

Australia, New Zealand and East Asian Regional Cooperation

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Introduction

Australia and New Zealand have a mutually productive bilateral relationship. Each constitutes an important political friend, strong trading companion, and reliable military partner for the other. Given the strength of their bilateral relationship, complementarities in their general values and policies, and the utility of combining voices and views to achieve a higher profile in foreign policy settings, it has at times therefore befitted these Australasian countries to work closely together to engage ongoing regional processes in East Asia, as elsewhere. However, despite similarities of interests and commonalities of values in many facets of their relationship, there are a few points of difference at play.

This paper first of all sketches the move in international relations circles towards a more comprehensive sociological analysis of state identity and interests and, therefore, state behaviour. In line with this type of approach the paper then briefly highlights important general domestic values and foreign policy principles for both Australia and New Zealand, before outlining the current state of trans-Tasman relations, and sketching ongoing engagement with the local neighbourhood. These sections help to set the context for a better understanding the nature of Australian and New Zealand interest in regional cooperation in East Asia. The paper then ends by highlighting where Australasian views coincide and where they differ, returning to the point that state identity and the interests that are at least in part constituted by that identity, are important in helping to locate each country's priorities, concerns and their prevalent ideas about engaging East Asian regional cooperation.

The sociological shift in IR

The rise of constructivism in international relations theory has presented new challenges and opportunities for the academic study of international relations. Constructivism emphasises the importance of domestic and international norms, identities and ideational structures, as well as recognising the significance of material goods in international relations.¹ Some constructivists, such as the early Peter Katzenstein, focus on unit level analysis to identify issues such as why Japan pursued a Pacifist policy in the post War years.² Others such as Martha Finnemore, Richard Price and Audie Klotz trace

¹ Christian Reus-Smit, 'Constructivism', *Theories of International Relations*, 2nd Edn, eds., Scott Burchill et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp209-330.

² Peter Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security; Police and Military in Post War Japan*, (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1993) and Peter Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National*

the emergence of international norms regarding, respectively, the legitimate use of force, the non-use of chemical weapons and anti-apartheid sentiment.³ Lastly, Alexander Wendt has been described as a 'systemic' constructivist who argues, amongst other things, that the ability to overcome collective action problems (described by realists as security dilemmas and by liberals as prisoner dilemmas), depends on whether the actor's social identities favour self-interest or collective interest.⁴ Identifying key elements of social identity is therefore vital for understanding what is going to be seen in a particular country as constituting the national interest.

More specifically, in terms of utility for this paper, Wendt suggests that there are a number of domestic and international determinants of a state's identity formation and therefore a state's interests. The former include the shape of state-society relations and nationalism. The latter include structural contexts, systemic processes and strategic practice. Structural contexts refer primarily to the threat perception that gives meaning to material structures in the world. Structural contexts are in turn influenced by systemic processes and strategic practices. Systemic processes result from external state actions that alter this overarching context. Strategic practices then describe the kinds of rhetoric and behaviour that states undertake that affect others' perceptions of them.

In essence, then, Wendt argues that an understanding of the 'self' of the state and perception of threat(s) help to provide an explanation of state behaviour. He also points out that statements and actions will shape others' perceptions. These ideas can help us to make some sense of matters pertaining to Australia and New Zealand's engagement in foreign affairs. Interests pursued in foreign policy are not just a 'given' but, in addition to instrumental motivations, these interests are motivated by identity too. Moreover, as structural contexts (threat perception) can influence 'strategic practices', the way in which states pursue their interests can also differ and can have ongoing effects. This paper therefore looks to sketch some of these determinants of Australia and New Zealand's identity, and to mark out their impact on what interests are pursued and how.

Potential determinants of social identity in Australasia

In terms of some key elements central to Australian identity, post-War Australia has traditionally seen itself as a 'middle power' that has aimed for a

Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics, (Columbia NY: Columbia University Press, 1996). See also Thomas Berger's chapter within this second book. Significantly for East Asia, Katzenstein has also recently co-authored (with Takashi Shiraishi) two important new works: *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* (Cornell University Press, 2005) and *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency* (Stanford University Press, 2004).

³ Martha Finnemore, *The purpose of intervention; changing beliefs about the use of force* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); Richard Price, *The Chemical Weapons Taboo*, (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid*, (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

⁴ Alexander Wendt, 'Collective identity formation and the international state', *American Political Science Review*, 88 1994, pp384-396.

leadership role in regional if not international affairs.⁵ Australia has also for many decades been strongly aligned with the US in spite of trade flows shifting markedly towards Asia – a fact underpinned by a feeling of ‘likemindedness’ with the US, both in cultural and value-oriented terms.⁶ Immigration has also primarily been sourced from Anglo-European countries, rising Asian migration is a relatively recent phenomenon (and is spiritedly debated in populist terms in domestic circles), and the issue of reconciliation with the indigenous population remains outstanding. Resource rich and export-driven, Australia’s economy has grown strongly in recent years and even in times of recession consumer confidence has remained high.⁷ In terms of security, Australia has long had a strong perception of some sort of threat to its sovereignty, and in-country debates about how to deal with such possible threats have oscillated between continental versus forward defence paradigms.⁸ These high levels of concern about potential threats are reflected in the fact that Australia is currently world’s 12th largest defence spender, spending about 2% of its considerable GDP on defence and this defence spending enjoys relatively strong domestic support (or perhaps it is little known, at any rate there is not a great deal of public controversy).⁹

With regards to recent government priorities in the Asia-Pacific region, although a more Asia-focused policy was promoted by Prime Minister Keating in the mid 1990s, the relationship with the US remained the mainstay of much of Australia’s security if not foreign policy, and this emphasis was broadened and deepened by the Howard administration.¹⁰ Recently elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd also calls himself “an unapologetic supporter” of the United States and his Asia-Pacific Community was at least in part an exercise intended to “avoid long-term strategic drift, avoid the possibility of America drifting away from Asia”.¹¹ For Australia, then, the US’ hubs and spokes system is seen to underwrite peace and security in the region, but (in a display of changing ‘systemic processes’ Wendt talks of) it is clear that this system is in a state of flux. Rudd has therefore moved the focus of Australian foreign policy to accommodate a stronger emphasis on the rise of China and has

⁵ This idea of Australia constituting a strong example of a ‘middle power’ is expressed in a variety of government and academic sources. See: Carl Ungerer, ‘The ‘middle power’ concept in Australian foreign policy’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 53 (4) 2007, pp538-51.

⁶ This phrase ‘like minded’ is often used in Australasia to refer to the ABCA countries.

⁷ For such statistics see: <http://melbourneinstitute.com/research/macro/csi.html>.

⁸ On the issue of threat perception see the work of Graeme Cheeseman such as his chapter ‘Australia: The White Experience of Fear and Dependence’, *Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region*, eds., Ken Booth and Russell Trood. (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999). On debates over forward versus continental defence see: J. Mohan Malik, ed., *Australia’s Security in the 21st Century*, (New South Wales: Allen and Unwin Press, 1998).

⁹ For a recent discussion and breakdown of Australia’s defence expenditure see: Mark Thomson, *The Cost of Defence ASPI Defence Budget Brief 2009-2010*, (Canberra: ASPI, 2009) as found at http://www.aspi.org.au/publications/publication_details.aspx?ContentID=215&pubtype=-1, accessed 23/08/09.

¹⁰ On the Keating years see Paul Keating, *Engagement*, (Sydney: Macmillan, 2000). Foreign Minister Gareth Evans also heavily promoted the development of the ASEAN Regional Forum, as noted in Richard Higgott and Kim Richard Nossal, ‘Australia and the search for a security community in the 1990s’, *Security Communities*, eds., Emmanuel Adler and David Barnett. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). On the moves to strengthen the US relationship see: Maryanne Kelton, *More than an Ally?*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

¹¹ PM Kevin Rudd interviewed by Hannah Beech, ‘Mr World’, *Time*, 174 (1) July 13 2009, pp24-6.

expressed a desire to be central part of – or even to lead – a new Asia-Pacific Community, and this will be discussed in later in the paper. Significantly too for both domestic and foreign policy considerations, there has been much talk in both Australia and New Zealand of the need to be ‘Asia literate’ and the growing Asian population in both countries is an increasingly important demographic factor.¹²

In New Zealand this growing Asian population is set against the backdrop of a similarly traditional emphasis on prioritising Anglo-European immigration, but this growing immigration from Asia is also unfolding against a history of a country that has had to grapple more closely with the notion of biculturalism (due to ongoing negotiations with Maori). In looking to New Zealand’s engagement outside of these territorial bounds, the country is a small and geographically isolated, but this is proved no barrier to high levels of involvement in international affairs. Indeed as a small state it is perhaps unsurprising that successive New Zealand governments have put much effort into developing and supporting international institutions and international law. Multilateral diplomacy has accompanied bilateral diplomacy, there have been very low levels of threat perception for many decades, and much of New Zealand’s foreign policy pays heed to the demands of an exporting trading state that needs access to international markets.¹³ Lastly, but very significantly, the adoption of a nuclear-free stance in 1984 saw New Zealand suspended from the ANZUS Treaty that had been the cornerstone of its security policy since 1951. Though many lamented the loss of the Treaty, the ideal of the anti-nuclear policy has fed a self-image of an environmentally responsible, peace-loving and fiercely independent country. Again echoing some of Wendt’s points above, domestic drivers in the form of state-society relations and a particular sense of nationalism vis-à-vis the emergence of a strong nuclear free movement and a broader sense of pacifism in general have been and continue to be important determinants of foreign policy.

Interestingly many of these foreign policy priorities enjoy bi-partisan support, and therefore the recently elected National government under the leadership of John Key has not meant a great deal of change in terms of foreign policy priorities. National governments have tended to be more alliance-oriented on the whole, and emphasise more conservative agendas touting the importance of defence and law and order, though this has not necessarily corresponded

¹² The need for these countries to be ‘Asia literate’ has been expressed in a very public manner in Australia by the Prime Minister himself (see: Clinton Porteus, ‘Kevin Rudd calls for Australians to become Asia literate’, *Herald Sun.Com* as found at <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,24173757-662,00.html>, accessed 24/08/09). This has also been expressed in a quieter way in New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Our Future with Asia*, (Wellington: MFAT, 2007), and in the notion that more Asian languages should be supported in country as well as in new Ethnic Strategies for New Zealand Police that have included basic Mandarin training for some senior Constables etc. See: Richard Bedford and Elsie Ho, *Asians in New Zealand; Implications of a Changing Demography*, Outlook 07 (Wellington; Asia NZ Foundation, 2008) as found at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/AsiaNZ%20Outlook%207.pdf>, accessed 20/07/09. On recent statistics for Australia see: BBC, ‘Asian migrants flock to Australia’, *BBC News Online*, as found at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7857515.stm>, accessed 20/07/09.

¹³ These low levels of threat perception are underscored by the fact that Defence White Papers (1987; 1991; 1997; 2000) have, since the 1980s, emphasised the almost impossibility of invasion, noting that New Zealand faces ‘no direct threat’.

with increased spending in these areas and the Defence budget is not set to change much under this administration.¹⁴ Therefore, despite some small adjustments such as terminology changes which have seen Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials discard 'poverty alleviation' in favour of 'sustainable economic development', general foreign policy and trade priorities under the new administration look as if they will continue on with much previous sentiment. This means an ongoing nuclear free stance, a push for free trade agreements with India to bolster those achieved with China under the Labour government, continuing defence and police commitments to Afghanistan, RAMSI and East Timor, and an ongoing effort to continue to repair previously strained relations with the US through contributions to Afghanistan and elsewhere (though this would not be pursued if it meant an obvious 'cost' to New Zealand's sense of independence). It also means continuing the process of strengthening relationships with Australia, but there are some caveats here too.

The trans-Tasman Relationship

At times New Zealand's foreign policy themes have echoed those of Australia (or vice versa depending on your point of view!), such as in the case of a strong show of support for each other in the challenging of the creation of the UN veto in the 1945. However, New Zealand has at times taken a foreign policy path that has differed strongly from its neighbour, with the most striking case being that of the 1984 ANZUS rift mentioned above, whilst the unwillingness to go to war against Iraq in 2003 similarly ran counter to Australian commitments. At the present time the current state of relations between these two Australasian countries is very healthy with both Rudd and Key seeking to deepen existing ties.¹⁵

With regards to political and economic matters, there has been renewed interest (the idea was first floated in 1992) in the notion of creating a common border without need for customs or immigration processing.¹⁶ The concept of a common currency continues to be bandied around, though this has not as of yet made much headway. With respect to current security and defence arrangements, much formal and informal cooperation between the two countries has been ongoing. Here, for a specific example, the operational demands of New Zealand's Australian-made ANZAC frigates have seen frequent exchanges of personnel aboard ship. Defence diplomacy through regular visits and exchanges to Senior Command and Staff Colleges on either side of the Tasman continue, and there is much mutual exercising through various exercises such as the Five Power Defence Arrangement's recent exercise, the French coordinated *Croix du Sud* exercises, the various

¹⁴ New Zealand's Defence Forces remain small, with a total of 9702 regular uniformed personnel serving in the three armed forces, no air strike capability but some stronger investment has occurred in the last few years in terms of armoured personnel carriers, transport aircraft and maritime vessels (with the purchase of 103 LAV's for the Army, the refitting of the C-130 Hercules and Orion planes and the purchase of new NH-90 helicopters for the Air Force and the buying of one Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) and eight Inshore Patrol Vehicles (IPV's) for the Navy amongst other things).

¹⁵ For one example, there was recently a policy paper co-written by authorities from both countries on facing the recession, as found at <http://www.nzaid.govt.nz/>.

¹⁶ Guy Espiner, 'Trading Places', *North and South*, August 2009, p90.

Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) exercises that are ongoing (indeed Auckland hosted this latest round in 2008).

In terms of future relations, both sides recognise each other as important partners in political, economic *and* security matters. With regards to the latter there is an issue of relative size, though, as Australia looks to the US as its most significant partner in this area, whilst New Zealand places Australia in that lofty position. However, there have been a number of strong overtures in the recent Australian Defence White Paper looking to increase the level of trans-Tasman interaction even further. This White Paper specifically notes that “we share many of these [our] strategic interests with New Zealand, and maintaining a strong bilateral defence and broader security relationship with that country is itself in our strategic interests in terms of ensuring a secure immediate neighbourhood”.¹⁷ New Zealand is also mentioned with regards to Australia increasing interoperability with other states and most significantly, the Paper says that:

the Government especially reaffirms its commitment through this White Paper to working with New Zealand to promote security, stability and development in the Pacific and East Timor. This requires that we continue to align our approaches to defence relations and capacity building and preventative diplomacy. But we must also plan together on the basis that our combined operations in pursuit of our common security interests, as has occurred over recent years, are the new norms. It is therefore critical that our two defence forces maximise interoperability and align our operational planning, logistics, communications, capability development and procurement activities to the maximum extent practicable...’Australia and New Zealand should look for opportunities to rebuild our historic capacity to integrate Australian and New Zealand force elements in the ANZAC tradition. This operational integration would of course be without prejudice to our respective policy choices¹⁸

The desirability of initiating this concept of ‘integration’ of elements was again reiterated in a recent visit to New Zealand by Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith.¹⁹

As of yet there is no official New Zealand response to this suggestion. New Zealand is currently undergoing its own Defence Review process in order to produce a new Defence White Paper in 2010. Indications are, however, that the Australian connection will be central to the Paper though some commentators have urged caution with the notion of any ‘integration’ – there is a strong national resistance in New Zealand more broadly to being seen to be ‘falling in’ with an Australian agenda. Most academic commentators in New Zealand would therefore want to see New Zealand remain ‘close but distinct’

¹⁷ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p42.

¹⁸ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p50 and p98.

¹⁹ Guy Espiner, ‘Trading Places’, *North and South*, August 2009, p90.

with regards to the trans-Tasman relationship.²⁰ This is borne out by involvement elsewhere, such as in the Pacific, where it has benefited New Zealand to not be overly associated with Australia who can be viewed at times as an overbearing 'big brother', and in the future there may well be very different views from New Zealand as issues such as the role of rising powers in the Asia-Pacific.²¹ That said, there is no doubt in Wellington that for the moment, Australia remains the country closest, both in geographic terms and in terms of culture, interests and values, to New Zealand – and as such it retains pride of place as New Zealand's most important bilateral relationship and therefore weighs heavily on New Zealand's relationships in the wider region.

Relations with neighbouring countries

The South Pacific constitutes both Australia's and New Zealand's immediate neighbourhood, and as such, occupies an important place in foreign policy initiatives. This in turn affects Australasian interaction with key players from East Asia. In Wendt's terminology, then, the South Pacific provides part of the picture when it comes to the structural context and, within this, the rise of a stronger role for East Asian countries in this neighbourhood constitute systemic processes that are pushing Australia and New Zealand to both reconceive of their role and identity as the two 'biggest fish in the pond' and to reassess how they will seek to engage these other actors.

Australia is heavily involved in Pacific in a number of ways. Australia remains the main contributor to security and development initiatives in RAMSI, Australian contingents led the initial intervention into East Timor and are still heavily involved in that country, and there is an intensive ongoing commitment to Papua New Guinea in a number of different sectors. Australia also leads or is deeply involved in a number of regional initiatives. An active member of the Pacific Islands Forum, Australia has contributed to a number of PIF and other regional efforts through the Pacific Patrol Boat Program, and the Pacific Regional Policing Initiative, amongst other things. This level of involvement is in large part driven by the notion that Australia has a leadership role to play in the South Pacific and by high levels of threat perception.

Reinforced by heightened security concerns following the Bali bombing of 2002, Australia has been increasingly active in the region, particularly in local security initiatives, and Australia's strategic interest in the area is highlighted by the recent Australian Defence White Paper. Here it is said that; "Australian interests are inevitably engaged if countries in the region become vulnerable

²⁰ These comments have been provided by commentators in the various recent Defence Review-oriented fora that the author has attended.

²¹ See, for example, Rosemary Smyth, Nii Ki Plange, and Neil Burdess, 'Big brother? Australia's Image in the Pacific', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 51 (1) April 1997, pp37-52 and 'Big brother? Australia and Papua New Guinea', *The Economist*, 27 September 2003. I would like to point out that this is a relative advantage as I believe New Zealand is sometimes viewed in the Pacific as behaving in this way too.

to the adverse influence of strategic competition”.²² The Paper states, unsurprisingly, that the number one priority is the defence of Australia, advocating forward defence in terms of protection of the sea and air approaches and (importantly) in terms of ensuring that “no major military power” has “access to bases in our neighbourhood from which to project force against us”. Following on from this the Paper then emphasises the need to “contribute to stability and security in the South Pacific and East Timor”, before discussing the need to contribute to military contingencies in the Asia-Pacific.²³ There is a particularly striking concern expressed in the White Paper that “major powers with different interests from ours might steadily increase their access to facilities and operating opportunities in our approaches”.²⁴ In light of such sentiments, the recent strengthening of military ties between Papua New Guinea and China could be perceived as another major power gaining significant strategic influence close to Australian shores, though great care is taken in the White Paper to not suggest that China may be one of these powers with ‘different interests’.²⁵ (Local academic commentary in both Australia and New Zealand is divided on this issue, with some seeing increased Chinese engagement as destabilising, others urging Australia to engage with China to help effect positive change in the region.²⁶ Importantly too there is much Australian academic criticism of the White Paper as a whole.)

The paper then talks about potential problems regarding economic decline and political instability in the region, arguing that these and other factors “on occasion will cause security problems of the kind to which Australia may need to respond directly with appropriate forms of humanitarian and security assistance, including by way of ADF deployments”.²⁷ This is in part because

²² Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p35.

²³ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p13.

²⁴ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p73.

²⁵ AAP, ‘Closer ties for Papua New Guinea and China’, *Stuff.co.nz* as found at <http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/south-pacific/2549444/Closer-ties-for-Papua-New-Guinea-and-China>, accessed 8/7/09. Liang said China paid great attention to ties with Papua New Guinea and was willing to promote friendly cooperation based on equality and mutual benefit,” Xinhua reported. “China also attached great importance to bilateral military cooperation and was ready to take substantial measures to advance military ties to a new level, Liang added”.

²⁶ Ron Crocombe, *Asia in the Pacific Islands: Replacing the West*, (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 2007); Graeme Dobell, ‘China and Taiwan in the South Pacific: Diplomatic chess versus Pacific political rugby’, *Lowy Institute Policy Brief*, (Sydney: Lowy Institute, 2007); and Susan Windybank, ‘The China Syndrome’, *Centre for Independent Studies Policy*, 21 (2) 2005, pp28-33 tend to be more wary of China’s role in the region. Fergus Hansen, ‘The dragon in the Pacific: more opportunity than threat’, *Lowy Institute Policy Brief*, (Sydney: Lowy Institute, 2008); Yongjin Zhang, ‘China and the emerging regional order in the South Pacific’, *Australian Journal of International Relations*, 61 (3) September 2007, pp367-81; Jian Yang, ‘China in the Pacific: A strategic threat? paper prepared for China-Japan dialogue August 2008 as found at http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/China%20in%20the%20SthPacific_DrJianYang.pdf, accessed 12/08/09 and Mark Shepard, ‘Australia’s Nation-building: An Assessment of its Contribution to Regional Security in the Pacific, and a New Policy to Guide its Future’, *SDSC Working Paper No.413*, (Canberra: SDSC ANU, 2009) all promote engagement.

²⁷ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p36.

“given our size and resources, Australia will be expected to take a leadership role in the South Pacific if these states are overwhelmed by a natural or man made crisis”.²⁸ In terms of other significant interests in the broader region, the Australian White Paper also notes that the US likely to remain the dominant power until 2030 and that “we should also continue to support the United States in maintaining global security” though “this of course does not mean unconditional support for all the policies of the United States, but does imply a recognition that Australia needs to play its part in assisting the United States to deal with global security challenges”.²⁹ It is clear that the US remains the most important defence relationship for Australia but much of the document talks about the need for Australia to be able to be relatively self-sufficient and notes an opposition to NMD by any country.³⁰

New Zealand’s relationships in the South Pacific and with the regional hegemon, the US, differ from that of its eastern neighbour. In the South Pacific New Zealand too sees itself as being one of the ‘bigger fish’ in the pond, so to speak. With a considerable Pacific Island population and close historical connections (particularly in Polynesia as opposed to the mainly Melanesian focus of Australian interests), New Zealand has also sought at times a leadership role through initiatives such as the Pacific Plan that emerged from meetings in Auckland in 2004. New Zealand is also active in promoting freer trade and migration in the region, recently instigating a new Pacific Temporary Migrants arrangement that allows for Pacific Islanders to travel more easily to and from New Zealand in search of predominantly seasonal work.³¹

What is made clearer from a more detailed view of these similar engagement profiles, however is that involvement in this neighbourhood can proceed along different grounds; even for countries as closely affiliated as Australia and New Zealand. For example, the Australian preoccupation with maintaining security in the region was borne out in official documents outlining the rationale for the depth and breadth of Australian engagement in RAMSI. New Zealand cabinet documents, on the other hand, stressed the humanitarian and ‘good neighbourliness’ element as key motivators.³² These ‘strategic processes’ to use Wendt’s terminology, indicate the different kinds of approaches that can then affect both how these actors proceed on the ground and how they are perceived by these countries in the Pacific. Moreover, differences in these ‘strategic processes’ can also be seen at play in Australasian efforts to engage East Asian regional cooperation.

²⁸ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p54.

²⁹ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p44.

³⁰ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, (Canberra: Australian Department of Defence, 2009), p93 and pp85-6.

³¹ A summary of the main issues surrounding the temporary visa debate can be found at <http://www.winejobsonline.com/documents/NewSeasonalWorkScheme.pdf>, accessed 23/08/09.

³² For further comment on this see: B.K Greener-Barcham and Manuhua Barcham, ‘Terrorism in the South Pacific? Thinking Critically about Approaches to Security in the Region’, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 60 (1) March, pp67-82.

Australasian engagement with East Asian Regionalism

The strong interest of Australia and New Zealand in engaging with East Asian regionalism has been demonstrated through rhetorical and practical support for a number of initiatives such as APEC, the various ASEAN fora such as the ARF, and, explored more thoroughly here below, the EAS.³³ Some commentators in these two countries have suggested that remaining outside of East Asia's regional integration processes might better fit these countries' needs, but the prevailing view is that inclusion is desirable and even necessary.³⁴ This drive to join such institutions is connected not only to economic flows but also to identity too; in that many in Australia and New Zealand now see themselves as part of a much larger regional entity. Here Malcolm Cook from the Lowy Institute has suggested that Australia's mental map of the region is highly inclusive, close to Japan's idea of an 'inland sea'; a view in contrast to Chinese views that China is part of Asia, Australia part of the Pacific.³⁵ Similarly New Zealand's policy paper on 'Our Future with Asia' emphasises that New Zealand needs to 'better integrate' with an 'integrating region', and notes that:

Any new regional architecture in Asia will have important implications for New Zealand. We need to continue engaging actively to ensure our participation in decisions that are vital to our future. We seek to be part of emerging regional structures.³⁶

The next section of the paper takes a brief look at Australasian views on these present and potential regional structures.

In terms of existing institutions (putting to one side an APEC focused agenda which has been described as currently 'lacking dynamism'³⁷), there has been much talk of ASEAN being in the 'driving seat' of contemporary regional institutionalism. For Australasia one recent initiative of note has been the recent signing of the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) earlier this year which officials hope will enter into force on the due date January 1 2010.³⁸ More recently, in June 2009 New Zealand's

³³ Interestingly Graeme Dobell, 'APC: Dead duck or bird with a few important feathers?' *The Interpreter*, 16 March 2009, as found at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2009/03/APC-Dead-duck-or-a-bird-with-a-few-important-feathers.aspx>, accessed 11/08/09 points out that Australian politicians and officials tend to be seen as falling into either Northeast Asianist or ASEANist camps and that Rudd has been associated with the former over the latter.

³⁴ In New Zealand this prevailing view is clearly emphasised in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand's Foreign and Security Policy Challenges, (Wellington: MFAT, 2000), and *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*, Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee, (Wellington: Government Printers, 1999) I. 4D, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Our Future with Asia*, (Wellington: MFAT, 2007) amongst others.

³⁵ Malcolm Cook, 'The APC and the world of regions', *The Interpreter*, 3 August 2009, as found at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2009/08/03/The-APC-and-the-world-of-regions.aspx> accessed 10/08/2009.

³⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Our Future with Asia*, (Wellington: MFAT, 2007), p6.

³⁷ Professor Gary Hawke, *APEC Cluster Group Memo*, 20 August 2009. Cited with permission of author.

³⁸ Hon Simon Crean, Minister for Trade, 'Visit to Thailand to boost ASEAN and East Asia trade links', 13 August 2009 Press Release, http://www.trademinister.gov.au/releases/2009/sc_109.html, accessed 20/08/09 and NZ Govt Press Release, 'Groser to attend EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting', *New*

Foreign Minister Murray McCully met with ASEAN Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan to talk about the possibility of upgrading the ASEAN-New Zealand relationship to a strategic dialogue partnership, and to confirm progress in working towards the implementation of the ASEAN-New Zealand Framework for Cooperation 2006-2010.³⁹ There also remains a great deal of interest in official circles to see the ARF performing well, with New Zealand set to co-chair the forthcoming Eminent Persons Group on Preventive Diplomacy, and with strong interest in seeing advances in maritime security. In particular, however, the ASEAN-initiated EAS has arguably been the subject of the most intense interest by both countries.

It is no secret that the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand in the East Asia Summit was met with a great deal of relief in both of these countries for both self-interested reasons and for more altruistic ones. The altruistic reasons stem from hope of increased trade and security opportunities for all, whilst the self-interested reasons for desiring involvement are clearly evident in bilateral trade figures, amongst other things. Current figures for the three big East Asian economies alone show that, for Australia: China ranks number two for exports (taking 14.6% of total share) and number one for imports (15.6%); Japan ranks number one for exports (22.7%) and third for imports (9%); whilst the Republic of Korea ranks third for exports (8.3%) and tenth for imports (2.9%).⁴⁰ (Significantly, Australian exports to Japan rose by a staggering 58% in 2008, whilst exports to China also rose 39%⁴¹). For New Zealand parallel figures are: China in third place for exports (5.2%) and second for imports; (13%); Japan is then touted as “New Zealand’s fourth largest trading partner” after Australia, the United States and China with 2008 figures putting New Zealand exports to Japan at NZ\$3.6 billion and imports from Japan at NZ\$4.0 billion; whilst the Republic of Korea is New Zealand’s sixth biggest export market and seventh biggest supplier of imports.⁴²

In underlining the importance of trade with East Asia, an Australian commentator estimated in 2007 that an EAS FTA would help boost Australia’s GDP by approximately 1.4% whereas, alternatively, should the ‘rival’ ASEAN +

Zealand Government Website 14 August 2009 as found at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/groser+attend+eas+economic+ministers+meetings> accessed 20/08/09 both emphasised the desire to keep the AANZFTA on track.

³⁹ Xinhua, ‘New Zealand Reaffirms Commitment to ASEAN’, *Global Times*, June 26 2009, as found at <http://world.globaltimes.cn/asia-pacific/2009-06/440349.html>, accessed 12/08/09.

⁴⁰ China trade figures (for 2008) from Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade China Factsheet, as found at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/chin.pdf>, accessed 06/07/09; Japan trade figures (for 2008) from Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Japan Factsheet, as found at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/jap.pdf> accessed 06/07/09; Republic of Korea trade figures (for 2008) from Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Republic of Korea Factsheet, as found at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/rkor.pdf> accessed 06/07/09.

⁴¹ Hon Simon Crean, Minister for Trade, ‘Fifth Consecutive Trade Surplus’, 3 February 2009 Press Release, as found at http://www.trademinister.gov.au/releases/2009/sc_005.html, accessed 15/7/2009.

⁴² China trade figures (February 2009) from New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Website, as found at <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Asia-North/China.php>, accessed 10/08/09. Japan information from New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade website as found at <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Asia-North/Japan.php#facts>, accessed 10/08/09. Republic of Korea information from New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade website as found at <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Asia-North/South-Korea.php>, accessed 10/08/09.

Three system have remained the only institution that seriously engaged these three countries, then Australia would have been shut out of these vitally important markets.⁴³ Similar fears are recognised in New Zealand. As Professor Gary Hawke noted:

It is obviously in New Zealand's interests that key debates and decisions should be made in the wider forum of the EAS in which New Zealand has a seat rather than in any process from which New Zealand is excluded, such as ASEAN plus Three. (It is equally obvious that New Zealand's interest is in maintaining trans-Pacific relations so that it seeks compatibility between EAS and APEC.)⁴⁴

Moreover, this academic commentary emphasising the significance and the potential of the EAS carries over into officialdom.

An early Japanese proposal to create a Comprehensive Economic Partnership fo East Asia (CEPEA) within the EAS led to a number of workshops, with the second of these being hosted by New Zealand. Official interest in seeing this type of arrangement up and running has grown with Economic Minister Tim Groser recently travelling to attend the Economic Minister's meeting for EAS in Bangkok to emphasise that:

In particular, New Zealand - working with our EAS partners - will seek to advance the case for launching an inter-governmental study into the benefits of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia.

This would be a free trade area consisting of all 16 East Asia Summit countries - a region which comprises more than half the world's population.⁴⁵

Similar sentiments were expressed by his Australian counterpart the Hon Simon Crean, who said that now that "ASEAN has concluded free trade agreements with each of its EAS partners, the logical next step is to consider a multilateral agreement involving all EAS countries."⁴⁶ It is also evident that, atop such trading potentiality, the EAS also not only allows for a highly inclusive approach to regionalism more broadly construed by including important players such as India, but it also allows for countries such as Australia and Indonesia to strengthen their bilateral relationships in a broader

⁴³ Malcolm Cook, 'East Asian Regionalism', *The Interpreter*, 4 December 2007, as found at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2007/12/04/East-Asian-regionalism.aspx>, accessed 10/08/09.

⁴⁴ Professor Gary Hawke, 'Report on the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) Academic Advisory Council', Jakarta, Indonesia, 18 May 2009, as found at http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/Gary%20Hawke%20overview_ERIA.pdf, accessed 12/08/09.

⁴⁵ NZ Govt Press Release, 'Groser to attend EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting', *New Zealand Government Website* 14 August 2009 as found at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/groser+attend+eas+economic+ministers+meetings> accessed 20/08/09.

⁴⁶ Hon Simon Crean, Minister for Trade, 'Visit to Thailand to boost ASEAN and East Asia trade links', 13 August 2009 Press Release, http://www.trademinister.gov.au/releases/2009/sc_109.html, accessed 20/08/09.

forum that tends to focus more on areas of commonality rather than difference.⁴⁷

The EAS appears to be the preferred vehicle for Australasian engagement with East Asia for the time being. Solutions to questions of the economic side of regional integration are being actively pursued with the recent creation of the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and other sub-institutional fora within EAS. Here New Zealand was quick to be the second member behind Japan to provide financial assistance to the ERIA.⁴⁸ This Institute has also had strong endorsement from other governments in the region in its role in providing policy recommendations to stimulate economic growth on the region, deepen regional integration and strengthen partnership in East Asia.⁴⁹ However, we have also seen the question raised as to whether or not we need to either push for further change in this and other institutions, and whether or not we are to supplant them altogether with a new more comprehensive form of 'Asia Pacific Community' or perhaps a less ambitious (note the caps) 'Asia Pacific community'.

In June 2008, in an address to the Asia Society in Sydney, Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd advocated the notion of a new Asia Pacific Community.⁵⁰ Rudd's proposal was aimed at creating an overarching, comprehensive and effective forum where political, economic and security issues could be dealt with together, rather than leaving existing institutions to deal with these issues on an individual basis. Rudd called for a regional institution spanning the entire Asia-Pacific region – including the United States, Japan, China, India, Indonesia and the other states of the region – which would be able to engage in the full spectrum of dialogue, cooperation and action on economic and political matters and future challenges related to security in order to "encourage the development of a genuine and comprehensive sense of community whose habitual operating principle is cooperation".

Rudd's proposal met with much scepticism with regards its motives and its relevance, with one senior diplomat arguing that such a notion was 'dead in the water' shortly after its debut due to a lack of interest on the part of Asian

⁴⁷ Malcolm Cook, 'East Asian Regionalism', *The Interpreter*, 4 December 2007, as found at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2007/12/04/East-Asian-regionalism.aspx>, accessed 10/08/09.

⁴⁸ Professor Gary Hawke, 'Report on the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) Academic Advisory Council', Jakarta, Indonesia, 18 May 2009, as found at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/Gary%20Hawke%20overview%20ERIA.pdf>, accessed 12/08/09. the ERIA has been funded by the Japanese Government in order to, in its first few years, focus on:

1. Deepening Economic Integration
2. Narrowing Development Gaps
3. Sustainable Economic Development

New Zealand participates in the ERIA through the NZ Institute of Economic Research. New Zealand is specifically involved in projects regarding the benchmarking biodiesel fuel standardisation. Australia is specifically involved in the first broad goal above on deepening economic integration; the sustainable automobile society in Asia; Energy Efficiency, Biomass and bio-fuels; and in benchmarking biodiesel fuel standardisation.

⁴⁹ As noted by Professor Gary Hawke, *Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia: Research Institutes Network Memo*, 25 August 2009.

⁵⁰ Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, 'A vision for an Asia Pacific community', video recording of his talk presented to the Asia Society, Sydney, 4 June 2008, as found at <http://www.asiasociety.org/policy-politics/international-relations/intra-asia/kevin-rudd-toward-asia-pacific-union>, accessed 07/07/09.

leaders.⁵¹ Others simply thought it was unnecessary with Dennis Jensen, a member of Australia's House of Representatives arguing that "We actually have or had very good relationships with all of the nations in the region so no, it's not necessary"; whilst the Opposition party foreign affairs spokesperson, Andrew Robb, called the plan 'presumptuous'.⁵² Other Australian commentators suggested that an APC idea was merely another ploy to ensure that 'Americans protect us', and that such a community, if it developed, will do so on Asian, not Australian, initiative.⁵³ More recently, Australian commentators asked how such an institution will work alongside the US alliance system, with Malcolm Cook of the Lowy Institute stating that he would be "taken aback" if the APC was "envisaged by its primary architects as a replacement for US bilateral alliances in the Asia Pacific and the trilateral dialogues that have been built upon them".⁵⁴

In New Zealand in 2008 the APC idea was met with mixed reviews. There was rumour that Prime Minister of the time, Helen Clark, was not consulted and that she talked about the Rudd Plan through "gritted teeth."⁵⁵ More formal reporting had Clark claiming it was an idea "that needs to be fleshed out", suggesting that APEC or the EAS were possible vehicles for such an idea and that:

We need to engage on the idea and see what interest others are showing in it and see whether either of the two major regional vehicles that exist at the moment could be adapted to that.⁵⁶

This year (2009) Professor Gary Hawke has argued that we are caught up in the wrong way of thinking about the issue, suggesting that "nothing supports the idea that there should be one Asia Pacific Community, rather than a set of institutions supporting the various aspect of a deep community. It is surely

⁵¹ Barry Desker, former Singaporean diplomat, called Rudd's plan 'dead in the water' after a distinct lack of interest in the concept. Desker was interviewed by Graeme Dobell, 'Rudd's Asia plan 'dead in the water'', *ABC Radio Australia* 3 July 2008, as found at <http://www.abc.net.au/ra/programguide/stories/200807/s2294006.htm>, accessed 5/7/09.

⁵² Denis Jensen interviewed by Australian ABC News, 6/5/08, and Hon Andrew Robb interviewed by the BBC 6/5/08, both cited in Roberto Jelash, 'Kevin Rudd pushing for an Asian Pacific union', *infonews.co.nz*, 12 August 2008, as found at <http://www.infonews.co.nz/news.cfm?l=1&t=0&id=25757> accessed 10/07/09.

⁵³ Alison Broinowski, 'Why Do We Want an Asia Pacific Community?', *East Asia Forum*, May 2 2009, as found at <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/05/02/why-do-we-want-an-asia-pacific-community/>, accessed 13/07/09.

⁵⁴ Malcolm Cook, 'The APC and the world of regions', *The Interpreter*, 3 August 2009, as found at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2009/08/03/The-APC-and-the-world-of-regions.aspx> accessed 10/08/2009.

⁵⁵ Audrey Young, 'Rudd should know who his friends are', *New Zealand Herald Online*, June 13 2008, as found at <http://blogs.nzherald.co.nz/blog/audrey-young/2008/6/13/rudd-should-know-who-his-friends-are/> accessed 08/07/09. Young critiqued Rudd for being in office for 6 months and not having yet attended a major regional meeting prior to suggesting the APC idea. Similar sentiments were expressed by Fran O'Sullivan, 'Clark signals Rudd – Please Ask Next Time', *New Zealand Herald Online*, June 14 2008, as found at http://www.nzherald.co.nz/opinion/news/article.cfm?c_id=466&objectid=10516215, accessed 08/07/09.

⁵⁶ Audrey Young, 'Clark Inspired Me: Aussie No 2', *New Zealand Herald Online*, June 14 2008, as found at http://www.nzherald.co.nz/helen-clark-prime-minister/news/article.cfm?c_id=1502272&objectid=10516287, accessed 08/07/09.

time that our thinking was in terms of networks and their interrelationships, rather than in building an old-fashioned institution.”⁵⁷ Asian regionalism to date has pursued a path different to that of Europe’s typically politically motivated and institution-led process, with more informal interaction that is not necessarily state-led paving the way for increased economic interaction.⁵⁸

Despite such criticisms, however, the idea of the or ‘a’ APC of some sort will continue to be a significant foreign policy focus for the current Australian administration. Significantly, however the tone of the dialogue has changed. Graeme Dobell, for instance, noted a change in capital letters introduced at the printed text version from this year’s Shangri-La dialogue – hence the APC became the Asia Pacific community (APC).⁵⁹ Moreover, despite carrying on with rhetoric about how:

Managing major-power relations, particularly in the context of the rise of China and India, will be crucial for our collective future. This will place a premium on wise statecraft, particularly the effective management of relations between the United States, Japan, China, and India”...’[and that] We need mechanisms that help us to cope with strategic shocks and discontinuities. We need a body that brings together the leaders of the key nations in the Asia-Pacific region, including Indonesia, India, China, Japan, the US and other nations, with a mandate to engage across the breadth of the security, economic and political challenges we will face in the future. Absent such a body [there is a concern about] the possibility of strategic drift within our region or, even worse, strategic polarisation, polarisation which....serves nobody’s interest.’⁶⁰

This ‘new and improved’ version of an APc returns to consider the role of existing arrangements. ASEAN was explicitly mentioned a number of times in Rudd’s 2009 speech who said that an APc could:

be seen as a natural broadening of the processes of confidence, security and community building in Southeast Asia led by ASEAN, while ASEAN itself would of course remain central to the region, and would also be an important part of any future APC⁶¹

⁵⁷ Gary Hawke, ‘The Asia Pacific Community: Ideas not Institutions’, *East Asia Forum*, June 15 2009, as found at <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/06/15/the-asia-pacific-community-objectives-not-institutions/#more-4844>, accessed 10/07/09.

⁵⁸ Tomoko Okagaki, ‘Europe as a Model of Regionalism in the Asia Pacific’, *East Asia Forum*, May 6 2009 as found at <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/05/06/relativising-europe-as-a-model-of-regionalism-for-the-asia-pacific/>, accessed 14/07/09.

⁵⁹ Graeme Dobell, ‘Asia Community: Rudd moves on’, *The Interpreter*, 31 May 2009, as found at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2009/05/31/Asia-Community-Rudd-moves-on.aspx> accessed 10/08/09.

⁶⁰ Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, 29 May 2009, as found at <http://www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2009/plenary-session-speeches-2009/opening-remarks-and-keynote-address/keynote-address-kevin-rudd/> accessed 10/07/09.

⁶¹ Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, 29 May 2009, as found at <http://www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2009/plenary-session-speeches-2009/opening-remarks-and-keynote-address/keynote-address-kevin-rudd/> accessed 10/07/09.

This new version has some support. In July 2009 Jia Qingguo of Peking University noted that the APC idea still lacks clarity on who will lead the venture and how it will work alongside existing arrangements, but also noted that it “has quite a few merits” in that it is inclusive, unlike notions such as the alliance of democracies idea.⁶² A major CSIS report that undertook surveys across the region similarly reported that most respondents were dissatisfied with existing architecture and noted that strong support existed for a future East Asian Community.⁶³ And with the US signing the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) that allows it to be considered for membership in the EAS, there may be renewed impetus yet for some reworking of the EAS into a new, bigger, more comprehensive institution that could as of yet be called an ‘Asia Pacific community’.⁶⁴

As of yet, though, there doesn’t appear to be much consensus even locally over what such an APc might look like. Australian scholar Ron Huisken has asked scholars and practitioners to imagine how one might start from scratch in constituting such a comprehensive multilateral institution suitable for the region. He suggested that this architecture might ideally encompass:

- 1) A leaders’ forum to address all the global and regional issues of common interest and concern;
- (2) A forum headed by Foreign and Defence ministers to address the security and defence agenda; and
- (3) A forum headed by Trade and Finance ministers to address the economic and trade agenda.⁶⁵

Huisken therefore suggested that when considering how to reconfigure or redevelop existing institutions that this skeleton be borne in mind.

Yet there remains much confusion as to who should be involved, what such an institution can or could actually *do*, and some are dissatisfied with the notion of ASEAN being in the driver’s seat. Here there has been some interest, in New Zealand academic circles at least, in Dr Rizal Sukma’s notion that *Indonesia* might want to consider not vesting all interests in ASEAN and

⁶² Jia Qingguo, ‘Realising the Asia Pacific Community: geographic, institutional and leadership challenges’,

⁶³ CSIS report.

⁶⁴ In 2008 Peter Drysdale, ‘Where does Australia really want Regional Architecture to Go?’, *East Asia Forum*, 5 June 2008 as found at <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2008/06/05/where-does-australia-really-want-regional-architecture-to-go/> accessed 13/07/09 noted that “[Although] The East Asian Summit (EAS), with the involvement of China, India, Japan, Southeast Asia and Australasia has potential to provide ballast in the re-alignment of Asian economic and political power... [and therefore it] might serve as a forum for regional political and security dialogue....the US is not a member of EAS and it is unlikely that the US would be to accept membership”. However, both Robert Gates and Hilary Clinton have spoken of the possibility of acceding to TAC, thereby potentially removing one of the biggest obstacles to that membership.

⁶⁵ Ron Huisken, ‘Multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific: What might have been, and what could be’, *East Asia Forum*, June 29 2009, as found at <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/06/29/multilateralism-in-the-asia-pacific-what-might-have-been-and-what-could-be/>, accessed 14/07/09.

indeed pursue some sort of 'post-ASEAN' policy when ASEAN wavers.⁶⁶ In addition to this, the rumour that the US will join Japan, China and the Republic of Korea in their fledgling Trilateral Summit will likely be met with muted applause in Australia and New Zealand – muted simply because these two countries want to, and need to, be part of the dialogue about East Asia and the directions regionalism is heading. Some of these questions might be answered towards the end of the year when both the EAS meets in October and if a rumoured Track One and a Half meeting on this very subject gets underway in Australia, but for now there is a moment of flux whilst we all wait to see just where this process will go.

Conclusion

Australia and New Zealand share a number of common foreign policy goals and interests. One of these common interests is that both countries very much want to be involved in any developments vis-à-vis East Asian regionalism. This may at first glance seem a little nonsensical given their geographical location much further to the south, and perhaps also given their strong Anglo-American oriented histories. Wendt's notion that social identities may be playing a strong role here seems to be a little weak. However the desire to engage East Asia is understandable for a number of reasons – including identity. Not only does it make sound economic sense given the growth of the region and a pressing need to be able to stay engaged with the powerhouse economies of the Asia-Pacific, but an inclusive regionalism also resonates with the political liberal arguments about interdependence and peace, whilst changing demographics at home in both countries also mean that this region is ever more significant to both Australia and New Zealand. Both countries have therefore sought to actively engage the region, and they will continue to do so. Both place great value in particular on their inclusion into the EAS, and their views on where future architecture might head will be converging more with the easing of Rudd's APC to an APC.

In terms of *how* these two countries have sought and are seeking to pursue engagement with East Asia, however, there are a few differences and these too can be seen to reflect a number of factors related to identity. Three key differences between the two are that: Australia has high threat perception, sees itself as a middle power and is more closely aligned with American interests; whilst New Zealand views itself as a small fish in the Asia-Pacific pond, has low threat perception and is more distanced from the 'hubs and spokes' San Fransisco alliance network (and in fact this is seen as a significant strength in dealing with other countries less comfortable with American hegemony). In 2008 Rudd displayed some of these differences in advocating a stronger role for Australia in shaping the architecture of the region, a move received with some caution both in Asia and, interestingly, across the sea in Wellington. These basic differences in alignment, threat perception and identity can and will comparatively alter the tenor of how engagement is undertaken.

⁶⁶ Rizal Sukma, 'Jakarta needs a post-ASEAN foreign policy', *The Jakarta Post*, June 30 2009, as found at http://www.csis.or.id/scholars_opinion_view.asp?op_id=718&id=46&tab=0, accessed 20/07/09.

In terms of *what* kinds of engagement are pursued, however, these two countries converge a little once more. Australia maintains a close relationship with the US and, in addition to this, has been and is pursuing very strong bilateral relations with Japan, India and Republic of Korea, in particular.⁶⁷ Relations with China have, on the other hand, appeared to have been shaken by both the Defence White Paper and the Chinalco / Rio Tinto issue. In addition to these bilateral relations, Trade Minister Simon Crean has strongly advocated global free trade mechanisms through the WTO's current Doha efforts, and the 'multilateralising' of regionalism – defined as the '*the non-discriminatory extension of preferential trading arrangements to additional trading partners*' which can occur 'either through including new members in existing agreements, or by replacing existing agreements with new ones that extend to new members'.⁶⁸ In one example of this, the Transpacific Partnership (TPP) Initiative is now being backed by Australia and this looks to build on the P4 agreement between Brunei, Chile, Singapore and New Zealand that was concluded in 2006.⁶⁹

Many in New Zealand similarly want to multilateralise regionalism, and some see the involvement of the US in such initiatives as of continuing importance – on this point it is significant that the relationship with the US has improved to the extent that Condolezza Rice used the term 'ally' in 2008.⁷⁰ New Zealand officials also pursue strong relationships with Japan and the Republic of Korea, and are also looking at how to extend across to India, but relations with China have arguably been steadier than that of Australia as made evident by the signing of the Sino-New Zealand FTA (viewed as a major milestone in New Zealand circles). New Zealand defence officials are at the moment in the throes of writing a new Defence White Paper that will have to bear in mind the sentiments expressed in Australia's latest White Paper, but that, as Robert Ayson pointed out in 2007, the review team may also "be tasked to produce a new White Paper that clarifies the defence side of New Zealand's East Asian security policy."⁷¹ This may impact upon relations in the region from a defence perspective whilst in the economic sphere New Zealand may either seek to pursue more general concrete initiatives such as an EAS free trade area or,

⁶⁷ Prime Minister of Australia Kevin Rudd and President of RoK Lee Myung-bak, 'Joint Statement on Enhanced Global and Security Cooperation between Australia and the Republic of Korea', 5 March 2009, *Australian Department of Foreign Affairs Website*, http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/rok/fta/090305_joint_statement.html, accessed 11/08/09 and Prime Minister of Australia John Howard and Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe, 'Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, 13 March 2007, *Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website* as found at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/joint0703.html>, accessed 11/08/09.

⁶⁸ Crean was citing Richard Baldwin's definitions here in italics. Hon Simon Crean, Australian Minister for Trade, Address to the ANU Symposium on Multilateralising Regionalism, as found at http://www.trademinister.gov.au/speeches/_2009/090324_multilateralizing_regionalism.html, accessed 13/07/09.

⁶⁹ Hon Simon Crean, Australian Minister for Trade, to the ANU Symposium on Multilateralising Regionalism, as found at http://www.trademinister.gov.au/speeches/_2009/090324_multilateralizing_regionalism.html, accessed 13/07/09. The TPP is likely to include these four countries plus Australia, the US, Peru and Vietnam and it is thought that such an arrangement could lead to agreement on issues such as rules of origin, intellectual property standards and investment protection.

⁷⁰ Again these sentiments have been expressed in various informal settings.

⁷¹ Robert Ayson, *New Zealand and East Asia's Security Future*, Outlook 03 (Wellington: AsiaNZ Foundation, 2006), p15.

more interestingly, might heed Professor Hawke's advice and advocate more fluid arrangements.

So it is clear that we are interested in East Asia and that at least some of these motivations, and the ways in which this engagement is pursued, are related to Wendt's notion of social identity. But what can Australasia bring to East Asian regionalism? There are many obvious advantages to be had for these two countries in engaging East Asia. Yet there are more subtle benefits from closer involvement by Australia and New Zealand for East Asia too. We can provide an alternative political conception of how things can be – hence Rudd's (admittedly clumsy) push for a new institution –or alternative views on the way the world 'is' (here contrast Australia's realism with New Zealand's more idealistic worldview). We can engage in economic affairs meaningfully, if in a niche way. Here this might either be with respect to important resources (particularly Australia) or education or with food technology (such as with New Zealand's dairy industry).

More broadly, though, we can help to shape regional dialogue on the 'big issues'. Australia's White Paper may be provocative but it at least provides some food for thought as to how other countries respond to the changing political and security environment in the region. New Zealand's very active stance on non-proliferation and disarmament can help to separate us out from the rest when talking about denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. The experiences of both countries with rapid economic liberalisation (New Zealand) or ongoing alliance engagement (Australia) or experiences of disengagement (New Zealand) may be useful for considering where to go in the future. Here our physical distance is also an asset, in that it might serve us well as acting in brokering or advising roles, or for acting as 'sounding boards' when local avenues for action become too entrenched or ossified. In sum, the countries of Australasia want to engage East Asian regionalism with good reason, including reasons related to identity, and there are equally good reasons for countries in East Asia to respond in kind by welcoming such involvement.