well as the expectation that Beijing would become an active supporter of the international system. The fact that under Xi Jinping, political control has been tightened over the media, over universities, and NGOs has played into this disappointment. As for a global role, China's willingness to create regional organizations like RCEP and the AIIB are seen as challenging to American interests, while its maritime disputes with American allies Japan and the Philippines are dramatically increasing regional insecurity.

3.13. Conclusion

The structure of the international system is complex. In this chapter we have seen how it is broken up into various systemic and sub-systemic features. The international system, the "Pax Americana", and the Asia Pacific region, can be further reduced by incorporating China's rise, the US alliance system in Asia, and nascent regional architecture. These various structural features shape the perceptions of American FPEs in a number of different ways that defy rational decision-making models. First there are the usual guns versus butter debates that take place, then there are also bureaucratic constraints, a range of elements – such as belief systems, history, and national narratives – which shape the threat assessment debates that take place between FPEs. These debates and the different outcomes that arise from them, explain why similar states can react differently to the same types of external stimuli.

One of the most important aspects of the nexus between structure and perception – for the purpose of this thesis – is the fact that American FPEs have not decided conclusively whether China is a threat. Or rather that some FPEs have, while others are not convinced. In some ways, this lack of threat-assessment agreement shows the drawback of so-called structural drivers to state behavior. There is simply no easy way for states – or their FPEs – to read the system. Certainly balance of power plays a role, but what is often forgotten in balance-of-power arguments is that power variables – while important – do not decide whether another state is a threat or not. As Walt showed us, balance of threat includes a host of other considerations. In this way, one might argue that the relationship between structure and perception is cyclical rather than hierarchical. This will be discussed further in the conclusion of this thesis.

4. CHAPTER 4: FOREIGN POLICY ELITES AND HEDGING

This chapter will examine the domestic composition of states, and look at states whose FPEs cannot agree on threat-assessments of a potential competitor in the international system. However, before doing that, it is necessary to examine in more detail what this thesis means by foreign policy elites, and how they break down into their component parts within the American political system. It is arguable that there are two types of FPEs, Level 1 and Level 2, which exist in the American political system. The first level contains those practitioners who have direct control over American foreign policymaking; the second level contains those analysts, journalists, or academics who indirectly influence policymaking, and influence or seek to influence the political debates held by Level 1 practitioners. Finally, this chapter will put forward a theory of hedging in international relations using a foreign policy analysis approach, by examining how American FPEs have reacted to the rise of China over the past three decades.

4.1. The State

As many foreign policy analysis scholars have noted, states are not unified entities²⁶⁷. Martin J. Smith asserts that they are a set of institutions that define the parameters for political conflict over the use of resources and direction of policy by different actors. These include elected politicians, bureaucrats, and pressure groups, who compete and cooperate in policy subsystems according to the issue. James

²⁶⁷ Martin J. Smith, *Pressure, Power and Policy: State Autonomy and Policy Networks in Britain and the United States* (London: UK; Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), pp.15-46.

A. Thurber states that “Policy subsystems can be characterized by networks of actors, their substantive policy domain, and various modes of decision-making. They are organized to make focused demands on the political system and to influence specific programs...”²⁶⁸ These networks can also cross over into relationships with like-minded actors in allied countries. Additionally, foreign policy elites sit at the nexus between external and domestic politics, blurring the lines between systemic and sub-systemic drivers. “Leaders often act on one level, but the target is to influence the outcome on another level.”²⁶⁹ However, we can agree that foreign policy elites strive for state survival or at least regime survival. Because they perceive the international system to be full of dangers and threats to that survival, they are always scanning the horizon, attempting to discern those powers that might threaten them.

The domestic institutional context in which foreign policy is made is said to be a chief determinant for neoclassical realists. In the United States, *innenpolitik* scholars often refer to the “foreign policy executive”, to mean the President, key members of the cabinet, and advisors, diplomats, and military officials who are charged with conducting foreign and defence policies²⁷⁰. This thesis argues for a broader term, “foreign policy elites”, which is arguably better-suited to the American foreign policy community. Using this broader definition, one finds that there are Level 1 FPEs who conduct, implement, and carry out foreign policy, but there is another grouping, which we might call Level 2 FPEs, which include former government officials, academics, and think tank scholars who have privileged access to Level 1 FPEs and who seek to directly or indirectly influence the shape of America’s foreign and defence policy. This division is fully visible in how American FPEs carry out alliance and foreign policy in the Asia Pacific region, where a relatively small number of journalists, academics, and think tank staff regularly meet in track 1.5 settings²⁷¹, and have facilitated the creation of the trilaterals. Additional Level 2 FPEs might include non-government organizations and other groups that lobby on foreign policy.

This thesis holds that within Level 1, FPEs tend to have either a regionalists and/or subject matter background. Typical examples might be a Middle East expert, or a Counter-terrorism specialist. In the case of US foreign policy in Asia, one would most likely find that Asian regional experts are naturally

²⁶⁸ James A. Thurber, “Dynamics of Policy Subsystems in American Politics” in A.J. Cigler, and A. Loomis, *Interest Group Politics*, Third Edition (Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1991), p.325.

²⁶⁹ Steven Lobell, “Threat Assessment, the State, and Foreign Policy,” in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, (eds.,) in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.46.

²⁷⁰ Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Steven E. Lobell, *Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), p.61.

²⁷¹ In settings, where both government and non-government officials are represented and where discussions are usually off-the-record.

the most common to be appointed to policy positions in a new American administration. Some have developed their knowledge in government service, while others have come from a journalism or academic background. In terms of subject matter, one might find a broader array of expertise being called upon for the Asia Pacific, ranging from trade issues, to non-proliferation, anti-piracy, to cyber and nuclear weapons experts. As with classical realism, the individual's role in shaping policy is reimagined and while the Mahanian/Continentalist division is an imperfect one, it imposes some shape on the debates that regularly take place among those FPEs formulating policy for the Asia Pacific region.

4.2. Level 1 FPEs

Level 1 FPEs are in direct contact with the tools of policy statecraft. The United States government has three branches of government, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. This thesis only considers the first two as actors in the making and implementation of American foreign and security policy. Certainly, this thesis does not hold that some departments or agencies are more *Mahanian* or *Continentalist* than others, but it does acknowledge that there is some causation between one's beliefs and the bureaucratic institute to which a given FPE belongs. For example, in *The Rise of China Vs. the Logic of Strategy*, Edward Luttwak, a prominent military strategist and historian, argues that the China policy of the United States is separated by bureaucratic interests: "It is customary to criticize the administration in office for not having a grand strategy and for not having a policy for this or that country. But this accusation certainly cannot be advanced in regard to (the US') China policy, there is not merely one of them, but three – two of which are moving in diametrically opposed directions."²⁷² Naturally, this directly influences the threat-assessment debates that drive overall US policy in the Asia Pacific.

4.3. The President and the National Security Council

The foreign policymaking powers of the Office of the President and the White House – also encompassing the National Security Council – are significant. The President, after all, is the Commander-in-Chief of the military and has the power to take American troops into conflict²⁷³ – barring Congressional opposition. He is also the principle negotiator of treaties and often has, according to Colin Dueck²⁷⁴, the decisive factor in determining foreign policy within political parties as

²⁷² Edward N. Luttwak, *The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), p.213.

²⁷³ This has been true since the Korean War, with nearly every engagement since 1951 lacking a declaration of war from Congress.

²⁷⁴ Colin Dueck, *Hard Line: The Republican Party and US Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p.6-7.

well as nationally. The power of the President, although limited domestically, is quite strong compared to the power of the other two branches of government. For example, not only is the President able to instruct bureaucracy through the issuance of instructions, executive orders, or the sponsoring of legislation, but the executive branch can appoint near 5,000 mid-level to senior-level civil servant positions, defending against – though not absolutely – bureaucratic interests. Furthermore, the personal background of the President – as with Barak Obama’s upbringing in Asia and subsequent personal support of the Rebalance to Asia – can play a major role in shaping overall policy shifts. While both President Bush and President Obama have been pivotal in supporting the trilateral initiative – meeting with their partners on the sidelines of ASEAN summits, for example – their support has not been critical to either the formation or the progress of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, which has taken place at a much lower level. The trilateral is by that standard, a bottom-up initiative, spawned by the alliance-management bureaucracy.

The National Security Council

Despite that, the White House has not been a silent partner in the creation of the trilateral, and staffers at the NSC have been involved at critical stages of its evolution. As a foreign policy actor, the NSC does have a certain amount of autonomy. Its large staff and centralized nature enable the President to instruct and mobilize all other branches and agencies working on particular issues within foreign policy by shaping the agenda in the Director-level, Deputy-level, and Principal-level weekly meetings²⁷⁵, chaired by the National Security Advisor (NSA). NSC staffers often travel with the President’s entourage on major trips and can carry out diplomatic initiatives on their own. This was seen in the pivotal role that senior NSC officials took in maintaining the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral, promoting it to ministerial level in 2005, after Robert Zoellick – who preferred to prioritize relations with China, and who did not wish to meet at the Vice-ministerial level – became the Deputy Secretary of State²⁷⁶. The NSC is able to be a “clearing house” for US intelligence, with a wider picture of events than other departments. On the other hand, this heightened foreign policy role of the President and NSC has not always created policy clarity. After all, the size of the NSC and its relationship to the president may bring a questionable level of expertise to certain issues. It was not uncommon, for example, in Obama’s first term for White House officials with no foreign policy experience – like Valerie Jarrett, David Axelrod, or Rahm Emanuel – to weigh in over the advice of the actual National Security Advisor General Jim Jones²⁷⁷. On the other hand, since many would return to the private sector, they were “more willing to make difficult choices without worrying about their career three

²⁷⁵ Anonymous (Senior Staffer, NSC) remarks in small roundtable.

²⁷⁶ Anonymous (Senior American Diplomat) telephone interview with author.

²⁷⁷ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p.291.

years down the line”²⁷⁸ thus bypassing some of the inter-departmental logjams that occurred over key issues.

At best, the National Security Council persuades government of the direction it wants to go. At worst, it becomes merely another advocate on a crowded stage. As Defense Secretary Robert Gates remembers about the Obama administration’s internal feuds over Afghanistan policy, “The National Security staff is supposed to be the “honest broker” in the policy-making process. That was not always the case with trilaterals since key officials like Torkel Patterson and Michal Green made the NSS an advocate rather than a neutral party.²⁷⁹

4.4. The Department of State

The Department of State (DOS) is in charge of implementing America’ foreign policy and operates 294 Embassies abroad on a budget of (FY 2016) \$54 billion²⁸⁰. According to Charles W. Thayer, Secretary Cordell Hull had once stated he required four things of his ambassadors: to report what was going on; to represent the United States before foreign governments and publics; to negotiate United States government business; and to look after American lives and property.”²⁸¹ It has the regional expertise and the networks abroad to make it a formidable balance to the power of the NSC. With a strong Secretary of State, it is possible for the DOS to prevail on key issues, depending ultimately of course, on the relationship between the President and the Secretary of State²⁸². At times, it has taken on the job of “doing” to the NSC’s task of “thinking”. Traditionally divided between its Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), political appointees, and career civil servants, criticism of the Department in the past has focused on administrative and policy planning weaknesses, namely, “its complex organization and its inability to integrate its routine functions with its policy formulation responsibilities.”²⁸³

While the Secretary of State shares much of the day-to-day running of alliance matters with the Department of Defense, it often leads broader foreign policy issues. This can even extend to DOS leadership during times of crisis, as with the DOS lead on creating the “Core Group” and mobilizing

²⁷⁸ Anonymous (National Security Council, 2009-2012) remarks in small roundtable, the LSE, November 15, 2016.

²⁷⁹ Anonymous, (Senior Staffer, NSC), Telephone interview, Washington DC, April 15, 2016.

²⁸⁰ Congressional Budget Justification: *Department of State*, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, available at: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/236395.pdf> (accessed November 30, 2016).

²⁸¹ Charles W. Thayer, *Diplomat*, (Westport: Praeger Publishing, 1975), p.81.

²⁸² Weak Secretaries of State can find it difficult to operate around strong National Security Advisors. The classic example of this was National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger’s ability to dominate foreign policymaking over Secretary of State William Rogers and NSA Zbigniew Brzezinski over Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. John Dumbrell, *The Making of US Foreign Policy*, 2nd Edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 89.

²⁸³ John Dumbrell, *The Making of US Foreign Policy*, 2nd Edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 94.

DOD units after the 2004 Tsunami²⁸⁴. Despite the close working relationship, there are times when inter-departmental rivalry plays a role. One of the primary reasons the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) is DOS-led is due to the fact that Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage restricted it in the initial stages, though representatives of the DOD and other agencies were invited into particular meetings or Working Groups. This has also seen the State Department continue to take a strong interest in the DOD-led trilateral, the Security and Defence Cooperation Forum (SDCF). Despite occasional tensions, there is a fairly good working relationship between the DOS and the DOD, which takes place through the DOS Political-Military Affairs Bureau (PM) Foreign Policy Advisor Program (POLAD)²⁸⁵, which imbeds DOS personnel as advisors in major DOD headquarters or combatant commands. In the case of both Japan and Australia, the relationships are shared between the two departments on an institutionalized basis, in the shape of the annual Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) and the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC). According to Luttwak, the DOS's China policy is to *confront* China²⁸⁶. Written when Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State, this policy valued cooperation with China, whenever possible, but more often than not, recognized that China opposed US values and interests across a wide range of interests and venues.

4.4.1.1. The Department of Defense

Given the place of the San Francisco System to US foreign policy in the Asia Pacific, the Department of Defense does have an oversized impact on American foreign policy in the region. It is close to America's allies because it interacts with them on a broad range of alliance issues²⁸⁷, but it also has a proactive engagement policy with the Chinese military. It also has a much larger budget - \$534 billion in 2016²⁸⁸ – than the Department of State and more resources, though this has been affected by automatic planned cuts of \$500 billion over ten years, as mandated by the 2011 Budget Control Act²⁸⁹. Interestingly, and perhaps counter-intuitively, the Department of Defense has far more exposure to Level 2 foreign policy elites than the DOS. In addition to political appointees at the senior levels, the

²⁸⁴ Revere, Evans (Japan Desk, Department of State 2003-4), Telephone Interview, January 30, 2016.

²⁸⁵ Office of the Coordinator of the Foreign Policy Advisor Program (PM/POLAD) Department of State website, available at: <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/polad/> (accessed December 1, 2016).

²⁸⁶ Luttwak, *The Rise of China*, 2012, p.223.

²⁸⁷ Robin, Sakoda (Department of Defense, Senior Country Director for Japan 1994-99), Personal Interview by Author, Washington DC, April 28, 2015.

²⁸⁸ Long Term Implications of the 2016 Future Years Defense Program, Congressional Budget Office website, available at: <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/51050> (accessed November 30, 2016).

²⁸⁹ Luiz Martinez, "Pentagon Begins Planning for \$500B in 'Fiscal Cliff' Cuts" ABC News, available at: <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/12/pentagon-begins-planning-for-500b-in-fiscal-cliff-cuts/> (accessed November 30, 2016).

Office of the Secretary of Defense operates a three-year programme whereby think tank or academic experts can be seconded by their institute to the DOD as Regional Policy Advisors, or Senior Advisors.

The DOD also operates its own “defence diplomacy” through its various Unified Combatant Commands²⁹⁰. The Pacific Command (PACOM), based in Honolulu, Hawaii, has more than 380,000 uniformed and civilian personnel under its command, and operates five aircraft carrier strike groups in the region, carrying nearly 1,100 aircraft. Although the region is split among the services, the US Navy tends to dominate the policy debates when it comes to tactical matters. The DOD also operates a large defence attaché network in the region, something which helped coordinate HA/DR efforts immensely during the 2004 Tsunami²⁹¹. Finally, the DOD cultivates links with rising regional military officers through the Asia Pacific Center for Strategic Studies (APCSS), based in Honolulu, which operates something between an executive training facility and a think tank²⁹². In terms of engagement and operations, the DOD has a number of funding programmes in the region to help with humanitarian assistance / disaster relief (HA/DR) work, capacity building assistance (CBA) programmes, and of course, through military exercises – all areas that are increasingly carried out on a trilateral basis with Australia and Japan.²⁹³ The DOD’s weaknesses include a tendency toward budgetary and planning rivalries between the different services.

As Morton Halperin points out, the classic rivalries include the US Army’s attempt to have its own air wing, competition between the services for “ownership” of new non-traditional systems like missile defence and cyberwarfare, as well as US Army troop transport. These disagreements also take place over tactics and military operations, and can spill out into public. A recent example of this was the debate²⁹⁴ over the Air-Sea Battle, which as its name suggests, was controversial among US Army supporters as it did not envision a great role for ground forces in contingencies involving the Asia Pacific. According to Luttwak, the third China policy within the US Government is that of *containing* China, promoted by the DOD. This has seen China “unambiguously become the prospective ‘Main Enemy’, at least for planning and procurement purposes.”²⁹⁵ This revolves around the possibility of a Taiwan contingency, and sees the United States competing with Chinese strategy and capabilities,

²⁹⁰ Unified Command Plan, Department of Defense Website, available at: <http://www.defense.gov/Military-Services/Unified-Combatant-Commands> (accessed November 30, 2016).

²⁹¹ Revere, Evans (Japan Desk, Department of State 2003-4), Telephone Interview, January 30, 2016.

²⁹² Mission and Vision, Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies Website: <http://apcss.org/about-2/mission/> (accessed January 1, 2017).

²⁹³ Richard Halloran, “Sharpening the Spear,” *Air Force Magazine*, (February 2011), p.73.

²⁹⁴ Aaron L. Friedberg, “Beyond Air-Sea Battle: The Debate over US Military Strategy in Asia,” *IISS Adelphi Series*, Edition 444, (2014).

²⁹⁵ Edward N. Luttwak *The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy* (Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), p.239.

with Air-Sea Battle, and its own strategy to develop counter-measures to new high-tech Chinese weaponry, such as stealth aircraft, growing maritime capabilities, and anti-ship missile systems.

4.4.1.2. The Department of the Treasury

The Department of the Treasury has not had a specific role within the formation of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral. Nor does it align and coordinate economic policy around American allies in the post-Cold War space, except occasionally to attempt to rally like-minded states from policies it believes threaten US national interests. This might be seen in the G7's use of sanctions against Russia after the annexation of the Crimea or in its attempt to persuade the UK and France not to join the Chinese-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in 2015. However, one area where it does play a significant role is in the internal debates and threat-assessments of China within the US bureaucracy and it continues to play an active role in the US-China Security and Economic Dialogue (S&ED). Luttwak asserts that "China is the beneficiary of the US Treasury's especial solicitude"²⁹⁶ given the fact that the Treasury is "naturally highly cognizant of the benefits to US public finance, and to private financial entities also, of having access to cheap Chinese capital"²⁹⁷. Senior appointees might also lack *Mahanian* tendencies because their primary working experiences of Japan and Australian policymakers is through the difficult and occasionally conflictual area of trade. According to one source, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick's sometimes difficult relationship with Japanese diplomats was related his experience as US Trade Representative and the debates over Japan's restrictions on US beef imports²⁹⁸. In addition to this socialization process, many senior level appointees come from leading financial firms, and tend to view China through the balanced lens of currency manipulation versus Chinese purchases of US Treasury Bonds, rather than focusing on the impact of Chinese trade on the manufacturing sector.

4.5. Level 2 FPEs

There are two divergent views on the utility of academics, think tank researchers, and journalist. One anonymous official inside the National Security Council in the Obama White House stated, "Nothing I read from the think tank community while I was in the NSC helped me make a decision. The fact is that the average government official knows two to three times more than someone writing a piece in Washington Quarterly – and they know the constraints of selling that policy internally."²⁹⁹ On the other hand, this same official admitted that they had spent much of their career as a Level 2 FPE, before

²⁹⁶ Edward N. Luttwak *The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy* (Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), p.214.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Anonymous (Senior American Diplomat) interview with author, telephone.

²⁹⁹ Anonymous (US National Security Council, 2009-2012) remarks in small roundtable.

joining the National Security Council. In the case of American foreign policy in Asia, there is much evidence to suggest that Level 2 FPEs have played a long-running role in shaping the debate, both on alliance management issues (particularly around strategic reassurance), and on dealing with China. This influence often plays out in so-called Track 1.5 diplomacy, in which think tanks host a mixture of government officials, academics, and analysts to talks. The Shangri-La Dialogue, hosted annually by the British think tank IISS in Singapore, is probably the most well-known example of this type of think tank-led diplomacy. The role of Pacific Forum CSIS in hosting the first US-Japan-South Korea trilateral has already been discussed, and it should be noted that this Hawaii think tank continues to host a large number of annual trilateral events.

Track 1.5 Diplomacy

These types of regular events can also act as screens for governments that do not wish to work on those issues publicly and within full view of the media. As mentioned previously, the US-Japan-ROK trilateral began in 1994 at the Track 1.5 level due to the sensitivities around the South Korean military discussing mutual security with the Japanese military. In 2012, for example, the Department of Defense provided funding to a US-based think tank to put on a regional maritime security event in Malaysia on the sensitive issue of the South China Sea. Had such an event been sponsored publicly by the US Embassy, regional states might have thought twice about attending for fear of offending China. Another area for Track 1.5 diplomacy is the Council of Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), which feeds policy reports to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Given the fact that all the regional states including India, North Korea, and Myanmar have CSCAP member committees, the various CSCAP conferences and forums provide regional governments – including that of the United States – with the opportunity for networking and socialization on a broad range of security issues. CSIS Pacific Forum has chaired the US Committee to CSCAP and has formed a number of working groups within CSCAP to promote areas of interest to the United States Government, including a Study Group on Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD Study Group), Export Controls Experts Group (XCXG), and a Nuclear Energy Experts Group (NEEG), among others³⁰⁰. While *Mahanian* or *Continentalist* divisions are less obvious in these types of regional events, there is a degree of socialization on China's threat-status taking place between the US and regional states because dialogue often focuses on Chinese-related issues like maritime security. As Robert Gates asserted,

³⁰⁰ Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific – US Committee Webpage, CSIS Website, available at: <https://www.csis.org/programs/pacific-forum-csis/programs/security-cooperation-asia-pacific/council-security-cooperation> (accessed December 7, 2016).

"Political scientists, historians, and reporters are often completely unaware of events or experiences unseen by the public eye that influence important decisions. I often reminded colleagues that presidents and other senior officials listen to a wide array of voices other than those in official government channels."³⁰¹

4.6. "Policy Academics"

The bureaucracy of the United States government is unique in that so many senior civil servants are appointed from the public sector. There are said to be around 4,000 to 5,000 policymaking positions which are exchanged after a Presidential election. While there are many arguments for and against this system, it does provide an opportunity for many international relations and politics professors to penetrate the bureaucracy, which in turn, has a number of effects. First, it exposes career civil servants to the latest in theory from international relations, economics, and law. Conceptual ideas like "smart power" or "security community" are tested in the real-world cut-and-thrust of power politics and government. A second way that this influx influences policymaking is by actually empowering those academics to influence policymaking. This has the effect of bringing theoretical constructs – however superficially – into policymaking within the Department of State and Department of Defense. Furthermore, because American career civil servants are constantly exposed to Level 2 FPEs are who are past or future colleagues, the tone of engagement between Level 1 and Level 2 FPEs can be more collegial than occurs in other countries³⁰².

American academics have brought the two main schools of international relations into Washington's corridors of power. Broadly speaking, although realism has its origins in classical antiquity³⁰³, there was a surge in writing and thinking about realism in the United States in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War³⁰⁴. Liberalism, by contrast, has its origins in Britain's 18th Century, and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, which made commerce a moral part of human progress³⁰⁵. One can see that Anglo-American policymakers have struggled with the broad contours of both schools more as international relations theory developed into a more systemic field³⁰⁶ throughout the 20th century³⁰⁷.

³⁰¹ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p.307.

³⁰² While it is only anecdotal, the author of this study found that American civil servants would repeatedly ask for concrete policy recommendations during interviews, a practice that rarely occurred in Canberra or Tokyo.

³⁰³ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, (London: Penguin Books, 1993).

³⁰⁴ Prominent realists in this tradition include Hans Morgenthau, Reinhold Niebuhr, and George Kennan, among others.

³⁰⁵ Jerry Evensky, *Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: A Reader's Guide* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p.12. (Smith uses "progress" over 100 times in *Wealth of Nations*)

³⁰⁶ Brian Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998).

³⁰⁷ Chris Brown, Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 3rd Edition, (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp.19-35.

This helps explain why American foreign policy is often seen as a contradictory mixture of realist calculations of national interest and idealist internationalist values-based judgments, and faith in institutions³⁰⁸. It is not the State per se that holds realist or liberal internationalist assumptions. We have rid ourselves of the black box of state, and now must see it as an organizing principle for groups of individuals, who bring their ideas, background, and professional experience to the role. There are some who see constructivism as specific to national or cultural values and might question the idea that international relations schools constitute constructed reality, but this is a misreading of how IR influences perceptions within the policymaking community.³⁰⁹.

While she was Secretary of State, for example, Hillary Clinton was heavily influenced by Harvard academic Joseph S. Nye's³¹⁰ concept of "smart power"³¹¹, which she attempted to apply to Department of State policy. She also chose Princeton academic Anne-Marie Slaughter as her State's Director of Policy Planning, and in this guise, Slaughter applied a networking conceptual framework lifted from her 2004 book, *A New World Order*,³¹² to State Department policymaking, attempting to harness "new technologies, public-private partnerships, diaspora networks, and other new tools...into fields beyond traditional diplomacy, especially energy and economics."³¹³ In this way, policy-academics can influence the thinking of their bureaucratic and socialize them into the greater debates inherent in the field of international relations. This may even be at the top level, if presidents come from that field – as with Woodrow Wilson. Or it may come from interaction with the President: a President's closest advisors often come from academia³¹⁴. Furthermore, there is a process of socialization between American policy-academics and policy communities in their fellow liberal democracies. In countries closely allied with the United States, this process of socialization may well be intense, with a wider community of international relations scholars working on policy-relevant issues. In the United States, scholars associated with Harvard, SAIS Johns Hopkins, Princeton, and

³⁰⁸ Alan P. Dobson, Steve Marsh, *US Foreign Policy since 1945*, 2nd Edition, (London & New York: Routledge 2007), pp.2-4; John J. Mearsheimer, "Introduction", in George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, 60th Anniversary Edition (Chicago & London, University of Chicago Press, 2012), p.x; Thomas U. Berger, "Power and Purpose in Pacific East Asia: A Constructivist Interpretation," G. John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno, (eds.,) *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp.387-420.

³⁰⁹ Peter J. Katzenstein, "Conclusion: National Security in a Changing World," in Peter J. Katzenstein, (ed.) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). For other accounts of states that are said to have "strategic cultures", a parallel to constructivist foreign policy-elites, see Iain Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998);

³¹⁰ Nye, a Harvard academic, was also a political appointee in Bill Clinton's administration in the Department of Defense.

³¹¹ See Joseph S. Nye, "Get Smart: Combining Soft and Hard Power," in *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2009); Hilary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), p.33; "American 'Smart Power': Diplomacy and Development are the Vanguard" on *Department of State Website*, Bureau of Public Affairs, April 28, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/pl/162247.htm> (accessed August 19, 2016).

³¹² Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

³¹³ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), p.551.

³¹⁴ Henry Kissinger, Condoleezza Rice, and Evan Medeiros might be seen as examples of academics who then went on to become close National Security Advisors or NSC staffers to their respective presidents.

Georgetown all field scholars who interact heavily with policymakers on Asia Pacific policy. In Tokyo, scholars grouped around Keio University and Tokyo University play this role, while in Australia, the Australian National University fields a large number of policy-academics.

Unlike the American system, academics in Australia and Japan rarely become policymakers themselves, and instead are content to play an advisory role and seek to shape the debate either as national security advisors, or through publications, events, and media work. Also, it should be noted that American policy-academics do not always dominate the foreign policymaking process. Some presidents allow free reign to their policy advisors, while others have their own ideas and concepts, which may at times go against those favored by their foreign policy advisors. At other times, these “policy-academics” are unable to promote their ideas within the bureaucracy because of inexperience in politicking³¹⁵. It is difficult to know how cohesive foreign policy networks are in these situations, and how their place in an administration actually becomes translated into policy decisions. One example that might serve as a case study for further analysis is the decision to commit American military forces to the Libya intervention. Here, a neoliberal pro-interventionist faction, consisting of Hillary Clinton, Susan Rice, and Samantha Power, which dominated the State Department, the National Security Council, and the White House, managed to overcome the pragmatic conservatism of Vice President Joe Biden, Defense Department officials, as well as the President himself.³¹⁶ The complexity of variables involved in such scenarios make prediction extremely difficult³¹⁷, but explain the fascination that foreign governments and the media have with the cabinet selection of an incoming President-elect.

4.7. How Level 2 FPEs influenced Policy (1990-2016)

As Hillary Clinton makes clear in *Hard Choices*, US policymakers perceive that they had three strategic options in Asia: (1) seek to transform China, by trade and high-level political engagement; (2) seek to strengthen and link Cold-War era alliances in order to balance a potentially threatening China; and (3) use the alliances to build a region-wide security community, which would both seek to integrate and balance Chinese power. Patrick Cronin states, the “current US strategy for managing a rising China

³¹⁵ This is the basis for Joseph Nye's fictional treatment of his time in government: Joseph S. Nye, *The Power Game: A Washington Novel*, (Washington DC: Public Affairs, 2004).

³¹⁶ See for example, Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), Chapter 16; Jo Becker, Scott Shane, “The Libya Gamble, Part 1: Hillary Clinton, Smart Power, and a Dictator's Fall,” *New York Times*, February 27, 2016 <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/us/politics/hillary-clinton-libya.html> (accessed July 16, 2016); Jo Becker, Scott Shane, “The Libya Gamble, Part 2: A New Libya, with ‘Very Little Time Left,’” *New York Times*, February 27, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/us/politics/libya-isis-hillary-clinton.html> (accessed July 16, 2016); Michael Hastings, “Inside Obama's War Room”, in *Rolling Stone*, October 13, 2011.

³¹⁷ Jeffrey T. Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics*, Vol. 50, Issue 02 (January 1998), pp.324-348.

rests on a three-legged stool of engaging, binding, and balancing.”³¹⁸ In charting American policy toward the Asia Pacific, we can see that a mixture of all three occurred from the 1990s onwards, with some options being favored by certain foreign policy coalitions at certain times, with others favoring different options at other times.

The Clinton administration, spanning the decade after the Cold War focused its China policy on the first two options, and attempted to draw down US forces across the region³¹⁹³²⁰, while simultaneously encouraging its alliance partners to build relationships across the region. Foreign policy elites in the US – as well as Canberra and Tokyo – wittingly or unwittingly utilized Karl Deutsch’s neoliberal concept of “security community”³²¹ in constructing policy and emphasized the transformative effects of trade vis a vis China. In 1993, President Clinton called for “a *New Pacific Community*, built on shared strength, shared prosperity, and a shared commitment to democratic values³²²”. The concept was subsequently explained further in the 1994 National Security Strategy³²³, explaining that the “New Pacific Community” would be built on three pillars: first, it would include a new inclusive dialogue-based approach to security issues like proliferation, piracy and terrorism; second, it would involve new overlapping security arrangements, which would include China; and third, it would provide support for the wave of democratic reform sweeping the region. This attempt to marry the US alliance system to nascent regional architecture community relied on liberal assumptions inherent in institutionalism and socialization, as well as promoting liberal values and norms³²⁴

As has already been mentioned, American foreign policy elites did not act in a vacuum. Often, these debates took on a socializing aspect as different Level 1 foreign policy elites were influenced – and influenced in their turn – by Level 2 foreign policy elites. Akihisa Nagashima, an influential DPJ politician, Vice Minister of Defense³²⁵ and foreign policy advisor to Japanese Prime Minister Noda, is a good example of this. He was an Adjunct Fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, and a visiting scholar at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington DC: “I

³¹⁸ Patrick Cronin, “China’s Problem with Rules: Managing a Reluctant Stakeholder,” *War on the Rocks*, June 26, 2014, <http://warontherocks.com/2014/06/chinas-problem-with-rules-managing-a-reluctant-stakeholder/> (accessed August 22, 2016).

³¹⁹ Thomas L. Wilborn, *Stability, Security Structures, and US Policy for East Asia and the Pacific*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, (Pennsylvania, Strategic Studies Institute, 1993).

³²⁰ Baker, James A. III “America in Asia: Emerging Architecture for a Pacific Community,” in *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 70, No. 5, (Winter, 1991), pp.1-18.

³²¹ Karl W. Deutsch, et al, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1957)

³²² Secretary Christopher, *US Department of State Dispatch*, Vol. 4, Number 31, August 2, 1993 at <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no31.html> (accessed on April 4, 2015)

³²³ A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, July 1994 at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1994.pdf> (accessed on 23 March, 2013).

³²⁴Desmond Bell, “Strategic Culture in the Asia Pacific Region”, in *Security Studies*, Vol. 3, No.1 (Autumn 1993), pp.44-74

³²⁵ Akihisa Nagashima was Vice-Minister in the Naoto Kan Cabinet 2010-2011.

used to write papers on the security community concept when I was in Washington, Karl Deutsch's idea. I liked it very much...I thought Japan's security strategy must be built on that idea, shared values, no conflict. So in that sense, Japan's strategic goal has been [shaped by] that."³²⁶ As has been mentioned, however, optimistic though these 1990s Japanese and American policy makers were, they also saw security community as a way of restraining and binding China. In an interview with the author, Admiral Blair – the former commander of Pacific Command, and a strong proponent of the security community concept in US policy in Asia³²⁷ – asserted "the more multilateral approaches you had, the more good things would happen without us (the US) having to do them. They would happen naturally...between even countries that were not ideologically aligned with us...partly to deal with China in a way that offered (it) a helpful role, but with sort of a backup in case China wasn't helpful".³²⁸

Such was the speed with which these ideas began to shape thinking, that by the late 90s, there was concern that the alliances were in danger, and foreign policy elites in both Tokyo and Canberra made efforts to re-forge the alliances and update their utility in the 1996 'US-Japan Joint Security Declaration' and 'Sydney Statement'³²⁹. The provision of public goods by the US-Japan Alliance became a way of legitimizing the expansion and revival of Japanese power. To some extent, there were conceptual problems with how the TSD would actually foster a community in an area as disparate culturally as the Asia Pacific³³⁰. Japanese policymakers worried that security community work would lessen US commitment to Japan's defence³³¹. Also, it is clear that many FPEs in the mainstream of American and Japanese policy-making world were becoming increasingly concerned with China's rise rather than with community building.³³² Regional security seemed to be getting worse rather than better: the North Korean nuclear crisis, the Taiwan Straits Crisis, and the growth of Chinese military spending all caused George W. Bush's incoming Asia team of to move the center of gravity back to US alliances. Unlike the Clinton team, they viewed China as much more of a potential threat³³³.

³²⁶ Nagashima, Akihisa (Assistant Ministry of Defense 2010, Democratic Party of Japan), Personal Interview by author, Diet Building of Japan, January 23rd, 2015.

³²⁷ Dennis C. Blair, John T. Hanley Jnr., "From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific Security Arrangements," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 24, Issue 01 (2000), pp.7-17

³²⁸ Blair (Adm.), Dennis, (CINCPAC 1999-2002), Personal interview by author, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, May 6th, 2015

³²⁹ Tomohiko Satake, "The Origin of Trilateralism? The US-Japan-Australia Security Relations in the 1990s" *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.11 (2015), p.2.

³³⁰ Anonymous (Senior Staffer, NSC), Personal interview by author.

³³¹ Blair (Adm.), Dennis, (CINCPAC 1999-2002), Personal interview by author, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, May 6th, 2015

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Aaron L. Friedberg "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia" in *International Security* Vol.18, No.3 (Winter, 1993-4), pp.5-33.

Throughout the early 2000s, in the first half of the new decade, they created the trilateral with Australia and Japan, encouraged extra-regional security cooperation, and moved the alliances down the track to closer intelligence and military integration. The Administration's policy was characterized by realist documents like the 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States*, which heavily emphasized the fight against terrorism and viewed the US alliance system (in Asia as elsewhere) in realist terms: the US would "support our friends and confront our enemies" according to one critic of the strategy³³⁴. James Kelly, President Bush's Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia from 2001 to 2005³³⁵, called on US allies for aid in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and to increase regional security cooperation³³⁶. This "realist turn" was in turn reflected in the security policies of Prime Ministers Junichiro Koizumi, Taro Aso, and Shinzo Abe, who all viewed China with some degree of concern, overlaying any inclusive neoliberal aspects to trilateral cooperation.

Interestingly, the second half of the Bush administration saw another shift, as new cabinet members and other FPEs moved the center of gravity back to one of engaging China, emphasizing trade relations and attempting to create a positive role for China in the US system. As can be sensed, there is much here derived from the idea put forward by Immanuel Kant³³⁷ and Norman Angell³³⁸ that trade and international interdependence reduce conflict³³⁹.

4.8. How Level 1 and Level 2 FPEs Interact

*"Policy doesn't make the people. The people make the policy."*³⁴⁰

~Torkel Patterson

While Luttwak's analysis of the three bureaucracies and how their interests translate into three "China policies" is generally persuasive, we should really look at policy networks which develop between interest groups, elected officials from Congress, and members of the bureaucracy. In his analysis,

³³⁴ Blair (Adm.), Dennis, (CINCPAC 1999-2002), Personal interview by author, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, May 6th, 2015

³³⁵ Kelly, James A., 'George Bush and Asia: An Assessment' in Robert M. Hathaway and Wilson Lee (eds.,), *George W. Bush and East Asia: A First Term Assessment*, Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, Asia Program, 2005.

³³⁶ This also coincided with a reduction in US forces and the implementation of 'strategic flexibility'. In South Korea, these changes took place in a series of meetings between 2003 and 2006: the Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiative (FOTA), the Security Policy Initiative (SPI) and Annual Security Consultative Meetings (SCM). In Japan, these talks took place from 2002 and were known as the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI).

³³⁷ See Kant's writing on the "perpetual peace" in Hans Reiss, (ed.,) *Kant's Political Writings*, 2nd Edition, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

³³⁸ Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion: A Study of the Relation of Military Power in Nations to their Economic and Social Advantage*, (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1910).

³³⁹ Joseph Nye, Robert Keohane, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston, Little, Brown & Co. 1977); Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1984) p.9, 29, 67. Robert Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power* (Boulder Colorado; Westview, 1989), pp.7-9; see also Randall L Schweller and David Priess, "A Tale of Two Realisms: Expanding the Institutions Debate," *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 41, Supplement 1 (May 1997), pp.1-32.

³⁴⁰ Patterson, Torkel, (National Security Advisor, 2001-2002), Personal interview by author, telephone, April 12, 2016.

bureaucracies are monolithic entities that know their interests; however, as we have shown, the American system is marked by a high rate of turnover and agency rotation of senior policy-bureaucrats in the system. This is partly because the political appointee system makes it difficult to ascertain whether someone is a “trade” person, a “defence” person, or something else. Clearly, the old adage “where you stand, depends on where you sit” becomes *where you stand, depends on where you have sat*. However, until a research project can approach this question in a quantitative way, it remains a qualitative tool, subject to the error and oversimplification.

Nevertheless, the many interviews undertaken for this research project indicate that there is a belief among practitioners that FPEs are socialized by their institutions. In Washington DC, broadly speaking, diplomats, think tank policy analysts, and defense officials begin their careers focused on one country. While this does necessarily influence their policy preferences, interviews suggest that one’s background is linked to the membership of policy networks, who may favor certain policy baskets over others. There have long been within the United States, for example, groups of foreign policy elites associated with China, who promote a mercantilist approach toward China. Termed “China Hands” or the “China Lobby”³⁴¹, they tend to come from the Department of State, from big business, from the private commercial sector, or from Sinologists in academia and in think tanks. According to journalist James Mann, a former bureau Chief for the Los Angeles Times in Beijing and political correspondent in Washington, these China hands hold that China’s economic development will inevitably lead to an opening up and democratization of the system. This belief is held by “leading academic experts on China, business executives who are eager to trade and invest in China, and the think tanks and other elite organizations that depend on corporate contributions for their funding...has become the professed view of American presidents, too, both Democrat and Republican”.³⁴²

There are other FPE groups in Washington’s Asia policy community. When Jim Kelly, a notable Korea and Japan expert, headed Asia policy in the Department of State in Bush’s first term, policies around alliances were prioritized. Indeed, one could argue that this split was in part the cause of the Blue Team / Red Team debates on China within Washington’s policy community during the 1990s and early

³⁴¹ The term has evolved from the late 19th century, when the term denoted merchants, soldiers, and diplomats familiar with China and its customs, to World War 2, when US policy faltered between the pro-Chang Kai-shek “China Lobby” and State Department “China Hands”, who were accused of losing China to the Communists. See, for example, Barbara W. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China 1911-45* (New York: Bantham Books Co. 1971), p.671; Ely Jacques Kahn, Jr. *The China Hands: America's Foreign Service Officers and What Befell Them* (New York: Viking, 1975); Hanna Gurman, “Learn to Write Well”: The China Hands and the Communist-ification of Diplomatic Reporting,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.45, No.2 (2010), pp.430-453; Ross Y. Koen, *The China Lobby in American Politics*, (New York: Harper, 1974); Paul G. Lauren, *The China Hands’ Legacy: Ethics and Diplomacy* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1987); James Mann, *The China Fantasy: Why Capitalism Will not Bring Democracy to China* (New York: Viking, 2007), pp.39-46.

³⁴² James Mann, *The China Fantasy: Why Capitalism Will not Bring Democracy to China* (New York: Viking, 2007), pp.39-46.

2000s³⁴³. How positions are handed out in the US system is of immense importance to the countries and focal points of subsequent policy. Brad Glosserman, executive director at the Pacific Forum CSIS, a think tank notes, “There’s usually only one Asia guy in the NSC (National Security Council). I think it really matters whether that guy is a ‘Japan guy’ or a ‘China guy’. It matters even more if the White House – like the Obama White House - tries to run a lot of foreign policy from the NSC.”³⁴⁴ As Torkel Patterson summarized, “Policy doesn’t make the people. The people make the policy.”³⁴⁵ And this also occurs in allied capitals, as many of the fieldwork interviews carried out for this thesis will reveal. As one senior Japanese diplomat asserted, “[the trilateral] has become a comprehensive relationship with a large human network on all three sides. MOFA people are so busy, so they hardly have time to think deeply on why the relationship is so important. On top of that, many Japanese diplomats are ‘Australia hands’ or ‘America hands’. They don’t have any opposition.”³⁴⁶ Though such accounts are essential to our understanding of the creation of foreign policy in the US system and in its fellow allies, the difficulty is predicting policy behavior through the intervening variables of belief and personality.

4.9. Hedging

Thus far, we have looked at how structure, beliefs, and domestic variables impact the threat assessment debates of American foreign policy elites. In this section, I will look at some of the current attempts to define the theoretical concept of *hedging* in international relations scholarship, before attempting to synthesize the useful elements of those definitions with a neoclassical realist definition. In the first instance, I look at why structural theories of hedging are insufficient to explain why some states hedge and others do not. As with the reasoning around Walt’s balance-of-threat argument, I note that not all states are perceived the same way: some are obvious threats, some are obvious partners, and some aren’t obvious either way. It is these last that I would like to look at, and explore more in-depth systemic reasons for uncertainty. Then, in keeping with my approach, I will look at domestic causes of uncertainty, including regime type, ideology, and finally, bureaucratic politics.

4.10. Past Definitions of Hedging

In his 2005 *The Washington Quarterly* article, “Strategic Hedging and the Future of Asia Pacific Stability”³⁴⁷, Evan Medeiros put forward a strong definition of hedging; it is, he says, a strategy composed of cooperative and competitive elements, with different fluctuations in each area changing

³⁴³ Michael J. Waller, “Blue Team Takes on Red China”, *Insight on the News*, (June 4, 2001).

³⁴⁴ Glosserman, Brad, (Executive Director, Pacific Forum CSIS, 2002-2016), interview with author, telephone, October 10, 2016).

³⁴⁵ Patterson, Torkel, (National Security Advisor, 2001-2002), Personal interview by author, telephone, April 12, 2016.

³⁴⁶ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat) interview with author.

³⁴⁷ Evan S. Medeiros, “Strategic Hedging and the Future of Asia Pacific Stability,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No.1 (Winter 2005-6), pp.145-167.

as time progresses. “To hedge,” he says, “the United States and China are pursuing policies that, on the one hand, stress engagement and integration mechanisms and, on the other, emphasize realist-style balancing in the form of external security cooperation with Asian states and national military modernization programs.”³⁴⁸ US engagement strategy is intended to engage and bind China into the rules, structures, and institutions comprising the international system, but the US is challenged by uncertainty over (1) Chinese current and future power capabilities, (2) credible indicators of Chinese intentions, and (3) how changes in the first will affect the second³⁴⁹.

In contrast to Medeiros, Evelyn Goh asserts that hedging is a “set of strategies aimed at avoiding (or planning for contingencies in a situation in which states cannot decide upon more straightforward alternatives such as balancing, bandwagoning, or neutrality.”³⁵⁰ Because both Medeiros and Goh view states as black boxes, they are unable to fully explain why some states hedge in certain situations but not in others. Goh asserts that hedging is the prerogative of small and medium sized states, and states that ascribing it to China and the United States is problematic because ““hedging” behavior is the norm in international relations – engagement and diplomacy are staples of international life.”³⁵¹ This is rather weak, and neglects why some states appear more threatening to states than others.

In some ways, both are right in asserting that hedging arises from indecision, but Medeiros is incorrect in thinking that hedging is deliberate reaction to that indecision. Goh is incorrect for thinking this is purely a behavior of small and medium-sized states³⁵², and fails to explain why states are unable to make clear policy decisions. Neither has really attempted to frame hedging from a domestic foreign policy perspective, though Goh does recognize that “threat perceptions” shape state strategies. Unfortunately, like Victor Cha, she treats such perceptions as uniform within a state and does not give room for internal debate between various domestic actors or policy coalitions. Goh mentions “Singapore policymakers” and “Singapore officials” and comes close in domestic coalitions in mentioning “the change in leadership when Lee Hsien Loong took over as Prime Minister in August 2004”³⁵³, but unfortunately, does not pursue these terms to the logical conclusion that foreign policy in a country is at essence a contested activity. In a sense, both acknowledge that hedging as a concept has suddenly become salient because of China’s rise, but do not explore that more fully.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p.145.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p.147.

³⁵⁰ Evelyn Goh, “Understanding “Hedging” in Asia-Pacific Security,” *PacNet*, Number 43, (August 2006).

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Evelyn Goh, “Meeting the China Challenge: the US in Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies,” *Policy Studies 16, East-West Center*, (2005).

³⁵³ Ibid., pp.12-13.

Atanassova-Cornelis makes a further contribution to the debate on hedging when she states that US hedging behavior is derived from worry that “the PRC may seek to alter the American-centered regional order as its power grows³⁵⁴,” pushing Washington to “reinforce its security alliances and partnerships in East Asia while simultaneously emphasizing common interests and bilateral relations with Beijing.” In one sense, her recognition that threat assessment is a part of hedging adds to the concept’s utility. However, this thesis goes one step further, and argues that hedging is the result of *uncertain threat assessments*, driven by a combination of systemic and domestic factors. Simply defined, hedging is *the inability of a country’s foreign policy elites to make a clear threat assessment about a potentially threatening state, resulting in inefficient and – at times – contradictory – policies*.

4.11. Systemic Causes of Hedging

In line with an NCR approach, a new definition of hedging might emphasize the interaction between domestic elites and their perception of the distribution of capabilities in the system. There are two systemic points that cause uncertainty among domestic elites: those that have to do with changes in power balances, conflicting behavior, and the nature of modern warfare. First, the uncertainty brought about by sudden changes in the distribution of power and capabilities causes uncertainty and fear among what Arnold Wolfers, Peter Trubowitz³⁵⁵, and Randall Schweller³⁵⁶ call “status quo” states. This is vitally important, because it represents change to those who benefit most from the current distribution of power and privileges. Such status quo states will seek to maintain their position in the system. Some states may welcome change and see this as an opportunity to increase some limited gains in the system; others look to overturn the entire system, and reshape the order. These unlimited-aims revisionists include well-known empire-builders, like Alexander the Great, Napoleon Bonaparte, Shaka Zulu, and Adolf Hitler, among others, and often found their power in military prowess and might. However, not all rising powers have the will or the capability to overturn the orders they join. Woodrow Wilson’s United States, Meiji Japan, and Soviet Russia³⁵⁷ were all limited-aims revisionists. That’s to say, they wished to increase their influence upon the system, not displace or dominate it. Certainly, they came to have much greater influence on the global system over time, but their initial aims were limited.

³⁵⁴ Elena Atanassova-Cornelis, “Reshaping the East Asian Security Order: US-China Hedging and the EU’s Strategic Choices”, *Ritsumeikan International Affairs* Vol.10. (2011), p.220.

³⁵⁵ Peter Trubowitz, *Politics and Strategy: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 10-13;

³⁵⁶ Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), p.10.

³⁵⁷ Interestingly, one might see Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution as unlimited-aims revisionism, however, as we know, Stalin’s “Socialism in One Country” brand of Soviet policy eventually prevailed from 1924 onwards.

In looking at the rise of China from the perspective of status-quo oriented United States, one is confronted by a number of contradictory drivers. On the one hand, China's potential power capabilities mean that it could seek to displace the United States as hegemon or system leader. Its population is currently the largest in the world, more than 4.25 times larger than that of the United States³⁵⁸, and larger than the combined populations of North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, and all of Western Europe³⁵⁹. By some accounts, its economy is already larger than that of the US³⁶⁰; by other accounts, it will overtake the US economy by 2019³⁶¹. Its military power is fast approaching regional parity with that of the United States. All of these factors feed bilateral tensions. On the other hand, China's population is a major untapped market for American companies, an opportunity for economic revival. Chinese policymakers have long sought to play down such structural elements, arguing that China's would be a "peaceful rise"³⁶², that China had no interest in displacing American power³⁶³. They argued that Beijing did not seek Chinese hegemony, and that it was only a limited-aims revisionist state seeking "win-win cooperation"³⁶⁴. Such consistent and long-term messaging, combined with attempts to join global institutional architecture created by the liberal democratic states, have relieved the concerns in Western Europe and the United States, and found resonance among "Continentalist" policy coalitions³⁶⁵. China's willingness "to play by the rules" seems evident in its willingness to be a constructive member of the United Nations, the Security Council, the World Trade Organization, and many other institutions. However, it should be noted that China's reassurance strategy has only been partly effective.

³⁵⁸ As of July 2015, the Chinese population is 1,367,485,388, while the US population is 321,368,864: *The CIA World Factbook* <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html> (accessed August 22, 2016).

³⁵⁹ Matt Schiavenza, "A Surprising Map of the World Shows Just How Big China's Population Is," *The Atlantic*, (August 14, 2013); <http://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/08/a-surprising-map-of-the-world-shows-just-how-big-chinas-population-is/278691/> (accessed August 22, 2016).

³⁶⁰ Ben Carter, "Is China's Economy Really the Biggest in the World?" *The BBC News Website*: 16 December, 2014, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-30483762> (accessed July 20, 2015); "China Poised to Overtake US Economy: World Bank Ranking," *Economic Times*, April 30.

³⁶¹ Economics Focus, "How to Get a Date: The Year When the Chinese Economy Will Truly Eclipse America's is in Sight," *The Economist*, (December 28, 2011).

³⁶² The concept of "peaceful rise" was first introduced by Zheng Bijian in November 2003, with General Secretary Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao using the term later in December 2003. Apparently, Jeng Zemin and other members of the Politburo Standing Committee voiced objections so the term was quietly dropped and replaced by "peaceful development". Despite this, the salience of the term has meant that policymakers and academics continue to view it as a defining feature of Chinese foreign policy. For a discussion of it, see: Bonnie S. Glaser, Evan S. Medeiros, "The Changing Ecology of Foreign Policy-Making in China: The Ascension and Demise of the Theory of 'Peaceful Rise'", *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 190, (June 2007), pp.291-310; Robert L. Suettinger, "The Rise and Descent of 'Peaceful Rise'", *China Leadership Monitor*, No.12, http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/clm12_rs.pdf (accessed August 16).

³⁶³ "Wen Rejects Allegations of China, US Monopolizing World Affairs in Future," Xinhua, May 21, 2009; Liu Jiafei, "Sino-US Relations and Building a Harmonious World," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol.18, No.60, (June 2009), p.479;

³⁶⁴ Yang Jiechi, "Win-Win Cooperation," *Washington Post*, July 9, 2013, p.13.

³⁶⁵ James Mann, *The China Fantasy: Why Capitalism Will Not Bring Democracy to China* (New York: Viking, 2007), pp.39-46.

As was discussed in the last chapter, perception plays a major part in assessing systemic features. How do American policymakers judge China's intentions? As Mearsheimer and other realists, note, it is impossible for states to perfectly ascertain the intentions of other states in the system. "It is simply impossible, for example, to know what Germany or Japan's intentions will be toward their neighbors in 2025."³⁶⁶ The China that eschews global hegemony today, may not do so tomorrow. Furthermore, there is the question of China's actual behavior. Though potentially threatening states can send out overt messages meant to reassure status quo powers, those status quo powers do not rely on such messages alone. They assume some level of dissembling inherent in inter-state relations. Instead they seek to understand the intentions of a power by gaining intelligence on the state's leadership and on its military spending³⁶⁷. Powers that invest in aircraft carriers, heavy-lift and bombers, for example, are investing in power projection, while those who only develop anti-aircraft defences, infantry and armour, are not. Status quo states may also take their cues from how a rising power behaves in its foreign policy and this can vary from leader to leader. Bismarck's ability to keep the peace Europe was maintained by his adept handling of diplomacy and alliances. By contrast, Kaiser Wilhelm the Second's brash style of diplomacy, his bullying of non-allies, and Germany's military build-up in the 1890s, all led to Germany's neighbors balancing against it for mutual protection³⁶⁸. China's attempts to reassure the United States have had a mixed record, in part. On the one hand, it has shown a willingness to play a constructive role in regional multilateral architecture and cooperated with the US and others to resolve the North Korea issues. On the other hand, this has occurred concurrently with a large military build-up, and encroachment upon the territories of neighboring states – some of whom are American Treaty allies. The fact that in 2016, China began building islands across a trade route of global importance, struck many as a sign that China's viewed the global rules-based system with ambiguity³⁶⁹.

Interestingly, the systemic feature of power-changes may also cause uncertainty within the foreign policy elites of the rising power. For example, some FPEs within Beijing may promote closer ties with the West, while others may emphasize China's power. The fact that no one knows how powerful China will ultimately become is a source of uncertainty that works both ways, affecting elites in the region, in Washington, and in Beijing³⁷⁰. Will its rise eventually eclipse that of the United States, or would it falter on the economic problems that prior powers have – the so-called middle-income trap, and

³⁶⁶ John J. Mearsheimer, "China's Unpeaceful Rise," *Current History* (April 2006), pp.160-162.

³⁶⁷ "The Dragon's New Teeth: A Rare Look Inside the World's Biggest Military Expansion," *The Economist*, April 7, 2012

³⁶⁸ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Touchstone, 1994), pp.170-171.

³⁶⁹ Patrick Cronin, "China's Problem with Rules: Managing a Reluctant Stakeholder," *War on the Rocks*, June 26, 2014, <http://warontherocks.com/2014/06/chinas-problem-with-rules-managing-a-reluctant-stakeholder/> (accessed August 22, 2016).

³⁷⁰ Jae Ho Chung (ed.,) *Assessing China's Power*, (New York: Asan-Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

“Japanese disease”³⁷¹ of negative growth. China’s power is in flux and until its growth slows down, it will be monitored closely by FPEs on all sides. Many foreign policy elites inside the US work from the assumption that China’s advantage is growing, day by day, and that the risk of conflict grows as the two become closer in power parity. Is it in China’s interest to press for its’ interests sooner – while perceptions favor its bargaining position – or later, if and when it has surpassed the US? This state of constant flux also permeates the uncertainty over China’s willingness to use its ever-growing military power to further its interests in the international arena, and whether such usage will challenge American interests³⁷². China’s willingness to deploy forces abroad in Syria, its willingness to partner with Russia and Iran, and its new base in Djibouti, are all watched closely for this reason. But perhaps more worrying for American policymakers is the fact that Chinese planners have sought to consolidate military power in the Asian regional theatre first, threatening the security of the US maritime system, upon which its East Asian allies depend.

4.12. Domestic Causes of Hedging

It is a core part of the argument of this thesis that hedging cannot be explained from the systemic level of analysis alone. This is because hedging arises from domestic debates between FPEs who are undecided on the level of threat posed by a potential challenging state. Broken into different policy coalitions, the divergent groups seek to press their foreign policy vision upon the state, either through legislation or through appointments of like-minded government officials to offices that affect that particular issue. In the wake of a crisis with China, for example, the executive may wish to appoint someone “who’s tough on China” to the Department of State. These types of appointments however are rarely the primary consideration, and it is more than likely that such appointments are subject to the domestic-level game and the internal haggling that takes place within administrations. Once officials are appointed to office, the push and pull of policy that takes place between them and FPEs who view China in a different light produces different types of output. If bureaucracies fall in line with certain lines on a foreign state, then this hedging behavior might also take place. While National Security Councils and Executives exert some control over bureaucracies and appointed officials, much depends on the autonomy extended to the cabinet within a given government.

³⁷¹ Minxin Pei, *China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Free Exchange.

³⁷² Bai Tiantian, “Djibouti Base not for Power: China Won’t Follow US in Expanding Global Military Reach,” *The Global Times*, (August 22, 2016).

4.13. Conclusion

It has been argued above that states are not monolithic entities. Instead, they are sets of institutions with networks of different domestic actors moving around and through them, competing for both resources and competing for the direction of state policy. One finds that in the American system, there are actually two types of foreign policy elites: level 1 and level 2. Level 1 comprises those who actually wield state power, and level 2 comprises those who have privileged access to level 1, including academics, think tank analysts, journalists, and even former or future officials. This trend is accentuated among the American FPE community which deals with the Asia Pacific, and one finds a confluence of mid-ranking Level 1 officials and senior Level 2 FPEs who helped facilitate trilateralism inside the corridors of power. This thesis puts forward the proposition that where you sit influences where you stand, and asserts that this has particular relevance to the Asia Pacific, where American FPEs policy-orientation can be linked to both their host bureaucracy and to their regional background. This can also be found in Level 2 FPEs, who are a mixture of insider and outsider. As outsiders, they bring “high” theory from international relations and economics academia into the different bureaucracies through their appointments to positions within the administration. They are both agents of socialization and receivers of bureaucratic culture. One can perceive among US FPEs dealing with China, a propensity for FPEs to fall into two great divides: one, prioritizes China-as-threat, the other prioritizes China-as-opportunity. The long-term threat-assessment debates between these *Mahanians* and *Continentalists* on China is what leads to the back-and-forth tussle of policy on the region, and is a direct contributor of the behavior characterized as “hedging”. As long as two groups of FPEs within United States are unable to dominate over the other, we will see more of the current mixture of balancing and engagement with regards to China.

5. CHAPTER 5: THE CLINTON PRESIDENCY (1993-2000)

This chapter explores the origins of the US – Japan – Australia security cooperation in the immediate post-Cold War period, which ultimately led to the US-Japan-Australia trilateral in the beginning of the following decade.³⁷³ It will do this by tracing wider “guns versus butter” foreign policy debates inside Washington, the first post-Cold War signs that China might present security challenges to American FPEs, and changes in regional security, which promoted closer trilateral cooperation. As will be demonstrated, systemic and domestic stimuli among US foreign policy elites (FPE) each played a part in promoting security cooperation between the three, but only after the Clinton Administration had first attempted to apply liberal multilateralism and a form of regional integration to security in the region. As such, the first term of the Clinton administration was very supportive of multilateral groupings, such as ASEAN and APEC, and it was felt that these might even overlap and conjoin the old bilateral alliance system. As the Cold War cleavages were dispelled in the European theater, American approaches to the region attempted to be highly inclusive toward previous foes of the Cold War, and were even highly optimistic in tone at times. This inclusivity extended to China, with which the Clinton administration took great pains to develop strong political and economic ties. However, as this chapter will show, American foreign policy elites (FPEs) were ultimately compelled to maintain the San

³⁷³ This thesis is most closely associated with Tomohiko Satake’s article, “The Origin of Trilateralism? The US-Japan-Australia Security Relations in the 1990s” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.11 (2015).

Francisco System after initial attempts at retrenchment provoked an internal security dilemma among America's key allies in the region and after both North Korea and China failed to fulfill the expectations of key Clinton FPEs.

Neorealism's predictions of American foreign policy making during this period are not wrong, but they do not really provide a wholly satisfactory account of why American policy took the different directions it did. Nor can realism by itself explain the overriding preoccupation of US policy with trade liberalization as a tool for managing relations with China and other former Soviet opponents in the region. As China's power increased over the period, and gradually began posing more of a threat to the traditional balance of power in the region, mainstream American FPEs continued to utilize an engagement strategy toward Beijing, according it Most Favored Trading Nation (MFN) status and helping it join the World Trade Organization (WTO). Instead, it is only by looking at the domestic debates between *Continentalist* FPEs and their Mahanian opponents inside the Beltway, that we can see by US policy had two very different strategic objectives under the same administration. The first term was characterized by a fit of neoliberal optimism about multilateral institutions, the rightfulness of the Washington Consensus in economics, and a sense that diplomatic solutions would become the preferred way of dealing with regional problems. However, as we will find, Mahanian FPEs – both within the administration and among the Republican opposition – saw this approach as dangerously naïve, and as weakening US alliances and security in the region. A number of events – North Korea's nuclear ambitions, China's behaviour in the Taiwan Strait, and the Asian Financial crisis, caused a Mahanian retrenchment within the Second Clinton administration, bolstered and abetted by similar-minded policy coalitions within Canberra and Tokyo.

Theoretically, it is nearly impossible to explain the two terms of the Clinton administration by using one international relations school, either liberalism or realism, since the foreign and security policy of these two terms differed so markedly. Furthermore, neither school enabled *Continentalists* or *Mahanians* to get the upper hand in the policy debates that took place over Asia inside the Beltway over this 8-year period. One of the most cited areas where neorealism provides insufficient explanatory power is the failure of Japan to rearm in the 1990s, and challenge the United States for regional leadership. Instead, US-Japan relations deteriorated initially as the US sought to correct perceived trade imbalances, but then recovered as US FPEs began promoting a renewal of the US-Japan Alliance. Certainly, it is impossible to ignore China's rise as a factor in this, or other foreign policy problems such as North Korea, the Taiwan Crisis, and the Asian Financial Crisis. The primary – though

not the only driver – for these inconsistencies lay with FPEs and their inability to agree on a common threat assessment for regional security. This inability to agree manifests itself in a number of ways, from hard power balancing strategies mixed with trade engagement strategies to battles between the various arms of government. There arose in Washington, a very clear division between those FPEs who sought to engage China diplomatically and economically, and those who saw it as a future threat to US interests. The Blue Team / Red Team divisions on Capitol Hill – as they came to be called – were symptomatic of these debates, and would influence many *Mahanians* in the subsequent Bush Administration, leading to a renewal of purpose in the alliance system and a hedging approach toward China. However, even then, US policy would continue to see-saw over China. This chapter will also chart how Japanese FPEs, reacting in part to American pressure and systemic features, sought new security partners across the region. We will also see what factors contributed to the development of a strong Japan-Australia bilateral.

5.1. The First Term of the Clinton Administration (1993-1997)

The Clinton administration did not come into office seeking closer security cooperation with Japan or Australia. It was open to changing the alliance structure, but did not seek to do so as part of a grand strategy. Rather, its initial priority was focused on the economy and domestic issues: as a result, foreign policy was a slightly hodge-podge mixture of democratic enlargement and economic growth³⁷⁴. In *Clinton's Grand Strategy*³⁷⁵, James Boys argues that there was an attempt at neo-Wilsonian vision articulated by National Security Advisor Antony Lake³⁷⁶ and Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeline Albright³⁷⁷ in the early part of the administration, but President Clinton was too interested in domestic politics and trade³⁷⁸ to take part in fostering the vision. While Kenneth Lieberthal has cast Clinton's approach toward East Asia as pragmatic³⁷⁹, it may well be that he simply applied domestic answers to foreign policy problems. His core belief that greater prosperity would lead to greater mutual security was a mark of classical liberalism. This prioritization of the economic had profound implications for the US San Francisco System.

³⁷⁴ William J. Clinton, XLII President of the United States: 1993-2001, *Inaugural Address*, The American Presidency Project, January 20, 1993: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=46366> (accessed February 6, 2016).

³⁷⁵ James D. Boys, *Clinton's Grand Strategy, US Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

³⁷⁶ Antony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement," Speech at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, 21 September, 1993, US Department of State Dispatch, Vol. 4, no.39, 27 September 1993.

³⁷⁷ Madeline K. Albright, "Use of Force in Post-Cold War World," Address to the National War College, National Defense University, Fort McNair, September 23, 1993, US Department of State Dispatch, Vol. 4, no.39, 27 September 1993.

³⁷⁸ James D. Boys, *Clinton's Grand Strategy: US Foreign Policy in a Post-Cold War World*, (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015) p.85.

³⁷⁹ Lieberthal, Kenneth, (Special Assistant to the President, National Security Affairs) Personal interview, Washington DC, 8 June, 2015.

During the Campaign, Clinton's team emphasized that America's long-neglected domestic concerns needed to be prioritized: "It's the Economy, Stupid", James Carville's pithy phrase epitomized this shift from foreign policy issues. Clinton promised that "a post-Cold War restructuring of American forces will produce substantial savings beyond those promised by the Bush Administration, but that restructuring must be achieved without undermining our ability to meet future threats to our security."³⁸⁰ He had also promised to further trim \$60 billion from Bush's defence budget over five years³⁸¹. He and others in his campaign team strongly believed that 'geo-economics' was rapidly replacing geopolitics³⁸². In a 1992 campaign speech at Georgetown University, Clinton had promised, "We can and must substantially reduce our military forces and spending...the Soviet threat is decreasing and our allies are able to and should shoulder more of the defense burden...the American people have earned this peace dividend through 40 years of unrelenting vigilance and sacrifice...".³⁸³

Coming into office, the Clinton administration inherited a 1990 policy known as the *East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI)* from the Bush White House, which sought the following: (1) to reduce overall defense spending by reducing troops numbers in the region from 140,000 to 90,000; (2) to encourage allies to do more to share the costs of regional security; and, (3) to encourage non-ally regional states to participate in multilateral security efforts. The new administration embraced this policy with gusto. Christopher Warren, Clinton's first Secretary of State, set the tone in his first speech on the region, "America's Pacific Future," made in November, 1993 in Seattle. "In Asia, we see most clearly that economic policy stands at the center of our foreign policy. Last year, our exports to the region totaled \$128 billion and created 2.4 million American jobs...Asia has asked us to remain engaged in the region, and we will do so. But for the American people to appreciate the benefits of such engagement, Asia's markets must be open to our goods and services."³⁸⁴ This focus on economic growth and the desire to open Asian markets to US trade pervaded Clinton's first term. Accounting for just 8% of global GDP in the 1960s, Asian economies grew at three times the rate of developed economies, and represented more than 25% of global GDP by 1994. By 1996, 30% of US merchandise exports went to APEC's Asian members³⁸⁵. While trade was good for the region, this emphasis on multilateralism and force

³⁸⁰ Democratic Party Platform of 1992, *A New Covenant with the American People*, The American Presidency Project: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29610> (accessed February 6, 2016).

³⁸¹ *Les Aspin Serves One Year as Defense Secretary*, from CQ Almanac 1993, <https://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/document.php?id=cqal93-1106289> (accessed February 9, 2016).

³⁸² Joseph S. Nye, "The Nye Report: Six Years Later," Ellis S. Kraus, Benjamin Nyblade, (eds.) *Japan and North America: The Post War*, Vol. 2 (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p.143.

³⁸³ William J. Clinton, "A New Covenant for American Security" in *Helvidius*, Vol.3, No.2 (Spring 1992), pp.14-17.

³⁸⁴ Warren Christopher, "America's Pacific Future," *Speech by Secretary of State*, University of Washington, Seattle, November 17, 1993 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dossec/1993/9311/931117dossec.html> (accessed February 24, 2016).

³⁸⁵ James D. Boys, *Clinton's Grand Strategy: US Foreign Policy in a Post-Cold War World*, (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015) p.174.

reductions led to a sense of lost cohesion within the alliance system: trade frictions weakened ties with Japan, while regional multilateralism weakened ties with Australia. Despite the feeling of post-Cold War uncertainty³⁸⁶ about peace on the Korean Peninsula that was beginning to pervade American thinking, the second year of the Clinton administration revealed an attempt to articulate an optimistic approach to the Asia Pacific region. However, this optimism was to eventually founder as a series of regional crises proved that US engagement was still necessary to providing security to the region.

By 1993, US allies had become “very nervous about that [East Asia Strategy Initiative] policy because they saw the US withdrawal from Asia as creating a vacuum, and the big concern and worry was ‘who’s going to fill that vacuum?’”³⁸⁷ Victor Cha, who was later a *Mahanian* appointee to the NSC under George W. Bush, voiced a note of caution, then prevalent among East Asia experts in Washington at the time, “With this threat (the USSR) now gone, the alternatives should not be simply reap the peace dividends and retrench. Instead, there must be a proactive willingness to bear the costs and burdens of preventing problems ...from magnifying in the future.”³⁸⁸ In writing about the region, Thomas Christensen notes that to many, the region “appeared more dangerous in the aftermath of the Cold War than did other areas...such as Western Europe. The common bond that the Soviet Union had provided for the US-PRC and even for the Sino-Japanese relationship had been removed.”³⁸⁹ Some American writers at the time had even predicted that US-Japan relations would become adversarial³⁹⁰. Satake argues that the origins of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral can be found in a growing “sense of crisis” and abandonment among Japanese and Australian alliance managers in the 1990s, that these years of drift formed the basis for the drive to renew relations³⁹¹. When North Korea threatened to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1993, the trilateral model suggested itself as a logical framework for alliance cooperation between Japan, South Korea, and the United States. The relative success of this first trilateral opened up a range of possibilities to American, Japanese, and Australia FPEs, then considering the future of regional security architecture.

³⁸⁶Aaron L. Friedberg “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia” in *International Security* Vol.18, No.3 (Winter, 1993-4), pp.5-33.

³⁸⁷ Anonymous (Senior Defense Official, OSD, DOD), Personal Interview by Author.

³⁸⁸ Victor Cha, “Positive and Preventative Rationales for Korea-Japan Cooperation: The American Perspective,” in Ralph Cossa (ed.,) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a ‘Virtual Alliance’*” (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), p.69.

³⁸⁹ Thomas J. Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press, 2011), p.226.

³⁹⁰ George Friedman, Meredith Lebard, *The Coming War with Japan* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1991).

³⁹¹ Satake, Tomohiko (National Institute for Defense Studies), Personal Interview by Author, Tokyo, January 8, 2015.

5.2. Hub and Spokes to Security Community?

In order for trilateralism to evolve, the policy preference for the “strict bilateralism” of the San Francisco System in Washington DC had to end. Although the Clinton administration did not plan to network its alliances, its policies did represent a break from the past, seeing the bilateral system as outdated. Indeed, many in the region were then filled with a “global enthusiasm for multilateralism...heavily influenced by internationalist euphoria and growing movements of institutional renewal and ‘new regionalism’”.³⁹² The Clinton administration was no different and during the Senate confirmation hearings of Winston Lord as Assistant Secretary of State for Asian and Pacific Affairs, Lord identified a commitment to enhanced multilateral security dialogue as one of the Administration’s top ten goals. For a time, the White House even entertained ideas of an American-led security community developing across the Asia Pacific. In November 1993, Clinton hosted the first APEC Summit in Seattle, Washington, where he trial-ballooned the concept with foreign leaders. Secretary of State Warren Christopher stated that the new multilateralism would mimic the “open architecture” that was then found in the software industry.³⁹³ In his first visit to the region in 1993, Clinton announced a “New Pacific Community Initiative” in a speech in Seoul. This new community, he stated, would be built on three core elements: shared prosperity, shared strength, and shared commitment to democratic values. It sought to “place U.S.-Japan relations at the center and promoted economic cooperation through APEC, democracy and human rights across the region”³⁹⁴. Praising the role of NATO in Western Europe, he stated: “In the Pacific no such institution exists...The challenge for the Asian Pacific in this decade, instead, is to develop multiple new arrangements to meet multiple threats and opportunities. These arrangements can function like overlapping plates of armor, individually providing protection and together covering the full body of our common security concerns.”³⁹⁵ In this way, he gave room for American policymakers to conceive of the old bilateral US alliance system as another “overlapping” set of arrangements. In many ways, as will be shown, this optimistic approach to the region did still contain a pessimistic hedge toward regional security, and did not completely jettison hard power principles or the alliance system.

In addition to undermining strict bilateralism that then pervaded US government, the new approach fostered an inclusive regional approach to countries with which the United States had previously excluded during the Cold War. One could see this new attitude the administration’s efforts to integrate

³⁹² Michael Wesley, *The Howard Paradox: Australian Diplomacy in Asia 1996-2006*, (Sydney: ABC Books, 2007), p.216.

³⁹³ Warren Christopher, “America’s Pacific Future,” *Speech by Secretary of State*, University of Washington, Seattle, November 17, 1993 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dossec/1993/9311/931117dossec.html> (accessed February 24, 2016).

³⁹⁴ US Department of State Archives, History of the Department of State During the Clinton Presidency, 1993-2001, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/pubs/8530.htm> (accessed February 8, 2016).

³⁹⁵ William J. Clinton, *Remarks to the Korean National Assembly in Seoul*, The American Presidency Project: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=46829> (accessed February 6, 2016).

China into American policy. In his 1993 speech in Seoul, President Clinton proclaimed, “The goal of all these efforts is to integrate, not isolate, the region's powers. China is a key example. We believe China cannot be a full partner in the world community until it respects human rights and international agreements on trade and weapon sales. But we also are prepared to involve China in building this region's new security and economic architectures. We need an involved and engaged China, not an isolated China.”³⁹⁶ It was clear that although the Tiananmen Square Massacre had only been five years before, most FPEs in the administration did not share a high threat assessment of China. The 1994 *National Security Strategy* aptly called for *Engagement and Enlargement*³⁹⁷. Admiral Blair, the Commander-in-Chief at PACOM and a supporter of the security community notion, argued that “this idea of security communities would enable cooperation to happen even between countries that were not ideologically aligned with us, to do good things without bringing in the things like democracies versus autocratic governments, or China versus the rest.”³⁹⁸ Despite the inclusive nature of the security community policy toward China, American FPEs never completely forgot that China might emerge as a threat, as Admiral Blair makes clear, “...It [the security community] was also partly to deal with China in a way that offered a helpful role to China, but with a sort of back up in case China wasn't going to be helpful, it would form a containment net around China, not of our actions, but of China's actions.”³⁹⁹ The seeds of America's hedging policy were already being sown, even during this most inclusive of era of American policymaking.

5.3. Regional Security Reconsidered

Initially, the optimistic approach taken during Clinton's first term seemed justified as various troop numbers around the region were reduced and regional conflicts were resolved through great power cooperation. The founding of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994 – with a major role played by Japan – seemed to herald a new multilateral approach to security⁴⁰⁰. However, the two security dilemmas can be dated to this period. The first intra-alliance security dilemma took place after the East Asia Strategy Initiative sparked abandonment fears among Japanese and Australian alliance managers. The shift in the mid-to-late 1990s to reinvigorate those alliances and give them new purpose across the region provoked the second security dilemma, that with China. Four crises rocked the Asia Pacific during the first term of the Clinton administration, which seemed to strengthen the hand of realist

³⁹⁶ William J. Clinton, *Remarks to the Korean National Assembly in Seoul*, The American Presidency Project: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=46829> (accessed February 6, 2016).

³⁹⁷ A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, July 1994 at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1994.pdf> (accessed on 23 March, 2013).

³⁹⁸ Blair (Adm.), Dennis, (CINCPAC 1999–2002), Personal interview by author, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, May 6th, 2015

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ralph A. Cossa, *The Major Powers in Northeast Asian Security*, McNair Paper 51, (Washington DC: National Defense University, 1996), p.11.

scholars who thought the region “ripe for rivalry”⁴⁰¹ and increased the grip of both security dilemmas on American FPEs.

The first indicator of this was the North Korean nuclear crisis, which began in March 1993, when North Korea announced its decision to withdraw unilaterally from the NPT⁴⁰². The second crisis occurred in 1995, when China fired a number of missiles into the seas surrounding the Taiwan Straits, sparking off the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis. The third crisis took place in the East China Sea in 1996 after Japanese nationalists built a lighthouse on one of the Chinese-claimed East China Sea islets. Subsequent anti-Japanese protests rocked East Asia, targeting Japanese embassies, consulates and companies across Macao, the PRC, the ROC, and Hong Kong, ending with the large scale maritime intrusions by Chinese nationalists into Japanese territorial waters in September and October 1996⁴⁰³. The fourth crisis to dispel Clinton’s optimistic liberalism was the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which shook regional confidence in American leadership, and once more raised the possibility of a China-centered order. As a result of these crises and of allied concerns⁴⁰⁴, the Pentagon issued the East Asia Strategy Report (also known as *the Nye Report*) in 1995. The report heralded the end of American efforts to draw down forces in East Asia, putting a floor on US troop strength in East Asia at 100,000 and sought to redefine the alliance with Japan. The North Korean Nuclear Crisis 1993-4 had found policymakers⁴⁰⁵ more cautious about regional institutions taking up the slack.

5.4. Japan, Korea, and the creation of the trilateral model

The growing crisis on the Korean Peninsula in 1993 was the catalyst for the first trilateral dialogue between the US, Japan, and the ROK. With little fanfare, the trilateral model was created in 1994 by the Former-Deputy Secretary of Defense for East Asia, Carl Ford. He was troubled that there was a complete absence of military-to-military contact between his Japanese and Korean counterparts. Due to political sensitivities, Seoul and Tokyo would only agree to an “unofficial” track 1.5 meeting, and Ford began organizing it with support from George Washington University. The first meeting was not held in Washington, but rather at a PACOM-connected think tank, Pacific Forum in Hawaii in August 1994. The meeting saw the first grouping of American, Korean, and Japanese defence and foreign

⁴⁰¹ Aaron L. Friedberg “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia” in *International Security* Vol.18, No.3 (Winter, 1993-4), pp.5-33.

⁴⁰² Kelsey Davenport, “The Chronology of US-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy,” *Arms Control Association*, May 2015 <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron> (accessed on January 4, 2016).

⁴⁰³ Yuki Tatsumi, *Senkaku Islands / East China Sea Disputes – a Japanese Perspective*, (Washington: CNA Maritime Asia Project, 2012), p.111.

⁴⁰⁴ Robin, Sakoda (Department of Defense, Senior Country Director for Japan 1994-99), Personal Interview by Author, Washington DC, April 28, 2015.

⁴⁰⁵ Kurt M. Campbell, “The Official US View” in Michael J Green, Mike M. Mochizuki, *The US-Japan Security Alliance in the 21st Century* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Study Group Papers, 1998), pp.85-87.

ministry officials attempting to build closer relations between the two security partners of the United States.

There seemed to be three drivers for the US-Japan-ROK trilateral. In his interview for this research project, former-Secretary Ford states that he intended the meeting to be primarily a mechanism for ending Japan-ROK enmity⁴⁰⁶, in order to foster closer cooperation over North Korea. However, some attendees of that first meeting already viewed the strengthening and networking of the US alliance system into trilaterals as a means of dealing with the rise of China⁴⁰⁷. Admiral Michael McDevitt – a prominent naval thinker, and James Kelly – Undersecretary of State for East Asia under the Bush administration – wrote, “The real key to long-term stability in Northeast Asia is the UK-Korean-Japanese strategic triangle. The best way to ensure that Northeast Asia remains stable in the future is for the United States and its two closest allies in Asia to become strategically coherent. If, as [Hisahiko] Okazaki asserts, Japan and the United States alone can influence the direction China pursues, one must consider how much more influential this balance of power would be if it included the ROK.”⁴⁰⁸ Another attendee, a senior Japanese defence official, Noboru Yamaguchi, wrote that the three sides “exchanged views on the regional security environment, explained national security policies, and discussed scenarios for future trilateral cooperation.”⁴⁰⁹ Here, in the first trilateral meeting, were five of the key ingredients that were also to drive US, Japanese, and Australian security cooperation: continued US engagement in the region; burden-sharing among allies; the normalization of Japan and a regional role; and maintaining a balance of power vis a vis China.

5.5. Weakening of US Alliances

Although the newly-formed US-Japan-ROK trilateral gave Japan a role in the North Korean crisis, the trilateral evolved slowly, hampered by South Korean – Japanese mistrust and historical issues⁴¹⁰. As will be shown in the next two chapters, this mistrust would over time, derail what many assumed would be the primary US-Japan trilateral. Furthermore, outside the small number of State Department and Defense Department bureaucrats working on the Northeast Asia, Tokyo’s relations with

⁴⁰⁶ Ford, Carl, (Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia 1991-3) Telephone Interview with author, March 29, 2016.

⁴⁰⁷ McDevitt, RADM Michael (Dir. Strategy & War Plans, J-5 CINCPAC, 1993-4) Telephone Interview with author, March 23, 2016.

⁴⁰⁸ Michael A. McDevitt, James A. Kelly, “In Search of Stability: Designing for a Better Peace in East Asia”, in Ralph Cossa (ed.,) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a ‘Virtual Alliance’*” (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), p.158.

⁴⁰⁹ Noboru Yamaguchi, “Trilateral Security Cooperation: Opportunities, Challenges, and Tasks,” in Ralph Cossa (ed.,) *US-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a ‘Virtual Alliance’*” (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), p.8.

⁴¹⁰ See for example, Anonymous, (Senior Official, MOFA) interview with author, Tokyo, January 15, 2016; Cossa, Ralph, (Director, Pacific Forum, CSIS 1991-2016), telephone interview with author, Honolulu, February 24, 2016;

Washington were characterized by trade disputes. President Clinton came into office determined to reset trade relations with both Australia and Japan, seeing the latter through the trade imbalances of the 1980s. The collapse of the Soviet Union means that alliances “must be justified anew, regardless of any utility they had in the Cold War.”⁴¹¹ Prominent members of both parties in Washington blamed Japan for the US economic slowdown and criticized both Japan’s restricted access to key sectors of its domestic market, as well as its current-account surpluses. He placed the New Economic Framework at the top of its agenda with Tokyo, seeking to pressure Japan into accepting targets for American exports to Japan⁴¹². In one of his first speeches, Secretary of State Warren Christopher made it clear that trade imbalances were a priority for the administration:

...with Japan, we are negotiating a new economic framework. The security and political dimensions of our partnership with Japan are in sound condition. But the economic pillar is urgently in need of repair. This Administration attaches as high a priority to improving our economic ties with Japan as it does to maintaining our security and political links. That is why we are working to correct our persistent trade imbalance. We are determined to forge a more equitable and mutually beneficial partnership.⁴¹³

5.5.1. Abandoning Japan?

The sudden end of the Cold War had caught Japanese policymakers by surprise. Although the 1990 National Security Strategy had reiterated Japan’s place as the “centerpiece of (US) security policy and an important anchor of stability”⁴¹⁴, Tokyo found itself confronted first with the East Asia Strategic Initiative (EASI), which threatened to undermine American guarantees over Japanese security by dramatically reducing the number of US military troops in the Asia Pacific from over 140,000 to 90,000⁴¹⁵. The sudden 1992 withdrawal of troops from the Philippines and draw down in bases, as well as unilateral withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula Japanese fears of abandonment were compounded by the “Gulf War Shock”⁴¹⁶, in which Japan’s financial contribution

⁴¹¹ Ted Galen Carpenter, *A Search for Enemies: America’s Alliances after the Cold War* (Washington DC: Cato Institute, 1992), p.vii.

⁴¹² James Przystup, Robert P. O’Quinn, “Bill Clinton and Japan: Getting the Record Straight,” *The Heritage Foundation F.Y.I.* No.95, (April 11, 1996), p.2.

⁴¹³ Warren Christopher, “America’s Pacific Future,” *Speech by Secretary of State*, University of Washington, Seattle, November 17, 1993 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dossec/1993/9311/931117dossec.html> (accessed February 24, 2016)

⁴¹⁴ The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (March 1990) p.12.

⁴¹⁵ Robin, Sakoda (Department of Defense, Senior Country Director for Japan 1994-99), Personal Interview by Author, Washington DC, April 28, 2015.

⁴¹⁶ For a full discussion of the Japan’s “Gulf War Shock”, see for example: Yoichi Funabashi, “Japan and the New World Order” in *Foreign Affairs*, (Winter 1991-1992); Andrew Bennett, Joseph Lepgold, and Danny Unger, “Burden-Sharing in the Persian Gulf War” in *International Organization*, Vol.48, Issue 1 (Winter 1994), pp.39-75; Courtney Purrington, “Tokyo’s Policy Responses During the Gulf War and the Impact of the “Iraqi Shock” in *Pacific Affairs*, Vol.65, No.2 (Summer, 1992), pp.161-181; Glenn Hook, *Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan* (London: Routledge, 1996).

of \$13 billion to the Gulf War were seen as “too little, too late”⁴¹⁷. In both cases, Japanese FPEs realized that Washington increasingly expected more from Japan, expecting it to step up its global and regional contributions to security. To their surprise, Japanese FPEs found that the country lacked the military capabilities⁴¹⁸ to do so. It had simply not built the logistics capabilities to operate forces outside of Japan – even in a humanitarian or peacekeeping role. As the incoming Clinton administration came in, Japanese observers were concerned that the end of the Cold War would highlight trade issues between the two allies.

Although, President Clinton had sought to reassure Japan’s Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, that “there is no more important relationship for the United States than our alliance with Japan,” at their first meeting in 1993,⁴¹⁹ it was also clear to others – such as former US Ambassador to Japan Michael H. Armacost – that “trade frictions generated mistrust and resentment that threatened to contaminate our security relations”⁴²⁰. Indeed, in a telling sign of the weak state of the bilateral, Ambassador Armacost is said to have told a Japanese delegation prior its mission to Washington DC that “there was no point in Mr. Miyazawa’s visiting Washington unless he had something specific to offer.”⁴²¹

The alliance with Australia also suffered during this period. The Keating government in Canberra was also seen as less interested in the Australia-US bilateral, preferring instead to focus on multilateral institutions in Southeast Asia⁴²². Tomohiko Satake notes that this preference revealed itself in the number of joint exercises between Australia’s Defense Force (ADF) and its neighbors. In the early 90s, 38 percent of its exercises were with ASEAN defense forces, with only 29 percent were with US forces⁴²³. This lack of interest seemed to be reciprocated when neither Secretary of State Warren Christopher, nor Defense Secretary Les Aspin attended the Australian-US ministerial (AUSMIN) talks in 1993. Instead, DFAT was far more concerned with pursuing strong relations with ASEAN. Gareth

⁴¹⁷ Famously, the Kuwaiti Government took out an advert in the New York Times and Washington Post to thank countries that helped liberate their country, but omitted Japan.

⁴¹⁸ Tomohiko Satake, “The Origin of Trilateralism? The US-Japan-Australia Security Relations in the 1990s” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 11, (2015), pp.3.

⁴¹⁹ James D. Boys, *Clinton’s Grand Strategy: US Foreign Policy in a Post-Cold War World*, (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015) p.178.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Glen St. J. Barclay, “Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, January – June 1993”, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Volume 39, Issue 03, (December 1993), p.302.

⁴²² Desmond Ball, P. Kerr, *Presumptive Engagement: Australia’s Asia Pacific Policy in the 1990s*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1996), p.64.

⁴²³ Tomohiko Satake, “The Origin of Trilateralism? The US-Japan-Australia Security Relations in the 1990s” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.11 (2015), p.5.

Evans, Australia's Foreign Minister, pursued a "comprehensive engagement"⁴²⁴ on regional diplomacy, negotiating a peace in Cambodia, and playing a lead role in establishing the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). In a 1993 address to the ASEAN – Australian forum, Evans remarked that Australia was in the middle of a "remarkable transformation". The defence deal with Indonesia and Canberra's role in negotiating the Cambodia peace deal⁴²⁵ (1989-1991) suggested to Evans:

Our preparedness to risk our prestige in pursuit of a primary regional security goal, and to do so in the closest cooperation with our regional friends, especially Indonesia, [has] established a new type of Australia in the minds of nations of the region, an Australia putting the region first, staking out ambitious goals and pursuing them in a sustained and sophisticated way.⁴²⁶

There was an increasing sense of "drift" within elements of the military bureaucracy in all three countries, prompting fears of abandonment. Robin Sakoda, a DOD official remembers the mood after EASI: "What we found was the region was getting very nervous about that policy because they saw the US withdrawal from Asia as creating a vacuum, and the big concern and worry was 'who's going to fill that vacuum?' The US [was] giving a sign that indicates it is no longer committed to the region, and they want to withdrawal and go back home".⁴²⁷ The rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three American Marines in September 1995, was a low point for the alliance. As a result of this horrific incident, Secretary of Defense William Perry ordered the creation of a Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in November in order to minimize the political fallout and reduce the burden on the local community. Perry also instructed the DOD to carry out a review of the US presence in Japan and establish a minimum baseline for US troops to defend Japan.

The 1995 East Asia Strategy Report (EASR), or *Nye Report*⁴²⁸, named after the prominent Harvard academic who was then serving as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs sought to reassure Japanese and Australian policymakers and redefine the alliance system. In terms

⁴²⁴ "Australia's Regional Security," Tabling Statement by Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministerial Statement on Australia's Regional Security, The Senate, 6 December, 1989, available at: http://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1989/061289_fm_regionalsecurity.pdf (accessed December 7, 2016).

⁴²⁵ Gareth Evans, "Peacekeeping Lessons Learned: Australia in Cambodia," Gareth Evans Website, available at: <http://www.gevans.org/speeches/speech530.html> (accessed December 7, 2016).

⁴²⁶ The 1993 Heindorff Memorial Lecture by Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs, "The Challenge of Asia for Australian Foreign Policy," to the Queensland Branch of the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Brisbane, Wednesday 15 September 1993. Available at: http://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1993/150593_fm_thechallengeofasia.pdf (accessed on October 27, 2016).

⁴²⁷ Anonymous (Senior US Department of Defense official), Interview with author, Washington DC.

⁴²⁸ East Asia Strategic Report, Introduction, Department of Defense, February 1995, <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPUS/19950227.O1E.html> (accessed January 5, 2016).

of addressing fears raised by the 1990 East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI)⁴²⁹, the EASR capped US troop reductions in the region at 100,000, and the 1997 National Security Strategy proclaimed that the “...Treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand and the Philippines, and our commitment to keeping approximately 100,000 US military personnel in the region, serve as the foundation for America’s continuing security role.”⁴³⁰ Nye also gained the help of two prominent Japan experts, M. Cronin and Michael J. Green, in writing a strategic paper, *Redefining the US-Japan Alliance*⁴³¹, which sought to expand the remit of the alliance to peacekeeping, sea lane defense and nonproliferation. Green, a noted Japan expert, would later come to play a prominent role in the creation of the US-Japan-Australia trilateral during the Bush administration.

On April 15th, 1996, SACO issued an interim report, which in turn fed into the Joint Security Declaration (JSD)⁴³², a key document in restoring the strength of the US-Japan alliance. This was announced by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto in the Rose Garden of the White House, two days later. The JSD described an alliance that would operate “bilaterally, regionally, and globally”⁴³³, and combined elements of the American EASR and the November 1995 Japanese *National Defense Program Outline* (NDPO)⁴³⁴. It was the first step redefining the US-Japan Alliance as a regional force, opening up areas of operation “in the areas surrounding Japan”, which might have “an important influence on the peace and security of Japan.” It established that the alliance was also a provider of public goods, a bold decision that put both states on the trajectory to trilateral and minilateral security cooperation with states around the region.

Perhaps most importantly – in terms of the future trilateral with Australia – was the opportunity presented by the 1990 Cambodia Peace conference, in which Japan committed to the deployment of more than 1,800 peacekeeping troops to Cambodia for noncombatant duties. This put Japanese troops in the field with Australian troops for the very first time⁴³⁵. Internally, Japanese FPEs argued that it was time to move beyond a purely defensive posture and advocated peacekeeping cooperation across the region.

⁴²⁹ Anonymous (Senior US Department of Defense official), Interview with author, Washington DC.

⁴³⁰ A National Security Strategy for a New Century, May 1997 at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1997.pdf> (accessed on 20 Feb, 2016), p.27.

⁴³¹ Patrick M. Cronin, Michael J. Green, *Redefining the US-Japan Alliance: Tokyo’s National Defense Program*, McNair Paper 31, (Washington DC: National Defense University, 1994).

⁴³² The Joint Declaration of Security – Alliance for the 21st Century, 17 April 1996: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/security.html> (accessed March 23, 2016).

⁴³³ Anonymous (Senior US Department of Defense official), Interview with author, Washington DC.

⁴³⁴ Matake Kamiya, “Nichibei Domei no Tenbo: Beihoku no me [Perspective for the Japan-US Alliance: An American Perspective]”, *Kokusai Mondai*, Vol.491, pp.34-49.

⁴³⁵ Antony L. Smith, Japan’s Relations with Southeast Asia: the Strong Silent Type” in Yoichiro Sato, Satu Limaye, (eds.,) *Japan in Dynamic Asia: Coping with the New Security Challenges* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), pp.185-6.

5.6. The China Factor

As this thesis has argued, the rise of China plays an integral part in driving trilateral cooperation among the three allies. Tracing the arc of US-China relations and the domestic debate in the United States, there is evidence that American FPEs were splitting in two very different factions. For much of the Clinton Presidency, however, one might argue that America's China policy was firmly *Continentalist*. This was in keeping with the economic prioritization of the Clinton administration's first term and could be seen in Assistant Secretary of State for Asian and Pacific Affairs Winston Lord's confirmation hearings in the Senate. There he argued that Chinese leaders were gambling that they could liberalize the economy, while maintaining a closed political system. Lord advocated a long-term "nuanced" approach of waiting for this to fail⁴³⁶. A brief effort in May, 1993, by President Clinton to link human rights with China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) Trade Status was hastily dropped after garnering a strong reaction in Beijing and across the region⁴³⁷. The US 1994 National Security Strategy reiterated this optimistic engagement policy vis a vis Beijing:

We are developing a broader engagement with the PRC that will encompass both our economic and strategic interests. That policy is best reflected in our decision to delink China's Most Favored Nation status from its record on human rights. We are also working to facilitate China's development of a more open, market economy that accepted international trade practices. Given its growing economic potential and already sizable military force, it is essential that China not become a security threat to the region. To that end, we are strongly promoting China's participation in regional security mechanisms to reassure its neighbours and assuage its own security concerns.⁴³⁸

Despite this, mistrust continued to affect the relationship. The 1989 Tiananmen Massacre had reminded American policymakers – particularly in Congress – that China had a values-system ideologically opposed to that of liberal democracy. There was also concern that Chinese growth was such that it might one day threaten and even eclipse American power⁴³⁹. There were – even in the

⁴³⁶ William Hyland, *Clinton's World: Remaking American Foreign Policy*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1999). p.111.

⁴³⁷ Stephen Sherlock, "Australia's Relations with China: What's the Problem?" *Current Issues Brief* 23, (1996-7) http://www.aph.gov.au/sitecore/content/Home/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Publications_Archive/CIB/CIB9697/97cib23 (accessed September 30, 2016); Glen St. J. Barclay, "Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, January – June 1993", *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Volume 39, Issue 03, (December 1993), p.302.

⁴³⁸ A *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, July 1994 at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1994.pdf> (accessed on 23 March, 2013), p.24.

⁴³⁹ Michael C. Oksenberg, Michael D. Swaine, Daniel C. Lynch, *"The Chinese Future"* (Honolulu, HI: Pacific Council on International Policy and RAND Center for Asia Pacific Policy, 1997).

1990s – growing *Mahanian* concerns about the future of China, which were taken into consideration when American policymakers thought about the future of the American alliance system. There was an alleged attempt by the Chinese Embassy to manipulate American politics in the 1996 campaign finance controversy⁴⁴⁰. Finally, there began a growing awareness of the build-up and modernization of China's armed forces throughout this period. These concerns about China revealed themselves in the “Red Team-Blue Team Debate”⁴⁴¹ which pervaded Washington DC during the period and showed that the “China threat” was being revived among some American foreign policy elites. Having said that, the majority of policymakers sought policies that would shape China's choices, rather than contain it. As a temperature take of the mood in Washington, it should be noted that all of the presidential candidates in the 1997 election campaign remained positive about China, focusing on trade-relations, constructive engagement, and inclusion of Beijing into international institutions.

Despite this, Chinese FPEs increasingly viewed the US-China relationship in competitive terms⁴⁴² and one can see the growth of the security dilemma from this period. From Beijing's perspective, there was a significant shift between 1993 – when it worried about an American withdrawal and possible Japanese remilitarization – and 1995 – when it became concerned with the newly reinvigorated alliance between Tokyo and Washington. This combined with a growing Tokyo-Taipei relationship seemed to point to an anti-Beijing coalition to contain Chinese power, and directly struck the Communist Party at one of its most sensitive spots: the province of Taiwan, which is the link between the Party's legitimacy to rule and its mission to unite the nation⁴⁴³. As will be shown, the latter half of the Clinton Presidency would see this security dilemma blossom into a full-blown crisis, and would taint US-China relations and impact overall regional security.

5.7. The Second Term of the Clinton Administration (1997-2000)

During its second term, the Clinton administration began to shift away from the optimistic approach toward regional integration and inclusive multilateralism. As the crisis with North Korea deepened in the first term, and Sino-Taiwan relations began to approach crisis, the administration hurriedly returned to the Cold War-era prioritization of the Asian alliances. At the same time, Continentalists

⁴⁴⁰ Bob Woodward, Brian Duffy, “Chinese Embassy Role in Contributions Probed” *Washington Post*, February 13, 1997, Campaign Finance.

⁴⁴¹ For a discussion around the “Red Team, Blue Team” debates, see for example: Robert G. Kaiser, Steven Mufson, “‘Blue Team’ Draws a Hard Line on Beijing: Action on Hill Reflects Group’s Clout,” *The Washington Post*, February, 22, 2000; J. Michael Waller, “Blue Team takes on Red China” *Insight on the News*, (June 4, 2001), (accessed February 10, 2016); Eftimiaides, Nicholas, (Founder: “Blue Team” 1994), Personal interview by author, London, UK, February 10, 2016.

⁴⁴² Chu Shulong, “The Chinese Thinking on Asia-Pacific Regional Security Order”, Paper Delivered to a Seminar at the East-West Center, Honolulu, May 2001, p.11.

⁴⁴³ Christopher R. Hughes, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism: National Identity and Status in International Society* (New York: Routledge, 1997). p.1-19.

inside the administration – and the President himself – continued to see the engagement of China as a central policy package. Dropping regional integration from the list of priorities, the new Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, reiterated the administration’s strategy of engagement with both US allies in Asia and China in her testimony to Congress, saying, “Our priorities here are to maintain the strength of our core alliances while successfully managing our multi-faceted relationship with China.”⁴⁴⁴ Mahanians – like Joseph Nye – inside the Department of Defense swiftly began undoing or reversing the “peace dividend” policies that had characterized the first administration. Regional allies’ push-back on the policy, combined with a number of regional crises, induced a period of reflection in the Department of Defense. The 1995 East Asia Strategy Report (EASR)⁴⁴⁵, had capped EASI-planned troop reductions in the region at 100,000, and the 1997 National Security Strategy proclaimed that the “...Treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand and the Philippines, and our commitment to keeping approximately 100,000 US military personnel in the region, serve as the foundation for America’s continuing security role.”⁴⁴⁶ Furthermore, changes in government in both Tokyo and Canberra, favoured this *Mahanian* return to alliances.

All of these were important, but the October 2000 report *The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership*⁴⁴⁷, or so-called Armitage-Nye report, was bipartisan in nature and was to have the most influence on the future of US alliance policymaking. It was seen by many in Washington as the guide to future alliance cooperation, and marks the rise of the *Mahanian* perspective to the centre of US policymaking in the Asia Pacific and opened the first step to US-Japan minilateralism and Australia-Japan bilateral cooperation. Many of the authors of this ‘Mahanian manifesto’ –Richard Armitage, Michael J. Green, and James Kelly – would go on to be appointed to influential policy positions in the Bush administration and would play direct roles in networking of US alliances, including the creation of the trilateral. Clintonian *Mahanians* like Joseph Nye, served in the Clinton administration, but continued to have a heavy influence over Bush-era Mahanians. Other Democratic Party Mahanians who contributed to the Armitage-Nye Report– like Kurt M. Campbell – would go on to play influential roles in the Obama administration, working on alliances in the Asia Pacific. In essence, the document can be seen as a reaction to the Clinton first administration’s focus on China, and an effort to halt the slide in US-Japan alliance relations. “In the aftermath of the shared

⁴⁴⁴ Nomination of Madeline Korbel Albright, of the District of Columbia, to be Secretary of State, Congressional Record Volume 143, Number 5, (Wednesday, January 22, 1997), available at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CREC-1997-01-22/html/CREC-1997-01-22-pt1-PgS590-3.htm> (accessed on October 27, 2016).

⁴⁴⁵ East Asia Strategic Report, Introduction, Department of Defense, February 1995, <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPUS/19950227.O1E.html> (accessed January 5, 2016).

⁴⁴⁶ A National Security Strategy for a New Century, May 1997 at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1997.pdf> (accessed on 20 Feb, 2016), p27.

⁴⁴⁷ Joseph Nye, Richard Armitage, et al, “The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership”, *INSS Special Report*, National Defense University, (October 2000), pp.1-7.

victory [of the Cold War], however, the course of US-Japan relations has wandered, losing its focus and coherence – notwithstanding the real threats and potential risks facing both partners.”⁴⁴⁸ The report went on to link the alliance to deterrence of future threats in the region, “Because the stakes are so high in Asia, it is urgent that the United States and Japan develop a common perception and approach regarding their relationship in the 21st century. The potential for conflict in Asia is lowered dramatically by a visible and ‘real’ US-Japan defense relationship.”⁴⁴⁹ Interestingly, the report calls for an alliance modelled on that which the US shared with the UK and notes that “intelligence sharing with Japan contrasts sharply with the increasing close relationships we have enjoyed with our NATO partners”⁴⁵⁰. Given the fact that Australia was a Five Eyes intelligence partner⁴⁵¹ with the United States, this focus on intelligence was prophetic.

As this shift was taking place, the Clinton administration was still attempting to ameliorate the post-Taiwan Straits Crisis security dilemma with Beijing with an unprecedented week-long trip of the President to China in the summer of 1998. However, bilateral tensions continued to increase over the NATO intervention in the former Yugoslavia, culminating in the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. The Red Team / Blue Team debates continued to debate the China threat, with a small victory going to the Blue Team when it produced the 1999 Congressional *Cox Report*⁴⁵², highlighting Chinese espionage inside the United States. North Korea represented both an opportunity and a challenge, as funding the 1994 Agreed Framework became nearly impossible with a newly-elected Republican Congress. However, the various problem-states in the region also gave Japan the opportunity to partner with other allies, working with Australia on peacekeeping missions in East Timor and as Tokyo agreed to work with Washington and Seoul within the framework of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO)⁴⁵³. The US-Japan trade dispute decreased in intensity as Washington began to realize the full scale of Japanese economic woes. Throughout the second administration, American policymakers switched from criticizing Japanese protectionism to encouraging Japan to make the necessary structural reforms to revive the economy. Indeed, this was a defining feature of President Clinton’s Tokyo visit in 1998. The second term saw a friendlier relationship between the US and Australia, as the incoming John Howard government revealed its pro-Alliance leanings. This positive relationship was to have direct benefits as the two worked together

⁴⁴⁸ Joseph Nye, Richard Armitage, et al, “The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership”, *INSS Special Report*, National Defense University, (October 2000), p.2.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., p.3.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., p.4.

⁴⁵¹ The so-called Five Eyes network, UK-Canada-New Zealand-Australia, represents the US’ closest intelligence partners.

⁴⁵² Congressional Select Committee on US National Security, *Report of the US National Security and Military Concerns with the People’s Republic of China*, (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999).

⁴⁵³ This organization was not a trilateral per se, and has had up 13 member states, and gained funding from the was funded by the EU and other bodies.

closely on the East Timor Crisis in 1999. In the end, Australia carried out the UN-authorized mission (INTERFET), but had US naval and logistics backing.

5.8. Moves toward Trilateralism

In the wake of the downturn in the alliance, Japanese FPEs began to view new alliance structures and behavior more favorably. First, the US was not only encouraging, but adamant about promoting a new security relationship, which gave Tokyo a stronger voice in regional security. Second, there was cross-party support for the evolution of Japanese security policy as it combined the “interwoven influences of the US alliance, UN-centric policies, and regional interests balanced and complemented by military dispatch”.⁴⁵⁴ This allowed for growing cooperation between Australia and Japan on “soft” regional security issues, and included the aforementioned PKO cooperation in Cambodia and then East Timor. These missions were critical in strengthening “what Australian diplomats characterized as an underdeveloped or “weak third leg of Australia-Japan security relations.”⁴⁵⁵ For one Japanese diplomat, it was clear that Japan-Australia bilateral cooperation always had a trilateral element to it, saying, “...when we talk about strengthening the relationship with Australia, that is always something to do with our relationship with the United States. So, these days, because our alliance has been strengthened, and we try to be more operationally integrated, seen from the US side, of course Australia and Japan should be in the room”.⁴⁵⁶

The first trilateral interaction took place at this time in the form of military exercises. Inaugurated in 1999, the Cope North air exercises involved all three air forces taking part in large scale military scenarios, and remain an annual feature of trilateral military cooperation⁴⁵⁷. A second area was the development of the trilateral model on the Korean peninsula. Despite the failure of trilateral cooperation to resolve either the North Korea nuclear issue or Japan-Korean tensions, growing institutionalization provided a ready framework for future alliance cooperation. Third, the relationship between China and Japan deteriorated dramatically, despite the best efforts of the Hashimoto government to keep things pragmatic and based around the Tokyo’s engagement strategy. The impact this had on Japan and its willingness to partner further with US allies became an increasingly important factor for trilateralism⁴⁵⁸.

⁴⁵⁴ Garren Mullo, *Japan Self-Defense Forces’ Overseas Dispatch Operations in the 1990s: Effective International Actors?* Thesis submitted for PhD (Newcastle: Newcastle University, 2011), p.2.

⁴⁵⁵ William Tow, “The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue: Facilitating Community-Building or Revising Containment?” *NBR Special Report*: December, 2008.

⁴⁵⁶ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁴⁵⁷ Joshua Gray, “Cope North 2013 Kicks off on Guam,” *Pacific Air Forces – PACOM Air Force*, US, February 04, 2013.

⁴⁵⁸ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy 2010-2012) “The Evolution of the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral,” Address made at the Simpson Center, April 16, 2015.

5.8.1. The Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group

By 1999, the US-Japan-Korean variant of the trilateral had become one of the most exciting features of American foreign policy in northeast Asia. US officials described the intricate diplomacy required to come up with the Agreed Framework as follows: “Managing the Korean crisis felt like playing a multi-tiered chess game on overlapping boards. It required dealing with the North, the South, China, Japan, the IAEA, the UN, the non-aligned movement, Congress, the press, and others.”⁴⁵⁹ Minilateral approaches seemed to suggest themselves to resolve this tangle. The US and its partners established the Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO) as a means of following through with the commitments made in the Agreed Framework⁴⁶⁰, but quickly discovered that mutual suspicion, technical difficulties, and domestic politics threatened from all sides. The trilateral talks between Korea, Japan, and the United States became “four party” talks, with China occasionally joining from 1997. In November 1998, former US Defense Secretary William Perry assumed the role as US North Korea policy coordinator and special advisor to the President and the secretary of state. As part of preparation for the role, he consulted with Japanese and Korean representatives. When he suggested that more formal and regular trilateral talks might be useful, both countries readily agreed and the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) was born.

As with the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, part of the driving logic of the trilateral derived from the intra-alliance security dilemma. South Korea and Japan were unable to work closely when regional security was relaxed, but as regional tensions grew over North Korea’s nuclear programme and missile tests, abandonment fears drove both to set aside their differences. They realized that aside from diplomatic considerations, there were important intelligence-sharing and military imperatives, which might arise if hostilities broke out on the peninsula which required closer trilateral cooperation. US Forces Korea (USFK) would rely heavily on Japan for logistics and as well as the quick deployment of US men and materiel stationed there. This included a carrier battle group and some twenty thousand marines. There were also significant numbers of Japanese and American civilians who would have to be evacuated in case of war.

The first TCOG meeting took place in Honolulu on April 25, 1999, prior to a US-DPRK bilateral that would take place in Berlin on November 15th⁴⁶¹. Initially, Perry led the American delegation, though

⁴⁵⁹ Joel S. Wit, Daniel B. Poneman, Robert L. Gallucci, *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), p.193.

⁴⁶⁰ Victor Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, (New York: Ecco, 2012), p.289.

⁴⁶¹ Victor Cha, “Japan-ROK Relations: DPRK Dialogue: A little Luck the Fourth Time Round?” in Ralph Cossa, Rebecca Goodgame Ebinger (eds.) *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 4th Quarter, (January 2000), p.68.

Wendy Sherman from the DOS assumed the lead thereafter. Lim Dong-won, a top advisor for President Kim Dae-jung initially led the Korean delegation, while the Japanese delegation was initially led by Ryozo Kato, the deputy vice-minister for foreign policy and director general of the Foreign Policy Bureau. Kato, a close friend of US Statesman, Richard Armitage, would go on to play a founding role in the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, as will be described in the next chapter. Interestingly, the format for the TCOG bears more than a striking resemblance to the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, with the foreign ministries leading, but welcoming in officials from the NSC, the OSD, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Korean Ministry of National Defense, and the Japanese Defense Agency. Jim Schoff has argued that while the TCOG never became “a common negotiating platform with North Korea”⁴⁶², it did provide trilateral solidarity, and became an important planning function for KEDO-related issues. American FPEs “saw the TCOG as an opportunity to get Seoul and Tokyo involved in the US policy-making process on board with initiatives early”⁴⁶³. In the end, TCOG as an institution began to suffer from internal tensions in the Agreed Framework, and inter-agency tensions inside the new Bush administration. The trilateral had met in 1999 eight times. By 2001, this had dropped down to four. By 2003, the meetings were no longer labeled “TCOG”, and had stopped issuing press statements, and gradually morphed into “a sort of informal caucus among allies within the so-called six-party talks on North Korea’s nuclear weapons programs”⁴⁶⁴.

5.9. Resurgence of the US-Australian Alliance

The late 1990s saw a significant tack in Australian politics, as the supposedly Asia-focused, “multilateralist”⁴⁶⁵ Paul Keating was replaced by an openly pro-American leader, “bilateralist”, John Howard in the 1996 Election. The campaign had been a bitter one, with Keating remarking that “Australia’s continuing emergence as a successful partner and player in Asia”⁴⁶⁶ was at risk by a Howard government. As a result of these remarks, Howard’s new Foreign affairs spokesman and future Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, stressed that despite its reorientation from an Asia-focus to a Washington-focus, “closer engagement with Asia would be our highest foreign policy priority.”⁴⁶⁷ The 1997 White Paper *In the National Interest* stressed Australia’s bilateral relationships over its multilateral ones, particularly that with the United States. This section on the United States was

⁴⁶² Jim Schoff, “First Interim Report: The Evolution of the TCOG as a Diplomatic Tool” (Cambridge MA: The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 2004), p.12.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., p.11.

⁴⁶⁴ James L. Schoff, Tools for Trilateralism: Improving US-Japan-Korea Cooperation to Manage Complex Contingencies (Dulles Virginia, Potomac Books, Inc. 2005), p.vii

⁴⁶⁵ The new Australian White Paper, *In the National Interest*, made a commitment to focus on bilateral relationships, eschewing its predecessors preference for multilateral ‘grand constructs’. John Howard, National Press Club Address, Canberra, October 1, 1998.

⁴⁶⁶ Michael Wesley, *The Howard Paradox: Australian Diplomacy in Asia 1996-2006* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2007), p.8.

⁴⁶⁷ Michael Wesley, *The Howard Paradox: Australian Diplomacy in Asia 1996-2006* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2007), p.8-9.

directly followed by a telling section on the Howard governments ambitions on Japan: “Over the next fifteen years, Japan is likely to become a more important defence partner of Australia as it works, with the framework of a firm alliance with the United States, gradually to assume greater responsibility for its own security and to develop closer defence links within the region...this is a logical extension of the close partnership between the two countries and of our shared perspectives on regional security.”⁴⁶⁸ US-Australia ties experienced the first surge in 1996 during the Taiwan Straits crisis, when Canberra urged restraint on Beijing, and offered public support for the Clinton administration’s decision to deploy aircraft carrier groups to the Straits⁴⁶⁹. Closer ties seemed cemented at the US-Australia Defence talks (AUSMIN), with the US sending one of the most senior delegations to the event, including Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Defence Secretary William Perry, and Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili.⁴⁷⁰ In the 1996 Joint Security Declaration on Security, also known as the Sydney Statement, the two sides agreed to extend the lease on the Pine Gap Joint Defence Facility, to pursue closer training, stage a major joint exercise in early 1997, and reaffirmed the centrality of the alliance to each, and confirmed that both would cooperate regionally and globally in their “common security interests”⁴⁷¹. Interestingly, Secretary Christopher noted that both countries saw “eye-to-eye on the importance of the US-Japan Alliance as well as...China’s integration as a strong and constructive member of the international community.”⁴⁷²

Howard had inherited from Paul Keating one strong new relationship with an Asian ally: Japan. In 1995, he met Prime Minister Murayama and the two issued the Joint Declaration on Australia-Japan Partnership. Howard’s cabinet looked to take this relationship even further, holding their first political-military and military-military talks in Tokyo in February 1996. In a speech at the Australia-Japan Symposium in May 1997, Foreign Minister Downer explicitly linked the US-Japan Joint Declaration to the AUSMIN Joint Declaration on Security, noting “the new patterns in the power relationships and security interests of countries in the region”. Australia and Japan, he continued, are “natural partners”, which “both recognize that regional security and stability depends on an increasingly

⁴⁶⁸ *In the National Interest: Australia’s Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper*, p.61 <http://australianpolitics.com/1997/08/31/in-the-national-interest-foreign-policy-white-paper.html> (accessed September 30, 2016).

⁴⁶⁹ Ian McLachlan, Minister for Defence, ‘Australian Defence Policy After the Year 2000’, *Address to the SDSC/ISS Conference on The New Security Agenda in the Asia-Pacific Region*, Canberra, 3 May 1996.

⁴⁷⁰ C. Brown, “Australian Foreign Policy: January – June 1996,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol.42 (1996), pp.339.

⁴⁷¹ *Australia – United States Ministerial Consultations 1996 Sydney Statement: Joint Security Declaration*, available at <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/united-states-of-america/ausmin/Pages/australia-united-states-ministerial-consultations-1996-sydney-statement.aspx> (accessed on October 27, 2016).

⁴⁷² US Department of State, Office of the Spokesman, Joint US-Australian Press Conference with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, Secretary of Defense William Perry, and Australian Defense Minister Ian McLachlan at the Close of AUSMIN Talks, July 27, 1996 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dossec/1996/960727dossec.html> (accessed September 30, 2016).

complex web of linkages at the bilateral, sub-regional and regional level”⁴⁷³. Canberra welcomed Tokyo’s inclusion as a regional security partner, and saw any overlapping functions between the US-Japan Alliance and the US-Australia alliance as necessary to regional security. The first proper peacekeeping mission in which Japanese and Australian forces co-deployed and cooperated was Cambodia, however this was followed by the UNTAET peacekeeping mission in East Timor (1999-2002), which went well and was considered “very natural”⁴⁷⁴ and increased trust for Australia among Japanese diplomats⁴⁷⁵. According to Murray MacLean, Australian Ambassador to Tokyo in the mid-2000s, the Australian-led mission and subsequent UNMISET, “presented both with good opportunities to work together. They were the beginnings of confidence-building, inter-operability, and working together.”⁴⁷⁶

Regional dynamics were beginning to see-saw during this period, and to some extent, the Asian Financial Crisis played a role in fostering closer trilateral discussions. Positive feelings about China among Japanese FPEs had already experienced a dramatic decline in 1995 after Beijing tested a nuclear weapon at Lop Nur⁴⁷⁷. However, in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis both Australian and Japanese diplomats realized that Chinese initiatives and preferences were getting far more traction than their own among Southeast Asian states, while Americans felt that they were being left out⁴⁷⁸. In the wake of a December 1997 ASEAN+3 meeting, in which ASEAN states invited Korea, Japan, and China to participate in crisis talks, Japan sought to use the occasion to promote regional integration. Japanese diplomats sought – unsuccessfully at the time – to enlarge the format to ASEAN+6 (including fellow democracies Australia, New Zealand, and India). One senior Japanese diplomat remembers, “Essentially, that was a political process and our motivation came from the idea of regional integration...What worried us at that time was the emergence of China in the region. And it was very clear that most of the Southeast Asian countries were developing countries and were hurt by the economic crisis, and IMF austerity measures were very unpopular in many of those countries. If we were unable to show an alternative vision for the future, there was a real danger that those countries would become anti-Western. Anti-democratic...well, democracy was not contested at that time, but economic issues were very important for many of those Asian countries for very obvious reasons, it

⁴⁷³ Alexander Downer, “‘Natural Partners’ – Australia and Japan- Past, Present, and Future,” Address by Alexander Downer, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs to the 20th Australia Japan Relations Symposium, Canberra, 26 May, 1997, available at: http://foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/1997/downer_ajrs.html (accessed on October 27, 2016).

⁴⁷⁴ Kawahara, Setsuko (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Professor of Peacekeeping, Hitotsubashi University) interview with author, January, 2015.

⁴⁷⁵ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁴⁷⁶ MacLean, Murray (Australia’s Ambassador to Japan: 2004-2011) interview with author, March 2015.

⁴⁷⁷ Michael J. Green, *Japan’s Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power*, (Washington DC: Palgrave, 2003), pp.80-81.

⁴⁷⁸ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat), interview with author, Tokyo.

was just after the Asian Crisis. The element of democracy, free speech, and those democratic values were emphasized to differentiate ourselves from China.”⁴⁷⁹ In the process of formulating the trilateral, regional integration played a minor but important role in mobilizing Australian, Japanese, and American diplomats to start talking with each other about regional dynamics.

5.10. US-China Relations in the late 1990s

The Taiwan Crisis of 1995-6 had a deep impact on US FPEs during the second-term, though changes within the Clinton White House were less apparent. The administration’s policy on China was still aspirational, forward-looking, and might be described as *Continentalist*. In a joint statement issued during President Jang Zemin’s 1997 visit to Washington, the two agreed that “the two Presidents are determined to build toward a constructive *strategic partnership* between the United States and China...”⁴⁸⁰ As laid out in the 1997 National Security Strategy (NSS), this still seemed overridingly optimistic and inclusive, indicating the administration had not fundamentally altered course on its neoliberal strategy of binding China into global liberal institutions and norms, but it did include a new desire for China to behave “responsibly”. The new NSS stated: “There is an overarching US interest in China’s emergence as a stable, open, secure and peaceful state. The prospects for peace and prosperity in Asia depend heavily on China’s role as a responsible member of the international community.”⁴⁸¹ This linkage to responsible behavior was emphasized again by the administration and again by Senator Feinstein in the Foreign Relations Committee⁴⁸² and traces the arc of Robert Zoellick’s “responsible stakeholder” concept over a decade later. In October 1997, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Stanley Roth, stated at the World Economic Forum: “We want China to take its place as an active and responsible member of the international community.”⁴⁸³ Despite this, however, there were growing signs that American FPEs were raising their threat assessment of China. This occurred across political party lines, as evidenced by the 1999 Congressional *Cox Report*⁴⁸⁴, which

⁴⁷⁹ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat), interview with author, Tokyo.

⁴⁸⁰ China-US Joint Statement, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China to the United States of America, available at <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgx/zywj/t36259.htm> (accessed on October 6, 2016).

⁴⁸¹ A National Security Strategy for a New Century, May 1997 at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1997.pdf> (accessed on 20 Feb, 2016).

⁴⁸² During the nomination of Secretary of State Madeline Albright, in 1997, Senator Feinstein stated, “...the United States must build *our most important*, but largely undeveloped, bilateral relationship – that with the People’s Republic of China – into one of partnership and cooperation in our many areas of mutual interest.” [italics added] Nomination of Madeline Korbel Albright, of the District of Columbia, to be Secretary of State, Congressional Record Volume 143, Number 5, (Wednesday, January 22, 1997), available at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CREC-1997-01-22/html/CREC-1997-01-22-pt1-PgS590-3.htm> (accessed on October 27, 2016).

⁴⁸³ Stanley O. Roth, “US-China Relations on the Eve of the Summit,” World Economic Forum, Hong Kong, October 14, 1997, at http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/971014_roth_china.html (accessed February 14, 2016).

⁴⁸⁴ Congressional Select Committee on US National Security, *Report of the US National Security and Military Concerns with the People’s Republic of China*, (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999).

revealed what many thought as unacceptable levels of defence industrial espionage by China inside the United States.

It could also be seen within the defence community, particularly inside the Pentagon “think tank”, the Office of Net Assessment, where Andrew Marshall, a prominent strategist and influential figure on the DOD’s long-range precision-strike capabilities was starting to voice concern about Chinese systems that might target American carriers, “We [at ONA] were trying to point out that aircraft carriers were going to become increasingly vulnerable over time...It was...in the mid-1990s that we became aware of the Chinese-specific program [to target carriers]⁴⁸⁵. His conceptualization of China’s anti-access strategies would lead directly to mainstream American political leaders voicing concern about China, with Pat Buchanan, staking a hawkish campaign position during the 1999 Presidential election, “We must neither ignore nor isolate China, but we cannot embrace as a strategic partner an expansionist power that perverts our elections, plunders our nuclear arsenal, and targets our cities. China’s ongoing oppression of women, Christians, Tibetans & political dissidents is an affront to American values, but we appease them instead of shaming the regime.”⁴⁸⁶

The battle lines were not always drawn so clearly, when it came to how American elites viewed China. At times, “Blue Team” supporters – that’s to say those who viewed China as a threat – also worked hard for the approval of permanent MFN trade status for China, because they believed that economic liberalization would weaken the Communist Party’s grip on Chinese society. In the run up to the 2000 vote on bringing China into the WTO, House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey stated: “I consider the government of China to be dangerous, not only to the people of China, but at least to all peoples of that region,” before adding that he hoped China’s accession to the WTO would help extend “freedom through commerce to the Chinese people”⁴⁸⁷

These apparent contradictions were brushed aside as Clinton promised that China’s accession would ameliorate future tensions between the two: “If you believe in a future of greater openness and freedom, you ought to be for this agreement. If you believe in greater prosperity for the American people, you certainly should be for this agreement. If you believe in a future of peace and security for Asia, and the world, you should be for this agreement.”⁴⁸⁸ In 1995, President Clinton told President

⁴⁸⁵ Nina Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: US Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia,” *International Security*, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016), pp.45-88.

⁴⁸⁶ Source: www.GoPatGo.org/ “Issues: China: Our MFN?” Jun 12, 1999.

⁴⁸⁷ Robert G. Kaiser, Steven Mufson, “‘Blue Team’ Draws a Hard Line on Beijing: Action on Hill Reflects Group’s Clout,” *Washington Post*, February, 22, 2000.

⁴⁸⁸ C-Span, Speech by the President of the United States, Johns Hopkins SAIS, William Jefferson Clinton, May 9, 2000.

Jiang that “a stable, open and prosperous China – in other words, a strong China – is in our interest. We welcome China to the great power table. But great powers also have great responsibilities.”⁴⁸⁹ Despite mutual assurances, however, concerns on both sides of the US-China relationship grew during this period.

5.11. The Security Dilemma of the Taiwan Crisis

Thomas Christensen has written how the Taiwan Crisis exacerbated the security dilemma: “One major catalyst of Chinese concerns in the period between the issuing of the Nye Report in early 1995 and the Clinton-Hashimoto Communique in April 1996, was the notion that changes in the US-Japan Alliance could easily facilitate US intervention in a Taiwan contingency.”⁴⁹⁰ When Taiwan’s President Lee Teng-hui was granted a US visa to address his alma mater at Cornell University in June 1995, Chinese fears crystallized into military action. In July and December 1995, and March 1996, the People’s Liberation Army held surface and missile exercises in the vicinity of Taiwan. Reacting to the missiles exercises, Washington dispatched one carrier group in 1995, then two to the Taiwan Straits in March 1996. Sino-US relations seemed to hit rock-bottom, when Deputy Chief of PLA General Staff, Xiong Guangkai told Assistant Secretary of Defense Chas Freeman, “In the 1950s, you three times threatened nuclear strikes on China, and you could do that because we couldn’t hit back. Now we can. So, you are not going to threaten us again because, in the end, you care more about Los Angeles than Taipei.”⁴⁹¹ The 1997 Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review noted that “China has the potential to become a major military power in Asia” and between now and 2015, it was reasonable to “assume that one aspiring power will have both the desire and the means to challenge US interests militarily.” One can see the influence of the Taiwan Crisis in the following passage:

Deterrence in a crisis generally involves signaling the United States’ commitment to a particular country or expressing our national interest by enhancing our warfighting capability in the theater. Our ability to respond rapidly and substantially as a crisis develops can have a significant deterrence effect.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁹ Joseph S. Nye, “The Nye Report: Six Years Later,” Ellis S. Kraus, Benjamin Nyblade, (eds.) *Japan and North America: The Post War, Vol. 2* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p.146.

⁴⁹⁰ Thomas J. Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press, 2011), p.235.

⁴⁹¹ Barton Gellman, “US and China Nearly came to Blows in 1996,” *Washington Post*, 21 June 1998.

⁴⁹² The Department of Defense, 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, available at: <http://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/quadrennial/QDR1997.pdf?ver=2014-06-25-110930-527> (accessed December 11, 2016).

From the Chinese side, there was fear that closer US Japanese military cooperation made intervention in any Taiwan contingency more likely. It also meant that Japan was assuming more military responsibilities within the wider Asia Pacific.⁴⁹³ On the American side, there was concern among senior politicians that the balance of military power across the Straits was shifting as China added more and more missiles along the coasts opposite Taiwan, acquired Russian destroyers, and other weapons⁴⁹⁴. The possibility of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan began presenting itself as a possibility to American foreign policy elites⁴⁹⁵, and the White House still expressed confidence in American military power. In an interview, a senior advisor to President Clinton said of the time, “We didn’t think they could take Taiwan; I mean, we didn’t know if they’d try, but we thought the balance was in our favour. We simply had to message them and signal them without provoking an arms race. Could they take it? Perhaps. But if they couldn’t take it and keep it in less than 10 days, they’d lose.”⁴⁹⁶

Of growing importance to American FPEs was to gain the support of allies⁴⁹⁷ like Australia and Japan⁴⁹⁸ in the event of a contingency. American FPEs did not have to explain to their Japanese counterparts, the strategic importance of Taiwan to Tokyo. In an Issues and Insights report in 2001, Murata Koji notes that a Chinese embargo of the island would affect Japanese sea lanes. More importantly, he says, “Should Taiwan be forcefully unified with China...many Southeast Asian countries will perceive it as a US military retreat from Asia. This will undermine the credibility of US defense commitment in the region.”⁴⁹⁹ President Clinton’s enunciation of the three No’s⁵⁰⁰ on a 1998 trip to China seemed to be a concession designed to head off Taiwanese moves toward independence, while gaining Beijing’s support in other areas..

Ultimately, the security dilemma created by the Taiwan incident would dull the multilateral and neoliberal vision espoused by President Clinton in the first term. The Cold War was not necessarily back, but the event certainly reshaped expectations about the region. National Security Advisor

⁴⁹³ Thomas J. Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), p.226-227.

⁴⁹⁴ Jesse Helms, *Empire for Liberty: A Sovereign America and Her Moral Mission*, (Washington DC: Regnery Publishing Inc. 2001) pp.105-106.

⁴⁹⁵ Bernard D. Cole, “The Balance of Power in the Taiwan Straits”, *China Brief*, Vol. 4, Issue, 7, (March 31, 2000).

⁴⁹⁶ Anonymous, (Former NSC Staff) interview with author, Washington DC.

⁴⁹⁷ Paul Kreisbert, “Asian Responses to Pressures on Taiwan,” in Parris H. Chang, Martin L. Lasater (eds.,), *If China Crosses the Taiwan Strait – The International Response*, (New York: University Press of America, 1993), pp.82-93.

⁴⁹⁸ Greg Austin, Stuart Harris, “Chapter 4, Taiwan Between Japan and China”, in *Japan and Greater China: Political Economy and Military Power in the Asian Century* (London: Hurst & Company, 2001), pp. 119-140.

⁴⁹⁹ Koji Murata, “Chapter 11: The US-Japan Alliance and Taiwan,” in *The United States-Japan Strategic Dialogue: Beyond the Defense Guidelines: Policy Recommendations for a New Millennium*, Issues & Insights, Vol. 1, No.1 (May 2001), p.137.

⁵⁰⁰ Michael Y. M. Kau, “Clinton’s Three No’s Policy: A Critical Assessment,” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume VI, Issue 02 (Summer/Fall 1999), pp.16-17. The Three No’s include (1) No support for Taiwan independence, (2) No recognition of a separate Taiwanese Government; and (3) No Backing for Taiwanese membership of international organizations.

Antony Lake warned Beijing that an attack would result in “grave consequences.” The Administration even stated that the US “One-China” policy could be at risk, and Congress passed a resolution urging the administration to defend the island nation from Chinese invasion. Christensen describes the cycle of mistrust: “In order to dissuade Japan from active cooperation with the United States and to coerce Washington, China is increasing its coercive capacity against US bases in Japan with ballistic missiles and land-attack cruise missiles. Such Developments feed “China threat” theories in Japan”⁵⁰¹. This in turn provoked “an arms competition of sorts between Chinese offensive, coercive weapons on the one hand, and Taipei’s, Washington’s, and Tokyo’s defensive anti-coercion weapons on the other.”⁵⁰² Alliance managers in Washington, Tokyo, and Canberra noted the new reality.

5.12. Japan’s security policy-making structures

The second half of the 1990s, saw a resurgence in the US-Japan alliance. While the Taiwan Crisis of 1995-6 was not the only reason for this resurgence, it certainly gave the alliance new-found purpose and energy. Despite expectations, Japan did not adopt a neutral tone during the crisis. Japan’s Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda criticized China’s missile exercises as counter-productive⁵⁰³, while Ryozo Kato, head of the Asia Affairs Bureau, summoned the Chinese Counsellor, Zheng Xiangling, and called for restraint⁵⁰⁴. The MSDF stationed the *Chikusen*, a large helicopter cutter, 50 km north of Yonaguni, and Prime Minister sought contingency planning on evacuation of Japanese nationals, coastal safety measures, and rear-area support for US Forces. The 1997 Joint Security Declaration, signed by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, explicitly raised policy coordination on “situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan”⁵⁰⁵, code, many believed, for Taiwan. The Revised Guidelines used similar language noting the importance of “areas surrounding Japan that have an important influence on Japan’s peace and security.”

The 1996 Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation were instrumental in changing Japan’s defence structures in relation to other parts of the government. The calls for an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement (ACSA) date from these negotiations. Furthermore, the domestic position of the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) vis a vis other ministries improved. This gave the JDA a seat at the table with MOFA in talking to the US in the 2+2 Security Consultative Committee⁵⁰⁶. While the shift of

⁵⁰¹ Thomas J Christensen, “The Contemporary Security Dilemma: Deterring a Taiwan Conflict,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, Issue. 4 (Autumn, 2002), p.15.

⁵⁰² Ibid.

⁵⁰³ Peter Starr, “Hashimoto ‘very worried’ as China-Taiwan tensions Escalate,” Agence France-Presse, March 12, 1996.

⁵⁰⁴ “Tokyo urges Chinese Self-Restraint on Taiwan,” BBC Summary, March 19, 1996.

⁵⁰⁵ The Joint Declaration of Security – Alliance for the 21st Century, 17 April 1996: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/security.html> (accessed March 23, 2016).

⁵⁰⁶ Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan’s Remilitarization* (Abingdon, UK: IISS | Palgrave, 2009), p.59.

Japan's area of operations to the region around Japan could be read as Taiwan, it was vague enough to include a wider regional role. In his study on Japan's defence policy, Takao Sebata⁵⁰⁷ states that the 1997 Revised Guidelines promised "rear support" in emergencies, something the 1978 Guidelines did not; second, this opened up the possibility for Japan to assume the right to collective self-defence; third, it was vague as to where these emergencies were located, opening up space for Japanese forces to be deployed theoretically anywhere in the world⁵⁰⁸; fourth, it did not require new legislative, budgetary, or administrative measures in making these deployments; fifth, it weakened the restrictions on deployment, requiring only cabinet approval, rather than Diet approval; sixth, it gave US forces and Japanese JSDF access to Japanese ports and facilities in times of emergency. Finally, in contrast to the 1978 Guidelines, which were negotiated primarily by MOFA diplomats, the 1997 Revised Guidelines were negotiated predominantly by military officials of the SDF, increasing their power and influence in decision-making⁵⁰⁹. While MOFA would initially dominate the trilateral with Australia, the JDA would come into its own from 2007 when it became a ministry.

Thus far, Japan's experience of trilateralism – within the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group – was overwhelmingly dominated by MOFA. The Taiwan Crisis and subsequent revision of the US-Japan Alliance, gave parity to Japanese Defense Agency vis a vis MOFA. Traditionally, the Agency has always been subordinate in policymaking to MOFA but increased roles gave it increased power domestically within Tokyo. These changes were welcomed in Washington, where many *Mahanian* FPEs viewed them as "a 'floor' upon which further bilateral defense cooperation could be built.⁵¹⁰ The Self Defense Agency was not the only agency changing within Kasumigaseki, however. The 1990s also saw the power of the Prime Minister to influence Japan's security policy grow under the Hashimoto Civil Service Reforms. Originally, the 1955 System – as characterized by Green (2003), Shinoda (2013), Samuels, and others – had left the Prime Minister extremely vulnerable to challenges from within his own party, highly dependent on a small staff of seconded civil servants, and reactive at best in a bottom-up policymaking process⁵¹¹. Following the passing of the administration-related bills in the Diet in July 1999, the ability of the Prime Minister to influence and lead foreign and security policy was increased dramatically. This was primarily by empowering the office of the Prime Minister through

⁵⁰⁷ Takao Sebata, *Japan's Defense Policy and Bureaucratic Politics 1976-2007* (Plymouth, University of America Press, 2010), pp.302-324.

⁵⁰⁸ According to James Przystup, this was motivated more by events on the Korean peninsula, rather than events in the Taiwan Straits: "They [the Japanese] refused to define the area of operations, at least geographically, but everyone understood that it was focused on the [Korean] peninsula, in which they had significant stakes", Przystup, James, (Professor at US National Defense University) interview with author, Washington DC, May 6, 2015.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, p.333.

⁵¹⁰ Ralph A. Cossa, "Forward", in *The United States-Japan Strategic Dialogue: Beyond the Defense Guidelines: Policy Recommendations for a New Millennium*, Issues & Insights, Vol. 1, No.1 (May 2001), p.vii.

⁵¹¹ Kenji Hayao, *The Japanese Prime Minister and Public Policy*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), p.202.

the Cabinet Office (the *Kantei*), which was made “the highest and final organ for policy coordination under the cabinet.”⁵¹² As will be seen, Japanese Prime Ministerial support for US-Japan-Australia trilateralism would be critical, particularly under Shinzo Abe.

Some like Amy Catalinac, have argued that this was due to the electoral structural reforms of 1995, which shifted the focus of Diet Members from pork-barreling to becoming interested in elements of national policy⁵¹³. Others like Tomohiro Shinoda⁵¹⁴ have emphasized the bureaucratic side, arguing that increasing of staff of the Cabinet Office / *Kantei*, gave the Prime Minister more access to independent technocratic expertise, while giving the *Kantei* the ability to initiate legislation, allowed the Prime Minister to circumnavigate ministerial bottlenecks. These reforms have also allowed some Prime Ministers – like Junichiro Koizumi and Shinzo Abe – the power to expand the remit of Japan’s defence policy⁵¹⁵, something that was crucial in the later development of the trilateral with Australia. The reforms also gave the Chief Cabinet Secretary (CCS), under the Prime Minister, the power to set the agenda at cabinet meetings and to chair administrative vice-ministerial meetings, a sub-cabinet meeting attended by all the senior bureaucrats. The CCS was also given the power to approve or block all senior appointments for senior bureaucrats (bureau chief and above). When Prime Ministers have had excellent Chief Cabinet Secretaries, it has helped centralize power and decision-making around the *Kantei*. The decision to send Japanese peacekeeping troops abroad, for example was decided by the PKO Secretariat within the Cabinet Office⁵¹⁶. Tracking these changes at the many alliance-related conferences and meetings, *Mahanian* FPEs in the American system, were able to anticipate and plan future stages of cooperation⁵¹⁷.

5.13. Conclusion

The post-Cold War decade 1990 to 2000 saw a major shift in US security policy in the Asia Pacific. Initially propelled by neoliberal optimism and a preoccupation with trade and financial prosperity, American FPEs began the decade with an open mind about US alliances in the region. Although they sought to perhaps link allies within the overlapping groupings, then taking place across the region, it is clear that they did not have a strong vision for the old bilateral system. Consequently, alliance relations suffered a downturn at this time, both in terms of alliance engagement and in terms of

⁵¹² “The Guideline for the Policy Coordination System,” Cabinet Decision, on May 30, 2000.

⁵¹³ Amy Catalinac, “From Pork to Policy: The Rise of Programmatic Campaigning in Japanese Elections,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol.78, No.01 (January 2016), pp.1-18.

⁵¹⁴ Tomohito Shinoda, *Koizumi Diplomacy: Japan’s Kantei Approach to Foreign and Defense Affairs*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2007), pp.63-80.

⁵¹⁵ Hosoya, Yuichi, (Keio University Professor), interview with author, Keio University, Tokyo, 7 January 2015.

⁵¹⁶ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁵¹⁷ Anonymous (Former NSC Staffer) Interview with author, Washington DC.

military exercises. However, as the region began to show signs of continued insecurity, on the Korean peninsula, in the Taiwan Straits, and during the financial crisis, American FPEs felt the full force of the two security dilemmas – one within their allies, and the growing one with China⁵¹⁸. Networks of *Mahanian*-minded FPEs, clustered around think tanks like CFR, CSIS and Pacific Forum CSIS helped coordinate a policy reversal within US government, which began to take shape in the second administration. Despite this, it must be noted that *Continentalists* were equally determined to repair ties with China following the Taiwan Crisis⁵¹⁹.

This shift away from regional multilateralism back toward the alliances with the US was mirrored in both Tokyo and Canberra, where FPEs worried about a US withdrawal from a region that seemed less and less stable. The result of these three *Mahanian*-oriented networks pushing toward each other, resulted in a series of incremental, but significant policy changes, such as the 1996 Sydney Statement, the US-Japan Joint Declaration, the 1997 Revised Guidelines, and the 2000 Armitage – Nye Report, which between them paved the way for enhanced US-Japan alliance engagement in the region and bolstered the case for Japan-Australia bilateral security cooperation. This initially centered around PKO missions in Cambodia and East Timor, but expanded to greater military-to-military talks and increased high level visits. Fundamentally, Japan's position as a powerful economic power with little contribution to regional or global role came to be seen as an oddity, within both the US and Australia. Both were willing to promote a regional role for Tokyo, but this required Japanese FPEs to effect structural reforms inside Japan's policymaking institutions to make this even possible. As was discussed, the Prime Minister's office was empowered by a larger secretariat, and began to grow as a central hub for influencing policymaking in MOFA and the JDA. This shift would allow for policy clarity and hurried along the pace of security normalization that took place post-9/11, under Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, and which has continued to this day. First seen in the US-Japan-ROK trilateral meetings centered around the North Korean threat, the trilateral model was imitated swiftly in a number of other forums, including a track-two US-China-Japan trilateral, a track-two US-India-China trilateral and a track-one Japan-ROK-China economic trilateral.

⁵¹⁸ Thomas Christensen, "China, the US-Japan Alliance and the Security Dilemma in East Asia", *International Security*, Vol.23, No.4 (1999), pp.69.

⁵¹⁹ Gellman, Barton; "US and China Nearly Came to Blows in '96; Tension Over Taiwan Prompted Repair of Ties;" *The Washington Post*; June 21, 1998.

6. CHAPTER 6: THE BUSH PRESIDENCY (2001-2008)

This chapter describes how a *Mahanian* coalition of foreign policy elites – in power in all three countries at the same time – shared a similar desire to strengthen alliances and a similar threat-perception of China in the first Bush administration. It is also important to note changes inside Japan which allowed it to match the US desire for greater security alignment. As was described in the last chapter, the first term of the Clinton administration was somewhat economic-focused and neoliberal in its approach toward regional integration and in its belief in the power of multilateral institutions to resolve regional crises. The failure of that nascent regional architecture to deal with either the North Korean nuclear slow-burn crisis, or the China-Taiwan crisis caused a push-back by *Mahanian* FPEs within the Democratic and Republican Parties. *Continentalists* in the second term, continued to push for deep engagement on China, but *Mahanian* policymakers like Joseph Nye began to repair and refocus US Cold War-era alliances with Japan and Australia. The first term of the Bush administration came in determined to continue this *Mahanian* push.

If we examine structural factors alone, we can see that the two security dilemmas – the intra-alliance security dilemma and the security dilemma with China – pulled American strategy under the first Bush administration in opposing directions. At first glance, neorealism seems well suited to explain US policy during this period. As regional balances of power have shifted, so fears of abandonment among US allies have become more acute. Japan and Australia have sought to maintain US focus and power in the region, by aligning themselves more closely to Washington's security objectives. As the three states aligned more closely and involved India in the mid-2000s however, China became threatened by what it perceived to be a coalition against it and pushed back diplomatically. Given China's growing importance for American business, this period saw *Continentalists* attempting to maintain control over the China policy and to keep terms within Beijing on favourable terms. This same dynamic was also found with Washington's allies, who were also seeing a surge in trade with Beijing. This explains the weaker support for trilateralism in Canberra and provided incentives against full-alliance status. As we will see neoclassical realism tells this same story and more by moving past the state-actor level to that of the foreign policy actor. It provides a thoughtful and more accurate account of how foreign policy elites within the US at this time actually behaved. It also explains why US policy seemed to see-saw between very different objectives. It also explains why US allies pushed for closer relations, but were reluctant to develop a larger multilateral NATO-like organization. For example, Japan – though by far the most threatened by China's rise – has at time behaved at variance to how neorealism might suggest. For example, in 2007, there is evidence that Australian diplomats were prepared to offer

Japan a more formal treaty, which Japan declined⁵²⁰. This makes sense only when one considers domestic variables – like Japan’s peaceful constitution and political culture – which are left out of neorealist accounts. Then, in 2004, the United States came very close to allowing the trilateral to lapse in favor of a closer political relationship with Beijing. Again, this can only be explained by an examination of domestic variables.

While a purely neorealist account might argue that the post-9/11 realignment of American security objectives were responsible for this, it is not clear why Washington would only have decided in 2004-5 to attempt to align China more closely to its Middle East policy. On the other hand, interviews with various FPEs for this project point to the appointment of Robert Zoellick – a noted enthusiast for the “responsible stakeholder” engagement policy with China – to the position of Deputy Secretary of State as playing a major role in the sudden lack of interest in trilateralism in the Department of State. Nor does neorealism explain certain elements about the Quadrilateral initiative, which took place between 2007 and 2008. In the end, Australian FPEs decided not to antagonize China – in what Beijing perceived as encirclement – and let the quadrilateral languish. While neorealism would seem to account for this, Australia’s behavior is somewhat a riddle. Since Canberra has always been the least threatened by China, it makes sense that it would only seek enough security to maintain US interest in the region, and would not logically have any real interest in the quadrilateral. Its disproportionately large economic reliance on China, would make Canberra more sensitive to Beijing’s fears of encirclement. By a neorealist account, therefore, it is difficult to explain why Australia ever would have shown interest in the Quadrilateral in the first place. If, however, we move past the black-box “Australia” to an analysis at the domestic unit level, we are afforded an extra level of explanatory insight. When Canberra’s foreign policy was dominated by Mahanian FPEs, interest in the Quadrilateral was high. After the election of Kevin Rudd – a self-appointed “China hand” – Australian foreign policy then shifted its stance and reprioritized the China security dilemma over the “China threat” assessment. In summary, it would seem that neoclassical realism’s domestic level variable is crucial – rather than supplementary – to our understanding of events.

This chapter explores the origins of the trilateral using neoclassical realism, and examines how a small network of like-minded foreign policy elites (FPEs) in Washington, Canberra, and Tokyo, assumed or held office around the same time, and how that was the critical factor – not only systemic power balances – to the creation of the trilateral. As will be seen, these elites shared concerns about security dynamics enough to encourage them to agree on several policy directions, which might be seen as

⁵²⁰ Greg Sheridan, “Security Treaty Rejected by Tokyo,” *The Australian*, March 12, 2007.

balancing: the strengthening of alliances, the refocusing of US attention on the region, and the normalization of Japan's security and defence posture. Implicitly, they saw the security dilemma with China as an unavoidable cost of a stronger alliance, but thought that signaling China might ameliorate this somewhat. We will see that they prioritized collective security: Australian scholar Michael Wesley has pointed out, initial statements discussed how the three might "coordinate policy" on regional security issues⁵²¹. Finally, as we will see, Australia – the state with the softest threat perception of China – is actually credited with creating the trilateral, and while abandonment fears played a part in their deliberations, it is clear that some FPEs within Canberra were aligned with their colleagues in Washington and Tokyo in fearing a rising China. The very idea that states can be broken down into groupings like this – and how those grouping fare politically – is such an old insight, that it belongs to classical realism. What is neorealist about it, is the fact that power balances matter; what is neoclassical realist about it, is the fact that those FPEs disagree on their assessments of whether China is a threat or not; and these disagreements spill out into the real world of policymaking.

6.1. The First Term of the Bush Administration (2001-2004)

In the first months of 2001, a group of *Mahanian* FPEs who shared a common perception of the region began to assemble in Washington, as George W. Bush administration's Asia foreign and defense policy team began to take shape. Colin Powell, a well-known Republican moderate and Gulf War hero, was sworn in as the new Secretary of State, emphasizing the strong ties with Asia Pacific allies "particularly Japan" in his Confirmation Hearing in the Senate⁵²². Calling these alliances, the "bedrock" of American security in the region, Powell, argued that "all else in the Pacific and East Asia flows from these strong relationships."⁵²³ This emphasis on allies was also found in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)⁵²⁴ – which though published on September 20th, 2001, was largely written before the September 11 attacks. Arguably, the Bush first term team assembled one of the strongest groups of 'Asia hands' in the post-Cold War period. Certainly, it held some very capable individuals. Powell's new Assistant Secretary of State was Richard Armitage, a special forces veteran from the Vietnam War, and previously, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia in the early years of the Reagan administration, and Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy. With an impressive network of political elites in the Asia Pacific, he had co-written the Armitage-Nye Report

⁵²¹ Michael Wesley, "The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue's Institutional Politics," in William T. Tow, Mark J. Thomson, Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Satu P. Limaye, *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (London: Routledge, ASPI, 2007), p.39.

⁵²² Colin. L. Powell, *Confirmation Hearing by Secretary-Designate Colin L. Powell*, Washington DC, January 17TH, 2001. <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/443.htm> (accessed April 7, 2016)

⁵²³ Ibid.

⁵²⁴ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, September 30, 2001, available at: <http://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/quadrennial/QDR2001.pdf?ver=2014-06-25-110946-823> (accessed December 11, 2016).

in the run-up to the 2000 elections, advocating closer defence cooperation with Tokyo⁵²⁵. James A Kelly, the new Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs also had a long business career in Asia and had spent the past 6 years as President of the PACOM-affiliated think tank the Pacific Forum, CSIS, the think tank which had hosted the first US-Japan-ROK trilateral in 1994, the year Kelly had joined Pacific Forum as President. He would also take over as the lead American delegate in the US-Japan-Korea TCOG. In the DOD, the new Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld and Andrew Marshall, the former Director of the Office of Net Assessments (ONA), promoted the Defense Strategy Review (DSR) in 2000, in order to examine global security and the US ability to “assure” allies, and “dissuade” and “deter” peer competitors like China from becoming a threat⁵²⁶, a theme that was picked up in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).

Richard Armitage remembers, “When the new administration came in, we were peopled by a team that had very strong views on Asia, and saw Japan as our primary interlocutor and alliance. That would be me, Mike [Green], and Jim [Kelly], and all of us, as well as Australia. We’d had long identification with Australia, from the time that I’d served in Vietnam.”⁵²⁷ In the National Security Council, Torkel Patterson’s brief to Michael Green – the Director for Asian Affairs – was simple. He was to do everything he could to “strengthen alliances”⁵²⁸. With over five years’ experience living in Japan, and fluent in Japanese, Green was well-connected and influential inside Tokyo’s corridors of power. Although there was a slight disconnect between Powell’s State Department and Rumsfeld’s Defense Department, Richard Lawless, a former intelligence officer, ran the Pentagon’s posture review in Asia as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Asia Pacific Affairs, an event which would lead to the development of the military-to-military trilateral in the second Bush administration. In this way, one can see that FPEs which share common perceptions of allies and threats and are aligned on their views of the balance of power are more likely to clearly shape the direction of state’s foreign policymaking than those who are at odds with each other. They are also more willing to take risks and implement new cooperative initiatives. Many of those interviewed for this paper, attest to the fact that this new – and potentially frightening – trilateral arrangement arose from the trust and goodwill that had accrued from years of working together.

⁵²⁵ Report Study Group, *The United States and Japan: Toward a Mature Partnership*, INSS Special Report, Institute for National Strategic Studies, October 11, 2000 http://spfusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ArmitageNyeReport_2000.pdf (accessed April 12, 2016).

⁵²⁶Department of Defense, Guidance and Terms of Reference for the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, available at: <http://www.comw.org/qdr/qdrguidance.pdf> (accessed December 11, 2016).

⁵²⁷ Armitage, Richard (Assistant Secretary of State, Department of State, 2001-2005) interview with author, Washington DC, May 26, 2015.

⁵²⁸ Patterson, Torkel, (Special Assistant to the President for Asia, National Security Council, 2001-2003), Telephone interview, Washington DC, April 15, 2016.

The first term of the Bush administration was one of unexpected events and immense change, and put immense pressure on the new team. The initial months of the administration were dominated by yet another crisis with China when a Chinese fighter aircraft collided with an EP-3 American intelligence-gathering aircraft in international airspace adjacent to Hunan Island⁵²⁹. The administration had come in thinking of China as a “strategic competitor”⁵³⁰ rather than a strategic partner and had immediately renounced Clinton’s Three No’s⁵³¹. Furthermore, Andrew Marshall’s concern about growing Chinese military capabilities led to the identification within the QDR of six operational goals as the focus for DOD’s transformation. Those linked to China, included “countering A2/AD capabilities and investment in precision-strike capabilities, information technology and space systems”⁵³² Thomas Mahnken, who took the lead in drafting the QDR, said these elements were “really – albeit not exclusively – about China.”⁵³³

Although the EP-3 incident put the administration on the back foot vis a vis China, relations improved after the September 11th attacks, radically shifting the administration’s priorities⁵³⁴. China followed this up by throwing its support behind the administration’s War on Terror, giving it for UNSC Resolution 1368 and Resolution 1373, and publicly offering support and endorsing the American campaign in Afghanistan⁵³⁵. However, not all was calm in Northeast Asia as North Korea re-emerged as a crisis point. In 2002, the Agreed Framework broke down after a meeting between Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, James Kelly, and a North Korean team in Pyongyang amid accusations that the North were secretly engaged in a uranium enrichment program⁵³⁶. A new round of negotiations, the Six Party Talks, was begun in Beijing in August 2003 to see if US-DPRK differences could be resolved. The US-Japan-ROK Trilateral Coordination Oversight Group (TCOG) continued meeting, but since it was replaced by the Six Party Talks as the key forum for dealing with

⁵²⁹ Armitage, Richard (Assistant Secretary of State, Department of State, 2001-2005) interview with author, Washington DC, May 26, 2015.

⁵³⁰ One week before inauguration, CIA Deputy Director for Operations briefed President-elect Bush on the three top security challenges facing the United States. They included terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and the rise of China’s military. Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, (London: Simon Schuster, 2003), p.35.

⁵³¹ Bush Reassures China, BBC News, 23 March, 2001 available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/1236923.stm> (accessed on October 6, 2016).

⁵³² Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, September 30, 2001, p.20, available at: <http://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/quadrennial/QDR2001.pdf?ver=2014-06-25-110946-823> (accessed December 11, 2016).

⁵³³ Cited in: Nina Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: US Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia,” *International Security*, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016), p.58.

⁵³⁴ Jeffrey Bader, *Obama and China’s Rise: An Insider’s Account of the America’s Asia Strategy*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), p.20.

⁵³⁵ Shirley Kan, “US-China Counter-Terrorism Cooperation: Issues for US Policy” *CRS Report for Congress*, (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2004), pp.1-4.

⁵³⁶ David E. Sanger, “North Korea Says it has a Program on Nuclear Arms,” in *The New York Times*, October 17, 2002, World Section.

North Korea's nuclear weapons program, it became – in essence – an informal caucus within this framework and a means for the Bush administration to effect military transformation⁵³⁷.

US-Japanese bilateral coordination over North Korea became at times difficult, with the growing domestic importance of the Abductees issue in Japan. On other fronts, however, US-Japanese alliance relations improved immensely, as these like-minded FPEs responsible for policy in both countries began a Strategic Dialogue in the background of Article 9 and collective self-defense debates in Japan. The Bush administration was also intent on developing relations with India at this time, and spent much of this time negotiating what became the US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement, signed in 2005. The Bush Administration also had to deal with the December 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, which revealed a number of possibilities regarding alliance networking across the Asia Pacific. In many ways, the emergency response group of the US, Japan, Australia, and India, was extremely successful in reacting and coordinating to the event, raising the possibility for future security cooperation in the second term.

6.2. The Origins of the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD)

As the last chapter revealed, security cooperation between the United States, Japan, and Australia began to take shape in the 1990s. Perceptions about growing regional insecurity in all three countries provided the impetus to renew the two alliances, which occurred in the 1996 US-Japan Joint Declaration and 1996 Sydney Statement. This was matched by a willingness among FPEs in all three countries to build on Japan-Australia ties, so that Japan might develop better regional capabilities. Furthermore, while the US-Japan-Korea TCOG suggested itself as a model for trilateral cooperation, and there was no interest in trying to incorporate Australia into the US-Japan-ROK trilateral, but rather to simply build a new trilateral. This was down to Korea-Japan tensions, and disinterest among Korea FPEs in joining a larger regional-minded organization. By the start of the Bush administration, FPEs in Canberra and Tokyo were primed for such a trilateral⁵³⁸: Australian support for the concept had existed from the late 1990s, while Japanese support grew steadily from inside the Foreign Policy Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2000 onwards⁵³⁹.

⁵³⁷ Yul Sohn, "Relocating Trilateralism in a Broader Regional Architecture: A South Korean Perspective," *National Bureau of Asian Research Website*, March 25, 2016: <http://www.nbr.org/research/activity.aspx?id=660> (accessed May 3, 2016).

⁵³⁸ Michael Wesley, "The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue's Institutional Politics," in William T. Tow, Mark J. Thomson, Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Satu P. Limaye, *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (London: Routledge, ASPI, 2007), pp.39-53.

⁵³⁹ See, for example,

Political support was also growing at the senior levels of government. President Bush viewed Australia and Japan as “friendly” countries, a sentiment shared by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Australian Prime Minister John Howard, who also had a close personal friendship⁵⁴⁰. Indeed, Howard was in Washington during the attacks, having spent September 10th at a White House luncheon hosted by the President and his father⁵⁴¹, following a ceremony at the naval dockyard, honoring the 50th anniversary of the ANZUS Treaty. His speech of support in Australia’s House of Representatives on the 17th September was impassioned and invoked Articles IV and V of the ANZUS Treaty⁵⁴², ultimately committing over 1,000 Australian troops as well as aircraft and vessels for operations⁵⁴³. Koizumi was also strongly supportive of the United States and had already had an “incredibly warm”⁵⁴⁴ first meeting with the new president at Camp David on June 30th, where the two men had played baseball. Partly due to the legacy of the Gulf War⁵⁴⁵, the Prime Minister was determined to put Japan “in the game” after the terrorist attacks, calling terrorism, “Japan’s own security problem”⁵⁴⁶ and swiftly passing the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. The warmth of these three leaders was partly down to the personal style of politics that all three took in foreign policy⁵⁴⁷. This warmth also pervaded the bureaucracy, with incoming Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage telling his aides to clear his schedule if either Australian or Japanese diplomats requested a meeting⁵⁴⁸.

The initial seed for a regular trilateral discussion was planted by Foreign Minister Alexander Downer at the AUSMIN meeting with Secretary of State Powell in Sydney in July 2001⁵⁴⁹. According to Downer,

⁵⁴⁰ Oike, Atsuyuki (Director, Oceanic Division, MOFA, 2001-2003), interview with author, Tokyo, February 12, 2015.

⁵⁴¹ Armitage, Richard (Assistant Secretary of State, Department of State, 2001-2005) interview with author, Washington DC, May 26, 2015.

⁵⁴² Graham Dobell, “Great Australian Foreign Policy Speeches: Howard on 9/11 and the US Alliance,” *The Lowy Interpreter*, <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2014/08/15/Great-Australian-foreign-policy-speeches-Howard-911-US-alliance.aspx> (accessed March 31, 2016).

⁵⁴³ Nicole Brangwin, Ann Rann, “Australia’s Military Involvement in Afghanistan since 2001: A Chronology,” Parliamentary Library, July 16, 2010.

http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/1011/MilitaryInvolvementAfghanistan (accessed April 1, 2016).

⁵⁴⁴ Chen, Edwin, “Bush Enjoys a Warm Meeting with Koizumi”, LA Times, July 1, 2001, The World.

⁵⁴⁵ Yu Uchiyama, *Koizumi and Japanese Politics: Reform Strategies and Leadership Style* (London: Routledge, 2010), p.84.

⁵⁴⁶ Tomohito Shinoda, *Koizumi Diplomacy: Japan’s Kantei Approach to Foreign and Defense Affairs*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2007), p.86.

⁵⁴⁷ See, for example: “US-Australia had a very good solid dialogue, with the 2+2 dialogue. The friends close to George Bush consisted of Japan, Australia, and to some extent the United Kingdom.” Miyajima, Akio (Director, First NA Division, North American Affairs Bureau, MOFA, 2001-2003) interview with author, Tokyo, March 2, 2015; “Prime Minister Koizumi and Prime Minister Howard were very good friends.” Oike, Atsuyuki (Director of Oceanic Division, 2001-2003, MOFA), Interview with author, Tokyo, 12 February, 2015.

⁵⁴⁸ Schaeffer, Marie (then-aide to Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage, Japan Desk 2003), interview with author, Tokyo, February 6, 2015.

⁵⁴⁹ Takashi Terada, “Evolution of the Australia-Japan Security Partnership: Toward a Softer Triangle Alliance with the United States?” in Takashi Inoguchi, G. John Ikenberry, Yoirchiro Sato, (eds.,) *The US-Japan Security Alliance: Regional Multilateralism*, (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), pp.217-232.

he and Foreign Secretary, Ashton Calvert had been working on the idea⁵⁵⁰, which then emerged during spontaneously in the post-AUSMIN press conference⁵⁵¹. Calvert – a dominant figure inside the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) – had strong personal links to Japan, spoke the language fluently and was a long-time friend of the new Japanese Ambassador to Washington, Ryozo Kato⁵⁵². Kato – who had spent a number of years as the Japanese lead within the TCOG, was also very close to Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and to the Australian Ambassador to Washington, Michael Thawley. Within days of his arrival in post, the new Japanese Ambassador presented his credentials to his old friend at the State Department. In addition to his close connection to Kato, Armitage was close to the Australians, and had been personal friends with Prime Minister John Howard since the Reagan administration⁵⁵³. Calvert’s then-deputy in the DFAT, Bruce Miller asserts that this close relationship between the three – Kato, Calvert, and Armitage – was crucial to starting the trilateral, since all three had known and trusted each other for many years and were “each in their own way, capable of stepping above the day-to-day grind of foreign policy-making and bilateral relations and understood strategic power relations in East Asia, and – in a policy sense – what to do about it.”⁵⁵⁴

The first trilateral meeting in the summer of 2001 was tacked onto the afternoon session of a US-Japan Strategic Dialogue⁵⁵⁵ and took place between US Assistant Secretary Richard Armitage, Japanese Vice-Foreign Minister Yasuo Takeuchi, and Australian Foreign Secretary Ashton Calvert. Armitage remembers,

...it was our view that this was the way of the future. A good solid anchor in the north, which was Japan, a good solid anchor in the south, ourselves and India – though you had to be much more careful about how you played India. As the overarching democracies in the region, we thought it was pretty good – not a containment strategy – but a pretty good signpost for the region. Calvert led the Australians, Takeuchi led his, and I led ours...We spoke as allies should

⁵⁵⁰ Downer, Alexander (Foreign Minister of Australia, 1996-2007), interview with author, London, September 9th, 2015.

⁵⁵¹ Tow, Willian (Professor, International Relations, ANU), interview with author, Canberra, March 10, 2015.

⁵⁵² Miyajima, Akio (Director, First NA Division, North American Affairs Bureau, MOFA, 2001-2003) interview with author, Tokyo, March 2, 2015.

⁵⁵³ John Howard, *Lazarus Rising: A Personal and Political Autobiography*, (Sydney: HarperCollins, 2013), p.450-451; and Armitage, Richard (Assistant Secretary of State, Department of State, 2001-2004), interview with author, Washington DC, May 26, 2015.

⁵⁵⁴ Miller, Amb. Bruce (Australia’s Ambassador to Japan; aide to Ashton Calvert, Secretary of DFAT 1998-2004) Personal interview, Tokyo, 23 February 2015.

⁵⁵⁵ Miyajima, Akio (Director, First NA Division, North American Affairs Bureau, MOFA, 2001-2003) interview with author, Tokyo, March 2, 2015.

and for us – the Americans – and I think it got much more for the Japanese, I really think they got a sense of an alliance; that we tell each other the truth, in depth.⁵⁵⁶

Atsuyuki Oike, a senior Japanese diplomat, also present at that first meeting, says of the first meeting,

The mood that first meeting was very good, very constructive with some interesting discussions. I think it was a full meeting with Dr. Calvert, Mr. Takeuchi, and Mr. Armitage in Washington, I think...When you start doing things for the first time, you don't have a big fanfare because you're not sure if this is going to work and you don't know what kind of reaction you're going to get from other countries to what you're doing. We don't want to be too noisy about what we were doing. So the atmosphere that first time was, let's have an occasion for discussions to see the value of this initiative.⁵⁵⁷

This arrangement would last until 2004, when the meetings were upgraded to ministerial level. Although China did figure in the early TSD meetings, North Korea and the global war on terror were the immediate focus for talks, as the three countries considered ways in which Japan and Australia could contribute diplomatically and militarily to the new strategic imperatives of the Bush administration. Following the 2002 Bali terrorist attack, in which 90 Australians were killed, and the 2004 bombing attempt of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, the three agreed to hold annual Counter-Terrorism Discussions in 2004. Some on the Australian side saw the trilateral as being "all about Japan"⁵⁵⁸, while some in Japan saw the trilateral as being motivated by "the idea of regional integration."⁵⁵⁹ There was much to discuss, as the United States began organizing multilateral reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan after swiftly vanquishing the Taliban in November 2001. The meetings continued in this ad hoc manner, without producing joint statements, but despite that, it was clear that "the merits of this joint activity...were appreciated in all three capitals, and personal relationships among the three leaders continued to develop."⁵⁶⁰ Both Japan and Australia supported the US invasion and reconstruction of Iraq after 2003, with Japan going so far as to deploy 600 Ground Self Defense Forces to a Provincial Reconstruction Team in the southern province of Samawah⁵⁶¹, and

⁵⁵⁶ Armitage, Richard (Assistant Secretary of State, Department of State, 2001-2004) interview with author, Washington DC, May 26, 2015.

⁵⁵⁷ Oike, Atsuyuki (Director of Oceanic Division, 2001-2003, MOFA), Interview with author, Tokyo, 12 February, 2015.

⁵⁵⁸ Anonymous (Senior Australian Diplomat) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁵⁵⁹ Oike, Atsuyuki (Director of Oceanic Division, 2001-2003, MOFA), Interview with author, Tokyo, 12 February, 2015.

⁵⁶⁰ James L. Schoff, "The Evolution of US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation" Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Simson Center, 2015), p.40.

⁵⁶¹ "Prime Minister Encourages Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) to be Dispatched to Iraq," *Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet website*, February 1, 2004, http://japan.kantei.go.jp/koizumiphoto/2004/02/01asahikawa_e.html (accessed April 8, 2016).

200 Air SDF to a logistical support mission in neighboring Kuwait in late 2003⁵⁶². Then in 2003, Michael Green headed a new inter-agency Asia strategy for the Asia Pacific at the NSC. The report found that China's rise was the primary "strategic challenge" for US security and that the report proposed "not a NATO per se, but a federated set of capabilities and interoperability that [would] enhance dissuasion without creating a security dilemma or two blocs in the region."⁵⁶³ This federated network of defense relationships "would help dissuade China from using force in the region by demonstrating the latent potential for closer security ties among China's neighbors if provoked."⁵⁶⁴ The conceptual strategic logic for the trilateral was being laid out.

6.3. The 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami

The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami provided a new impetus to this core group of FPEs, working on the trilateral and was a good test of what the three states could achieve through closer inter-operability, and seemed to justify the US strategy of networking alliances. According to Stacy White, such was the "unprecedented scope" of the disaster, that it changed how policymakers "thought about risk"⁵⁶⁵ and impacted how the trilateral approached HA/DR. Trilateral cooperation with Australia and Japan certainly helped attune US officials to the willingness of their Australian and Japanese counterparts to play a major role in this type of crisis in the years preceding the earthquake. The disaster also saw India take a large role in reconstruction efforts. The fact that India was easily incorporated into this "Tsunami Core Group", would later lead directly to the Japanese attempt to upgrade the trilateral with Australia and Japan to a "quadrilateral", with India. For its part, India's role in disaster relief efforts highlighted its growing willingness to partner with both the United States and with Japan in "soft" security operations. Senior State Department official, Evans Revere remembers the 'can-do' attitude that characterized cooperation in the days after the earthquake:

We could tell the Japanese wanted to be a player and had certain resources they wanted to commit. What was missing, was the 'way', the logistical capability to get what they had out into the field and deploy it. This is where the US-Japan Alliance came into play. While the Japanese had bulldozers, helicopters, water purifications, system, and combat engineers, they didn't have

⁵⁶² "Prime Minister Encourages Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) to be Dispatched to Iraq," *Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet website*, December 24, 2003, http://japan.kantei.go.jp/koizumiphoto/2003/12/24komaki_e.html (accessed April 8, 2016).

⁵⁶³ Cited in: Nina Silove, "The Pivot before the Pivot: US Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia," *International Security*, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016), p.65.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁵ Stacy White, "Disaster Management in Asia: The Promise of Regional Architecture, in Robert S. Wang, Jeffrey D. Bean, (eds.,) *Asia's Response to Climate Change and Natural Disasters: Implications for an Evolving Regional Architecture* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2010), p.61-98.

the logistical mechanisms to transport these things long distances in a timely manner. So we put them on US bottoms, aircraft carriers, and got them out there.⁵⁶⁶

It also led directly to Japan, Australia, and India cooperating for the first time around a US-led hub of efforts.

Such was the seriousness of the crisis, that the usual red tape was avoided. Bypassing usual Department of Defense procedure, PACOM officials ordered a Japan-ported American Marine Amphibious Group – bound for Iraq – to turn around in the Indian Ocean to attend relief efforts around the area. American, Australian and Japanese defence attaches rang up their counterparts across the region in order to gain overflight permissions for relief helicopters⁵⁶⁷, bypassing the usual diplomatic channels. According to Revere, the concept of the “core group”⁵⁶⁸ was thought up in Armitage’s office in the State Department, with Robin Sakoda, Randall Schriver, and a number of others, in the days immediately after the earthquake. Interestingly, while humanitarian considerations trumped geopolitics in those early days, the strategic implications of coordinating a large scale disaster relief operation were realized fairly early on: (1) it was realized almost immediately that the event was perfect for Japanese forces to play a large expeditionary role in tandem with US forces, (2) the event offered a possibility to include China in relief efforts⁵⁶⁹ (though in the end, China declined, citing development concerns), (3) the event smoothed the way for US-India and Japan-India military cooperation and opened up future possibilities toward quadrilateral cooperation. The ease with which the Core Group functioned in the weeks after the disaster did not go unnoticed by alliance managers. The quick, joint movement of assets, the real-time intelligence-sharing, and the parceling up of strategic objectives between this core group revealed the art-of-the-possible for the future of Green’s “federated set of capabilities.”

6.4. A New Foreign Policy Nexus in Tokyo

Japan’s reaction to the new strategic direction emanating from Washington was key to the success of the whole trilateral endeavor. A Japan that could not or would not engage in this new alliance connectivity would have stymied American strategic direction from ever gaining momentum. However, structural changes taking place in the bureaucracy around the Prime Minister’s office also fostered a stronger and more centralized policymaking capacity. Political support from the centre

⁵⁶⁶ Revere, Evans (Japan Desk, Department of State 2003-4), Telephone Interview, January 30, 2016.

⁵⁶⁷ Revere, Evans (Japan Desk, Department of State 2003-4), Speech given at Maui Conference, Pacific Forum 2012.

⁵⁶⁸ It included Japan, Australia, India and many UN and relief-related international organizations.

⁵⁶⁹ Revere, Evans (Japan Desk, Department of State 2003-4), Telephone Interview, January 30, 2016.

emboldened men on the spot – like Japanese Ambassador Ryozo Kato in Washington DC and US Ambassador Tom Schieffer in Tokyo – to promote the trilateral. However, as was argued in the last chapter, it was only the institutional reform of the cabinet office and role of the Prime Minister, which would enable Japanese prime ministers to pursue these foreign policy visions. Junichiro Koizumi's election as Prime Minister and leader of the LDP represented more than just "business as usual". As Richard Samuels has argued, the rise of Koizumi represented the rise of a generation of conservative young, "revisionists", or "Young Turks", who wanted "to transform the institutions of national security policymaking"⁵⁷⁰. It was, he argues, "the most consequential political change in Japan since 1945."⁵⁷¹ More importantly, these young politicians – Shinzo Abe, Taro Aso, and Shigeru Ishiba, among others – had both the policy expertise and the backing of alliance managers from the United States. Inheriting the Hashimoto reforms described in the last chapter, Koizumi wasted no time in adding personnel and expertise to the newly-authorized Cabinet Secretariat, creating no less than fifteen offices for policy development by 2004, while also merging and reducing the number of government ministries and agencies from twenty three to thirteen⁵⁷². He made his intentions clear: "I am resolved to make this cabinet a 'ceaseless reform cabinet' that would boldly undertake reforms in Japan's social and economic structures."⁵⁷³

Furthermore, the new Cabinet Office usurped the Ministry of Finance's budgetary responsibilities at this time, creating a Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, independent of the bureaucracy. This new council – chaired by the prime minister – was created in January 2001 and gave Koizumi great powers over the budget. In addition, the Cabinet Office also gained the ability to draft and pass bills under the jurisdiction of the relevant ministries – something that was initially resisted by the bureaucracy. Koizumi instructed Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Teijiro Furukawa to serve as the secretariat to a new Task Force on Emergency Legislation, staffing it with young officials from the JDA, MOFA and the National Policy Agency. The MOFA presence in the Task Force was minimized allowing both the JDA and the Cabinet Secretariat more influence over the decision-making process⁵⁷⁴. Overall, one could argue that there was a trend of the Cabinet Office and the JDA usurped many foreign policy roles from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁵⁷⁰ Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2007), p.74.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

⁵⁷² Tomohito Shinoda, *Contemporary Japanese Politics: Institutional Changes and Power Shifts* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2013), p.79.

⁵⁷³ "Naikaku Sori Daijin Danwa" [Statement of the Prime Minister], April 26, 2001. <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/koizumispeech/2001/0507osin.html> (accessed April 1, 2016).

⁵⁷⁴ Tomohito Shinoda, *Koizumi Diplomacy: Japan's Kantei Approach to Foreign and Defence Affairs*, (New York, Columbia University Press, 2007), p.92.

However, it should be noted that – as so far as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was concerned, Koizumi was pushing on an open door and many within that department welcomed his regional integration policies. Japanese diplomats began to view the growth of Chinese influence in Southeast Asia with apprehension after the 1997 Financial Crisis, as China became a regional economic power with its own regional initiatives⁵⁷⁵. A senior Japanese diplomat in the Oceanic Division in MOFA, between 2001 and 2005, remembers, “So, on the one hand, we were trying to promote NAFTA-style regional economic integration as a solution to the Asian Crisis. Chinese ideas were somewhat different to ours: they had more of a developing country style, gradual-incremental approach for regional integration. And those two ideas came out. And at that time, China was reasonably confident that in the context of ASEAN plus Three, they would prevail...”⁵⁷⁶ In the end, China’s vision for regional integration did prevail and Japanese concern deepened after losing what it saw as crucial diplomatic battle to lead regional architecture in the early 2000s. China’s lobbying in ASEAN capitals for an ASEAN plus Three ultimately triumphed over Tokyo’s preferred ASEAN plus Six at a Leaders Summit in Manila in 1999. One concern about the Plus Three format, was the Japanese fear that it would allow China to dominate the agenda, while the Plus Six format – including India, New Zealand, and Australia – would balance growing Chinese clout, by adding states that shared democratic values and norms. This common concern that China intended to marginalize the US and its allies in future integration efforts helped bring together different FPEs within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expediting Ambassador Kato’s diplomacy with Armitage in Washington⁵⁷⁷. Some external observers have alleged that a “purge” of the China school⁵⁷⁸ took place within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during this period.⁵⁷⁹

6.5. The Rise of Sino-Japanese Tensions

The deterioration of Sino-Japanese ties at this time also explains the shift of Japanese FPEs in their approach toward both Japan’s security institutions and its defence policies. Perhaps the “China Factor” does not entirely explain why Japan joined the trilateral, but it does explain why – once the idea was suggested – Japanese FPEs embraced the idea whole-heartedly. It has long had a China component embedded in it for Japanese policy makers⁵⁸⁰. The first half of the new decade saw a marked drift in ties between the two states, that were wholly avoidable, linked to the domestic politics of each state. In many ways, the drift in relations was at odds with their ever-closer economic relationship. By 2003, China was responsible for more than 90 percent growth of Japanese exports,

⁵⁷⁵ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat), interview with author, Tokyo.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ Kato, Ryozo (Japanese Ambassador to the United States, 2001-2008) interview with author, telephone, June 1, 2015.

⁵⁷⁸ Denoting those with experience of postings in China and who might hold favorable views of China.

⁵⁷⁹ Anonymous (Senior American Official, DOS), interview with author, Washington DC.

⁵⁸⁰ Jimbo, Ken, (Professor at Keio University), interview with author in Tokyo, January 16, 2015.

while 30-40 percent of Japanese production inside China was for the export market⁵⁸¹. Although more than 10 million Chinese workers were employed by Japanese firms, China's patriotic education – begun in 1994 – began building legitimacy for the Communist Party leadership through anti-Japanese teachings⁵⁸², downplaying 30 years of Japanese official development aid and trade, and emphasizing instead Japan's war time aggressions, and historical revisionism. This occurred despite the Japanese Emperor's 1992 speech in Beijing to the "unfortunate era when our country caused immense pain and suffering to the Chinese"⁵⁸³. This period was marked by efforts to cooperate in the East China Sea⁵⁸⁴, over SARS, over policing issues, but these efforts were disrupted by incidences like the Shenyang Consulate incident⁵⁸⁵ (when Chinese police entered the consulate to recover North Koreans attempting to defect) and the anti-Japanese riots, which rocked China in August 2004 and April 2005, first over the Asian football championships and then over the textbook controversy. While more than 80 percent of Japanese had polled favorable views of China in the 1980s, less than 40 percent did in 2004.⁵⁸⁶

In Japan, Prime Minister Koizumi came to power somewhat beholden by a campaign promise to the *Nippon Izokukai*,⁵⁸⁷ a political association representing Japan's war dead, to visit *Yasukuni Shrine*, while in office. His decision to restart annual visits in 2002 – which had lapsed under Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone in the mid-1980s – was a major cause of the steep decline in Sino-Japanese relations during this period. Yasukuni had become a sore point between the two countries since 1978, when the head priest Matsudaira Nagayoshi – of his own accord – had decided to inter 14 A-Class war criminals into the shrine⁵⁸⁸. The existence of the *Yushukan* – a historical museum on Japanese imperialism – on the grounds, cemented the Shrine's place as a symbol of a new type of Japanese war-revisionist nationalism,⁵⁸⁹ which had revived during the 1990s⁵⁹⁰. Despite his attempts to reach out to critics in

⁵⁸¹ Tomohiko Taniguchi, "A Cold Peace: The Changing Security Equation in Northeast Asia," *Orbis*, Vol.49, no.3 (Summer, 2005), p.446.

⁵⁸² Christopher R. Hughes, "Japan in the Politics of Chinese Leadership Legitimacy: Recent Developments in Empirical Perspective," *Japan Forum*, Vol.20, No.2, (2008) pp.245-266.

⁵⁸³ Remarks by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan at a State Banquet: cited in Sheila Smith, *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p.42.

⁵⁸⁴ "Japan-China Consultations on the East China Sea and Other Matters," MOFA Website: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/consult0509.html> (accessed December 30, 2016).

⁵⁸⁵ "The Position of Japan Regarding the Incident at the Japanese Consulate General in Shenyang, PRC," MOFA Website: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/shengyang.html> (accessed December 30, 2016).

⁵⁸⁶ Gaiko ni Kansuru Yoronchosa, <http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h16/h16-gaikou/images/h05.csv>

⁵⁸⁷ The full title as formed in 1947 was Nihon Izoku Kosei Renmei or The Japan Bereaved Family Welfare Federation.

⁵⁸⁸ Sheila A. Smith, *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), pp.85-100.

⁵⁸⁹ Gianni Simone, "A Trip around the Yushukan, Japan's Font of Discord: Yasukuni War Museum is Forever Hostage to a Doctrine that Eschews Balance or Remorse" in *The Japan Times*, July 28, 2014, *The Foreign Element*.

⁵⁹⁰ For a full discussion of the various organizations and groups that represented this shift, including The National Shrine Association, The Liberal View of History Study Group, Citizen's Association for the Defense of Japan, the (1996) Diet Members League for a Bright Japan, see Laura Hein, Mark Selden, *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, (New York: East Gate Book, 2000), pp.53-96.

both Korea and China during the first year of his premiership, Koizumi's visit to the controversial shrine in April 2002 caused a major diplomatic storm between Japan and China. Another issue that was to rear its head during this period was the resurrection of maritime disputes in the East China Sea. Although these had occurred intermittently throughout the Cold War, the 1990s coming into force of UNCLOS created new areas of disagreement. This was particularly true of Exclusive Economic Zones and the differing methods of delineating them (by continental shelf or by mileage)⁵⁹¹.

This period, as well as marking the rise of Cabinet Office power in Japan, also marks the rise of the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA), a traditionally weak sub-cabinet body in the Japanese polity. Much of this was down to the perception of growing Chinese assertiveness on Japan's periphery, particularly the Senkaku Islands. This included China's nuclear test in 1993, its seizure of Mischief Reef in 1995, its missile tests over the Taiwan Straits in 1996, and the increase of its air and maritime incursions into Japanese territory. China's military modernization had also taken an immense boost at this time from massive Russian arms sales⁵⁹². According to SIPRI, 90 percent of all arms sales to China came from Russia between 1991 and 2011, with Beijing purchasing such advanced systems as Tor-M1 mobile air defense systems, Mi-17 military transport helicopters, SU-27/Su-30 combat aircraft, the Kh-59MK anti-ship cruise missile, four Sovremenny-class destroyers (designed as "carrier killers"), twelve kilo-class submarines, among others. It also indirectly contributed to the 2001 purchase of China's first aircraft carrier, the *Varyag*, which was moved to a dry dock in Dalian for refitting.

By the mid-2000s, the average value of purchases is estimated at US\$42 billion per annum⁵⁹³, and as can be seen, focused on building China's existing naval and air-naval capabilities. In response to this build-up, Japanese FPEs began to view China with serious concern, expressing that concern for the first time in a government policy document, in the 2004 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG),⁵⁹⁴ "China...continues to modernize its nuclear forces and missile capabilities as well as its naval and air forces...and also expanding its area of operation at sea. We will have to remain attentive to its future actions."⁵⁹⁵ The new NDPG emphasized "defensive defense" replacing the Cold War-era Basic Defense Force Concept with a flexible response posture. In 2004, the JDA also began planning for three invasion scenarios at this time, based around Chinese attacks on US forces based in Japan,

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., pp.134-135.

⁵⁹² Richard A. Bitzinger, *Russian Arms Transfers and Asian Military Modernization*, Policy Report, (Singapore: RSIS, Nanyang Technical University, 2015), pp.6-7.

⁵⁹³ SIPRI. (2012a). SIPRI Arms Transfers Database. Retrieved 01.03.2012, from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/html/export_values.php (accessed June 2013).

⁵⁹⁴ Ishihara, Yusuke, (Fellow, Policy Studies Department, NIDS, Deputy Director, International Policy Division, MOD, 2014-2016) interview with author, Tokyo, January 7, 2015.

⁵⁹⁵ *National Defense Program Guidelines, FY2005-*, Approved by the Security Council and the Cabinet on December 10, 2004, http://japan.kantei.go.jp/policy/2004/1210taikou_e.html (accessed on April 8, 2016).

around the Senkaku Islets, and around the East China Sea gas fields⁵⁹⁶. Japanese naval and air units were emphasized at the expense of its armoured tank forces, and the naval defense system, Aegis was upgraded through the co-development of the SM-3 missile with the United States⁵⁹⁷. North Korea's missile tests and nuclear test in 2006 was also "a Godsend"⁵⁹⁸ at the time, according to Richard Lawless, Deputy Under Secretary for Asia Pacific Affairs, because it highlighted gaps in how the US and Japan shared real-time intelligence, and how Japan's intelligence agencies shared their information with decision-makers within Japan's government. This – along with the personal support of the US Ambassador, Tom Schieffer⁵⁹⁹ – would become one of the leading drivers for Japanese intelligence reform during the first Abe Premiership.

The Japanese Coast Guard was also modernized during this period, receiving off-budget increases in Japan's defense spending⁶⁰⁰. This period also saw the development of Japan's defence diplomacy, with senior JDA ministers and officials forging security dialogues with more than sixteen countries in addition to NATO by 2004⁶⁰¹. Crucially, this was a period for the JDA to develop capacity, as MOD policy planner Yusuke Ishihara says, "[at the time] we didn't even have enough number of English speakers, and we didn't posture the SDF for adequate changes. It needed to adjust, and it took time. And it's true that...right after the end of the Cold War, our only experience was having external contact with the United States, but as our activities expanded, we started meeting other partners...Now there's an independent division, in which I work, with about 40 people, working on external relationships....It took time for the bureaucratic organization to adjust."⁶⁰²

During this period, the JDA also successfully fought off a Ministry of Finance (MOF) proposal for a 40,000 reduction in troops⁶⁰³, as the JDA was gradually taking its seat as a "normal" defence ministry in *Kasumigaseki*, a process that would be formalized in 2007⁶⁰⁴.

⁵⁹⁶ Richard J. Samuels, "'New Fighting Power!' Japan's Growing Maritime Capabilities and East Asian Security", *International Security*, Vol.32, No.3, (Winter 2007/8), pp.84-112.

⁵⁹⁷ Nagase, Matt (President Global Insight Corporation, ret. Mitsubishi Corp), Personal interview, Tokyo, February 3, 2015.

⁵⁹⁸ Lawless, Richard (Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Asia Pacific Affairs, DOD 2001-2008), interview with author, Washington DC, June 4, 2015.

⁵⁹⁹ Anonymous (Senior American Diplomat) Interviewed by telephone, December 23, 2016.

⁶⁰⁰ Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2007), p.170.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² Ishihara, Yusuke, (Fellow, Policy Studies Department, NIDS, Deputy Director, International Policy Division, MOD, 2014-2016) interview with author, Tokyo, January 7, 2015.

⁶⁰³ Takao Sebata, *Japan's Defense Policy and Bureaucratic Politics 1976-2007* (Plymouth, University of America Press, 2010), p.327.

⁶⁰⁴ Richard Halloran, "Japan's Defense Agency changes Name and Reality" in *Taipei Times*, January 8, 2007, Editorial.

6.6. The Second Term of the Bush Administration (2005-2008)

In many ways, the second Bush administration was a reaction to the first. The *Mahanian* perspective was seen as simplistic and over weighted by those who thought that American foreign policy in the region was overly weighted toward US allies. The second administration American requests for increased support and cooperation in the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite this, the trilateral did grow quickly, gaining a new military trilateral structure in 2006, which came as the result of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) process⁶⁰⁵. Ordered to focus on allies in the Asia Pacific by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Lawless viewed alliance inter-operability as his overriding mission goal. The political track, the TSD was upgraded to a ministerial level that same year, and then summit level event. This initial elevation took place for two reasons: partly because of US and Japanese concerns about Australia's diverging position on China; and partly because of changes inside the Bush administration's Asia team.

The cabinet reshuffle of 2005 saw the old Asia team, with Secretary of State Powell, and his deputy, Richard Armitage, being replaced by Condoleezza Rice, National Security Advisor, and Robert Zoellick, a former diplomat and trade representative. Coming from a trade background, Zoellick had dramatically different views on Japan than his predecessor Armitage, and the relationship with Tokyo is said to have suffered somewhat during this period⁶⁰⁶. A number of the administration's best "Japan hands" left around this time: Torkel Patterson had left the NSC suddenly in 2002,⁶⁰⁷ while 2005 saw the biggest shake up with the administration losing both Michael J. Green from the National Security Council and Evans Revere from the State Department. In some ways, the shift represented more than just a few Japan experts. Some have argued that in all three trilateral countries, there are policymakers who orient themselves around "US-first, Japan-first, maritime/*Mahanian* democratic and Anglophone-values", broadly-speaking, with Richard Armitage, Andrew Shearer, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and Prime Minister John Howard belonging to that camp. He contrasts these with "*Continentalists*", such as Hugh White, Michael L'Estrange (Calvert's replacement in DFAT), Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuyama, and Robert Zoellick, who all stressed engagement and accommodation with China over alliances and values⁶⁰⁸. Furthermore, some allies

⁶⁰⁵ James L. Schoff, "The Evolution of US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation" Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Simson Center, 2015), p.40.

⁶⁰⁶ Anonymous (Senior American Diplomat), Telephone interview with author.

⁶⁰⁷ "White House Japan Expert Resigns, *The Japan Times*, January 27, 2002, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2002/01/27/national/white-house-japan-expert-resigns/#.Vwjgk4SojVo> (accessed April 9, 2016).

⁶⁰⁸ Anonymous (Senior Staffer, NSC), interview with author, Washington DC.

believed that Christopher Hill –the administration’s main Asia heavyweight – began to emphasize the Six Party Talks and the North Korean issue to the exclusion of other regional topics⁶⁰⁹.

Despite its pre-occupation with wars in the Middle East, and the appointment of Zoellick as Deputy Secretary of State, the US-China relationship became marked by its increasing complexity in the second term of the Bush administration. As has been noted, China was generally supportive of the administration’s war against terrorism, seeing in it an opportunity to dampen growing tensions with the US⁶¹⁰ and garner support over Uighur separatists⁶¹¹. Furthermore, it attempted to address growing American concerns about its rise with the application of the “peaceful rise” slogan⁶¹², which came to supplant Jiang Zemin’s “Avoid confrontation, build up comprehensive national power, advance incrementally” slogan. It also seemed willing to play a positive role over lingering problems with North Korea. In 2003, after the breakdown of the Agreed Framework, North Korea withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Beijing managed to organize and host the first Six Party Talks, initiating one of the first collective approaches to security in Northeast Asia. Impatient with the Bush administration’s approach to talks and labelling of it as a part of an “axis of evil”⁶¹³, Pyongyang tested seven Taepodong-2 missiles in July 2006, following that up with its first underground nuclear weapon in October of that year. Despite both tests, the Six Party Talks would continue off-and-on until 2007, when an apparent diplomatic breakthrough was made in the 5th and 6th rounds of the talks. The breakdown of the Six Party Talks reflected – for different reasons – the widening gulf between Washington and Beijing on how to resolve the North Korea issue. One reason for this growing unease among American defense official about China’s growing military capabilities⁶¹⁴. The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* stated that China held “the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional US military advantages”.⁶¹⁵ As

⁶⁰⁹ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat) interview with author, London, UK.

⁶¹⁰ Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011), pp.146-147.

⁶¹¹ Chien-peng Chung, “China’s ‘War on Terror’: September 11 and Uighur Separatism,” *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2002), pp.8-12.

⁶¹² According to Henry Kissinger, in his book *On China* (2011), the primary article associated with this slogan is Zheng Bijian, “China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’ to Great-Power Status,” *Foreign Affairs*, (September/October 2005). As “rise” was seen as potentially threatening to other countries, the slogan later became “peaceful development”.

⁶¹³ The President’s State of the Union Address, The White House Archives, January 29, 2002, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> (accessed April 11, 2016)

⁶¹⁴ For examples of this concern, see: Annual Report to Congress “China Expands Sub Fleet,” The Washington Times, March 2, 2007 <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2007/mar/2/20070302-012440-4462r/?page=all> (accessed April 12, 2016); China’s Official Military Budget to Grow by 17.6% in 2008, Defence Industry Daily, March 6, 2008, <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/Chinas-Official-Military-Budget-to-Grow-by-176-in-2008-04779/> (accessed April 12, 2016);

⁶¹⁵ “Quadrennial Defense Review Report,” US Department of Defense, February 6, 2006, <http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/defenseReviews/QDR/Report20060203.pdf> (accessed April 12, 2016), p.29.

if to highlight this, the Pentagon's newest stealth fighter⁶¹⁶ was hacked, allegedly, by Chinese cyber actors sometime between 2006 and 2007. Beijing also tested an anti-satellite missile in 2007, revealing a potentially devastating weapon against a US military, overly-reliant on C4ISR.

Another concern at this time, was China's growing influence within ASEAN. This revealed itself in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, when China insisted that ASEAN Plus Three, rather than the East Asia Summit, be used as a forum for regional integration. Beijing's success leading regional integration in this way revealed its growing leverage on ASEAN states like Laos and Cambodia. Unease among American and Japanese FPEs had grown since the 2007 American Financial Crisis with many arguing that the Beijing's behavior constituted "increased assertiveness"⁶¹⁷. Certainly, continued increases in Chinese military spending, combined with an increase in maritime-based disputes with its neighbors in the East and South China Seas fed into this wider geopolitical narrative. In response to these increased tensions, Pentagon policymakers began considering balancing strategies against Chinese capabilities, while simultaneously seeking improved communications and ties with their Chinese counterparts⁶¹⁸. By the time the Obama administration came into office, Sino-American relations were seen an increasingly competitive in nature, with many in-region and within the American policy community arguing that the United States needed to "return to Asia."⁶¹⁹

6.7. The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Grows

The second term of the Bush administration saw a dramatic uptick in the structure and scope of activities of the trilateral initiative, with the forum becoming institutionalized and elevated to the ministerial and summit level. It would be easy to suppose that this was primarily because of neorealism's predictions about power balances, and the rise of China, and while this is partly true, what actually occurred was also influenced by how FPEs perceived and reacted to changes in the structure of power and to events in the region – such as the Indian Ocean Tsunami. One would assume that American FPEs would universally drive trilaterals toward closer institutionalization at this time, but that is not what in fact took place. In 2005, Robert Zoellick replaced Richard Armitage as Deputy

⁶¹⁶ Siobhan Gorman, August Cole, Yochi Dreazen, "Computer Spies Breach Fighter-Jet Project," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 21, 2009, Tech Section; Franz-Stefan Gady, "New Snowden Documents Reveal Chinese behind F-35 Hack," *The Diplomat*, January 27, 2015.

⁶¹⁷ See for example, Michael D. Swaine, "Perceptions of an Assertive China," *China Leadership Monitor*, No.32, (May 2010), p10; Michael D. Swaine, M. Taylor Fravel, "China's Assertive Behavior – Part Two: The Maritime Periphery," *China Leadership Monitor*, No.35, (Summer 2011); Thomas Christensen, "The Advantages of an Assertive China: Responding to Beijing's Abrasive Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.90, No.2, (Mar/April 2011), pp.54-67; Daniel Twining, "Were US-China Relations Oversold? Part II," *Shadow Government, Foreign Policy Blog*, June 12, 2012; For a counter argument to this assertive narrative, see: Alastair Iain Johnston, "How New and Assertive is China's New Assertiveness?" *International Security*, Vol.37, No.4, (Spring 2004), pp.7-48.

⁶¹⁸ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p. 195.

⁶¹⁹ Kurt M. Campbell, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia*, (New York: Twelve, 2016), p.198.

Secretary of State. Unlike Armitage, Zoellick lacked enthusiasm for the trilateral strategic initiative, partly because he viewed it as a junior-level dialogue, and partly because he preferred to focus on ASEAN and US-China relations⁶²⁰. According to Andrew Shearer, a senior Australian diplomat close to the Howard government, “there was this slight shift between Bush’s first and second administrations when Bob Zoellick came in as Deputy Secretary of State. This caused anxiety amongst the Japanese, as there was a sense that Zoellick wasn’t interested in the dialogue and was more focused on the US-China relationship and the ‘responsible stakeholder’ vision.”⁶²¹ Zoellick took this so far as to decline a meeting with a visiting Japanese delegation to show his displeasure over Tokyo’s ban on US beef exports⁶²².

The concept around “responsible stakeholder” was a normative policy statement of what China should become, and had strategic repercussions for American strategy and foreign policymaking.⁶²³ Zoellick had been the lead negotiator on China’s entry into the WTO, and came into office with a plan to make China a “strategic partner”. Concerned with the impact this new perspective might have on the growing trilateral, Michael Green, Senior National Security Advisor on Asia, persuaded Zoellick to call his new US-China meeting a “senior dialogue” rather than a strategic dialogue⁶²⁴. The first meeting of this dialogue took place in August 2005 in Beijing, and was co-chaired by Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick and Secretary General of the Foreign Affairs Leading Group of the CPC, Dai Binguo. An additional US-China meeting to the Senior Dialogue was created the following year in December. Named the Strategic and Economic Dialogue, this meeting was hosted by the Treasury Department (on the American side).

Realizing that the trilateral meetings would falter without someone in the State Department to support them at the proper level, Michael Green, Senior Director of Asia at the NSC, and Andrew Shearer, a senior diplomat at the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade worked on a plan to continue the meetings⁶²⁵. Since the trilateral meetings could no longer take place at the deputy

⁶²⁰ Anonymous (Senior American Diplomat), interview with author.

⁶²¹ Shearer, Andrew (Japan Desk Officer, 2005-6, DFAT,) interview with author, May 21, 2015.

⁶²² Anonymous (Senior American Diplomat), interview with author.

⁶²³ For example, see: Robert Zoellick, Deputy Secretary of State, “China: From Membership to Responsibility?” Remarks to National Committee on US-China Relations, New York City, September 21, 2005 (accessed on April 9, 2016); The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States, March 2006, <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/2006.pdf> (accessed April 14, 2016), p.41.; Robert Zoellick, “From the Shanghai Communiqué to ‘Responsible Stakeholder,’” *Remarks made at the China Balance Sheet in 2007 and Beyond*, at the Peterson Institute, May, 2007.

⁶²⁴ Despite this, Chinese government documents did not differentiate between the two expressions. and used “Strategic Dialogue”.

⁶²⁵ See interview with: Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), Personal interview, CSIS, Washington DC, April 15, 2015; Shearer, Andrew (Japan Desk Officer, 2005-6, DFAT, Australia’s Prime Minister’s Office 2006-7) interview with author, May 21, 2015.

Secretary of State level, the two men decided to approach their respective ministers with the proposal to elevate them to minister-level. On a long-haul flight to the region in March 2005, Green persuaded Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice of the need to keep the meetings going at the Secretary level⁶²⁶, while Shearer spoke to Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer in Canberra. According to Shearer, Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura was happy to accede to the elevation, given the circumstances⁶²⁷. The elevation was announced in May 2005 in a meeting between the three in Washington⁶²⁸, with the second trilateral ministerial taking place in March 2006, with Alexander Downer hosting Taro Aso and Condoleezza Rice in Sydney⁶²⁹. While there was a hiccup between Rice and Downer on nature of the trilateral (he openly disavowed the China-strategic element in the press briefing after their meeting), the trilateral not only survived, but thrived in political terms.

Despite this, the shift of power between *Mahanians* and *Continentalists* inside the Bush administration's second term was real and also affected US relations with Tokyo and Canberra over the latter half of the decade. After Junichiro Koizumi stepped down in Tokyo in 2006, there was a period of confusion inside the Liberal Democratic Party, with three different political heirs claiming the leadership of the LDP in as many years. Yasuo Fukuda – Koizumi's able Chief Cabinet Secretary, and a proponent of engagement with China – became prime minister in 2007-2008, sandwiched, however, by two *Mahanian* China-skeptics, Shinzo Abe and Taro Aso. Abe's tenure saw a brief uptick in enthusiasm from the Japanese side as he promoted a trilateral summit in Sydney in 2007 and the Quadrilateral initiative in 2008. However, all three leaders would be out of office within a year of the summit.

In Canberra, Howard lost the premiership to Labor Party Kevin Rudd, a *Continentalist*, just two months after the APEC Summit in September. Rudd, a former diplomat who spoke fluent Chinese, was known for his more-accommodating stance vis a vis China. What is interesting about this period, is that despite the electoral gains of the pro-engagement *Continentalist* group, the trilateral managed to continue growing. This was possible, partly because of the Green-Shearer upgrade described above, and partly because the trilateral became more diffused among the various agencies of government. In the wake of the success of the Core Group during the 2004-5 Indian Ocean Tsunami reconstruction

⁶²⁶ Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), Personal interview, CSIS, Washington DC, April 15, 2015.

⁶²⁷ Shearer, Andrew (Japan Desk Officer, 2005-6, DFAT, Australia's Prime Minister's Office 2006-7) interview with author, May 21, 2015.

⁶²⁸ Michael Wesley, "The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue's Institutional Politics," in William T. Tow, Mark J. Thomson, Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Satu P. Limaye, *Asia Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (London: Routledge, ASPI, 2007), pp.39-53.

⁶²⁹ DFAT Annual Report 2005-2006 <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/annual-report-2005-2006/performance/1/1.1.3.html> (accessed April 11, 2016).

efforts, for example, the US Department of Defense in 2006 proposed another separate trilateral forum, dedicated to increasing security cooperation and interoperability between American, Japanese and Australian forces⁶³⁰. The new Security Defense Cooperation Forum (SDCF), came about partly because Pentagon officials had found large deficits in inter- and intra-ministerial planning and cooperation inside Japan as part of the 2001-2004 Global Defense Posture Review ordered by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld⁶³¹. Traditionally, MOFA had dominated strategic dialogues with the DOD, but without the relevant military expertise, conversations with MOFA personnel had their limitations for the DOD. Therefore, in creating the SDCF, the DOD preferred that the newly-elevated Japanese Ministry of Defense lead, with MOFA taking more of a back seat.

6.8. Expanding Australia-Japan and trilateral Security Ties

Japan-Australia bilateral security ties continued of their own accord, seemingly drawing momentum from the military bureaucracy and from events on the ground. They had experienced an immense boost from cooperation in the Indian Ocean Tsunami, and this was increased in early 2005, when Canberra agreed to provide force protection for the Japanese Iraq Reconstruction and Support Group in Samawah Province, Iraq. Due to Japan's Constitutional constraints, Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces (GSDF) deployed under extremely restrictive rules of engagement, a serious liability in Southern Iraq at the time. The deal for Australia to provide force protection was initially negotiated by Jack Straw⁶³², the British Foreign Secretary, who sought to plug the gap caused by a scheduled troop withdrawal of Dutch forces in March 2005. In January, Straw telephoned Downer and made a formal request. Downer contacted Prime Minister Howard who was then at the annual Davos meeting in Switzerland⁶³³ and once the two were both back in Canberra, they worked first to persuade the cabinet, and then the Australian public of the need to send Australian troops back to Iraq⁶³⁴. Once the Cabinet was convinced, they approached their Japanese counterparts. Negotiating through Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura, they agreed to have Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi telephone Howard and make the request personally, as such a request would play better with the Australian public. Both the telephone call and the overall policy were successful, and in late February 2005, 450 Australian troops deployed to the *Al Muthanna* Task Group, replacing the Dutch in Southern Iraq and providing force protection for Japanese forces.

⁶³⁰ James L. Schoff, "The Evolution of US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation" Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) *US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges* (Washington DC, Simson Center, 2015), p.42.

⁶³¹ Lawless, Richard (Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Asia Pacific Affairs, DOD 2001-2008), interview with author, Washington DC, June 4, 2015.

⁶³² Anonymous (Senior UK MOD official 2001-2007) interview with author, London, January 26, 2016.

⁶³³ Downer, Amb. Alexander (Foreign Minister of Australia, 1996-2007), interview with author London, September 9th, 2015.

⁶³⁴ John Howard, *Lazarus Rising: A Personal and Political Autobiography*, (Sydney: HarperCollins, 2013), p.536.

The impact that this had within the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA) / Ministry of Defense (MOD) cannot be overstated, and played a large role in overturning the traditional reticence of senior JDA policymakers to engage deeply with non-US militaries⁶³⁵, as well as influencing the view of Japanese political elites of the possibility of a quasi-alliance with Australia⁶³⁶. It also paved the way for a new security agreement, the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2007.

In September 2006, Shinzo Abe – Koizumi's lieutenant and former Chief Cabinet Secretary (CCS), and the scion of a notable political family – was elected leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Like Koizumi, he supported Japan's strong alliance with the United States. Distinguishing himself from Koizumi during the LDP leadership campaign, however, Abe advocated an assertive foreign policy and the development of 'strategic dialogues' with Australia and India on the basis of common values⁶³⁷. This emphasis on values – carried out by both Abe and his close advisor Yoshihide Suga – trickled down to the various Japanese bureaucratic actors, helping foster the on-going enthusiasm for security ties with Australia⁶³⁸. This and the Australian troop deployment to Iraq helped pave the way for the Joint Security Declaration on Security Cooperation⁶³⁹ (herein called the Joint Declaration) signed by Prime Ministers Abe and Howard in Sydney in March 2007⁶⁴⁰. In a moment that stands in contrast to neorealist expectations, Australian diplomats opened a discussion formalizing the Joint Declaration in a treaty of alliance similar to ANZUS, but both pulled back at the last moment due to the constitutional concerns of Japanese government lawyers⁶⁴¹. By all reckoning, Japan should have accepted such a treaty, given its increasing fears about China, but without understanding the political culture of Japan, one cannot understand why Japanese FPEs rejected the unusual offer.

In light of the PKO operations in Cambodia, East Timor, and the Indian Ocean Tsunami, Japan and Australia sought to institutionalize such cooperation in the Joint Declaration and included in the document, "peace operations", "humanitarian relief operations, including disaster relief:", and sought to conduct further exercises and training⁶⁴². It was, according to one Australian Defense official, "a

⁶³⁵ Anonymous, (Senior Japanese Defense Official) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁶³⁶ Toyama, Kiyohiko, (New Komeito Diet Member, Secretary-General of Komeito's Special Committee on Security-Related Legislation, 2013-2016), interview with author, Tokyo, February 16, 2015.

⁶³⁷ Bert Edstrom, *The Success of a Successor: Abe Shinzo and Japan's Foreign Policy*, Silk Road Paper, (Sweden: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, 2007), pp.38-39.

⁶³⁸ Holloway, Trevor, (Japan Desk, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013-2015), interview with author, Canberra, March 10, 2015.

⁶³⁹ "Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation" *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*, available at: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/joint0703.html> (accessed on October 14, 2016).

⁶⁴⁰ John Howard, *Lazarus Rising: A Personal and Political Autobiography*, (Sydney: HarperCollins, 2013), p.536.

⁶⁴¹ Greg Sheridan, "Security Treaty Rejected by Tokyo," *The Australian*, March 12, 2007.

⁶⁴² H.D.P. Envall, "Community Building in Asia? Trilateral Cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief," In Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges (Washington DC: Simson Center, 2015), p.53.

phenomenal thing and only hinted at the types of things that Australia could do with Japan”⁶⁴³ and a significant step for both countries⁶⁴⁴. It has provided the momentum for further institutionalization⁶⁴⁵, including the Japan-Australia “2+2” Defense and Foreign Minister’s meetings, which took place in June 2007 in Tokyo. This meeting marked the first time that Japan had carried out these types of talks with any state other than the United States. Other forms of institutionalization between the two would materialize over the next five years with the Japanese military now committed to the bilateral and trilateral relationships⁶⁴⁶. In June 2008, the three ministers met in Kyoto, where they issued the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Statement. The first area of cooperation raised in the document was humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and in the Annex, the Joint Statement committed the three to technical level meetings, for information-sharing and lessons learned, and committed to conducting “exercises to build understanding of respective emergency response procedures and capabilities.”⁶⁴⁷ According to David Envall, trilateral HA/DR activities took place in September 2009 after the Sumatra, earthquake, and in July 2010 after the Pakistan floods⁶⁴⁸.

6.9. The Quadrilateral Proposal and US-Japan-India Trilateralism

The rise and fall of the Quadrilateral dialogue with India is an interesting point in demonstrating the need for unit level analysis in the story of the trilateral. Neorealism might predict why states that shared a high threat assessment of a fifth state might band together for protection and deterrence. It might even predict why they might bandwagon and eschew such an option, but it cannot explain why states promote and then abandon alliance-like structures. In order to understand why the short-lived project between Washington, Canberra, Tokyo and New Delhi, got off the ground, but was then abandoned, unit level analysis must be used. For it is only by understanding that FPEs within all three states were not agreed on China’s threat assessment and that they alternated in holding the reins of policy that we can understand this confusion. Therefore, a neoclassical realist interpretation might run as follows: *Mahanian* FPEs, holding power and sharing a common threat assessment of China, judged a quadrilateral as necessary. However, their initiative was seen as dangerous, and possibly counter-productive by *Continentalists*, who promptly lobbied within their own governments to overturn the idea. This perspective would have been magnified if elections or cabinet reshuffles put

⁶⁴³ Anonymous (Senior Australian Defense Official) Personal interview, Canberra, ACT.

⁶⁴⁴ Paul Dibb, “Security Deal a Significant Step for Two Aspiring Nations,” *Australia Financial Review*, March 16, 2007; Yoshinobu Yamamoto, “Strengthening Security Cooperation with Australia: A New Security Means for Japan,” *AJISS Commentary*, October 9, 2007.

⁶⁴⁵ Tow, Willian (Professor, International Relations, ANU), interview with author, Canberra, March 10, 2015.

⁶⁴⁶ Anonymous (Policy Planning Bureau, JMOD, 2010-2012) interview with author, Tokyo, January 9, 2015.

⁶⁴⁷ Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Statement, July 28, 2008, available at MOFA Website: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/joint0806-2.html> (accessed November 3, 2016).

⁶⁴⁸ H.D.P. Envall, “Community Building in Asia? Trilateral Cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief,” In Yuki Tatsumi (ed.) US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges (Washington DC: Simson Center, 2015), p.53

more China-oriented FPEs at the reins of policymaking in their respective capitals. In fact, field research suggests that this is exactly what occurred between 2006 and 2007.

The first event that promoted the possibility of quadrilaterals among *Mahanian* FPEs was the ease and success with which India had been included into the relief efforts of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Core Group⁶⁴⁹. The fluid and ad hoc approach of networking among America's like-minded allies, was supported by Armitage in the State Department, and Stephen Hadley, Scooter Libby, and Michael Green in the NSC. According to Green, he discussed the idea with Shinzo Abe prior to Abe's electoral victory within the LDP in the summer of 2006⁶⁵⁰.

Green remembers, "When the Quad came up, it was a surprise to everybody. I had been talking about it, Scooter Libby had been talking about it. Armitage had been talking about it. Hadley put it in a speech, but it was all based on the experience of the tsunami, which was so effective. So we all kind of liked it and I talked about it with Abe in person. But he's the one who put it in the book, and made it a campaign promise. And then all of a sudden, he wanted to implement it"⁶⁵¹. In the wake of closer US-India ties exemplified in the 2005 US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement and New Framework for US-India Defense Relationship, it was a perfect opportunity for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to showcase his vision for a new Japanese diplomacy based on common values and interests. His decision to prioritize security and foreign relations with India was a strong aspect of his pre-campaign foreign policy, put forward in his book, *Toward a Beautiful Country [Utsukushii Kuni E]*⁶⁵², which sought to create a values-based "arc of freedom" stretching across the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Prime Minister Abe's friendship with Manmohan Singh was such that he called the Indian leader "a dear friend" and "mentor". To American policymakers, the idea of linking India and Japan was a "dazzling opportunity"⁶⁵³, who thought that "as the two grow closer, the US needs to pounce on this moment of opportunity to shape the direction diplomacy takes in this region in the coming decades".⁶⁵⁴

Indeed, the 2005 US-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement was preceded by the signing of a US-India New Framework for the Defense Relationship, which envisioned greater collaboration in defence technology, expanded partnerships, joint exercises, and by expanding "interaction with other nations

⁶⁴⁹ See, for example, Anonymous (Senior Japanese Diplomat) interview with author, Tokyo; Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), interview with author, Washington DC, April 15, 2015.

⁶⁵⁰ Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), interview with author, Washington DC, April 15, 2015.

⁶⁵¹ Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), interview with author, Washington DC, April 15, 2015.

⁶⁵² Shinzo Abe, *Utsukushii Kuni E*, (Tokyo: Bunshun Shinso, Bungei Shunju, 2006), pp.158-60.

⁶⁵³ Sarah Hiddleston, "How the 'Stars aligned' for Closer Trilateral Relations," *The Hindu*, April 23, 2011, The India Cables.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

in ways that promote global peace and stability”⁶⁵⁵. This event, which also saw a close personal relationship between Singh and President Bush develop⁶⁵⁶ set the stage for US-Japan-India trilateral meetings, and a trilateral naval exercise off the coast of Tokyo in April 2007. Thereafter, Prime Minister Abe proposed a Quadrilateral meeting to take place at the ministerial level, to discuss security and intelligence-sharing issues, with his advisors Nobukatsu Kanehara and Tomohiro Taniguchi leading the diplomatic charge. According to Rory Medcalf, the Quadrilateral meeting began on the sidelines of ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Manila in May 2007, when foreign policy officials from the three countries met under the rubric of “shared values and common interests”,⁶⁵⁷ without a fully-planned agenda. Promoted by Libby Scooter in the White House, the Quadrilateral found support with President Dick Cheney and Senator John McCain, who viewed it in light of the “concert of democracies” concept outlined in the 2006 Princeton Project Report⁶⁵⁸. The Manila meeting was swiftly followed up by a planned week-long war games in the Bay of Bengal in September, with Singapore joining the US, Japan, India, and Australia, as well as a Japan-India security agreement ratified by Prime Minister Singh on a visit to Tokyo in October 2007.

Despite this enthusiasm, the Quadrilateral would not meet again. Indeed, before the Quadrilateral had even met in Manila, Chinese diplomats were approaching *Continentalist* counterparts in all four countries demanding information on the quadrilateral’s purpose and issuing demarches⁶⁵⁹. Chinese concerns continued growing after the Quadrilateral meeting and in October, President Hu Jintao approached Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the G8 Summit in Germany, reiterating Beijing’s concerns and fear of encirclement.⁶⁶⁰ His response, “India is not part of any so-called contain China effort,”⁶⁶¹ which did little to reassure Hu. China continued to apply pressure on the right points in the governments of all four countries. At times, they even seemed willing to stoop to petty punishments, such as stalling visas for Indian delegations visiting China⁶⁶². While support for the

⁶⁵⁵ “New Framework for the US-India Defense Relationship,” Donald Rumsfeld Library Archives, p.2, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3211/2005-06-28%20New%20Framework%20for%20the%20US-India%20Defense%20Relationship.pdf> (accessed April 13, 2016).

⁶⁵⁶ Harish Khare, “Manmohan to Bush: The People of India Love you,” *The Hindu*, September 27, 2008, Today’s Paper.

⁶⁵⁷ Rory Medcalf, “Chinese Ghost Story,” *The Diplomat*, February – March 2008, pp.16-18.

⁶⁵⁸ Rory Medcalf, “Chinese Ghost Story,” *The Diplomat*, February – March 2008, pp.16-18.

⁶⁵⁹ See for example: David Brewster, *India’s Ocean: The Story of India’s Bid for Regional Leadership*, (New York: Routledge, 2014), p.155; Brendan Nicholson, “China Warns Canberra on Security Pact,” *The Age*, June 15, 2007, http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/china-warns-canberra-on-pact/2007/06/14/1181414466861.html?s_cid=rss_age (accessed April 13, 2016).

⁶⁶⁰ Mahmud Ali, “The New Strategic Partnership against China,” September 3, 2007, BBC News Website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/6968412.stm (accessed April 13, 2016).

⁶⁶¹ “India not part of ‘contain China’ effort,” *The Hindu*, January 11, 2008, <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/article1177057.ece> (accessed April 13, 2016).

⁶⁶² Although this might also have been related to a ‘visa war’, which broke out in 2007-8 over the disputed territory of Arunachal Pradesh, as described in Jeff M. Smith, *Cold Peace: China-India Rivalry in the 21st Century*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2014). p.44.

Quadrilateral was strong in the American National Security Council, within the Prime Ministers' offices in Australia, Japan, and India, concerns began to reverberate around the various foreign ministries over China's strong reaction to what it saw as a "little NATO" in Asia. The initiative's primary supporter, Shinzo Abe, resigned in September 2007, citing ill health. The timing was not auspicious: The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs was deeply divided, and under immense financial pressure at that time⁶⁶³.

According to some sources, a small group of *Continentalists* from within the State Department, approached Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Christopher Hill, and persuaded him to abandon the concept⁶⁶⁴. His skepticism was shared by Australian Secretary of DFAT, Michael L'Estrange and India's Foreign Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, both of whom were becoming increasingly aware of *Continentalist* opposition to the idea⁶⁶⁵ and who were concerned that such a body might antagonize Beijing and ratchet up tensions further. The electoral victory of Kevin Rudd, in Australia, cemented the end of the initiative, with Rudd privately reassuring China's foreign minister, Yang Jiechi that Australia would no longer join the Quadrilateral meetings in late 2008. This was followed up by Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith's public announcement that Australia was unilaterally withdrawing from the Quadrilateral when he met with Foreign Minister Yang at the first Australia-China strategic dialogue in early 2008⁶⁶⁶. Despite this apparent diplomatic defeat of the Quadrilateral, meetings continued to take place at the track 1.5 level⁶⁶⁷. With regards to India's participation in strategic discussions, these continued under the rubric of US-Japan-India trilateral meetings, which began in 2006, with the first 'official' meeting in 2011, when Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia and Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell hosted their Japanese and Indian counterparts in Washington⁶⁶⁸. This has recently – as of September 2015 – been upgraded to a Ministerial, with Secretary of State John Kerry hosting Japanese and Indian foreign ministers, Fumio Kishida and Sushma Swaraj in New York.

⁶⁶³ Taniguchi, Tomohiko (Deputy Press Secretary, MOFA, 2005-8), Telephone interview, April 22, 2016.

⁶⁶⁴ Anonymous (Senior Staffer, NSC), Interview with author, Washington DC.

⁶⁶⁵ See for example: Siddharth Varadarajan, "American Century" in Asia and the Pacific: India Supports Washington's Agenda," *The Hindu*, July 5, 2007; Josh Gordon, "Diabolical Dilemmas in PM's China High-Wire Act," *The Age*, April 5, 2009, Federal Politics.

⁶⁶⁶ See, for example: Rory Medcalf, "Squaring the Triangle: An Australian Perspective on Asian Security Minilateralism," in *Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, A Special Report*, (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), pp.28-30; Gordon Josh, Diabolical Dilemmas in PM's China High-Wire Act," *The Age*, April 5, 2009.

⁶⁶⁷ These track 1.5 events, known as the US-Japan-India Strategic Dialogues were hosted by the American think tank CSIS, the Japanese MOFA-affiliated think tank, JIJA, and the Indian CII and have been held annually from 2006. The participants, usually drawn from alliance-managers and *Mahanians*, have briefed their governments on the nature of discussions. http://www2.jiia.or.jp/pdf/report/090301e-us-j-india_strategic_dialogue.pdf (accessed April 13, 2016).

⁶⁶⁸ "US-Japan-India Trilateral," Department of State Website, December 11, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/12/179172.htm> (accessed April 13, 2016).

6.10. China and Regional Security

Despite Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick's efforts to give coherence to America's China policy, Sino-American ties continued to deteriorate in the latter half of the decade. This period also saw a continuing decline in Sino-Japanese relations. This decline took place despite a brief political warming between Tokyo and Beijing, during the premierships of pro-engagement prime ministers, Yasuo Fukuda (2007-8) and Yukio Hatoyama (2009-2010). The goodwill China had earned with its maritime neighbours with the 2002 China-ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the 2007 Sino-Japanese Agreement for Joint Hydrocarbon Development, was lost during the latter half of the decade. In the first instance, China pressured BP not to develop with Hanoi two gas fields 230 miles off of Vietnam's southeastern coast; then, in July, a Chinese naval patrol fired on a Vietnamese fishing vessel, killing a sailor, finally in December 2007, Beijing created a county-level city, Sansha on Hainan island to administer China's claims, including the Vietnamese-claimed islands in the Paracel Island chain. Such was the level of feeling in Hanoi that anti-Chinese demonstrations broke out in Vietnam throughout 2007⁶⁶⁹. This pattern was repeated for the Philippines, where a Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU), initially hailed as a "historic diplomatic breakthrough for peace and security in the region," by Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo became a political liability, since it appeared to apportion one-sixth of Philippines claimed territory to China⁶⁷⁰. This, and China's diplomatic pressure, on the Philippines as it attempted to update its archipelagic baseline claims ahead of its continental shelf submission to the UNCLOS⁶⁷¹.

American FPEs remained divided over China. In 2007, two prominent books on China in the United States neatly exemplify this division: James Mann's *The China Fantasy: How our Leaders Explain Away Chinese Repression* attacked the *Continentalist* approaches in the US toward China, while Susan Shirk's *Fragile Superpower*, promoted the idea that China was weaker – and thus less threatening – than many believed. Both were "insiders" to some extent, but their opinions of China varied dramatically. However, by this time, American and Japanese *Mahanian* FPEs were becoming increasingly aligned over China's "non-transparent" military expansion and spending. In the US, these concerns found their way into the 2006 National Security Strategy⁶⁷², and became a regular feature of security journals and annual reports on China. The 2003 Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments had been the first

⁶⁶⁹ "Vietnam sees Second Weekend of Anti-China Protests," *Straits Times*, December 7, 2007; "China pays Close Attention to so-called Protest in Vietnam over South China Sea," *Xinhua*, December 11, 2007.

⁶⁷⁰ Ian Storey, Conflict in the South China Sea: China's Relations with Vietnam and the Philippines," *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, Vol.6, Issue 4, (April 30 2008).

⁶⁷¹ Jim Storey, *ASEAN and the Rise of China: The Search for Security*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp.264-266.

⁶⁷² The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States, March 2006, <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/2006.pdf> (accessed April 14, 2016), p.41.

to link anti-access, area-denial technologies with strategic intent to China⁶⁷³, though the report did not limit its concerns to China. By the latter half of the 2000s, however, this anti-access, area-denial strategy, shortened to A2AD, was being increasingly linked to China in US government reports, as the PLA developed its C4ISR capabilities, increased its mobile SRBM systems across the Taiwan Straits, and built up the PLAN and PLAAF with further Russian arms packages, in ways that countered and neutralized American advantages⁶⁷⁴. The Chinese strategic intention of “fighting and winning local wars under conditions of *informationalization*”⁶⁷⁵, extended to space, with the PLA testing an anti-satellite weapon in January 2007. The 2006 *Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of China* stated that China’s build-up was not only upsetting the balance of military power in the Taiwan Straits, but also across the region, explaining that: “The pace and scope of China’s military build-up already placed regional military balances at risk. Current trends in China’s military modernization could provide China with a force capable of prosecuting a range of military operations in Asia – well beyond Taiwan – potentially posing a credible threat to modern militaries operating in the region.”⁶⁷⁶ At this time, the US military approach toward China began to take two strong directions: balancing Chinese capabilities, and seeking closer military-to-military ties with both alliance military leaders and Chinese military leaders⁶⁷⁷, in the hope of avoiding miscalculations and escalations. This became more urgent from 2007, when American military leaders perceived some military actions of the PLA – such as the harassment of a US Naval vessel *Impeccable* – to have occurred without the knowledge of the civilian leadership⁶⁷⁸.

6.11. Conclusion

The Bush presidency (2001-2008) initially saw the end of the optimistic Clintonian approach toward collective security architecture and a lessening of emphasis on “engagement”. Instead, the Asia policy of the United States could be characterized by Torkel Patterson’s brief to Michael Green in the NSC: “strengthen alliances”.⁶⁷⁹ This matched the approach of Donald Rumsfeld and Andrew Marshall in the Defense Department as they sought to strengthen US alliances and US capabilities against a

⁶⁷³ Andrew Krepinevich, Barry Watts, Robert Work, *Meeting the Anti-Access and Area-Denial Challenge*, (Washington DC: CSBA, 2003), p.93.

⁶⁷⁴ Richard C. Bush, Michael E. O’Hanlon, *A War like No Other: The Truth About China’s Challenge to America*, (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007), pp.105-120.

⁶⁷⁵ Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, “China’s National Defense in 2008,” January 2009, Available at http://www.china.org.cn/government/whitepaper/node_7060059.htm (accessed October 12, 2016).

⁶⁷⁶ Department of Defense, *The Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People’s Republic of China, 2006*, <http://www.dod.mil/pubs/pdfs/China%20Report%202006.pdf> (accessed April 14, 2016), p.10.

⁶⁷⁷ In 2007, Robert Gates describes attempting to lay the groundwork for a military-to-military relationship with the PLA that was “immune to political differences”, Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p. 413.

⁶⁷⁸ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p. 414.

⁶⁷⁹ Patterson, Torkel, (Special Assistant to the President for Asia, National Security Council, 2001-2003), Telephone interview, Washington DC, April 15, 2016.

potentially-threatening China through the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) process. This would ultimately result in the creation of the Security and Defense Cooperation Forum (SDCF) in the second half of the Bush presidency. It also chimed with Richard Armitage, who had long-sought to make the US-Japan Alliance more symmetrical. His deep personal connections inside the governments of Japan and Australia helped facilitate an Australian initiative to broaden and network US alliances with each other, seeing the creation of the trilateral forum as an informal ad-hoc meeting. According to many close to events⁶⁸⁰, Ashton Calvert and Andrew Shearer played a critical role on the Australian side, with Ryozo Kato and Nobukatsu Kanehara doing much the same on the Japanese side. Having this enthusiasm among critical players in key points of the bureaucracy allowed for the trilaterals to develop quite strongly. This was maintained in the second term, by Michael Green, who managed to have the trilateral elevated to the Secretary of State level. This he did, by working with Shearer, with both men persuading Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer to upgrade the trilaterals to the ministerial level. This bureaucratic enthusiasm was mirrored at the leadership level, as Shinzo Abe saw in the trilateral, the answer to his quest to broaden Japan's security partnerships within a broad pro-American family of nations. His interest in developing Japan's relations with NATO, the UK, and Australia all attest to this, and while his India policy falls a little outside this area, it met with strong American approval.

The Trilateral and Quadrilateral both mark a sort of hesitant search for security by their participants. The hesitancy comes from the fact that all three (and including India), have policy coalitions of FPEs who are pushed and pulled between the two security dilemmas: that of alliance abandonment/entrapment, and that of competition with China. As a result, these FPEs have been divided on whether they should prioritize security with allies or prioritize engagement efforts with China. *Mahanians* were mobilized by North Korea and by the experience of the 2004-5 Indian Ocean Tsunami reconstruction and disaster relief operations, but have also been propelled by other interests, including defense industry cooperation, intelligence-sharing, and collective security. What has been interesting to note is how China has interacted with these trilaterals – seeing in them as efforts at containment rather than of deterrence. With its complex set of economic relationships with Australia and India, it has managed to reveal its displeasure at the groupings, and though it initially

⁶⁸⁰ See, for example: Miyajima, Akio (Director, First NA Division, North American Affairs Bureau, MOFA, 2001-2003) interview with author, Tokyo, March 2, 2015; Green, Michael (Senior Director on Asia, National Security Council 2002-2004), Personal interview, CSIS, Washington DC, April 15, 2015; Miller, Bruce (Australia's Ambassador to Japan 2011-2016; aide to Ashton Calvert, Secretary of DFAT 1998-2004) Personal interview, Tokyo, 23 February 2015; Armitage, Richard (Assistant Secretary of State, Department of State, 2001-2005) interview with author, Washington DC, May 26, 2015. Patterson, Torkel, (Special Assistant to the President for Asia, National Security Council, 2001-2003), Telephone interview, Washington DC, April 15, 2016; Tanaka, Hitoshi (Vice Minister, MOFA 2002-2003) interview with author, Tokyo, December 4, 2014; Kato, Ryozo (Japanese Ambassador to the United States, 2001-2008) interview with author, Telephone, June 1, 2015.

managed to nix the quadrilateral initiative, it has not been able to halt the growing US-Japan-Australia trilateral or the Japan-Australia bilateral.

There have been broad efforts by these states – in turn – to appease Chinese concerns, by inviting it into separate trilaterals or security groupings. The United States developed, under Robert Zoellick, two different strategic dialogues with China. The rapid of these discussions has been helpful, but they have not, however, prevented the growth of “China threat” narratives, and “assertive China” narratives inside the Beltway. Chinese military spending, its targeting of American strategic vulnerabilities through A2AD, and its unwillingness to negotiate in the East and South China Sea, have not helped its case. Despite all the flourishes of language around “human security”, it is clear that China has helped play a large role in creating the alliance-like trilaterals, by wittingly or unwittingly justifying the need for future security against military buildup. Finally, Japan and Australia have both played large roles in developing the trilateral. Australian diplomats really are responsible for bringing the idea to the Americans and Japanese, and once that idea was borne, keeping it going. The Japanese for their part, are in the midst of immense political and strategic change, and the times and the pace of change suited something like the trilateral. Australian diplomats – and the first term, Bush team – were pushing on an open door in Tokyo, one that may have been shut only five years previously.

7. CHAPTER 8: THE OBAMA PRESIDENCY (2008-2015)

This chapter will explore how after swinging between Mahanian and Continentalist -led foreign policymaking in the Asia Pacific during the Clinton and Bush administrations, the Obama administration sought to balance Washington's attention to China with its commitment to alliances. Indeed, such was its determination to balance American commitments to the region that it policymakers in Obama's administration now divided its Asia foreign policy into three focus areas, that of engaging carefully and at the most senior levels with Beijing, that of continuing the alliance networks that were building between allies, and by returning to a commitment to regional integration in Southeast Asia, a priority last seen in the first Clinton administration. Notably, refocusing of attention on ASEAN and other integration policies was not the optimistic variant tried by the Clinton administration in its first term. Indeed, it was a rather more realistic version that could be said to have a China-balancing element, as the South China Sea rose on the administration's radar. As interviews in this chapter will show, the Obama administration not only focused its diplomatic resources on ASEAN, it also began to fund maritime security awareness projects among the smaller states that had conflicting claims with China in the region. The trilateral between Australia, the US, and Japan also began cooperating over security-related initiatives in the region; initiatives that had both a soft security aspect and a hard security aspect.

Initially, Obama's administration seemed more interested in retrenchment and burden-sharing, seeking to partner with American allies in the provision of security, and attempting to rein in the two "open-ended" wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Peter Trubowitz notes, that before the election, President Obama spoke about "the limits of American power and the importance of keeping the US effort proportional to the interest at stake in any particular situation."⁶⁸¹ This could be seen in the first National Security Strategy which lessened focus on terrorism and spent a quarter of its space discussing strengthening the domestic economy and rebuilding infrastructure. Simultaneously, Robert Gates, the Defense Secretary sought to both cut spending and oversee future spending. In a speech given on the 65th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, Gates said "The attacks of September 11, 2001, opened a gusher of defense spending that nearly doubled the base budget over the last decade...the gusher has been turned off and will stay off for a good period of time."⁶⁸² The development of the trilateral – in tandem with the basket of policies that would come to be known as

⁶⁸¹ Peter Trubowitz, *Politics and Strategy: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), p.145.

⁶⁸² Thom Shanker, "Gates takes Aim at Pentagon Spending," *the New York Times*, May 8, 2010, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/09/us/politics/09gates.html>, (accessed November 24, 2016).

the “Pivot” – would have to accommodate these fiscal tensions. The question arose as to whether the United States afford to balance the growth of Chinese power internally.

Gates sought in 2010 to trim \$100 billion in cuts from major systems, including a missile defence system, a new stealth bomber, and production of the F-22 Raptor⁶⁸³. There were also efforts to increase efficiency and get rid of waste, by overseeing reforms of the Pentagon bureaucracy and procurement system, and to lessen the dependence on civilian contractors to pre-2001 levels⁶⁸⁴. In some ways, it is difficult to know how much these trends contributed to support for the trilaterals, especially after the administration made it clear that spending in the Asia Pacific would be ring-fenced. Certainly, the burden-sharing component of trilateral cooperation was used internally as a justification for greater integration, but this was not prioritized over geopolitical elements. Furthermore, the 2010 and 2013 defence budget plans indicated that although the administration would seek to cut \$487 billion over the next decade, this would not affect the DOD’s ability to “be prepared to respond to future threats from ‘near peers’ (e.g., China)”.⁶⁸⁵ It would retain 11 aircraft carriers, maintain and expand the F-35 and F-18 jet programmes, expand its cyber and UAV programmes.⁶⁸⁶ Clearly, the administration remained cognizant of the need for a strong military to maintain stability in the Asia Pacific region and to deter China from military adventurism. It also continued with the force posture changes proposed in the 2001 QDR and 2004 Global Posture Review (GPR), shifting troops around the region to minimize vulnerabilities to long-range precision-strike weapons, and rotating systems through the region for local capacity building and for deterrence and dissuasion⁶⁸⁷.

Unlike the previous two administrations, the Obama administration shared policymaking power between the *Mahanians* and the *Continentalists*, with key roles inside the Department of State, the Department of Defence, and the National Security Council, going to key individuals who subscribed to each approach. Prominent Continentalists like Jeffrey Bader and prominent Mahanians like Kurt Campbell – a co-author of the Nye-Armitage Report - viewed balancing China and networking alliances as two sides of the same coin. By networking the bilateral system, the US and its allies would maintain an edge in the power balance, allowing them to dissuade and deter Chinese adventurism, while also engaging Beijing in what would be an optimistic and constructive manner. Hillary Clinton reveals this

⁶⁸³ “Gates Announces Major Pentagon Priority Shifts,” *CNN Online*, April 6, 2009, available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/04/06/gates.budget.cuts/index.html?iref=topnews> (accessed November 24, 2016).

⁶⁸⁴ According to CNN Online, this would reduce support service contractors from 39 percent to 26 percent.

⁶⁸⁵ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p.312.

⁶⁸⁶ David Alexander, Jim Wolf, “Pentagon Cuts Reshape Military, Trim Costs,” *Reuters*, January 26, 2012, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-defense-budget-idUSTRE80P1SP20120126> (accessed November 24, 2016).

⁶⁸⁷ US Department of Defense, “Report to Congress: Strengthening US Global Defense Posture” (Washington DC: US Department of Defense, 2004), http://www.dmrhawaii.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/global_posture.pdf.

administration's attempt to combine these two approaches with that of regional integration in her book, *Hard Choices*, "One option was to focus on broadening our relationship with China, on the theory that if we could get our China policy right, the rest of our work in Asia would be much easier. An alternative was to concentrate our efforts on strengthening America's treaty alliances in the region (with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia), providing a counterbalance to China's growing power. A third approach was to elevate and harmonize the alphabet soup of regional multilateral organizations, such as ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and APEC (the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation organization). [...] I decided that the smart power choice was to meld all three approaches. We would show that America was 'all in' when it came to Asia. I was prepared to lead the way, but success would require buy-in from our entire government, beginning with the White House."⁶⁸⁸ Despite protestations to the contrary, it was clear that the Pivot to Asia policy contained internal and external balancing elements toward the rise of China – though even now, it balanced this with heavy political engagement. As in past administrations, FPEs with a stake in the US trade relationship with China, were most likely to continue stressing the transformative nature of American engagement with China, and promote "trust-building"⁶⁸⁹ on issues sensitive to Beijing, such as Taiwan and Tibet, but from 2008 this began to subtly shift. No longer did *Continentalist* FPEs espouse the transformative and liberalizing nature of trade. They seemed to realise that Chinese leaders had set the country on a different path. This path saw China remaining an authoritarian power for the foreseeable future, and becoming a regional great power and even global power. American FPEs noted that the domestic slogan "China Dream"⁶⁹⁰ put forward the notion that the CPC would make China "strong and powerful again", and noted the apparent transition deal offered by China—notably in Xi Jinping's "New Type of Great Power Relations"⁶⁹¹ policy – proposed in 2014. Dismissive of this attempt in 2014 by Beijing to shape the relationship to China's advantage, US FPEs have since encouraged the process of trilateral military inter-operability with allies, and prepared for a worsening cycle of bilateral relations with China.

⁶⁸⁸ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), p.44-45.

⁶⁸⁹ Michael Pillsbury, "Reading China Wrong," *The Journal of International Security Affairs*, Vol.0, No.23, (Fall / Winter, 2012), p.96.

⁶⁹⁰ The China Dream concept is notably difficult to define, since the name first came to prominence in 2010, when a Colonel in the PLA wrote "It has been China's dream for a century to become the world's leading nation" in a best-selling book by that title. For a wider discussion of the domestic and foreign policy implications of the term promoted by Chinese President Xi Jinping, see Peter Ferdinand, "Westward ho – the China Dream and 'one belt, one road': Chinese Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping," *International Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 4, (2016), pp.941-957; William A. Callahan, *China Dreams: 20 Visions of the Future*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁶⁹¹ Cheng Li, Lucy Xu, "Chinese Enthusiasm and American Cynicism Over the New Type of Great Power Relations," *Brookings Institute*, op-ed, December 4, 2014.

In many ways, this emboldened *Mahanian* FPES in the Obama administration who favoured strong US alliances, and the trilateral began to take on a particularly robust shape at this time, ‘trilateralising’ – for example - two conventional warfare exercises that had previously been bilateral. In 2012, the Royal Australian Air Force was invited into the US-Japan air exercises, *Cope Guam North*, while in 2015, Japanese Ground Self Defence Forces were invited into the US-Australian *Southern Jackaroo* ground exercises. Additionally, the three navies began an annual series of submarine warfare exercises in *Exercise Pacific Bond*, which was “designed to advance participating nations’ military-to-military coordination and capacity to plan and execute tactical operations in a multinational environment.”⁶⁹² For many nations, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercises are extremely sensitive because they enable forces to determine the capabilities of their partners. For this reason, only real allies are usually allowed to take part in this exercises. While the US is alliance partners with both Japan and Australia, their lack of a common treaty alliance should make trilateral ASW exercises problematic. However, despite the lack of a full Japan-Australia alliance, the two have been able to carry out this and many other types of sensitive hard-warfare cooperation.

US defence officials in the Obama administration assert that all three are designed to develop a common communications infrastructure, common rules of engagement, as well as unit-level operational familiarity.⁶⁹³ The Australian DOD has stated that the trilateral air exercise, *Cope North Guam*, seeks to “develop multilateral interoperability and coalition procedures in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, air power missions, to include *air superiority, close support interdiction, electronic warfare, tactical airlift, aerial refueling and airborne command and control*.[italics added]”⁶⁹⁴ Whatever the public statements made about them, it is clear that these exercises are becoming increasingly large and complex as time passes. The largest of these trilateral exercises – the US-Australia combined forces *Talisman Sabre* – has combined air, land, and sea components between the three countries, with more than 33,000 personnel taking part. Japan and Australia are also regular partners in large-scale American exercises, such as the US-Japan-India Malabar exercise, the annual air exercise *Red Flag* in Alaska, and the biennial *RIMPAC* maritime warfare exercise (the world’s largest), often hosting up to 22 participant nations.

As we will see, the Obama administration’s focus for trilateralism was the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, after the US-Japan-Korea trilateral broke down over continued bilateral tensions between Tokyo and

⁶⁹² US 7th Fleet Public Affairs, “Allied Navies to Participate in Pacific Bond 2013”, Navy Website: <http://www.public.navy.mil/surfor/cds-15/Pages/AlliedNaviestoParticipateinPacificBond2013.aspx#.WZG0cdHTWhA> (accessed August 14, 2017).

⁶⁹³ Anonymous, (Joint Staff, DOD) interview with author, Washington DC.

⁶⁹⁴ Exercise: Cope North Guam, Ministry of Defense Website, available at: <http://www.defence.gov.au/Exercises/CopeNorthGuam/> (accessed on November 3, 2016).

Seoul in 2003 and again in 2011. The failure of the Japan-ROK intelligence-sharing GSOMIA agreement to gain approval in the South Korean Assembly in 2012⁶⁹⁵ was a part of this breakdown of the older trilateral. Subsequently, the growth of maritime tensions in the South and East China Sea also suited a refocusing of trilateral cooperation as the US sought to partner with Tokyo and Canberra in building up the naval and maritime capacity of Southeast Asian states, and re-oriented its military posture in both Japan and Australia. Lacking similar historical legacies, the Australia-Japan leg of the trilateral continued to grow increasingly inter-operable, and sought to develop new areas of defence industrial cooperation in a high-profile submarine deal. Jeffrey Bader, a key advisor to President Obama, asserts that US regional policy was shaped by the following three guidelines: (1) China's growing influence and legitimate expanded role should be welcomed by the US; (2) the US should resolve to see that China remained consistent with international rules and norms; (3) the US should shape the Asia Pacific environment – particularly with its key alliances – to ensure China's rise is stabilizing rather than disruptive⁶⁹⁶.

7.1. The First Term of the Obama Administration (2008-2012)

Even before it had assumed office, the incoming Obama transition team had located Asia as one of its key areas of focus. Despite the Defense Department "shift to Asia" underlined in the 2001 QDR and 2004 GPR, key advisors in the Obama camp saw themselves as "correcting" the mistakes of the previous Bush administration, such as the overriding concern with terrorism, the middle east, and penchant toward unilateral action⁶⁹⁷. According to Tom Donilon, President Obama's National Security Advisor, US policy had been "over weighted" in the Middle East, and "underweighted" in the Asia Pacific⁶⁹⁸. There had been, they thought, serious policy incoherence on China⁶⁹⁹, compounded by a neglect of Southeast Asia, a view prominent in academic and policy circles at the time⁷⁰⁰. The US, for

⁶⁹⁵ Seongho Sheen, Jina Kim, "What went wrong with the ROK-Japan Military Pact?" *Pacific Bulletin, East-West Center*, Number 176, (July 31, 2012).

⁶⁹⁶ Jeffrey Bader, *Obama and China's Rise: An Insider's Account of the America's Asia Strategy*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), p.7.

⁶⁹⁷ According to Nina Silove, this misappraisal of the Bush administration's accomplishments was because the DOD "made a deliberate decision to keep the strategy muted to avoid antagonizing China." (N. Silove, "Pivot before Pivot", 2016, p.47).

⁶⁹⁸ National Security Advisor Tom Donilon's Remarks on President Obama's Asia Policy and Trip to the Asia, November 2012, Delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 15, 2012: <http://www.cfr.org/asia-and-pacific/national-security-advisor-donilons-remarks-president-obamas-asia-policy-trip-asia-november-2012/p31443> (accessed May 2, 2016).

⁶⁹⁹ See chapter 5 for differences in first, second term approaches toward China.

⁷⁰⁰ For example, see: John T. Tkacik, Dana Robert Dillon, "China and ASEAN: Endangered American Primacy in Southeast Asia" *Heritage Backgrounder on Asia* (October 19, 2005); Jurgen Haacke, "Playing Catch-up: the United States and Southeast Asia," in Nicholas Kitchen, (ed.) LSE IDEAS Report: Obama Nation? US Foreign Policy One Year On, (2010); Alice Ba, "Systemic Neglect" A Reconsideration of US-Southeast Asia Policy," In *Contemporary Southeast*, Vol.31, No3 (December, 2009), pp.369-398; "US Alliances and Emerging Partnerships in Southeast Asia: Out of the Shadows," *A Report of the CSIS Southeast Asia Initiative*, (July, 2009); Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p.322.

Jeffrey Bader, *Obama and China's Rise: An Insider's Account of the America's Asia Strategy*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), p.1.

example, had failed to sign ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, failed to hold US-ASEAN summits, and often did not send key officials to regional meetings. However, the lines between the Bush administration and the Obama administration on Asia were not by political party. *Mahanian* Republicans, like Jim Kelly, the former Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific from the first term of the Bush presidency also thought that the second Bush administration had not paid enough attention to what was becoming a global center of economic and political power. A 2006 conference at the prestigious East – West Center in Honolulu, chaired by Kelly stated, "The region still values US engagement and role, and while the current relative inattention in Washington to developments in Asia does some harm to US interests, the damage is still manageable. However...Asia is not waiting for the United States, and Washington must actively re-engage if it is to maintain its influence."⁷⁰¹ The incoming administration's criticism of the previous Bush administration actually masked an internal feud between *Mahanians* and regionalists, who thought that the second term administration had been overly focused on China and North Korea in the Department of State. In the first instance, Robert Zoellick continued to build diplomatic and economic forums for Washington and Beijing to build upon, and in the second instance, Christopher Hill, Special Representative on North Korea, began to drag the alliance bilaterals with South Korea and Japan into the all-encompassing Six Party Talks, which lasted until 2007.

In the months after the presidential victory, Obama's Asia team swiftly took shape, with key appointments divided between the campaign foreign policy teams of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton presidential campaign team. As she mentions in *Hard Choices*⁷⁰², Clinton was able to appoint most of her team to the DOS⁷⁰³. Asia policy was initially shared between Jeffrey Bader, Obama's new senior Director for Asia in the National Security Council, Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner, and Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg, though this gradually shifted, when Clinton appointed Kurt Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia. Arguably a *Mahanian*, Campbell was a previous Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia, and joined the administration later in the year⁷⁰⁴. According to Admiral McDevitt, much of the intellectual work for what became the

⁷⁰¹ James Kelly, "Opening Remarks," The US and Asia: Assessing Problems and Prospects, East-West Center, 2006 <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/system/tdf/private/SeniorPolicySeminar2006.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=32162> (accessed May 3, 2016).

⁷⁰² This was part of a deal made by Barak Obama and Hilary Clinton during the presidential campaign after she agreed to halt her bid in return for becoming his Secretary of State, see: Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014), p.18.

⁷⁰³ With the exception of the well-known diplomat Richard Holbrooke, who Clinton wanted as her Deputy Secretary of State. Blocked by President-elect Obama, Holbrooke went on to become the Special Representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan. Vali Nasr, "The Inside Story of How the White House let Diplomacy Fail in Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy* (March – April 2013).

⁷⁰⁴ Kurt Campbell's nomination was not confirmed by the Senate until June 2009.

“rebalance” or “Pivot” originated with Campbell during the mid-2000s⁷⁰⁵. Michael Schiffer, from the Obama team, became the new Deputy Assistant for Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Department of Defense. Additional team members with strong Asia experience included John Huntsman, Obama’s appointee as Ambassador to China⁷⁰⁶. President-elect Obama’s biography – growing up between Hawaii and Indonesia as “America’s first Asia Pacific President”⁷⁰⁷ – also meant that the rebalancing policy had the personal support of the president himself⁷⁰⁸, and was less impacted by personnel changes between his first and second term. Hillary Clinton’s first speech – at the Asia Society in New York⁷⁰⁹ – boldly proclaimed the administration’s intention to strengthen ties with Asia and she chose⁷¹⁰ to go to the region for her first overseas trip,⁷¹¹ the first time a Secretary of State had done so since Asia-hand Dean Rusk had done in 1961. Despite this strong start, the first two years of the Obama administration were spent attempting to manage the financial crisis of 2007-2009 and much Asia policy – particularly that relating to China and Japan – was on collaborative diplomacy aimed at ameliorating a global recession as well as fighting perceptions of American decline.

7.2. New Political Winds in Japan

As has been discussed, the intra-alliance security dilemma realized itself in the entrapment / abandonment dichotomy. Along with the fear of abandonment, came the fear that a former ally might bandwagon with what had previously been a competitor⁷¹². If and when such behavior takes place, a foreign policy analysis (FPA) approach might suggest that it comes when there is a change in

⁷⁰⁵ McDevitt cites the following, as examples: Kurt M. Campbell, Willow Darsie (eds.) “China Marches on the 21st Century,” *A Report of the Aspen Study Group*, The Aspen Institute, 2007, available at: <https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/asg/CMTCFINAL052307.PDF> (accessed October 5, 2016); Kurt Campbell, Nirav Patel, Vikram J. Singh, *The Power of Balance: America in Asia* (Washington DC: Center for New American Security, 2008); Ralph A. Cossa, Brad Glosserman, Michael A. McDevitt, Nirav Patel, James Przystup, Brad Roberts, *The United States and the Asia Pacific Region: Security Strategy for the Obama Administration*, (Pacific Forum CSIS, Center for Naval Analysis, Center for New American Security, INSS; Institute for Defense Analysis, 2009). Available at https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/media/csis/pubs/issuесinsights_v09n01.pdf (accessed on October 5 2016).

⁷⁰⁶ Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. 2015), pp.245-246.

⁷⁰⁷ “Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall,” November 14, 2009, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall> (accessed May 3, 2016).

⁷⁰⁸ “National Security Advisor Tom Donilon’s Remarks on President Obama’s Asia Policy and Trip to the Asia,” November 2012, Delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 15, 2012: <http://www.cfr.org/asia-and-pacific/national-security-advisor-donilons-remarks-president-obamas-asia-policy-trip-asia-november-2012/p31443> (accessed May 2, 2016).

⁷⁰⁹ *Address of US Secretary of State, Hilary Rodham Clinton at the Asia Society* in New York; <http://asiasociety.org/video/us-secretary-state-hillary-clinton-complete> (accessed October 4, 2016).

⁷¹⁰ This was on the advice of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Jim Steinberg: Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). p.39.

⁷¹¹ Stephanie Valera, “Hillary Clinton: ‘We are Ready to Listen’ to Asia,” *The Asia Society Online*, February 13, 2009 <http://asiasociety.org/hillary-clinton-we-are-ready-listen-asia> (accessed May 3, 2016).

⁷¹² Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, (Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), p.158.

government⁷¹³, when one group of FPEs replace another. In 2009, the Obama administration began its Asia policy with a small-scale crisis in relations with the newly-elected Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) government in Japan. As the first country to be visited by Secretary Clinton on her February tour of the region, and the first national leader⁷¹⁴ to be welcomed to meet with the new President in the Oval Office, Japan was high on the list of the Obama team's diplomatic priorities. To some extent, the US was seeking as well as providing reassurance on Clinton's trip to Tokyo, since there growing worries about the direction of DPJ party leader, Yukio Hatoyama's foreign policy vision. During the election campaign, he had committed his party to removing a major US Base from Okinawa⁷¹⁵ and stopping the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Forces' (MSDF) refueling mission in support of the US Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)⁷¹⁶. This and the possibility that senior DPJ leaders favoured a "more balanced"⁷¹⁷ relationship between Beijing and Washington⁷¹⁸ raised alarm bells with alliance-oriented FPEs in Washington. Following a historic electoral win, the new DPJ Prime Minister, Yukio Hatoyama, laid out his foreign policy vision in a *New York Times* article, "A New Path for Japan", in which he stated,⁷¹⁹ "we [Japanese] must not forget our identity as a nation located in Asia. I believe that the East Asia region, which is showing increasing vitality, must be recognized as Japan's basic sphere of being."⁷²⁰ Despite its strong beginning, Prime Minister Hatoyama's premiership was not to last the year; this was partly due to the fact that the DPJ had only ever held office for four years over the past 60, struggled to implement policy, and had a poor working relationship with Japan's bureaucracy after vowing to "tame" the civil service in the media⁷²¹. Within months of taking office, the Hatoyama Cabinet was in crisis in several different areas, including a financial scandal in political contributions, a failure to adequately cut public spending, and reneging on a promise to abolish a tax on gasoline. In June, 2010, Naoto Kan replaced Hatoyama as DPJ leader and Prime Minister.

⁷¹³ The Presidency of Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines and his reversal of his country's foreign and security posture is a shining example of this.

⁷¹⁴ Taro Aso, Prime Minister of Japan 2008-2009.

⁷¹⁵ Helen Cooper, Martin Fackler, "Obama in Japan, Says US Will Study Status of a Marine Base on Okinawa," *The New York Times*, November 13, Asia Pacific: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/14/world/asia/14japan.html> (accessed October 4, 2016).

⁷¹⁶ "Remarks by President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan in Joint Press Conference," *The White House, Office of the Press Secretary* November 13, 2009, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-and-prime-minister-yukio-hatoyama-japan-joint-press> (accessed October 4, 2016).

⁷¹⁷ Global Security.org Democratic Party of Japan(DPJ) Groups Available at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/japan/party-dpj-groups.htm> (accessed October 5 2016).

⁷¹⁸ Kelly Currie, "Japan's Risky Rapprochement with China: Tokyo's Embrace of Beijing could Jeopardize Japan's Security Relationship with the US," *Wall Street Journal*, December 21, 2009 <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704107604574607430596196244> (accessed October 5, 2016).

⁷¹⁹ Yukio Hatoyama, "A New Path for Japan," *The New York Times*, August 26, 2009, The Opinion Pages.

⁷²⁰ Yukio Hatoyama, "A New Path for Japan," *The New York Times*, August 26, 2009, The Opinion Pages.

⁷²¹ Murie Dickie, "The 'Alien' vows to Tame Power of Civil Service," *The Financial Times*, January 27, 2009, available at: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/5db55ab4-ec12-11dd-8838-0000779fd2ac.html?ft_site=falcon&desktop=true#axzz4MJTrsh9u (accessed October 6, 2016).

Despite Hatoyama's wish to develop an equidistant relationship between Beijing and Washington, the DPJ government still developed strong links with Australia⁷²², a policy that ran throughout the three years of DPJ rule. How was this possible? A straight forward structural explanation would predict that Japan would bandwagon more fully with China by also loosening ties with other US allies, but this is not what in fact occurred, revealing the subtle nuances brought by a foreign policy analysis approach. In fact, the continuation of a strong Australia policy reveals the deep cleavages within the DPJ foreign policy community. Despite the views of Hatoyama and Ozawa, they could not prevail over those of a powerful backroom DPJ politician Toshimi Kitazawa, who was the Minister of Defence from 2009 to 2011, and who continued to support close ties with the US and Australia. In contrast to the rest of the cabinet, Kitazawa also seemed to command the loyalty of his civil servants⁷²³. Written during his tenure, the *2010 National Defense Program Guidelines*, explicitly noted China as a concern: "China is steadily increasing its defence expenditure. China is widely and rapidly modernizing its nuclear and missile force as well as navy and air force, and is strengthening its capability for extended-range power projection. In addition, China has been expanding and intensifying its maritime activities in the surrounding waters. These trends...are of concern".⁷²⁴ Said to reflect the views of a powerful Defense Official, Nobushige Takamizawa, the 2010 NDPG also raised the "gray-zone"⁷²⁵ disputes, increased air and maritime capabilities, introduced the idea of maritime capacity building in Southeast Asia⁷²⁶, encouraged joint operations, and shifted focus to Japan's southwestern region – widely seen as a response to the 2010 Senkaku fishing boat incident. Its emphasis on "multi-layered security cooperation" with Australia and South Korea saw a surge in Australian-Japanese defence relations, which had begun in 2010 with the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with Australia, which Kitazawa promoted within the coalition cabinet as enabling joint peacekeeping⁷²⁷. Prominent DPJ parliamentarian, Akihisa Nagashima, Assistant Defence Minister under Kan and Security Advisor to DPJ Prime Minister Noda in 2011 was another strong supporter of alliance ties to the US and Australia.

⁷²² Kede Lawson, "Hatoyama good for Australia Ties: Experts," *The Japan Times*, September 16, 2009. Available at: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2009/09/16/national/hatoyama-good-for-australia-ties-experts/#.WACkazKZNsM> (accessed on October 14, 2016).

⁷²³ Anonymous (Senior JMOD official) interview with author, January 9, 2015.

⁷²⁴ *The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2011 and Beyond*, Approved by the Security Council, December 17, 2010. p.4, available at http://www.tr.emb-japan.go.jp/T_06/files/National_Defense_Program_FY2011.PDF (accessed October 14, 2016).

⁷²⁵ *National Defense Program Guidelines*, FY 2011, p.8.

⁷²⁶ According to Ken Jimbo, "Japan-US-Australia Cooperation on Capacity Building in Southeast Asia," in Yuki Tatsumi (ed.,) US-Japan-Australia Security Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges, (Washington DC: Simson Center, 2015), pp.61-62, the 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines set a goal of helping regional states build their maritime capacity, and established a Capacity Building Assistance office in the International Policy Division of the Japanese MOD.

⁷²⁷ Ibid.

A second reason why Japanese FPEs began to favor strong ties with Australia around this time was the growing realization among Japanese FPEs that the US-Japan-Korea trilateral had grave problems. In an apparent confirmation of Robert Putnam's theory of the two-level game⁷²⁸, Japanese FPEs grew concerned about how Japan-Korean ties began to be increasingly tied to domestic debates inside Korea. One senior Japanese politician – a key foreign policy voice in the LDP-Komeito coalition, remember, “Compared to other frameworks – like that with Seoul – the US values the ROK [trilateral] as much as with Australia, but while one [with Canberra] is going very smoothly, the second one with Seoul is going very badly.”⁷²⁹ Relations began to spiral in 2010, after a Korean non-government group established the first memorial to comfort women outside Korea, in Palisades Park, New Jersey⁷³⁰. Security dynamics on the Peninsula also exerted contradictory pressures, both encouraging and spoiling trilateral cooperation. A US-Japan-ROK tabletop exercise held in Seoul in 2012 on a North Korean contingency found that the trilateral was easily splintered in an emergency⁷³¹, with each country pursuing wildly different foreign policy objectives. Nagashima – a DPJ legislator – states that under the DPJ, “the Kantei was very interested in strengthening the connection with Canberra on maritime security. At the same time, MOD was looking for some other nation next to the US. We assumed that would be Korea, but Korea was still difficult, so we just skipped past Korea to go to Canberra.”⁷³² Then in January 2011, the ongoing Japan-Korea talks to sign a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) between Tokyo and Seoul confirmed the increasing emphasis on ties with Australia. began talks on a possible submarine deal between Japan and Australia at this time, widely seen as a back-door to deeper strategic cooperation⁷³³. Nagashima noted how support for closer ties with Australia were both top-down and bottom-up, and explicitly linked the trilateral to concerns over China:

Australia is a unique country and in a unique position between US and Asia, they're English speaking, very close to the US, at the same time, they're concerned [with] the rise of China. They're also very interested in regional stability. So all of these factors are really important to

⁷²⁸ Robert D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two Level Games,” *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer, 1988), pp.427-460.

⁷²⁹ Anonymous (Diet member, New Komeito Party) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁷³⁰ Maki Kimura, *Unfolding the ‘Comfort Women’ Debates: Modernity, Violence, Women’s Voices*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p.171.

⁷³¹ “Pyongyang in the Cockpit: Regional Responses to North Korean Provocations,” *Issues and Insights*, Pacific Forum CSIS, Vol.12, No.2.

⁷³² Nagashima, Akihisa (Assistant Minister of Defense, 2010, Security Advisor to Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, 2011-2) interview with author, January 23, 2015.

⁷³³ Ibid.

Japan to deliver our own national strategy in this region. So, I think it's very natural for us to cooperate with Australia.⁷³⁴

A senior Japanese defence official who worked Australian relations at the time commented on the combination of non-traditional security and deterrence (vis a vis China) that the trilateral represented for MOD policy planners at the time; "...of course, we [had] to be united to deal with the different sorts of non-traditional security issues, like maritime security, piracy, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, but we also [had] to face power structures, traditional threats like China, so the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) framework is also effective to counter the rise of China as well. Because China's sense of value[s] is completely different from others, from ours, like Japan, Australia, and US."⁷³⁵ This sense of cultural, political, and strategic affinity with Australia and the United States was heightened by the March 2011 Tohoku Earthquake, Tsunami, and nuclear disaster. While a number of countries sent search and rescue teams, only the militaries of the United States and Australia were allowed to deploy within Japan to take place in HA/DR operations. The Australian frigate, HMAS Sydney, and heavy landing ship HMAS Tobruk, were both deployed, as were three RAAF C-17 Globemasters, which flew a large number of cargo missions within Japan. At one point, the success of Australian military participation provoked a discussion within Japan's Ministry of Defence on whether a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with Australia should be negotiated, thereby putting Australian defence forces on a legal basis, though this is yet to take place. While a SOFA does not necessarily lead to alliance-like behavior, it is a strong sign of general trend of the Japanese bureaucracy for closer military inter-operability and strategic cooperation.

7.3. The Pivot is Unveiled

By 2010⁷³⁶, the Obama administration had begun to signal the region on its new approach. Unlike the Bush administration's Asia policy, which had been split between the strongly pro-alliance *Mahanian* approach in the first term and the more China-centric *Continentalist* approach in the second term, policymakers in the Obama administration attempted to synthesize both approaches. In *Hard Choices*, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton laid out the three choices facing the transition team for America's policies in the Asia Pacific: "One option was to focus on broadening our relationship with China, on the theory that if we could get our China policy right, the rest of our work in Asia would be much

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Defence Official) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁷³⁶ Danny Russell, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia has argued that the "rebalance began the day, President Obama took office". See, for example, <https://twitter.com/USAsiaPacific/status/781979420542337024> (accessed October 6, 2016) Many commentators agree that the policy was perceived as such between 2010 and 2011 after Kurt Campbell had been confirmed by the Senate as the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia.

easier...an alternative was to concentrate our efforts on strengthening America's treaty alliances in the region (with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia), providing a counterbalance to China's growing power...a third option was to elevate and harmonize the alphabet soup of regional multilateral organizations, such as ASEAN, and APEC...I decided that *the smart power* choice was to meld all three approaches."⁷³⁷ Thus, the Obama team sought to combine the "wheels to webs" ethos of Admiral Blair, the symmetrical policies of Richard Armitage, the "federated network" of Michael Green, and the comprehensive China-engagement approach of Robert Zoellick. It was thought that each leg would be mutually-reinforcing.

As mentioned above, the first Obama administration contained both *Continentalist* and *Mahanian*-oriented FPEs in positions of prominence. With his emphasis on alliances, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, Kurt Campbell emphasized that a "defining element of the Pivot is to focus on strengthening ties to our Asian allies, including Japan, South Korea, Australia..."⁷³⁸. Citing the "federated approach" of Michael Green, Campbell notes that the US can "act as a convener in efforts pulling regional states together, especially through regularized multilateral initiatives"⁷³⁹, which might "provide a foundation for knitting together a still-nascent Asian security community."⁷⁴⁰ With regards to China, Campbell states that the Pivot must "avoid implementing a 'China first' approach often pursued by American administrations, which is based on the flawed assumption that getting the bilateral relationship right is key to getting Asia policy right."⁷⁴¹ Similar trilaterals to the US-Japan-Australia variant including "US-India-Australia, US-India-Japan, US-Japan-Philippines, among other formations, will be crucial to building a more integrated network of alliances and partners"⁷⁴² The NSC and Treasury seemed to be more inclined to engagement policies, and the 2010 National Security Strategy welcomed a "responsible leadership role"⁷⁴³ from China, and accompanied a real effort to engage more closely with Beijing. One sign of this was the administration's decision to combine the various Bush-era dialogues into one senior level Strategic and Economic Dialogue, which was announced on April 1st, 2009. As Bader comments, the dialogue was "unknown in US relations with any other country in the world and therefore indicated the importance that the Obama administration attached to China."⁷⁴⁴

⁷³⁷ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). p.42.

⁷³⁸ Kurt M. Campbell, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia*, (New York: Twelve, 2016), p.198.

⁷³⁹ Ibid., p.206.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid., p.207.

⁷⁴¹ Kurt M. Campbell, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia*, (New York: Twelve, 2016), p.232.

⁷⁴² Ibid., p.207.

⁷⁴³ National Security Strategy: May 2010, p.43 Available at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf (accessed on October 11, 2016).

⁷⁴⁴ Jeffrey Bader, *Obama and China's Rise: An Insider's Account of the America's Asia Strategy*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), p.22.

Signaling on the rebalance first took the form of a speech made by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Hanoi, which was widely seen as an implied challenge to growing Chinese assertiveness⁷⁴⁵ in the maritime domain⁷⁴⁶. It was also a response to those voices that predicted American decline in the wake of the financial crisis. Tacitly supported by a number of regional states,⁷⁴⁷ Secretary Clinton stated that “while the US does not take sides on the competing territorial disputes”⁷⁴⁸, the US had a “national interest in the freedom of navigation”⁷⁴⁹, and “opposed the use or threat of force by any claimant”⁷⁵⁰, indicating a harder line vis a vis China on the maritime disputes in the South China Sea. The response was fierce, with China’s Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi characterizing Clinton’s remarks as “an attack on China”⁷⁵¹. Then, in October 2011, attempting to show that the rebalance was not wholly about China, Secretary Clinton more fully laid out the administration’s definitive approach to Asia, in a significant *Foreign Policy* article⁷⁵². In brief, the pivot included three different policy choices in three different areas of government activity. According to Kurt Campbell, the pivot included “a military component, a political component, and an economic component”⁷⁵³, and the term “rebalance” or “pivot” was immediately coined by media observers.

In terms of diplomacy, the Pivot can be characterized by a “diplomatic offensive” in the region, in three broad directions. Washington continued intensifying strategic cooperation and military interoperability with allies, it intensified its presence in Southeast Asia, and intensified its high-level meetings with China. This also included accession to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, the appointment of a newly-permanent American Ambassador to ASEAN and accession of the US to the East Asia Summit in 2011⁷⁵⁴. It also attempted to present its new approach as regional economic leadership, working hard to ratify the Korea-US (KORUS) Free Trade Agreement in 2011 and giving

⁷⁴⁵ For an analysis of Chinese “assertiveness” during the 2009-2011 time period, see, Michael D. Swaine, M. Taylor Fravel, “China’s Assertive Behavior: Party Two: the Maritime Periphery,” *China Leadership Monitor* Vol.35 (Summer 2011).

⁷⁴⁶ Gordon G. Chang, “Hillary Clinton Changes America’s China Policy: The Secretary of State pulls a 180 on Beijing,” *Forbes*, July 7, 2010.

⁷⁴⁷ Michael McDevitt, “The Origin and Evolution of the Rebalance,” Huge Meijer (ed.,) *Origins and Evolution of the US Rebalance Toward Asia: Diplomatic, Military and Economic Dimensions*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), pp.32-33.

⁷⁴⁸ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, remarks at press availability, July 23, 2010, Hanoi Vietnam.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi Refutes the Fallacies on the South China Sea Issue, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Republic of Poland Website: <http://www.chinaembassy.org.pl/pol/xwdt/t719678.htm> (accessed October 5, 2016).

⁷⁵² Hillary Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century,” *Foreign Policy*, October 11, 2011, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/> (accessed May 3, 2016).

⁷⁵³ Remarks made by Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, Kurt Campbell at Pacific Forum Young Leaders Forum, San Francisco, March 23, 2012.

⁷⁵⁴ Jeffrey Bader, *Obama and China’s Rise: An Insider’s Account of the America’s Asia Strategy*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), pp.143-144.

White House support in 2013-4 for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)⁷⁵⁵. Despite this, the TPP was, according to President Obama himself, in direct competition with China's own model, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)⁷⁵⁶ and was seen in those terms by many commentators in China⁷⁵⁷. In terms of military alliances, the administration sought to strengthen alliances in the region, and in keeping with tradition, kept the US-Japan alliance as the "anchor of security in northeast Asia."⁷⁵⁸ While this policy initially stumbled in Japan between 2009 and 2010 – as described above – due to the ambivalent policies of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, they continued more smoothly under his successors. This would have repercussions for the role the administration envisioned for the US-Japan-Australia trilateral, and saw administration support at the highest levels for increased trilateral activities. At the same time, the administration stressed alliance relations with South Korea and the Philippines, and invested large amounts of diplomatic capital in Southeast Asia. As Jim Schoff, a defence advisor with responsibility for the trilaterals in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), remembers, "we were primarily focused on operationalizing regional architecture"⁷⁵⁹. This included building new relationships with Myanmar, facilitated by a visit by Secretary Clinton in 2011⁷⁶⁰, and reinvigorated ties with Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines. More significantly, the US also dramatically increased its defence diplomacy, sending Defence Secretary Robert Gates to many more regional events⁷⁶¹, and investing in new and old military-to-military relationships⁷⁶².

7.4. The Evolution of the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral

Because of the rebalance to Asia, the Obama administration came into office already well predisposed toward the various trilaterals which fit into its broader strategic objective of reinvigorating the United

⁷⁵⁵ Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. 2015), pp.248.

⁷⁵⁶ Barack Obama, "President Obama: The TPP would let the US not China, lead the way on Global Trade," *The Washington Post*, May 2, 2016, Opinions.

⁷⁵⁷ See for example: Wang Yong, "The Politics of the TPP are Plain: Target China," *Global Asia*, 26 March, 2013; Stuart Harris, *China's Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2014), p.151; Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. 2015), p. 250; Li Xiangyang, Wen Jin Yuan, "The Trans-Pacific Partnership and China's Corresponding Strategies," *CSIS Freeman Briefing Report*, (Washington DC, CSIS Press, 2012), pp.5-7; Jianmin Jin, "China's Concerns Regarding TPP No More than Empty Worries?" *Fujitsu Research Institute*, January 11, 2012, Available at <http://www.fujitsu.com/jp/group/fri/en/column/message/2012/2012-01-11.html> (accessed Oct 12).

⁷⁵⁸ Thomas E. Donilon, "Keynote Address: Obama in China: Preserving the Rebalance," *Council of Foreign Affairs Website*, November 5, 2014: <http://www.cfr.org/china/keynote-address-obama-china-preserving-rebalance/p33778> (accessed May 3, 2016).

⁷⁵⁹ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

⁷⁶⁰ Remarks made by Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, Kurt Campbell at Pacific Forum Young Leaders Forum, San Francisco, March 23, 2012.

⁷⁶¹ This included sending Robert Gates to the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue every year in Singapore, as well as to the ASEAN defence ministers plus meetings, which previously took a back seat to visits to allies. Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), pp.413-420.

⁷⁶² This included Vietnam, where US and Vietnamese ships began carrying out joint exercises.

States' alliances in the region⁷⁶³. Tom Donilon gave due prominence to alliances in a *Financial Times* article, saying they were "the foundation for the region's prosperity."⁷⁶⁴ Kurt Campbell was confirmed into office, emphasizing the need for closer US, Japan, ROK ties, referring to, "ambitious steps to increase trilateral [US-Japan-ROK] cooperation"⁷⁶⁵ at a Senate hearing in May 2011. Despite this energy, the US-Japan-ROK trilateral continued to suffer from Japan-Korean tensions, while the trilateral with Australia developed slowly in the initial years of the Obama administration. This was partly due to the new DPJ government in Japan, partly it was due to bureaucratic silos. Jim Schoff, at the DOD remembers:

It [the TSD] wasn't centralized in one office, whereas the US-Japan-ROK trilateral was a couple of cubicles right next to each other, which were working together on all this stuff, and we only had one Deputy Assistant Secretary to work with on that front, because the DASD⁷⁶⁶ for East Asia had responsibility for Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Mongolia, and China. However, for the Australia trilateral, you had to involve the office across the hall, with another person that you didn't necessarily know or get involved with that often, a separate DASD, and they had had some meetings that I was told about, but there was no real drive to place a high priority on this...⁷⁶⁷

Part of this lukewarm interest between 2009 and 2010 was due to a lack of political interest from Canberra and Tokyo who both emphasized engagement with China, and wished to avoid antagonizing Beijing⁷⁶⁸. This was partly because American DOD and State Department FPEs still thought US-Japan-Korea trilateral relations might still become the dominant paradigm of US alliance networking. Jim Schoff, a senior DOD advisor remembers, "When I started at DOD in 2010, of the trilateral initiatives that we had, the ROK one was more important and had more energy behind it. It was dynamic. It was hard, but everyone was galvanized by the 2009 North Korean nuclear test, the sinking of the ROK *Cheonan* frigate, and the artillery attack on Yeonpyeong Island. And there was a clear structure behind it. On the other hand, the Australia trilateral was easier to get together and talk frankly, without all the political, historical baggage that came with the other trilateral. But US-Japan-Australia trilateral

⁷⁶³ It is clear from Hillary Clinton's initial discussion with Kurt Campbell about becoming the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, that she saw Asia as "the future". Kurt M. Campbell, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia*, (New York: Twelve, 2016), p.xxi.

⁷⁶⁴ Tom Donilon, "America is Back in the Pacific and Will Uphold the Rules," *The Financial Times*, November 27, 2011, Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/4f3febac-1761-11e1-b00e-00144feabdc0#axzz2RMSU2pkO> (accessed on October 18, 2016).

⁷⁶⁵ Seongho Sheen, Jina Kim, "What went wrong with the ROK-Japan Military Pact?" *Pacific Bulletin, East-West Center*, Number 176, (July 31, 2012).

⁷⁶⁶ Deputy Assistant Secretary for Defense (DASD).

⁷⁶⁷ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

⁷⁶⁸ Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in Australia; Prime Ministers Yukio Hatoyama and Naoto Kan in Tokyo.

cooperation was built on a fuzzier premise, a more diverse set of priorities, and a very disconnected set of initiatives”⁷⁶⁹. This enthusiasm also was the result of strong political support from within the NSC, which had seen President Obama personally disappointed by the Chinese reaction to the sinking. Despite this, it became increasingly clear throughout the first term of the Obama presidency, that the US-Japan-Korea trilateral would be hampered by Korean-Japanese tensions. Akihisa Nagashima, Assistant Minister of Defense in 2010, remembers:

The Cabinet Office was very interested in strengthening the connection with Canberra on maritime security. At the same time, the MOD was looking for some other nation to partner with next to the US. We assumed that would be Korea, but Korea was still difficult, so we just skipped past Korea to Canberra.⁷⁷⁰

Broadly speaking, the Obama administration viewed the trilaterals as tools in a broader two-stage strategy of engagement and regional security integration, a return to Admiral Dennis Blair’s “wheels to webs” concept from the late 1990s. Jim Schoff, states that the administration was “trying to build stronger connections between wheels, that ally-to-allied cooperation could essentially build more of a NATO-type of arrangement, even if it’s not really a NATO, but you have a more functional, flexible alliance network.”⁷⁷¹ The first stage was concerned with the allies themselves, allowing them “to strengthen politico-diplomatic consultations, and where appropriate, calibrate defence collaboration at both bilateral and trilateral levels with other key regional security players, such as India and South Korea.”⁷⁷² The second stage involved using minilateralism to engage with Southeast Asian states⁷⁷³, particularly in non-traditional areas of security, like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief⁷⁷⁴. The political justification for trilateralism became more publicly acceptable after the Indian Ocean Tsunami and 2008 TSD Joint Statement, which committed the three to technical working groups, exercises. This was bolstered by, trilateral cooperation in the 2009 Sumatra Earthquake and 2010 Pakistan floods. After a number of typhoons rocked the Philippines during this period, and in 2011, the Japanese Ministry of Defense established a Capacity Building Office, which began working on projects in HA/DR,

⁷⁶⁹ James Schoff, Address made on the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral, Stimson Center, April 16, 2015, Washington DC.

⁷⁷⁰ Nagashima, Akihisa (Assistant Minister of Defense, MOD, 2010) interview with author, Tokyo, January 23, 2015.

⁷⁷¹ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, OSD, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

⁷⁷² William T. Tow, “The Broader Context: How Australia-Japan Relations ‘Fit’ into Regional and Global Security Dynamics,” in William T. Tow, Rikki Kersten, *Bilateral Perspectives on Regional Security: Australia, Japan, and the Asia Pacific*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.157.

⁷⁷³ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, OSD, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

⁷⁷⁴ Office of the Spokesman, “Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Statement,” *US Department of State*: available at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/sept/129443.htm> (accessed October 6, 2016).

maritime security, PKO, and military medicine in East Timor, Myanmar, Vietnam, and the Philippines in the following year⁷⁷⁵. The Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami also took place in 2011. The disaster saw American and Australian forces working together⁷⁷⁶ with Japan's Self Defense Forces in the rescue efforts. In political terms, it was thought that the discussion of regional security at the trilateral level offered reassurance, while lessening gaps in allied regional threat perceptions. Australian foreign policy elites were not, after all as worried about Chinese assertiveness as Japanese FPEs; instead, they tended to focus on balancing between the US as a security partner and China as a source for economic growth. Focusing on these non-controversial areas of cooperation were therefore driven by both events in the region, and by the fact that FPEs in the three countries did not agree on what – if any – threat China posed to their national interests. Finally, in the absence of policy agreement, the uniformed services were deeply interested in practical aspects of operations, and according to Schoff, were prominent in shaping the agendas of many of the SDCF meetings and subsequent trilateral exercises⁷⁷⁷.

7.5. Australia Debates its Strategic / Economic Choices

During the Rudd premiership, Australian FPEs seemed to pull back from US initiatives, while maintaining the trajectory of expanding defence ties with US allies, like Japan. In the wake of China's strong reaction to the Quadrilateral initiative in 2008, the new Kevin Rudd government had sought a more nuanced geostrategic position vis a vis China and the region. A fluent Chinese speaker, Kevin Rudd was often criticized by the Australian opposition as a *Sinophile* and a "roving ambassador for Beijing."⁷⁷⁸ However, with hindsight, assessing Rudd's foreign and security policy approach to the region is more easily said than done. On the one hand, his government backed away from the Quadrilateral initiative, and sought greater Canberra-Beijing trade ties; on the other hand, it continued promoting a strong relationship with Japan, following up the 2007 Joint Declaration with a "Comprehensive Strategic, Security and Economic Partnership", announced in Tokyo in June 2008⁷⁷⁹. It followed this, by agreeing to a number of landmark defence agreements, which were oriented

⁷⁷⁵ Satake, Tomohiko, (Capacity Building Office, Japanese MOD, 2011-2012, NIDS, 2016), interview with author, Tokyo, February 13, 2015.

⁷⁷⁶ While the Australian contribution of two C130s was a modest one, it was perceived as symbolic by the Japanese bureaucracy. The lack of a legal basis for the Australian aircraft to land in Japan promoted an internal discussion inside the MOD on a possible Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) for Australia. Anonymous (Senior Japanese Defense Official), personal interview, Tokyo.

⁷⁷⁷ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

⁷⁷⁸ Nick Bryant, "Fortress Australia," BBC News Website: http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/nickbryant/2009/05/fortress_australia.html, May 2nd, 2009, (accessed May 9, 2016).

⁷⁷⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan, Japan-Australia Relations (Basic Data) available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/data.html> (accessed on October 6, 2016).

around regional security. The first of these was the 2010 Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)⁷⁸⁰, a post-Indian Tsunami agreement, designed to promote reciprocal logistical support “in the field of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, humanitarian international relief operations, and other operations”⁷⁸¹. The second defence agreement was the 2012 General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)⁷⁸². Furthermore, the trilateral Security and Defence Cooperation Forum (SDCF) continued to expand its range of activities, joint exercises, and increased interoperability of the three militaries.

On his visit to Beijing, Rudd also sought discussions with Hu Jintao over human rights in Tibet in the wake of the unrest that shook the country in 2008. Not only did Rudd’s government continue meeting within the framework of the TSD, it vowed to increase defence spending by \$200 billion over two decades in the 2009 Defence White Paper, and explicitly named China as a cause of regional instability. The White Paper read “the pace, scope and structure of China’s military modernization have the potential to give its neighbours cause for concern if not carefully explained, and if China does not reach out to others to build confidence regarding its military plans.”⁷⁸³ The White Paper was the first sign that a serious debate on China had erupted between Australian foreign policy elites within the defence community. According to a story in the Australian newspaper⁷⁸⁴, the Department of Defence was taking a more hardline on China’s potential to threaten American power in the region than was justified by Office of National Assessments (ONA) and Defense Intelligence Organization (DIO) assessments, which viewed China’s military build-up as primarily defensive in nature. Mike Pezzullo, the main driver behind the White Paper, thought that Australia must adopt a “hedging” strategy toward China. Interestingly, when ONA Chief Peter Varghese approached Prime Minister Rudd to intervene, Rudd allowed the White Paper to be released. It stated that such was the Chinese shock over the Paper that a Chinese diplomat told the *Sydney Morning Herald*, “For us this is confusing. Kevin Rudd was supposed to be the Chinese-speaking prime minister who would provide a bridge between

⁷⁸⁰ *Agreement between Government of Japan and the Government of Australia Concerning the Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services between the Self-Defense Forces of Japan and the Australian Defence Force*, available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/pdfs/agree1005.pdf> (accessed October 7, 2016).

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*,

⁷⁸² *Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Australia on the Security of Information*, available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2012/5/pdfs/0517_01_01.pdf (accessed October 7, 2016).

⁷⁸³ *Defence White Paper 2009: Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Department of Defence, Australian Government, available at http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/2009/docs/defence_white_paper_2009.pdf (accessed October 6, 2016).

⁷⁸⁴ Cameron Stewart, “Spy Chiefs Cross Swords over China as Kevin Rudd Backs Defence Hawks,” *The Australian*, April 11, 2009, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/spy-chiefs-cross-swords-over-china/story-e6frg6n6-1225697020657> (accessed October 6, 2016).

China and the US. But now it looks like he wants to act on behalf of America against China. This is going to be hard to explain to the Chinese people.”⁷⁸⁵

The sudden end of Rudd’s premiership in 2010 and replacement by Julia Gillard did not signify a change in this mixed approach, due perhaps to the fact that Rudd was kept on as her foreign minister. Gillard’s initial criticism of the “overblown” and “unrealistic” 2009 Defense White Paper and replacement with a more cautious 2013 version⁷⁸⁶ seemed to indicate a shift to a more China-aligned posture, but this was swiftly balanced in April 2011, with a trip by Prime Minister Gillard around the region highlighted a growing dilemma for Australia and other American allies: A *Wall Street Journal* article by Andrew Shearer, an advisor under the Howard Cabinet stated, “At the same time as their economic dependence on China is growing, so too are their fears about its military muscle-flexing and its increasingly assertive regional diplomacy.”⁷⁸⁷ Around this time, voices within the Australian DOD began pushing for undersea warfare exercises with Japan and the United States, and according to one Australian defence official⁷⁸⁸, tripled the number of senior defence visitors to Japan. Andrew Shearer noted how Canberra had committed its entire C-17 fleet to *Operation Tomodachi*, following the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami⁷⁸⁹. The 2011 US-Australia Ministerial consultations (ASUMIN) also raised cybersecurity and further deployments of US forces to Australia. Then, in November, Prime Minister Gillard welcomed President Obama to Australia, where he used the occasion to lay out more fully, outlines of the Pivot and American determination to remain in the region: “I have, therefore, made a deliberate and strategic decision – as a Pacific nation the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region [the Asia Pacific] and its future by upholding core principles and in close partnership with our allies and friends.”⁷⁹⁰ The speech was accompanied by a new joint agreement to rotate 2,500 US Marines through Darwin on a permanent basis, seen by many as a counter to Chinese military power⁷⁹¹. Prime Minister Gillard followed this up with a trip to Tokyo, where she met with Japanese Prime Minister Noda, with both using the occasion to reiterate their support for closer bilateral defence cooperation and a continued presence of the US military in the

⁷⁸⁵ John Garnaut, “Defence build-up alarms Beijing,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 1, 2009, World Section.

⁷⁸⁶ Graeme Dobell, “Julia on Attack and Defence,” *The Strategist*, ASPI Website: <http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/julia-on-attack-and-defence/>, October 14, 2014 (accessed May 9, 2016).

⁷⁸⁷ Andrew Shearer, “The View North from Down Under: The Australian Prime Minister’s Trip to Japan, Korea, and China Helps Clarify Key Strategic Issues,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 25, 2011; Opinion Asia.

⁷⁸⁸ Anonymous (Australian Defence Official) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁷⁸⁹ Shearer, Andrew (Senior Advisor, Prime Minister’s Office, 2013-2015) interview with author, telephone, May 21, 2015.

⁷⁹⁰ Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament, Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, November 17, 2011, *The White House, Office of the Press Secretary*, Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament> (accessed on October 12, 2016).

⁷⁹¹ Peter Hartcher, “Obama to announce US Marine Base in Darwin,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, November 11, 2011; Jackie Calmes, “A US Marine Base for Australia Irritates China,” *The New York Times*, November 16, 2011; Jonathan Pearlman, “Barack Obama to Deploy 2,500 Marines in Australia as he says ‘We do not fear China’” *The Telegraph*, November 16, 2011; David Nakamura, “Obama: US to send 250 Marines to Australia in 2012” *The Washington Post*, November 16, 2011.

region: “As staunch US allies, Japan and Australia are as one in welcoming a continued forward presence of the United States in the Asia Pacific as an important contribution to regional stability.”⁷⁹² Revealing the security dilemma at work, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticized the move, “It may not be quite appropriate to intensify and expand military alliances and may not be in the interests of countries within this region,”⁷⁹³ with the Chinese Ambassador to Australia missing the event.

7.6. Dealing with a “newly- assertive” China

The first term of the Obama struggled with a definition of its relationship with Beijing. Secretary Clinton wrote, “the rise of China was one of the most consequential developments of our time...the United States would have to deal with a rising China and its growing economic, diplomatic, and military power in a careful disciplined way. In the past the emergence of new powers has rarely come without friction...”⁷⁹⁴ There was a growing narrative among Washington foreign policy elites (FPEs) that Chinese “assertiveness”⁷⁹⁵, had grown regionally, and vis a vis the United States, in the 2007-8 Financial Crisis and the 2008 Beijing Olympics., These narratives were echoed on the Chinese side by discussions of “American decline”⁷⁹⁶, as well as a perception that the US was seeking “to contain”⁷⁹⁷ Chinese power. Obama’s first term also saw an increasing number of incidents in the East China Sea and South China Sea, which saw China increasingly willing – and able – to press its maritime claims using fishing militias, a range of maritime agency vessels, and its growing naval forces. This led to mounting concern in the region and in Washington, and prompted Secretary Clinton’s Hanoi speech and diplomatic shift on the South China Sea in July⁷⁹⁸. What was most disturbing to American FPEs about China’s actions in the maritime region, was its apparent unwillingness to utilize traditional

⁷⁹² Simon Benson, “Julia Gillard Enjoys Chicken Skewer on Diplomatic Trip to Japan,” *Herald Sun*, April 22, 2011, available at: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/julia-gillard-calls-for-stronger-ties-with-japan/story-e6frf7jo-1226043376438> (accessed October 13, 2016).

⁷⁹³ Michael Grattan, Dylan Welch, Daniel Flitton, “Pointed Message to China,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, November 18, 2011, available at: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/pointed-message-to-china-20111117-1nl99.html> (accessed October 13, 206).

⁷⁹⁴ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). p.40.

⁷⁹⁵ See, for example: Michael D. Swaine, “Perceptions of an Assertive China,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No.32, (May2010), p10; Michael D. Swaine, M. Taylor Fravel, “China’s Assertive Behavior – Part Two: The Maritime Periphery,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No.35, (Summer 2011); Thomas Christensen, “The Advantages of an Assertive China: Responding to Beijing’s Abrasive Diplomacy,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.90, No.2, (Mar/April 2011), pp.54-67; Daniel Twining, “Were US-China Relations Oversold? Part II,” *Shadow Government, Foreign Policy Blog*, June 12, 2012; For a counter argument to this assertive narrative, see: Alastair Iain Johnston, “How New and Assertive is China’s New Assertiveness?” *International Security*, Vol.37, No.4, (Spring 2004), pp.7-48.

⁷⁹⁶ See, for example: Bonnie S. Glaser, Lyle Morris, “Chinese Perceptions of US Decline and Power,” *China Brief*, Vol.9, Issue 14, (July 2009), Li Hongmei, “The US Hegemony Ends, the Era of Global Multipolarity Enters,” *People’s Daily Online*, February 24, 2009, available at <http://en.people.cn/90002/96417/6599374.html> (accessed October 12, 2016); Wang Y Wei, “How can we Prevent the USA declining Too Quickly?” *Global Times Online*, August 12, 2006; Zhang Liping, “Is America in Decline after 9/11?” *Zhijie Zhishi*, Volume 21, (July 2007).

⁷⁹⁷ Attended the *Sino-US Relations, Regional Security and Global Governance* Conference, hosted by Fudan University, between May 29-31, 2012; various Chinese participants raised “containment” at nearly every stage of the event.

⁷⁹⁸ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014), pp.70-71.

dispute settlement bodies linked to UNCLOS and its increasingly heavy-handed tactics in contested maritime zones. Its military build-up of an “anti-navy navy”⁷⁹⁹ seemed to be “designed to push US sea and air forces away from the Asian coastline”⁸⁰⁰ leading to what Andrew Krepinevich, President of the think tank, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, called the “Finlandization”⁸⁰¹ of the Western Pacific. While new Chinese military systems were not thought to match American capabilities, they were still seen as threatening due to their targeting of vulnerabilities in American systems, using stand-off missile forces, targeting the “Achilles Heel”⁸⁰² of American satellite dependence, and benefitting from what US Naval War College professor Andrew Ericson calls, “theater concentration”⁸⁰³. To some senior American observers, like Michael Pillsbury, a prominent China hand, and Department of Defense advisor and former official, China seems intent on replacing the US as the global superpower⁸⁰⁴.

As a result of these tensions, the White House sought closer diplomatic, economic and military ties with Beijing’s civilian and military leaders, as a means of preventing sudden escalation through misunderstanding. In terms of the first two areas, the Obama team quickly found success with President Hu and Secretary Clinton agreeing to combine and upgrade the Economic dialogue to a Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED)⁸⁰⁵. On the other hand, Secretary Clinton quickly recognized that although Chinese leaders also sought a “positive, cooperative and comprehensive relationship”, the way to do that was not always obvious: “This isn’t a relationship that fits neatly into categories like friend or rival, and it may never.”⁸⁰⁶ President Obama’s November trip to Beijing was widely perceived as unsuccessful by Western media⁸⁰⁷, with much of his visit becoming tightly controlled by

⁷⁹⁹ Robert Kagan, *Asia’s Cauldron: The South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific* (New York: Random House, 2014), p. 37-38.

⁸⁰⁰ Robert Kagan, *Asia’s Cauldron: The South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific* (New York: Random House, 2014), p. 37-38.

⁸⁰¹ Andrew F. Krepinevich, “China’s ‘Finlandization’ Strategy in the Pacific” *The Wall Street Journal*, September 11, 2010, available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704164904575421753851404076> (accessed November 4, 2016).

⁸⁰² Ibid.

⁸⁰³ Andrew Erickson, “Beijing’s Aerospace Revolution,” in Andrew Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein (eds.), *Chinese Aerospace Power* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2011), p.14.

⁸⁰⁴ Nishihara, Masashi, (President, Research Institute for Peace & Security, Panel on Creation of the NSC 2012-2013) interview with author, Tokyo, January 16, 2015.

⁸⁰⁵ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). p.64.

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., p.60.

⁸⁰⁷ Edward Luce, Geoff Dyer, “Obama Visit Yields few Concrete Results,” *The Financial Times*, November 18, 2009, available at <https://www.ft.com/content/cb35fe02-d372-11de-9607-00144feabdc0> (accessed October 6, 2016); Jonathan Weisman, Andrew Browne, Jason Dean, “Obama hits a Wall on His First Visit to China,” *The Wall Street Journal*, November 19, 2009, available at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB125857743503654225> (accessed October 6, 2016); Helene Cooper, “China Holds Firm on Major Issues on Obama’s Visit,” *The New York Times*, November 17, 2009, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/18/world/asia/18prexy.html?_r=0 (accessed October 6, 2016).

Beijing⁸⁰⁸. In addition, his inability to get China to agree on a new climate change accord at Copenhagen in December 2009 was widely seen as sign of a global “power shift”, though much Western reporting cast the blame on Beijing⁸⁰⁹. Similarly, efforts to build a greater dialogue between the militaries of the US and China, were stymied by increasingly strong Chinese reactions to the 2009 US arms sales to Taiwan. Pointing out the fact that these sales were “old news”⁸¹⁰, American military leaders⁸¹¹ struggled to replace the on-off-again nature of the military relationship, with something which might weather political storms⁸¹². Around this time, US defence papers called for confidence-building measures (CBMs), recalling past successes – like the 1972 US-USSR Preventions of Incidents at Sea Agreement (INCSEA)⁸¹³ – as models for future Sino-American relations. The year 2011 did see a number of high-level visits, including an exchange of visits between Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and General Chen Bingde, chief of the General Staff of the PLA, but even these events were marred by miscommunication and point-scoring through the media. Rather than using the occasion of Admiral Mike Mullen’s visit to Beijing to emphasize positive relations, General Chen took the opportunity to chide him on US operations during a press conference, saying, “It’s not [the] proper time for the United States to conduct military drills in the region with the Philippines and Vietnam”,⁸¹⁴ and the PLAAF’s decision to test its new J-20 Stealth aircraft hours before Secretary Gates met with President Hu was widely perceived by the Defense Secretary’s advisors as a calculated insult⁸¹⁵.

There was a growing perception in Washington that despite the administration’s efforts to engage China in meaningful dialogue, the competitive elements in the relationship were growing on both sides. In many ways, this period exemplifies the confusion that American foreign policy elites had about China. Hillary Clinton had sought to guide the Chinese approach to the relationship by using an old Chinse proverb in her meetings with Dai Binguo, the State Counselor, “When you are in a common

⁸⁰⁸ Helene Cooper, David Barboza, “Obama Wades into Internet Censorship in China Address” *The New York Times*, November 17, 2009, Asia Pacific.

⁸⁰⁹ See, for example: Mark Lynas, “How do I know China Wrecked the Copenhagen Deal? I was in the Room,” *The Guardian*, 22 December, 2009; David Corn, “In Copenhagen, US Vs China”, *The Atlantic*, December 2009; Tobias Rapp, Christian Schwagerl, Gerald Traufetter, “How China and India Sabotaged the UN Climate Summit,” *Spiegel Online*, International, The Copenhagen Protocol, May 5, 2010;

⁸¹⁰ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), pp.416.

⁸¹¹ Remarks made by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, Michael Schiffer at the Royal United Services Institute, February, 2011.

⁸¹² Although the US and China had signed an Agreement establishing a Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA), American defense officials pointed out that Chinese interlocutors were most unlikely to use it when maritime crises occurred – like the harassment of USNS Impeccable in 2009 – due to chain of command concerns within the PLA.

⁸¹³ David N. Griffiths, “Challenges in the Development of Military-to-Military Relationships,” in Andrew Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, Nan Li (eds.,) *China, the United States, and 21st Century Sea Power: Defining a Maritime Security Partnership* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2010), pp.38-52.

⁸¹⁴ Shaun Waterman, “China’s Top General Calls US Naval Exercises Inappropriate,” *The Washington Times*, July 11, 2011.

⁸¹⁵ John Pomfret, “Chinese General to visit US Base in Small Sign of Thawing Military Ties,” *The Washington Post*, January 12, 2011; Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), pp.527.

boat, cross the river peacefully together.”⁸¹⁶ This idea sought to promote the understanding that while the relationship was marked by some competition, it was also marked by a need for cooperation. The administration experienced some limited successes of coordination with Beijing over Iran and North Korea in the first term. However, it was Sino-Japanese ties where tensions were to escalate again. This time in the East China Sea. The 2010 Senkaku fishing boat incident was a relatively minor incident, in which a Japanese Coast Guard vessel was rammed by a Chinese fishing boat near the Japanese-administered, Chinese-claimed Senkaku Islands. However, this event, and others like it increasingly set the tone of the US-China relationship, emboldening hawks on both sides. Secretary Clinton resolved to show a firm stance to China, stating the inclusion of the islands in the US-Japan security pact.

7.7. The Second Term of the Obama Administration (2012-2016)

The second term of the Obama presidency saw a number of changes in the administration, including the departures of a number of key figures associated with the “Pivot” or “Rebalance”. Despite the shifts in personnel, and the playing down of the Pivot to Asia, US foreign policy in the Asia Pacific remained largely the same with regards to the first term. This was partly due to policy extension, with new staffers largely following the track laid down in the first term. Jim Schoff, a senior advisor in the Department of Defence during Obama’s first administration described this policy continuity thus:

The challenge is that every four or eight years, you do get a change in the fundamental approach, so it’s hard to pursue policies in a straight line, but you try to lay down as many boards as possible while you’re there, so you end up with a pretty small porch, but you hope that someone will come after you and say, they’re starting to build a porch, maybe we’ll keep building this.⁸¹⁷

As Schoff went on to explain, the three policy options laid out in the first term had begun to merge in objectives, blurring the lines between *Mahanians* and *Continentalists*. Now, he asserted, US policy was increasingly focused on rectifying the region’s “impotent security framework” and shaping China’s behaviour into positive directions. In this new variant of the Clinton vision, the trilateral federated network and strengthening of regional architecture were directly linked to shaping China’s behavior.

⁸¹⁶ Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). p.61.

⁸¹⁷ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

Hillary Clinton left as Secretary of State and was replaced by Senator John Kerry, a strong figure on foreign policy, but with a portfolio traditionally centered around Europe and the Middle East. Leon Panetta replaced Robert Gates in the Pentagon, with Abraham Denmark – a former DOD China desk officer and Vice President at the National Bureau of Asia Research (NBR) – replacing Michael Schiffer as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense on East Asia. Jeffrey Bader left his post at the NSC and was replaced by Evan Medeiros who became Obama's chief advisor on China. At the Department of State, Kurt Campbell left, with his post ultimately going to a career diplomat and NSC Staffer, Daniel Russel. With a number of postings to Japan and Korea, and having supported the "Pivot", Russel is widely perceived as a "Japan hand"⁸¹⁸ and a sign of continuity for regional allies. The second term would see much criticism of the Pivot and Rebalance, from both within the Washington policy community⁸¹⁹ and from without⁸²⁰. With the exception of China, which continued to see the policy⁸²¹ as a form of containment⁸²² – criticism centered less on the validity of the policy itself, but concerned itself with whether the administration was resourcing the policy appropriately in the light of sequestration⁸²³. While the US had formally extricated itself from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, events in the Middle East and Eastern Europe would challenge the notion that Asia should be Washington's priority. Despite this ambivalence, American foreign policy elites became more vocal over their threat assessment of China during this period, partly in response to China's behavior in its near seas, and partly in response to its inability to reign in North Korea's growing nuclear capability.

⁸¹⁸ Paul Richter, "US Diplomat Draws on Asia Tradition to Address Problems in Asia," *The LA Times*, February 20, 2014, Available at: <http://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-asia-diplomat-20140219-story.html> (accessed October 14, 2016).

⁸¹⁹ Michael Auslin, "Where Obama's Asia 'Rebalance' Went Wrong," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 31, 2016, available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/where-obamas-asia-rebalance-went-wrong-1472684600> (accessed on October 18, 2016); James Jeffrey, "The Pivot has been Oversold and Misunderstood," *US News*, April 28, 2014, Debate Club: Was the Pivot to Asia a Mistake? Available at: <http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/was-the-pivot-to-asia-a-mistake/the-pivot-has-been-oversold-and-misunderstood> (accessed October 18, 2016); Robert A. Manning, "The Pivot is the Right Policy, but the Wrong Tactics," *US News*, April 28, 2014, Debate Club: Was the Pivot to Asia a Mistake? Available at: <http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/was-the-pivot-to-asia-a-mistake/obamas-pivot-is-the-right-policy-but-the-wrong-tactics> (accessed October 18, 2016).

⁸²⁰ Rob Lyon, "Assessing the US Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific," *The Strategist*, The Australian Strategic Policy Institute, January 16, 2015; Rong Chen, "A Critical Analysis of the US 'Pivot' toward the Asia-Pacific: How Realistic is Neo-realism?" *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, (Summer, 2013), pp.39-62; Walden Bello, "Washington Debates the Pivot to Asia: Make no Mistake: The 'Pivot to Asia' is All About Containing China" *Foreign Policy in Focus*, February 19, 2013.

⁸²¹ Zhou Jinghao, "US Containment Frays China's Nerves," *Global Times*, November 25, 2013, Luo Jun, "US Needs to Discard Containment Fantasy," *Xinhua*, June 1, 2014, "CCPPCC Calls for Less Containment in Sino-US Ties," CCTV, March 3, 2010; Lyle J. Goldstein, "How China sees American's Moves in Asia: Worse than Containment," *The National Interest*, October 29, 2014; Chinese Minister of Defense General Chang Wanquan, notes "With the latest developments in China, it can never be contained." Cited from Robert D. Blackwell, Ashley Tellis, "Revising US Grand Strategy Toward China" *Council of Foreign Relations Special Report*, No.72, March 2015, p.42 (endnotes).

⁸²² For a discussion of what constitutes "containment", see: George F. Kennan, "Containment, then and Now," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.65, No.4 (Spring, 1987), pp.885-890; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001) p.401; Alastair Iain Johnston, Robert S. Ross, "Preface," in Johnston and Robert S. Ross, eds., *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (New York: Routledge, 1999), p.xiv; Alastair Iain Johnston, "How New and Assertive is China's New Assertiveness?"

⁸²³ "Remarks by Senator John McCain at CSIS on US Interests in Asia" John McCain Website, available at: <http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/speeches?ID=4c62c413-fccb-c9b5-83b7-677faea96afe> (accessed October 19, 2016); Natalaya Anfilofyeva, "Budget Cuts Could Limit Military's Pacific Pivot," *In the News, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments*, March 25, 2014, available at: <http://csbaonline.org/about/news/budget-cuts-could-limit-militarys-pacific-pivot> (accessed October 19, 2016).

The repositioning of US forces to the Asia Pacific region – laid down in previous administrations – continued to build up capabilities in-theatre. This saw the US military rotate through the region B-1B Lancer strategic bombers⁸²⁴, advanced stealth F-22 aircraft⁸²⁵, and littoral combat ships⁸²⁶. On January 5th, 2012, new Defense Strategic Guidance was laid out by President Obama, which laid out the next priorities for the US military in Asia. This was followed up by a detailed speech by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, in which he laid out the reconfiguring of military forces to the region, including the deployment of six aircraft carriers⁸²⁷. These speeches were seen by the administration as a way of attempting to shape regional and diplomatic dynamics, by adding pressure on China to halt its moves to secure de facto control of the South China Sea. According to Ryo Sasashi, “the core security policy motivation for the United States is to maintain a rules based order, ensure access to sea lanes, and maintain its leadership position based on strategic primacy.”⁸²⁸

The trilateral between Australia, Japan, and the United States became a part of this core objective, and consequently became increasingly institutionalized. In 2012, the three government parts of the trilateral, the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD), the Strategic and Defense Cooperation Forum (SDCF), and the Trilateral Missile Defense Forum (TMDF) had met at the Asia Pacific Center for Strategic Studies (APCSS) in an attempt to resolve institutional and bureaucratic issues. While attendees remember that while the discussions helped, efforts to rationalize the groupings were unsuccessful⁸²⁹. As the second term proceeded, trilateral institutionalization developed in three broad areas: first, it continued to develop more and better military exercises; second, it began coordinating policy over maritime strategy – in capacity-building and HA/DR – in regional waters; and third, it began fostering “under-the-hood” cooperation, such as institutionalized intelligence-sharing and defence industrial cooperation. Notably, the latter led to the abortive attempt by trilateral supporters within Canberra and Tokyo to procure the latest Japanese submarine and marry that to US-spec electronics systems. As can be seen by all three of these shifts, the uniformed services were increasingly moving the overall shape of the trilateral the most, with the SDCF becoming the lead trilateral in “operationalizing the

⁸²⁴ Franz-Stefan Gady, “US Air Force Deploys Supersonic Strategic Bombers to Pacific,” *The Diplomat*, August 10, 2016.

⁸²⁵ David Cenciotti, “The US Air Force has Deployed 12 Alaska-based F-22 Raptor Multirole Jets to Yokota Airbase, Near Tokyo,” *The Aviationist*, January 22, 2016.

⁸²⁶ Mike Yeo, “Littoral Combat Ship USS Coronado Arrives in Singapore,” *USNI News*, October 18, 2016.

⁸²⁷ L.E. Panetta, “The US Rebalance Towards the Asia-Pacific,” First Plenary Session, 11th IISS Asia Security Summit, Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, June 2, 2012.

⁸²⁸ Ryo Sasashi “The Rise of China and the Transformation of the Asia Pacific Security Architecture,” in William T. Tow, Brendan Taylor (eds.,) *Bilateralism, Multilateralism and Asia Pacific Security*, (London: Routledge, 2013). p.142.

⁸²⁹ Jim Schoff, (Senior Advisor for East Asia Policy, Department of Defense, 2010-2012) interview with author, Washington DC, May 22, 2015.

security framework”, linking trilateral capacity-building and military-to-military cooperation with states like the Philippines, Vietnam, and Malaysia.

In the wake of continued and increased levels of Chinese assertiveness on its maritime periphery – in the form of a large ADIZ in the East China Sea and island dredging and base-building in claimed waters in the South China Sea, the US-Japan Alliance has seen much closer cooperation over China. In 2012, the US-Japan Alliance was upgraded by new Defence Guidelines, which attempted to increase naval, coast guard, and air force “jointery” and inter-operability for operations other than war (OOTW) in the East China Sea. It also established a permanent body, the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) to deal with planning and crises. Australian policy continued to see-saw between *Mahanian* and *Continentalist* approaches during this period as it moved from an outwardly pro-alliance government of Tony Abbott, to the slightly more *Continentalist* approach of Malcolm Turnbull, while American and Japanese FPEs – both in government and out – seemed to become openly critical of China.

7.8. *Mahanian* Japan: The return of Shinzo Abe

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s electoral victory in 2012 saw a strengthening of the Japan-Australia bilateral and the US-Japan-Australia trilateral. This can be explained in a number of ways. Certainly, environmental factors played a role, Japanese FPEs felt that the regional security environment was more challenging, with the 2014 Defence White Paper referring to the “increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan.” However, Prime Minister Abe’s belief system and the context of his cabinet, within bureaucratic structure, also played a role in how bilateral ties began to draw closer. According to William Tow, Abe wanted to build a Japan-Australia maritime security collective⁸³⁰, underpinned by the United States⁸³¹. For this reason, he maintained strong support for a robust US-Japan Alliance, encouraging the further enmeshment and institutionalization of the alliance, as laid out in the 2013 National Defense Program Guidelines⁸³². In this regard, the trilateral fitted perfectly as a means of maintaining strong links to Washington, while “diversifying” Japan’s defence relationships among other great powers. While never explicitly stated, Abe emphasized relations with US allies and both he remained close to Bush-era *Mahanians* – like CSIS’s Mike Green –

⁸³⁰ Rick Wallace, “Abe Tipped to Seek Alliance Between Japan and Australia,” *The Australian*, June 29, 2015.

⁸³¹ Tow, William (Professor of International Relations, Australia National University) interview with author, Canberra, March 10, 2015.

⁸³² *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2014 and Beyond*, December 17, 2013, Website of Japanese Ministry of Defense, available at: http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/agenda/guideline/2014/pdf/20131217_e2.pdf (accessed November 2, 2016), pp.9-12.

who continued to exert influence on US alliance policy⁸³³ in Washington⁸³⁴. Japan's first National Security Strategy, released in 2013, emphasized a commitment to "open and stable seas"⁸³⁵, raised China's "rapid rise and intensified activities in various (maritime) areas"⁸³⁶, committed to enhancing Japan's intelligence capabilities, and maritime capacity-building assistance – and HA/DR – in Southeast Asia. This was echoed in the 2013 National Defence Program Guidelines⁸³⁷.

While support for the bilateral relationship with Australia and the trilateral under Abe has been high among Japan's FPEs⁸³⁸, it has remained weak with the general public⁸³⁹. Abe has been able to move around the public's aversion to a growing security relationship between Japan, the US and Australia, because his cabinet has enjoyed some of the most centralized policymaking of any recent Japanese government⁸⁴⁰. Inheriting a strong, centralized Cabinet Office from Hashimoto's civil service reforms⁸⁴¹, Abe also strengthened the Secretariat's legislative-making powers, and appointed a powerful and efficient politicians, Yoshihide Suga, as Chief Cabinet Secretary. He also developed a National Security Council (NSC) in the Cabinet Office in 2013⁸⁴², which helped amplify trilateral security cooperation. One American defense official remembers the situation before the NSC was established, "Japan recognized that it had terrific inhibitions, because it did not have a single coordinating national security entity. There was no NSC. There was no counterpart. There was no entity at the Prime Ministerial, decision-making level, responsible for coordinating all sources of intelligence and all sources mostly of national military capability decision-making." The impact of the new NSC was almost

⁸³³ See, for example the Government-mandated independent study on US force posture in Asia: Michael Green, Nicholas Szechenyi, et al. "US Force Posture Strategy in the Asia Pacific Region: An Intendent Assessment", (Washington DC. CSIS Press, 2012). This report was mandated by Section 346 of the National Defense Authorization Act and was carried in cooperation with the Department of Defense, PACOM, and other government agencies.

⁸³⁴ Shinzo Abe, Japan is Back, Prime Minister of Japan, February 22, 2013, at CSIS, Washington DC. Mike Green, Richard Armitage, and Joseph Nye – all influential Mahanians from the Bush-era. Available at: http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/pm/abe/us_20130222en.html (accessed October 18, 2016).

⁸³⁵ National Security Strategy of Japan, December 17, 2013, p.8, Available at: http://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/documents/2013/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2013/12/17/NSS.pdf (accessed October 18, 2016).

⁸³⁶ Ibid., p.12.

⁸³⁷ *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2014 and Beyond*, December 17, 2013, Website of Japanese Ministry of Defense, available at: http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/agenda/guideline/2014/pdf/20131217_e2.pdf (accessed November 2, 2016), pp.9-12.

⁸³⁸ Nishihara, Masashi, (President, Research Institute for Peace & Security, Panel on Creation of the NSC 2012-2013) interview with author, Tokyo, January 16, 2015.

⁸³⁹ Tadashi Anno, "Japanese Domestic Politics and Security Cooperation with Australia: The Limits of Normalization," in William Tow, Rikki Kersten (eds.,) *Bilateral Perspectives on Regional Security: Australia, Japan and the Asia-Pacific*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2012), pp.46-54.

⁸⁴⁰ Anonymous, (Japanese Cabinet Staffer) Interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁴¹ See Chapter 4, "Japan's Security Policy-making Structures", p.125.

⁸⁴² Yuichi Hosoya, "The Role of Japan's National Security Council," *AJISS Commentary*, 17 June 2014, available at: http://www2.jiia.or.jp/en_commentary/201406/17-1.html (accessed October 18, 2016).

immediate, and most political observers agree that it has worked well so far in directing policy from the Prime Minister's office to the bureaucracy⁸⁴³.

Abe's cabinet has also promoted intelligence reform⁸⁴⁴ in order to increase trilateral cooperation, in addition to encouraging defence industrial cooperation⁸⁴⁵, particularly with a submarine deal with Australia. This has allowed Abe and those close to him to influence defence industrial policy much more directly⁸⁴⁶. Second, he has managed to circumvent opposition from the Cabinet Legislative Bureau⁸⁴⁷ – normally the key interpreter of Article 9 in the Constitution – with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), which has been the most radical in trying to broaden Japan's security cooperation⁸⁴⁸. This has been primarily implemented by two prominent members of the National Security Council, Secretary General Shotaro Yachi, and Deputy Secretary General Nobukatsu Kanehara, former diplomats, who have each played a part in expanding Japan's security posture. As Vice Foreign Minister – under the Koizumi period – Yachi had developed closer Japanese relations with NATO and the US, while Kanehara – as political minister in the Washington Embassy until 2005 – played a supportive role in the early days of the trilateral and wrote the values-oriented “arc of freedom” policy under the first Abe cabinet⁸⁴⁹.

The third group to support closer ties with the US and Australia has been the MOD, where Nobushige Takamizawa, a prominent defence bureaucrat who also sits on the National Security Council, has been a driving force for trilateralism and closer defence ties with Canberra. Under his leadership, the Japanese Defence White Paper identified Australia as a “first-ranked security cooperation partner”. According to Yuichi Hosoya, a legal expert who has worked closely with the Cabinet Office on collective self-defence, all three groups share a strong threat assessment of China, but for different reasons⁸⁵⁰. Kanehara and others within the liberal internationalist wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs see China's behavior as inherently threatening to the liberal international order⁸⁵¹; Abe, Yachi, and others view China's threat through the prism of Japanese identity, while Takamizawa and his supporters within the MOD view China as threatening because of the lack of military transparency, and China's

⁸⁴³ See, for example: Hashimoto, Junya (Yomiuri Political correspondent, NSC-watcher), interview with author, Tokyo, February 26, 2015; Kotani, Ken (Researcher, NIDS) interview with author, Tokyo, January 8, 2015.

⁸⁴⁴ Kotani, Ken (Senior Fellow, NIDS) interview with author, Tokyo, January 8, 2015.

⁸⁴⁵ Nagase, Masato (Global Insight Corporation / Mitsubishi Corp.) interview with author, Tokyo, February 3, 2015.

⁸⁴⁶ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Cabinet Official) interview with author, October 19, 2016.

⁸⁴⁷ Nishihara, Masashi, (President, Research Institute for Peace & Security, Panel on Creation of the NSC 2012-2013) interview with author, Tokyo, January 16, 2015.

⁸⁴⁸ Anonymous (Advisory Panel Member) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁴⁹ Anonymous (Advisory Panel Member) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid

⁸⁵¹ Anonymous, (Senior Japanese Cabinet Member), Chatham House, December 2, 2014.

use of military power to exert pressure on Japan's periphery. As Ambassador Ryozo Kato has noted, the present day trilateral relationship has become "a comprehensive relationship with a large human network on all three sides.⁸⁵²" In Tokyo, the policy preferences of this network have become mainstream.

7.9. Australia's Deep Hedge

This period also initially saw a surge of enthusiasm in Canberra for strengthening Australia-Japan and US-Japan-Australia ties. This was primarily because Prime Minister Tony Abbott was *Mahanian* in outlook, favoring a close relationship with the US and Japan⁸⁵³. He and Prime Minister Abe also shared a strong rapport. Like Prime Minister Howard before him⁸⁵⁴, Abbott believed that close ties to the US⁸⁵⁵ gave Australia more standing in the region. He even shared advisors, with Andrew Shearer – a key diplomat in the upgrading of the trilateral to ministerial status in 2005 – returning to the Prime Minister's Office as a senior advisor between 2013 and 2015. During this period, the Australia-Japan relationship came very close to an alliance⁸⁵⁶, with Abbott proposing a submarine deal to Abe, which was seen as strategically promising by both sides. Staff talks had become so regular, as to occur every year or year and a half.⁸⁵⁷ FPEs within Japan and Canberra even managed to organize some bilateral and trilateral capacity-building cooperation projects in Vietnam⁸⁵⁸ and the Philippines⁸⁵⁹. Furthermore, under the guiding influence of the military-oriented trilateral SDCF, US-Japan-Australia trilateral military exercises increased in scope, size, and regularity. Despite these signs of greater institutionalization within the trilateral, all three continue to suffer internal debates, nowhere more clearly than Australia, where Abbott's fall from power heralded a return to a more cautious middling approach toward allies and the China debate.

The Japan-Australia Submarine Deal

One might argue that the rise and fall of the Japan-Australia submarine deal is a good example of how internal FPE debates, and the shift of those FPEs in government can lead to policy confusion. A

⁸⁵² Kato, Ryozo (Japan's Ambassador to Washington DC, 2001-2008) personal interview with author, telephone, June 1, 2015.

⁸⁵³ Nick Bisley, "Why Japan has a big Stake in the Fate of Tony Abbott's Leadership," *The Conversation*, February 10, 2015, available at: <http://theconversation.com/why-japan-has-a-big-stake-in-the-fate-of-tony-abbotts-leadership-37358> (accessed November 8, 2016).

⁸⁵⁴ Michael Wesley, *The Howard Paradox: Australian Diplomacy in Asia 1996-2006* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2007); Rory Medcalf, "Abbott is Playing a Well-Balanced Hand in Asia," *The Lowy Interpreter*, April 10, 2014.

⁸⁵⁵ Remarks made by the Honorable Tony Abbott, "The Australia-US Alliance and Leadership in the Asia-Pacific," Lecture#1217 on Asia Pacific, November 2, 2012, The Heritage Foundation Website: <http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/2012/11/the-australiaus-alliance-and-leadership-in-the-asiapacific> (accessed November 8, 2016); Rory Medcalf, Abbott's Visit Will Reboot US Pivot to Asia," *The Lowy Interpreter*, June 16, 2014.

⁸⁵⁶ Rick Wallace, "Abe Tipped to Seek Alliance Between Japan and Australia," *The Australian*, June 29, 2015.

⁸⁵⁷ Anonymous (Defense Section, Australian Embassy, Tokyo) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁵⁸ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Defense Official) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁵⁹ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Defense Official) interview with author, Washington DC.

neorealist analysis might suggest that in pursuing the deal, Australia was intent on balancing Chinese power in the region, by allying its naval forces with those of Japan in self-professed “northern and southern anchors” of the US alliance system⁸⁶⁰. The \$40 million deal was first raised by Australian defence officials on a visit to Tokyo in 2011⁸⁶¹, and was widely discussed by both supportive and critical FPEs in both countries in geopolitical terms. It flourished under the strong political support of the *Mahanian*-oriented Tony Abbott, but lost its way once Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull took office. Whether or not its failure was down to geopolitical considerations as some in Tokyo believed⁸⁶², it certainly gained traction in Canberra and Tokyo due to its strong political support⁸⁶³. The extreme speed with which both sides began work on the deal under Prime Ministers Abbott and Abe, whereby the Japanese joint submarine bid for 12 new submarines for Australia’s Navy forces, was remarkable, given the traditional reticence and caution with which most Japanese defence companies treated international sales⁸⁶⁴, previously restricted by the ‘three principles’⁸⁶⁵. This same dependence on political support, may have also been what undermined it, once leadership changes took place⁸⁶⁶.

The ease with which this project rose and then fell, points to the importance of FPE debates on threat-status of the external environment, and shows how simple structural factors provide insufficient explanatory power for real-life events. One Japanese commentator, Masashi Nishihara, President of the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), notes the importance of domestic debates about foreign policy, “There is some hesitancy in Japan about pushing forward with the relationship with Australia, but my impression is those voices are quite weak today, so we’ll probably go ahead and do it, but in the future, we don’t know. Australia may have a different government, a different attitude toward China.”⁸⁶⁷ In referring to the Australian concern about provoking China into a conflict, another Japanese defence official close to the submarine deal, said,

⁸⁶⁰ Malcolm Cook, Thomas Wilkins, *Anchors and Antidotes*, *Pacific Bulletin*, East West Center, Number 303, March 19, 2015.

⁸⁶¹ Anonymous (Special Advisor to Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁶² Anonymous (Special Advisor to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe) interview with author, telephone.

⁸⁶³ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Defense Official) interview with author, Tokyo.

⁸⁶⁴ Nishiyama, Junichi (Director, Japan Forum for Strategic Studies, Institute of Future Engineering, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries) interview with author, Tokyo, January 16, 2015.

⁸⁶⁵ According to the MOFA website, the three principles on control of arms exports, Japan is not permitted to export to the following countries: (1) communist bloc countries, (2) countries subject to “arms” exports embargo under the United Nations Security Council’s resolutions, and (3) countries involved in or likely to be involved in international conflicts, available at: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/policy/> (accessed November 8, 2016).

⁸⁶⁶ Euan Graham, “Tokyo and Canberra Need to Pick up the Pieces,” *The Lowy Interpreter*, available at: <https://www.lowyinterpreter.org/publications/tokyo-and-canberra-need-pick-pieces> (accessed November 8, 2016).

⁸⁶⁷ Nishihara, Masashi, (President, Research Institute for Peace & Security, Panel on Creation of the NSC 2012-2013) interview with author, Tokyo, January 16, 2015.

Of course, there was a China factor. Even though Australia changed their stance a little. Basically, the Defense Ministry of Australia still sees China with concern. But as a government, they cannot say that. It's a little bit discouraging to Japan, but for internationalists inside Japan, it's understandable. And what internationalists in Japan believe that we don't need a containment policy. We need to engage with them [China]. That's what we should be aware of, and so we can have the Australia policy at the same level”⁸⁶⁸

7.10. The Growth of China's Threat Status

Throughout the second Obama administration, mainstream American FPE opinion of China grew increasingly critical about China and vocal in this criticism. Previously such open expressions toward China had been muted in prestigious journals, appearing only in centre-right think tank publications or defence-oriented publications. While China-critical books have appeared in Washington before this, they have been somewhat marginal⁸⁶⁹. However, books with a China-critical theme published in 2015 were written by a mixture of political scientists, military analysts, and former policy advisors. The most prominent of these were two books by what some might have called “China hands”. The first was *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* by Michael Pillsbury. His strong Chinese language skills, a long career in the defence and intelligence community, and extensive network among China's military gave some credibility to Pillsbury's shocking analysis. David Shambaugh's *China's Future*⁸⁷⁰ was the second book to criticize China. An academic with a long career of watching China's internal politics, Shambaugh's book was co-released with a controversial essay in the *Wall Street Journal*, in which he stated that the domestic move toward authoritarianism by Xi Jinping was likely to dramatically weaken the country. “The Coming Chinese Crackup”⁸⁷¹ was as contested as it was controversial, with China's foreign ministry demanding that the story be taken down from the *Wall Street Journal* website⁸⁷².

The third tract written, written by two former senior diplomats, Robert Blackwill and Ashley Tellis was a *Council of Foreign Relations* report, “Revising US Grand Strategy Toward China”. Though anticipating that their recommendations would be controversial, the two called openly for a new grand strategy, “one that at its core would replace the goal of concentrating on integrating Beijing into the

⁸⁶⁸ Anonymous (Senior Japanese Defense Official) interview with author, Washington DC.

⁸⁶⁹ See, for example, James Mann, *The China Fantasy, How our Leaders Explain Away Chinese Repression*, (New York: Viking Books, 2007).

⁸⁷⁰ David Shambaugh, *China's Future*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2015).

⁸⁷¹ David Shambaugh, “The Coming Chinese Crackup” *The Wall Street Journal*, March 6, 2015, available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-coming-chinese-crack-up-1425659198> (accessed November 6, 2016).

⁸⁷² Tom Mitchell, “Review: 'China's Future', by David Shambaugh,” *Financial Times*, May 16, 2016, available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/903d98c0-1833-11e6-b197-a4af20d5575e> (accessed on November 7, 2016).

international system with that of consciously balancing its rise".⁸⁷³ This was primarily because – the authors allege – China was already pursuing threatening policies against which many American administrations have promised to hedge. The fourth China-critical book was the novel, *Ghost Fleet* – surprisingly enough – and predicted a Tom Clancy-like war scenario with China. What was significant about this book was the authors gave a high level of attention to contemporary military technologies that might play a part in a real Sino-American conflict. As a result, the book was extremely popular with the US military and became a must-read for strategists and decision-makers in Washington DC and on the Hill. A *Foreign Policy* article⁸⁷⁴ on the book alleged prominent FPEs who cited the book, included Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work, Pacific Commander Admiral Harry Harris, and USMC Commandant General Robert Neller. In the wake of China's island-building activities in the South China Sea, and the release of a strong Chinese Defence White Paper, Chinese and Western media⁸⁷⁵ began to raise the possibility of war. One British scholar, Christopher Coker, even argued that while war seemed improbable, this was comparable to war, just before 1914 in his book *The Improbably War: China, the United States, and the Logic of Great Power Conflict* (2015).

Despite these increasingly critical voices of China and “the prevailing approach toward China”, the *Continentalist* voice has not fallen completely silent. In 2013, a prominent report *China 2030* was published by the World Bank and the Development Research Center of the State Council. The massive 500-page study co-written by Former-Bush appointee Robert Zoellick (along with Premier Wen Jiabou), outlining a reform blueprint for a more liberal development model for Beijing, showing the staying power of the economic liberalization. There were also signs that the Obama administration still sought to avoid unnecessary tensions with China. For example, one Philippine diplomat⁸⁷⁶ asserted that US diplomats had quietly opposed Philippine plans to take its maritime disputes with China to the International Tribune in the Hague.

7.11. Conclusion

The central feature of the Obama administration was the attempt to marry *Mahanian* and *Continentalist* approaches in the US policy toward China and toward regional allies. Partly because of the growth of Chinese assertive behavior, Beijing's willingness to use its military power, and the impact

⁸⁷³ Robert D. Blackwill, Ashley Tellis, “Revising US Grand Strategy Toward China”, *A Council of Foreign Relations Special Report*, No. 72, (March 2015), p.18.

⁸⁷⁴ Dan De Luce, “A Novel About War With China Strikes a Chord at the Pentagon,” *Foreign Policy*, May 15, 2016.

⁸⁷⁵ See, for example: Julian Ryall, “US-China War ‘inevitable’ unless Washington drops demands over South China Sea,” *The Telegraph*, 26 May 2015; Rober Boyes, “Risk of War Between US and China is Reaching Crisis Point,” *The Australian*, August 31, 2016.

⁸⁷⁶ Anonymous (Senior Philippine Diplomat, Embassy of the Philippines, London) remarks made at Parliamentary event on the South China Sea, July 19, 2016.

that this has had on the region and on US domestic FPE debates, this was relatively straight-forward and as a result, the trilateral has continued to grow ever-closer. Although the United States continues to hedge, one can see slight variations – the growth in hard power balancing, for example – taking place. As neorealism and neoclassical realism both predict, this has seen a growth in alignment in security cooperation. This is evident in the growth of US-Japan-Australia trilateral military exercises, the ever-expanding search for inter-operability in intelligence-sharing, in military communications, and in battlefield tactics. While the trilateral is still not an alliance, it has an incredible amount of alliance-like features.

Sadly, the period is marked by failure. The first failure is that of American FPEs to convince China to become a “responsible stakeholder”, and a failure to shape China’s behavior in the system through inclusive approaches to institution-building. It has also been marked by a failure of regional approaches – like ASEAN – to halt the slide toward great power competition. Finally, it has been marked by a failure of China to “rise peacefully”, since its foreign and security policy has put it at odds with enough regional states to facilitate counter-balancing by the United States.

8. CONCLUSION

The central hypothesis of this thesis is that a neoclassical realist approach toward US foreign policy provides more explanatory power than neorealism for the development of the quasi-alliance trilateral between Australia, Japan, and the United States. Changes in the post-Cold War power balance in the Asia Pacific like the growth of Chinese power and the relative decline of American power, combined with the two security dilemmas combined created the right conditions for the “federated network” of trilateral –quasi-alliances. Pivotal to this process was how domestic variables in the United States played a key role in perceiving structural features of the international system, and how – as a result – they formed into two broad bureaucratic policy coalitions – described in this thesis and elsewhere as *Mahanians* and as *Continentalists*. Their threat-assessment battles over China provoked a back-and-forth policy output, which shaped the quasi-nature of the trilaterals within US policymaking, which can be seen over the three presidencies since the end of the Cold War. There was a third group, those who broadly sought regional integration, but their story was far less significant – both to the development of the trilaterals and to the overall pitch of US policymaking in the region, writ large.

This chapter will examine these findings in more depth and provide a critique on where they could be improved or where there are weaknesses in the argument. It will then look at future avenues of research on trilateralism and on domestic variables and hedging.

8.1. Overview of Findings

This thesis began by making a few assumptions, which are worth revisiting here. The first of these is that the trilaterals are not fully-fledged alliances, like NATO or like the US-Japan Alliance. A broad review of the international relations literature did show that while there has long been a fuzziness on what constitutes an alliance, a common thread running through many scholars’ work was the idea of expectation. When states align with each other, they are moving into each other’s orbit on key issues and perhaps beginning to socialise over common policy challenges in their immediate environment. They may even – at this stage – begin formal and institutionalized defence cooperation. However, this thesis holds that they cannot be said to have allied with each other if there is no mutual expectation to come to the other’s defence in time of war – even if that expectation is highly conditioned. This does not mean that a state will not suffer from disappointment from its partner in time of war, but that for the sake of internal messaging, a government believes its hands to be free. This thesis rests on the fine foundations of scholars like Thomas S. Wilkins, whose taxonomy of alignment – of which allying is a subset – provides a clarity to the field that may reinvigorate and update alignment literature. This strict definition of what constitutes an alliance may seem arbitrary, but it is in fact a

common facet of how foreign policy elites have described the US-Japan-Australia trilateral. There is only one record of an actual government official using the term “alliance” to describe the institute, and they prefaced the term with “quasi”. Furthermore, of the 90 odd interviews carried out for this study, not one person agreed that the trilateral was an alliance. Some scholars – particularly those from China – declared that it “alliance-in-formation”, something on the way to becoming like NATO. Certainly, there were grave reservations from some officials, who found that language problematic.

A second assumption that is important for this thesis is on the functionality of the trilaterals. While they are not alliances, they have a number of properties that make them worthy of study and observation. This thesis has found that the following principles apply to the trilaterals. First, each country brings their own motives and objectives to them. While this thesis has been primarily about the US reasoning for the trilateral, it has been interesting to note that the other two states have differing objectives and reasons for being in the trilateral. Or to put it more accurately, they all prioritise different functions – balancing China, building capacity, multilateralizing defence – in different ways. As this thesis has sought to argue, these priorities also differ internally so that the Bush administration’s first term emphasis on balancing and alliance-strengthening is quite different from the “wheels to web-building”⁸⁷⁷ conceptualisation of the late Clinton and two-term Obama presidencies. This buffet-style approach towards security cooperation has ultimately meant that the trilaterals are loose-fitting security frameworks around which bureaucracies have built and negotiated political objectives. This is a fascinating insight into the sophistication of modern institution-building and might be said to characterise alignment behaviour more widely. A third principle of the trilateral’s functionality is its evolving nature. For as the trilaterals have progressed forward, moving from the purely diplomatic-political sphere, the high-space of strategy, and into the uniformed services level, so they have changed dramatically. They have moved from the policy coordination⁸⁷⁸ of the original TSD to the day-to-day practicality of military cooperation, championed by the SDCF and the BMDF. All three parts continue to change, but it is the latter two institutions that have the most potential to change, as they continue building intra-trilateral security interoperability and intra-regional trilateral security interoperability. To put it plainly, the navies of the three are now building a common operating picture (COP) with each other, AND attempting to foster that with willing regional partners in Southeast Asia.

⁸⁷⁷ Dennis C. Blair, John Hanley Jnr., “From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia Pacific Security Arrangements”, *The Washington Quarterly*, No 24:1 (2001).

⁸⁷⁸ Miller, Amb. Bruce (Australia’s Ambassador to Japan; aide to Ashton Calvert, Secretary of DFAT 1998-2004) Personal interview, Tokyo, 23 February 2015.

A primary insight at the domestic strategy-building level has been to discover the hedging types of policy outputs, when domestic actors inside states are unable to agree upon systemic challenges in the threat assessment stage. In a sense, this is a completely different theory of hedging than is currently presented by international relations theorists, who see it as a conscious strategy by states faced with difficult choices. This thesis uses bureaucratic pluralism and the dynamic between domestic actors, their perceptions of the balance of power in the international system, and their differing threat assessments to understand why states sometimes act in contradictory ways. It explains why states create half-way or alliance-like trilaterals, which do not actually contain the primary function of alliances – collective defence guarantees. The current literature is not able to answer why states have chosen “federated networks” of “overlapping defense arrangements” over other forms of institution-building and alliance-formation. However, using bureaucratic politics, we can see that a range of different actors within the state disagree on the nature and severity of threats in the international system. Those disagreements are not enough to prevent the creation of alliance-like institutions like the trilateral, but they are enough to halt or slow down their evolution to full alliance status. In essence, trilateralism is the impulse towards alliance-formation, constrained by domestic variables.

This work has sought to (1) explain the origins and nature of trilateralism using a foreign policy approach over the current realist and neorealist methods; (2) placed the half-way nature of trilaterals within the threat-assessment debates by domestic policy actors; (3) proposed that these debates are another driver for a much larger strategy we commonly call *hedging*. Hitherto, hedging has been viewed as a black-box state strategy toward other states, but this thesis finds that hedging arises from domestic debates between various actors inside a state who contest the nature of a threat in the system. In the case of the trilateral, the threat debate is about China. The rise of China, its growing military power, and its opaque policy-making – a consequence of its authoritarian nature – have all created within some policy elites – called *Mahanians* – the perception that China is or will be a threat. However, the economic relationship, China’s size, and the desire to avoid a “security dilemma”, have encouraged another group of policymakers – called *Engagers* – to continue to press for good relations with Beijing and avoid conflict.

This domestic battle on the threat assessment of China is what has created the American foreign policy behavior of hedging. Up until now, this concept has been debated between English Schools theorists, like Evelyn Goh, and foreign policy analysts like Evan Medeiros. In all cases, hedging is seen as a deliberate strategy. I offer an alternative explanation. Hedging is the result of bureaucratic infighting.

My framework borrows from Steven Lobell's *neoclassical realist* analysis of how different foreign policy elites contest threat assessments, and thus also uses neoclassical realism as its theoretical approach.

With the concept of bureaucratic hedging established, I then tested it against the case study of US foreign policymaking as relating to the trilateral strategic dialogue between 1993 and 2016. Since this is at heart, a foreign policy piece, this thesis relies heavily on elite interviews for its data. The range of interviews gathered for this project ranged over three countries, numbering around 90 individuals in various government departments and agencies. The wealth of data provided by the interviews made the selection of one case study preferable to three since much of the data collected for this study has not been assembled in one place before.

While it is true that structural analysis provides us with many of the drivers behind US behavior in the Asia Pacific, such as hierarchy within the alliance and regional system, the rise of China and economic inter-dependence between the US and China, it has not been able to explain some of the false steps taken by American and allied FPEs. This is because of the double security dilemma, which drives American FPEs in two opposing directions. Neoclassical realism adds explanatory power to these structural features by examining the role of domestic variables in translating structural imperatives into policy outputs. The influence of *Continentalists* can be felt – pushing back at *Mahanian* initiatives – throughout this thesis. Their views on integrating China into the global and regional economy, their emphasis on the security dilemma with China, have often stymied alliance-formation. This was evident in 2005, when the Department of State nearly let the trilateral strategic dialogue lapse, under Robert Zoellick. Another was the Department of State stepping in to halt the NSC-led Quadrilateral initiative with India in 2008, after Chinese protests made it clear that a security dilemma would result. It was also evident in the two Obama administrations that sought to soften the divisions between *Mahanians* and *Continentalists*.

As we saw, during the Obama administration, key positions in the US foreign policymaking apparatus were given to both *Mahanians* and *Continentalists*. Kurt Campbell, Jim Schoff, and Danny Russel were able to develop and strengthen alliance-building policies in the Department of State, while Jeffrey Bader, Evan Medeiros, and Abraham Denmark, were able to foster high-level engagement with Beijing at the economic and strategic levels. Furthermore, the Obama administration's *Mahanians* were able to bring on board those policymakers who continued to focus on regional integration. The trilaterals – not merely content with building cooperation between the US and its two allies – now set itself the

task of also building tighter security cooperation between the US alliance system and regional partners like Vietnam and the Philippines. Because of the differences in capacity – some, like the Philippines had very little – much of this trilateral regional work was in capacity-building, a phrase which covered both defence aid and tactical support. Setting itself the large task of helping Southeast Asian states defend their own sovereignty, the trilateral gave aid in the area of maritime awareness, developing radar systems for littoral states, that they might be able to develop a common operating picture.

Finally, we saw that as Chinese behaviour became increasingly of concern to US FPEs, the defence and security part of the trilateral became increasingly institutionalized at the expense of the diplomatic and strategic side. The SDCF and BMDF became more focused on exploring ever-new ways to build capacity, while the TSD became ever-more dependent on the back-and-forth of different political leaders in the three countries. Shifts in the outlook of Japan and Australia – for example with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd – made trilateral diplomacy less predictable. As one serving US official stated, however, when *Mahanian*-minded FPEs took leadership positions in both countries, it could have an enlivening effect on the uniformed cooperation. The most obvious example of this was the attempt by Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to develop a submarine deal. While the deal was ultimately unsuccessful in the end, the project was extremely unusual for a Japan that still regarded arms exports as sensitive. It was only the full support by both men that allowed the project to get as much traction as it did and though it failed in the end, it did develop new relationships between the defence ministries and defence industries of both countries.

Despite the importance this thesis puts on bureaucratic coalitions in the foreign policymaking process, it should not be forgotten that structure is also very important. This thesis allows for that. But it also finds that structural imperatives lack meaning unless they are given some sort of context. This context is human, it is social. It is certainly political. Furthermore, we find that there seems to be a cycle between structure and how that structure is perceived by domestic foreign polite elites (FPEs). Structure influences perception through the setting of goals, rules, and players. For example, the Asia Pacific – a regional sub-system of the international system – has within it a number of structural features, which shape the perceptions of American FPEs. The legacy of the San Francisco system is one of those features, China's rise another, and the efforts by regional states at building regional architecture, still another. The combination of these three features, along with the two security dilemmas, came to deeply shape the goals and objectives of American FPEs from the 1990s to today, and contributed to the inconclusive threat-assessment debates that particularly characterized the

Bush administration. International relations theory also plays a role in promoting wildly different perceptions among American FPEs primarily through the lens of the two schools of IR, realism and liberalism. When all that you have is a hammer, every problem tends to look like a nail.

8.2. Weaknesses in the Argument

There are a number of potential counter-arguments to the position laid out in this paper. One is that the argument is not really neoclassical realist, because it does not strictly prioritize structural imperatives over domestic intervening variables. A second argument is that the labels *Mahanian* and *Continentalist* are gross oversimplifications of how FPEs align themselves over policy positions and do not accurately reflect the complexity and nuances of decision making in government. Is labeling really just another form of cat-calling? Finally, there is a strong counter-argument which looks at the policy input of “threat assessment debates” and the policy output of “hedging” and notes that they are very basic constructions, ill-suited to the complexity of what takes place in the field of government policymaking. These are all strong arguments and they will be briefly examined below.

The first counter-argument that the case laid out in this thesis is that it does not prioritize structural imperatives. Instead, structure seems to persuade FPEs of the rules of the game, the players, and their objectives, while at the same time, FPEs use international relations theory, and their career backgrounds to make meaning of structural features. It seems far more cyclical than should be the case, and leads to the usual chicken and egg question, of which begat which? While this is a seemingly strong criticism, it represents a slight misreading of the case laid out in this thesis. First of all, structure is prioritized: this thesis merely points out that it is actually quite difficult to correctly assess actual power in the system. Often, it seems as though we may only learn the correct power balance after a state has misjudged it and lost a conflict with another. After all, history is littered with accounts of states that misread the balance of power in the system. But correct power assessment may only be possible after many years. One might think of Zhou Enlai’s warning about the significance French Revolution. Naturally, states can reveal the correct power balance by falling afoul of it, but as Jeffrey Taliaferro has pointed out, this is a much higher bar than first it appears. Particularly in dealing with a state of the United States’ size and capabilities, there is a lot of room for error before it is revealed that a state has misjudged power in the system. Also, it is difficult to tell which perceptions of the system are completely inaccurate immediately. Instead, this seems to remain a historical activity. It may take decades, even centuries before we are able to say with any sense of determination, that this and or that point, was the point in which American FPEs began to misjudge the structural balance of

power in the system. Therefore, this thesis tends toward the view that the relationship between structure and perception is more usefully seen as cyclical rather than top-down.

A second possible weakness of this thesis is the division of American FPEs into the two rather arbitrary labels, *Mahanians* and *Continentalists*. First of all, are we not simply using politer terms for “hawks” and “panda-huggers”? Second, doesn’t this label oversimplify both how FPEs conceive of US national interests and the nature of decision-making. Isn’t decision-making situational? These labels presume that some FPEs decided early in the careers on a set of objectives and principles to guide them on US policy in Asia and these remained static from then on? Someone who wanted to engage China in the 1990s might now wish to contain them. The short answer to this, is that nothing about these terms implies that once one falls into one camp they are branded for life. They are approximate positions in a very complex scale of positions. They are also a useful fiction. For if we were to use the actual complexities of human decision-making (whether one had visited China, whether one liked the color blue, or bagels, or whether one was going through a divorce when that decision was made), we would simply be engaged in description. The exercise would be next to meaningless. However, by conceiving of FPE policy baskets in these two areas, we can get some badly-needed clarity. Again, if we think of the Underground Map’s relationship to real-life London, we can account for the utility of representational images. These labels stand as a way that we can define the lowest common denominator that allows individuals to coalesce into a significant coalition. They may disagree on a great many things, but at the lowest end of the spectrum, what they hold in common is a tendency to prioritize certain policy objectives. This, at a minimum, sets them apart from another group.

Finally, and perhaps most intriguingly, is the attempt by this thesis to simplify complex grand strategy into two sequential features: “threat-assessment debates” and “hedging”. Prioritizing these terms, seems to oversimplify the broad range of policymaking choices that make up grand strategy and while providing neatness, hinders effective explanatory power. There are two possible responses to this point. First, as with the above question, this is really a question that lies at the heart of neoclassical realism as an approach – what is the right line between parsimony and clarity on one hand, and complex detail on the other? Where do we find that we have too much detail to make sense of things, and where do we find that we have extremely accurate predictive ability, but that these have so many exceptions, as to be essentially meaningless. We cannot have both perfectly. Instead, it is up to each scholar to attempt to find this line on the gauge between the two extremes. This thesis attempts to find that line in those concepts and finds that they are helpful in explaining real-life events, without pushing us into the realm of pure description. Second, this thesis does not claim that all grand strategy

falls into these categories, but that these categories adequately define how states align when confronted by potential aggressors.

8.3. Where next?

There are a number of interesting possibilities for future research, both in terms of the NCR approach, and in terms of the trilaterals and alliance research. In the first instance, we might look at what neoclassical realism has done for neorealism and see if it might apply to neoliberalism. That's to say, the key benefit provided by the framework is to give internal and external variables some sort of equal or semi-equal explanatory power. The idea that all structural variables must be perceived from a realist perspective, however, does not necessarily follow. Neoliberalism provides its own types of internal-external interplay, and it might be interesting to pursue those. After all, doesn't neoliberalism provide a type of structure within the international system overlaying anarchy? How should we account for the human constructs of the United Nations system, the global economy, and international society? Anarchy as a condition seems well-suited to the England of Hobbes, or the Italy of Machiavelli, or the Greece of Thucydides, but does not seem to accurately depict the rich institutional and normative nature 21st century of human politics. Yes, certainly, one might argue that at the end of the day, power is what sustains the international system, but already there are clear counter-examples that power is predicated on legitimacy. One cannot – it appears – have one without the other. Furthermore, we have already seen that pure neorealism does not seem to exist, given its heavy dependence on social meaning – in threat perception – in its explanation for state alignment.

A second area of possible future research is the nexus between “federated networks” of alliances and “security communities”. Clearly, foreign policy elites in the United States and in Japan have shown that they believe that the San Francisco system might one day provide the building blocks for a regional security community. First, where does this idea come from? Why is it so popular among FPEs? Second, does the concept have any merit? In order to determine this, one would have to look at how institutions evolve and the nature of evolution in international relations. Furthermore, one would have to decide whether this topic should be approached through neorealist theory or through institutional neoliberal theory, or some combination featuring aspects of both. The suggestion that international relations theory has reached a dead end in alliance theory literature is not evidence that we have “finished” that field of research, but perhaps evidence that we need to reexamine some of the assumptions we have about alignment in general. It might be appropriate to see if this new investigation fits those scholars now looking at strategic partnerships, coalitions, and other non-

traditional forms of security alignment. Either way, a number of interesting and exciting possibilities remain open for the scholar interested in understanding how states in a semi-secure world.

8.4. The Future of Policymaking in the Asia Pacific

In all of this, we have seen that domestic elites are unable to proceed quickly when it comes to making policy over complex areas. A reflection of the society they inhabit, they are pushed and pulled between different domestic interests. Doubtless, some of the *Continentalists* interviewed for this project were mindful of the important role that China's economy and trade play in the health of the US economy. Certainly, this became a bitter point of contention in the Trump-Clinton campaign, with Donald Trump choosing to attack the Clintonian vision of win-win trade relations. Some of *Mahanians* may have also been mindful of the interests of the Department of Defense and the defence industry in playing up threats in order to continue justifying large defence budgets. These types of claims – in the absence of mind-reading – are very difficult to verify, and one can only attempt to get a snap shot of how given individuals think and communicate their thought processes during the foreign policymaking process.

As we continue to proceed into the first term of the Trump Administration, it is already obvious that Trump as a leader differs widely from his predecessors. For one thing, he has focused his Asian policy on challenges, primarily on China as a potential challenger and trade cheater, and on North Korea, which has ballooned into a crisis in four very short months. Despite his lack of alliance-minded policies, it is clear that trilateralism – particularly at the uniform level – is continuing to evolve and grow, ever-more complex in nature, and ever-more alliance-like. Now that the three militaries have developed annual exercises and specific objectives, they continue to push closer and closer to what many would describe as an alliance, without committing themselves to a formal treaty. The possibility of a quadrilateral with the US, Japan, India, and Australia has also been revived, and when the first three held the Malabar Naval exercises in early July, 2017, Australian leaders expressed an interest in taking part. Perhaps mindful of Australia's unilateral withdrawal in 2008, or even concerned about Chinese sensibilities, Delhi decided to decline the request⁸⁷⁹. It has certainly become an age of muted competition and alignment; one that trilateral cooperation will become ever-more visible and of interest to states.

⁸⁷⁹ Andrew Greene, "India blocks Australian bid to join Malabar naval war games," ABC News.au, 1 June, 2017, ABC Website: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-31/india-rejects-australian-request-to-join-naval-war-games/8577664> (accessed August 14, 2017)

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10. INTERVIEWS

Stage 1: Tokyo – 10 November – 14 March 2015

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KANEKO, Mariko, *Senior Coordinator, Office of Policy Planning, Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty*, Cabinet Secretariat, 2 February, 2015

The Diet of Japan

IMAZU, Hiroshi, *Former Assistant Minister of Defense, Diet Member, Liberal Democratic Party, 2001-2003*, 29 January, 2015

NAGASHIMA, Akihisa, *Former Minister of Defense, Diet Member, former Security Advisor, to Prime Minister Noda, Democratic Party of Japan, 2010 - 2011*, 23 January 2015

TOYAMA, Kiyohiko, *Secretary General on Komeito Special Committee on Security Legislation, Diet Member, New Komeito Party*, 16 February, 2015

Ministry of Defense, Japan

HAYASHI, Mitsuko, *Former Policy Division, External Partners, Ministry of Defense*, 8 December, 2014

ISHIHARA, Yusuke, *Deputy Director, International Policy Division, Bureau of Defense Policy, 2014-2015, Fellow, NIDS*, 7 January, 2015

ISHIKAWA, Takeshi, *Director, Policy Planning Bureau, Ministry of Defense, Defense Counsellor, London Embassy, 2007-2010*, 9 January, 2015

KAMIO, Yusuke, *US Treaty Division, Ministry of Defense*, 9 January 2015

KOTANI, Ken, *Senior Fellow, International Conflict Division, NIDS*, 8 January, 2015

MAEDA, Kiyoto, *former Defense Counsellor, London Embassy, 2010-2012*, 12 February, 2015

YAMASHITA, Hikaru, *Senior Researcher, NIDS*, 29 January 2015

SATAKE, Tomohiko, *Fellow, Defense Policy Division, NIDS, Capacity-Building Office, MOD*, 8 January, 2015

TSURUOKA, Michito, *Former, Director of the International Policy Division, Bureau of Defense Policy, Ministry of Defense, 2012-2014*, 5 January, 2015

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

HARA, Kotono, *European Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 29 January, 2015

IIDA, Shiniichi, *Former Director, Oceanic Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010-2012*, 16 February, 2015

KIYOTO, Tomoko, *Former Intelligence Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 11 February, 2015

MISAWA, Yasushi, *Former Director, Oceanic Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004-2005*, 19 January, 2015

MIYAJIMA, Akio, *Former Director, Ocean Directorate, 1999-2001 Former Director American Division 2001-2003*, 2 March, 2015

OIKE, Atsuyuki, *Former Director, Oceanic Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001-2003*, 12 February, 2015

SHIKATA, Noriyuki, *Former Deputy Director, Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001-2003*, 12 February, 2015

TANAKA, Hitoshi, *Former Director General, Asian and Oceanic Affairs Bureau, 2001-2002, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, 2002-2004*, 4 December, 2014

YAMAGAMI, Shingo, *Former Deputy Director General, Foreign Policy Bureau, Ambassador for Policy Planning and International Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014-2015*, 4 December, 2014

WADA, Yukihiko, *Director, Oceanic Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014-2015*, 29 January, 2015

Academia

AKIYAMA, Nobumasa, *Professor of Law, Hitotsubashi University*, 5 January 2015

DUJARRIC, Robert, *Director, Institute of Contemporary Asian Studies (ICAS), Temple University*, 7 January 2015

HOSOYA, Yuichi, *Professor of Law, Keio University*, 7 January, 2015

JIMBO, Ken, *Associate Professor of Policy Management, Keio University*, 16 January 2015

KAWAHARA, Setsuko, *Professor of Law, Hitotsubashi University*, 5 January 2015

SOEYA, Yoshihide, *Professor of Law, Keio University*, 21 January 2015

YAMADA, Atsushi, *Professor of Law, Hitotsubashi University* 19 January 2015

VOSSE, Wilhelm, *Chair, Politics and International Relations, International Christian University*, 30 January 2015

Americans

BRADFORD, John, *Commander, US Navy, US Forces Japan*, 22 February 2015

COSSA, Ralph, *President, Pacific Forum CSIS, 1991-2016*, 23 February 2015

FLAKE, Gordon, *Executive Director, The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation*, 5 December 2015

SCHAEFER, Marrie, *Foreign Policy Advisor, MARFORPAC, Aide to US Ambassador, Tokyo* 6 February 2015

Australians

KEVORK, Chris, *First Political Officer, Defence Section, Embassy of Australia, Tokyo*, 26 January, 2015

MILLER, Bruce, *Ambassador, Embassy of Australia, Tokyo*, 23 February 2015

GLASS, David, *Political-Strategic Counsellor, Embassy of Australia, Tokyo*, 23 February 2015

Defence Industry

NAGASE, Masato "Matt", *President, Global Insight Corporation*, 3 February 2015

NISHIYAMA, Junichi, *Former Mitsubishi Heavy Industries*, (ret.) 16 January 2015

YOSHIMURA, Randy, *Sumitomo Corporation*, 22 February 2015

Think tanks

NISHIHARA, Masashi, *President, Research Institute for Peace and Security*, 15 January 2015

WATANABE, Tsuneo, *Senior Fellow, Tokyo Foundation*, 16 January 2015

OYAMADA, Kazuhito, *Coordinator, Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)*, 17 February 2015

Journalists

MIE, Ayako, *Journalist, Japan Times*, 5 February 2015

PERRY, Richard Lloyd, *Journalist, The London Times*, 19 February 2015

KASAHARA, Toshihiko, *Journalist, Mainichi Shimbun*, 14 February, 2015

HASHIMOTO, Junya, *Journalist, Yomiuri Shimbun*, 26 February 2015

Stage 2: Canberra – 8 March – 13 March 2015

Department of Defence

DEWAR, Scott, *First Assistant Secretary, International Policy Division, Australian Department of Defense*, 12 March, 2015

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

HOLLOWAY, Trevor, *Japan Desk Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, 10 March, 2015

MCLEAN, Murray, *Ambassador to Japan 2004-2011*, (ret.) Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 12 March 2015

Office of National Assessment

KEAN, Douglas, *Head, Strategic Analysis, Office of Net Assessment*, 12 March 2015

GENN, Harry, *Assistant Director-General, Office of Net Assessment*, 12 March 2015

MAHONEY, Thomas, *Researcher, Office of Net Assessment*, 12 March 2015

US Embassy

PETERSON, Calvin "Pete", *Deputy Political Counselor, US Embassy, Canberra*, 12 March 2015

CHILDS, Gary, *Political Officer, US Embassy, Canberra*, 12 March 2015

Academia

ARMSTRONG, Shiro, *Co-Director, Australia Japan Relations Centre, Australian National University*, 10 March, 2015

ENVALL, David, *Research Fellow, Department of International Relations, Australian National University*, 10 March, 2015

KING, Amy, *Lecturer in Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University*, 10 March, 2015

MULGAN, Aurelia George, *Professor, Humanities, University of New South Wales*, 9 March, 2015

SCIONE, Ben, *Doctoral Candidate, Australian National University*, 10 March, 2015

TOW, William, *Professor of International Relations, Australian National University*, 10 March, 2015

Think Tanks

FEAKIN, Tobias, *Director National Security, Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, 11 March 2015

SCHREER, Ben, *Senior Analyst for Defence Strategy, Australian Strategic Policy Institute* 11 March 2015

CHANNER, Haley, *Analyst, Australian Strategic Policy Institute* 11 March 2015

Stage 3: Washington DC – 10 April – 10 July 2015**Department of Defense**

BLAIR, Dennis, *Admiral, Former Commander in Chief, Pacific Command, 1999-2002 (ret.), Sasakawa Foundation of the USA*, 6 May 2015

KLIMAN, Daniel, *Senior Advisor for Asia Integration, OSD, Department of Defense*, 11 May, 2015

LAWLESS, Richard, *Former Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Asia-Pacific Affairs, Department of Defense, 2002-2009*, 4 June 2015

LORD, Arthur, *Strategy and Force Development Office, OSD, Department of Defense*, 12 May, 2015

MCDEVITT Mike, *Rear Admiral (ret.) Senior Fellow, Center for Naval Analyses, former Director Strategy War Plans, J-5, PACOM 1993-95*, 27 March, 2015

PRZYSTUP, James, *Senior Research Fellow, INSS, National Defense University*, 6 May, 2015

SAKODA, Robin "Sak", *Former Country Director for Japan, OSD, Department of Defense 1994-1999*, 28 April, 2015

SCHIFFER, Michael, *Senior Advisor to Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, 2009-2012*, 19 May, 2015

SCHOFF, Jim, *Former Senior Policy Advisor, OSD, Department of Defense*, 22 May 2015

TAIT, Scott, *Captain, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Asia Pol-Mil Affairs, Joint Staff*, 21 April, 2015

Department of State

ARMITAGE, Richard, *Former Deputy Secretary of State, 2001-2005*. 26 May, 2015

HANSEN, Scott, *Political-Military Affairs, Office of Japanese Affairs, Department of State*, 2013-2015, 5 June 2015

DUVALL, Linnea, *Foreign Affairs Officer, Bureau of Political Military Affairs*, 2013-2015. 2 June, 2015

SCHRIVER, Randy, *Chief of Staff to Deputy Secretary, 2001-2003, Deputy Assisant Secretary of State for East Asia, 2003-2005*. 17 June, 2015

National Security Council

CHA, Victor, *Former Director of Asian Affairs, National Security Council*, 2004-2007. 13 May, 2015

GREEN, Michael J. *Former Director of Asian Affairs, National Security Council*, 2001-2005. 15 April, 2015

LIEBERTHAL, Kenneth, *Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and Senior Director for Asia, National Security Council*, 1998-2000. 8 June, 2015

Japanese

KATO, Ryozo, *Former Ambassador to the United States, 2001-2008, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, June 1, 2014

WAGURI, Hiroshi, *Defense Policy Bureau, Japanese Ministry of Defense, 2011-2014, Former Capacity Building, Multilateral Affairs, Director*, 20 April 2015

Australian

SHEARER, Andrew, *Former Senior Advisor, Prime Minister's Office, Australia, 2006-2007, DFAT Japan Desk, 2005-2006*, 21 May, 2015

Stage 4: London 10 October – 14 December 2016

DOWNER, Alexander, *Former Foreign Minister, Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1996-2007*, 9 September 2015

REVERE, Evans, *Former Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and pacific Affairs, 2005, State Department Director for Japanese Affairs, 2003-2005*, 30 January, 2016

GLOSSERMAN, Brad, *Executive Director, Pacific Forum, CSIS*, 10 October, 2016

JILANI, Erum, *Asia Pacific Advisor, OSD, Department of Defense 2012-2016*, 4 November 2016

PATTERSON, Torkel, *Former Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director Asia, National Security Council, 2001-2002, Special Advisor to the Ambassador to Japan, 2002-2004*. 12 April 2015

PATEL, Nirav, *Former Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2009-2012*. 2 June, 2016

URENA, Michael, *Former Policy and Plans Officer, Pol-Mil Bureau, Department of State, 2009-2010*, 27 October 2016

ZOELLICK, Robert, *Former Deputy Secretary of State (2005-2007), Trade Representative (2001-2005)*, 23 December, 2016